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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, ALLAHABAD

4 January 1925. Some devotees were present with Swami Vijnanananda. A devotee said, ‘God has six superhuman attributes’.

The Swami said : ‘Why has He not seven attributes ? He has *innumerable* attributes. The aspects of God are classified into four groups, namely, gross, subtle, causal, and ultra-causal. In His gross aspect, this visible cosmos is His body, the sun and moon His eyes, sky His head, air His ear, earth His navel, the nether world His feet, and so on. He is so described in the *Panchadashi*.’

Devotee : ‘Maharaj, what can we say before you ? From what I have learnt and what appeals to me, I think that God is the embodiment of Truth, and realizable through purified intelligence. To us Sri Ramakrishna is God Himself.’

The Swami : ‘The definition is not satisfactory.’

Now, all of them requested the Swami to tell them the proper definition of God.

The Swami : ‘By God is meant Know-

ledge-Truth-Bliss Absolute. He has countless forms. He is reflected differently in the minds of various types of devotees, according to their spiritual attainments and understanding capacity. Some like Kali, some Rama, others Krishna, and so on. As is the mind of the devotee so is his conception. First of all, It is conceived as shadow and then comes the experience of Reality. As long as there is no proper conception of the Godhead, there is the chance for bigotry to raise its evil head. Listen to the story of Ghantakarna. He was a devotee of Shiva and would always repeat “Shiva”, “Shiva”. If anybody would utter any other name within his hearing, he would ring the bells tied to his ears so that no other utterances may enter his ears. Brahma and Vishnu appeared before him, but Ghantakarna shut his eyes in order not to see them. Then God appeared in the form of Hari-Hara. Then he opened one eye and looked at Hara only. God said, “He who is Hari is also Hara ; both are One”. But Ghantakarna would not

listen to that. He said, "I do not know that. I want to see you as Hara only. I do not want to see Hari." But look at what Hanuman says :

श्रीनाथे जानकीनाथे अभेदः परमात्मनि ।

तथापि मम सर्वस्व रामः कमललोचनः ॥

"As Paramatman Rama and Krishna are identical; even then, lotus-eyed Rama is my all in all."

The topic turned to the revival of the old Harisabha. Some gentlemen were trying to revive it. Possibly they were a bit sophisticated, and wanted to reorganize it on modern lines. The devotees requested the Swami to advise them as to what they should do.

The Swami said: 'Let them do so. You are quite sensible. See that you do not commit anything by which you may drift away from your own ideas; neither should you antagonize them. See how far you can go on jointly. By this you will be large-hearted and liberal. Though you say it will curtail your freedom, still you have to be accommodating if you have to work with different people. It will be excellent if you can work together, but beware of disunity among yourselves. If you are liberal you will surely succeed in winning over others. Suppose the River-Goddess Ganga were to say "None will be allowed to come to my bank", what will be the condition of the people? Our Master is like the Ganga. People of various types will come to him. Let them come. He will manage his own work. To you the Master is all-important, but to others he may not be so. But you need not forcibly try to make him all-important to them also. It is better you keep quiet, and do not quarrel.'

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13 January 1925. Talking to some devotees, Swami Vijnanananda said: 'Kant, the German philosopher, was of opinion that it was impossible to live without marriage. He has only said what he believed. Kant had very regular habits. When he would go out for a walk in the morning, people would

regulate their watch. He was so punctual! His philosophy is akin to our Advaitavada. But he avers that the Hindus got their religion from the Europeans. The Hindus are indebted to these white people in every way! They want to show that we have received everything from them and that they are superior to us. What a tomfoolery!' The Swami then referred to the following quotation: 'Surely the race is not to the swift but the battle to the strong; nor yet the bread to the wise and the riches to the man of understanding; nor yet the favour to the skilful; but time and chance happen to them all.' 'These are the utterances of a disappointed man,' the Swami remarked.

A devotee: 'These are applicable to many of us; they are based on observation and are appealing. Success often comes to him who abides by time.'

The Swami: 'Yes, that is true. But the fact is that both Daiva (divine grace) and Purushakāra (perseverance) are there. Mahākāla is the spirit of the times. What the Europeans call "chance" is to us the result of our own Karma—our past Purushakāra. The stream of Time flows on incessantly. It will not do if you simply drift along with the current. You have to cross the river. If you struggle together with the aid of the current and swim across, then alone can you reach the other side.

'Never give way to despair. No big task can be successfully performed without perseverance. God-realization is the *summum bonum* of life. Such a noble aim cannot be easily achieved. Never indulge in idleness and insincerity. It may be you are now near the other side. If you cease to swim you will be carried away by the current and then drowned in the river. If one struggles sincerely, according to one's best capacity, then will God give one strength ten times, hundred times, and even infinite times more. Then you will be able to cross the river and get to the land. You see, how many kingdoms

have vanished in the womb of Time—the all-destroyer. Our country too will meet the same fate if our countrymen do not serve our motherland with all their strength and sincerity. In whatever station of life one may be placed, one can surely render some service, either more or less, to the motherland, to fellow-brethren, and to God. May peace and bliss be unto all—such a pious wish must be constantly cherished in one's heart. A national worker, in the first place, must be sincere to the backbone. Do not look to the faults of others; rather keep a watch on your own faults. In this way you can eliminate them. Once when I was at the Belur Math, a gentleman came and said that he was sorry that we had become Sanyasins. He regretted that we had not married. He tried to prove by arguments that we were wrong, saying that even our Great Guru, Lord Shiva, was married to His divine consort Parvati.'

A devotee (ironically) : 'Yes, the speaker has himself become "Shiva" and hence it behoves him to say so!'

The Swami : 'You are right. But this nice idea did not strike me then. If it had occurred to my mind then, I would have certainly told him straightaway. Do you know what Swami Brahmananda told him? He said to the man, "You please do as you understand best". He called me aside and said, "Let us go away from here. We should not be here any more. Where many people gather, there such nonsense is generally talked of." I replied, "Yes, Maharaj, it is better to leave this place. Man can't see his own defects, his gaze being fixed on others. So he advances silly arguments in defence of his wrong-doing."'

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21 January 1926. Talking to some devotees, Swami Vijnanananda said : 'Selfishness rules the world. But if there be no selfishness, the world cannot go on. It is however improper to make the self very limited. That life is death which is for self only, and death

is verily eternal life when that happens to be for the good of the many.

'Our Master was the embodiment of purity. As soon as there was any talk on a holy subject, instantaneously he would go into ecstasy. People of all communities derived great pleasure in his holy company, and would look upon him as their own. Broad universality was his motto. He was not bound by any limitation. Thus "Whenever Dharma subsides and Adharma prevails" etc. of the *Gita* means that whenever the Universal Idea shrinks and narrowness possesses the mind, then the noble, pure, and broad ideas which relate to the Infinite are revived.

'It is shortsightedness to think that a family is extinct if no son is born. The real sons are those noble, pure, and liberal ideas and actions which alone endure for ever. The Master said to the Holy Mother, "Don't you see that you have thousands of sons?" It means that the innumerable immortal ideas of the Master will be manifested variously through diverse persons. Those pure thoughts are the real sons. The son (*putra*) saves one from only the hell called "Put", but the pure thoughts and actions save one from all hells.

'If good training is given to the boys and girls from the age of eight, they may be saved from the troubles and worries of the world. The period from 8 to 30 years is very impressionable and is the age for self-culture. Spread good thoughts to all. Pray every day for the good of India. You should sacrifice more for others, and minimize selfishness. All quarrels spring from this selfishness.'

* * *

21 April 1932. In the course of conversation, Swami Vijnanananda said : 'I was present when the Master showered his bountiful grace on Swami Shivananda. The Master loved his father very much as the latter was a Tāntrika Sādhaka of a high order. When the Master learnt from Swami Shivananda that the latter was the son of so-and-so, he said, "Very well; your father is a great

Sādhaka. You being the son of such a great Sādhaka must have a deeply spiritual life." Swami Shivananda told me that after meeting the Master sense-pleasures and the world became repulsive to him.

'I was also present on the day when the Master blessed Girish Ghosh. Girish Ghosh went to the Master in a drunken state. The Master kept calm, and sang the song of Girish Ghosh, which begins thus: "O Lord Keshava, bestow Thy mercy on me" etc. While singing the song the Master was beside himself with ecstatic joy. Girish Ghosh began to

dance in joy. Pleasantly surprised at this sight, I stood silent. With the termination of the song Girish Ghosh's drunkenness subsided. When the Master came to from his super-conscious state, he said to Girish Ghosh, "You will have everything in time. But repeat the name of God morning and evening." When Girish Ghosh expressed his inability to do so, the Master said, "Then give me the power of attorney to do it for you." Girish Ghosh at once agreed, with great joy.'

NEED OF A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

BY THE EDITOR

*'Vedāhametam purusham mahāntamādityavarnam tamasah parastāt,
Tameva viditvātimirityumeti nānyah panthā vidyate yanāya.'*

'I have known the Infinite Being, who is self-effulgent and beyond all darkness and delusion; knowing Him alone can one be saved from death. There is no other way to immortality.'

—*Shvetāshvatara Upanishad, III. 8.*

'Brahma satyam jaganmithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparah.'

'The Brahman (of the Vedānta) is the (only) Reality, and (everything else)—this mutable world (of manifoldness)—is unreal, (is a mere appearance); the individual soul is identical with Brahman, the One without a second.'

A fundamental characteristic of our times is a deep all-round concern for the common man. Notwithstanding the devastation of the last two world wars and the consequent confusion of ideas, ideals, and idols, meliorists are striving earnestly, though without much success, for the welfare of the masses. Of the many humanistic cults that bid fair to offer constructive proposals for the amelioration of the condition of the poor and toiling classes, socialism and communism have grown so powerful and vast in scope as to affect the whole of human society. The other prepotent force, somewhat less sentimental, which has brought about perhaps greater changes in the collective life of man is modern science.

The socio-economic movements, characterized by a revolutionary urge for collectivis-

tic naturalism, have of course won doubtful victories in their bitter struggle for the emancipation of man through political and material supremacy. The masses have greater opportunities for education and employment, and enjoy more rights and privileges. Feudal exploitation has to a large extent been eliminated, and the basic physical needs of food, clothing, and shelter have been appreciably secured. Scientific knowledge and technical skill have brought to man innumerable advantages and comforts for a pleasurable, *ergo* 'progressive', way of life. But how far have these gains and gifts bestowed by a much-vaunted modern mechanical civilization helped the common man to advance towards the realization of his destiny? Has the growth of the scientific spirit, or the idolization of

the State and the community, or the deification of the clay-footed tin gods of society saved man from the psychological regression resulting from a disruption of the essential cultural and spiritual values?

Aims and objects of human life vary, and people strive incessantly for things material with a view to the fulfilment of their worldly desires. The senses seek satisfaction through attachment to sense-objects in the external world. The human mind has a natural outgoing tendency, and a majority of people, propelled by their selfish motives, have their gaze fixed on the mundane level. Among innumerable human beings on earth, only a few, comparatively speaking, develop a desire for a sincere inquiry into the purpose and goal of human life. Among those who devote themselves to such an inquiry, one, here and there, earnestly strives for attainment of spiritual knowledge. And, of these few who strive for perfection, one or two, perchance, finally succeed in acquiring the knowledge of the Supreme Truth. Hence persons who attain the true knowledge of the essential spiritual Reality underlying all existence are rare on this earth. It is undeniable that our modern movements swearing by political and economic theories and wedded to a secular conception of life, aiming at making the best of this 'inequitable' world, have strengthened and accelerated the deplorable process of elimination of the higher spiritual values. Scientific intellectualism, which seemed to have solved for us the problem of human existence on a 'rational' footing by claiming to have discovered the basic roots of physical reality, has led humanity into a shadow world of symbols, totally neglecting the essential psychological forces guiding man's progress in his struggle after the eternal verities.

A great impulse in man's life is his love of freedom which is but the external manifestation of an innate hankering for reaching and becoming one with the Infinite. The eternal dissatisfaction in the soul is no other than an

indication of its irrepressible hunger for spiritual sustenance and divine fulfilment. Man longs for more and more. He wants to eat, drink, and be merry. He desires to exercise his rights as a member of society and the State. He feels elated on gaining power and success, and grieves when faced with suffering and failures. He feels in the innermost depth of his heart that he will be content with nothing short of that beyond which there is nothing else to aspire after. But, alas, the spirit is strong, but the flesh is weak! He seeks in vain the Infinite in the finite world, misguided by sapient, self-styled leaders of a secular humanism.

The high priests of pseudo-science have left the common man in the lurch after beguiling him into believing that he is merely a product of biological processes and a helpless victim of instinctual urges and emotions. The result is that man has arrived at a stage of utter spiritual bankruptcy when even the gains to his credit, hardly any, are liable to be wiped out.

There is no gainsaying the fact that there is something fundamentally wrong with the modern scientific civilization which has afflicted unnumbered millions with a vast uneasiness and severe world-weariness. The inordinate craze for earthly glory and material enjoyment for which the energies of man have been let loose has only served to inflame his baser passions and impulses, thus adding to the misery of the world. In spite of the repeated assurances of politicians and scientists that this planet of ours will be a veritable Fairyland flowing with milk and honey, 'the perusal of general history unfolds a gloomy tale of the insensate greeds, lusts, and panic fears, and of the ferocious passions and hideous deeds' of the unregenerate but 'civilized' man. Nations have indulged in such unholy orgies periodically, and the advance of civilization seems but to make more lethal the means and more effective the methods by which nations threaten to destroy each other. Civilization is on the brink of disaster, and it appears as

though the human race will relapse into primitive barbarism.

The need of a spiritual revival is imperative today to give back to humanity its lost bearings. The sway of science and social idealism has not succeeded in creating an ideal spiritual atmosphere suitable for peaceful progress and neighbourly love. The rehabilitation of erring man will not be achieved by merely making his life materially well off or by filling his mind with scientific superstitions and dry moralization. There are aspects of life and interests of culture other than the social, political, or economic. The prevalent confusion and disorganization are mainly the result of a woeful lack of a living and active faith in the abiding spiritual values which alone can satisfy man's desire for permanent peace and happiness. The plain matter-of-fact and 'sensate' view of life, springing from an idolatry of science and that of comfort, has led man to think that he is the master of unlimited power, and that there is no need for God or any other ultimate Reality. The supersensuous spiritual revelation of Truth Eternal is dismissed by many of these 'rational' intellectuals as 'unscientific' and 'unverified by experiments in a laboratory'. There are others who refuse to believe in anything metaphysical unless they are given 'an assurance that the soul in reaching out to the unseen world is not following an illusion'.

The world today is not facing but has already entered a period of trial and upheaval. The crisis that has overtaken modern civilization is by no means sudden or unexpected. The rot had set in long ago, and cold fear of an impending and inevitable catastrophe has been gripping the hearts of millions of people who are genuinely apprehensive of the consequences of the mad race for armaments. The great ones of the earth, presentiment of the gathering storm did not hesitate to utter unmistakable but timely warnings. But the passion for political world domination and the master-sentiment of 'self-esteem' ruling motives and actions crowded out the cultural,

moral, and spiritual truths of abiding value and significance. 'Blinded by its materialistic, mechanistic, and empirical bias respecting anything "superconscious", "spiritual", or "religious", this pseudo-science largely disregarded the teachings of Lao-tse and Buddha, Christ and Saint Paul, Saint Francis of Assisi and Ramakrishna, the Yogis and ascetics, the mystics, the founders of monastic orders, and other eminent altruists and moral educators.' (P.A. Sorokin: *The Reconstruction of Humanity*). In the ultimate analysis the cause of man's suffering is his excessive identification with his body and the senses and his ignorance (*avidyā*) of the divinity of the soul.

A healthy spiritual soul-affirmation will awaken in man the transcendental awareness of his true being. When he rises to the level of the spirit and knows himself to be one with the eternal Divinity, he will find that his limited ego-centric self has vanished, yielding place to universal existence-knowledge-bliss absolute. Then alone will this indecent and brutal self-exaltation which forces us to go ahead of everyone else by fair means or foul will give place to self-abnegation and self-surrender to God. Such a spiritual illumination will dispel from the human heart all gloom of selfish struggle, hate, and jealousy. The lower sensuous and materialistic self of man will be uplifted to the higher nonsensuous levels of the spiritual realm which make for a common human understanding and world peace. Instead of being a cesspool of iniquity, violence, and fraud, this very earth will then become a heaven. As the *Gita* declares, even a little touch of divine inspiration will transfigure men and save the world from great catastrophes (*svalpamapyasya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*). Such, indeed, is the great good to mankind resulting from an intense spiritual revival.

The spiritual leaders and teachers of the world have proclaimed that man's real nature is divine, that he is in essence the imperishable soul residing temporarily in this tabernacle

of flesh and blood, and that the ultimate purpose of life is to realize his identity with the Divinity which is immanent as well as transcendent. The *Mundaka Upanishad* depicts in most sublime language the picture of the human soul in its apparent and real aspects, and states that the feeling of suffering and helplessness of the individual soul is due to its erroneous dependence on matter and its thinking itself separate from Brahman through ignorance (*māyā*). Upon the same tree are seated two birds, united always and friendly to each other. Of them, one eats the fruits of the tree and feels happy or unhappy as the fruits are sweet or bitter, while the other sits calm and silent, without eating any fruit, and, therefore, feels neither happy nor unhappy. After passing through happiness and misery alternately, the bird eating the fruits gets disgusted and looks up with wonder at the other one ever remaining unperturbed and self-contented. Before long, the former, eager to attain to the blissful state of the latter, gives up eating the fruits and gradually approaches the latter. Finally, the two birds become identified into one, namely the one which was all the time remaining calm without eating any fruit. In reality, there was only one bird, not eating the fruits, and the second bird, eating fruits and feeling happy or unhappy, was only a reflection, a substantial-looking shadow of the former.

The two birds refer to the individual soul (*jīvātmā*) and the Supreme Self or God (*paramātmā*), the former being a reflection of the latter in the *Buddhi*. The two are inseparable, known by the same name *Atman*, both residing in the same body which, like a tree, is subject to decay and dissolution and bears diverse fruits of actions of sweet and bitter tastes characterized respectively by pleasure and pain. Man or the individual soul, thinking himself Mr. So-and-so, separate from the *Atman*, due to lack of spiritual awareness of the Supreme Self, goes on eating the sweet and bitter fruits of life. When his actions bring him pleasure he feels elated and

considers himself fortunate and successful. But, when, shortly after, failure comes and he receives a hard knock, he feels miserable and considers himself unlucky. Yet in the life of everyone, even in the midst of these joys and sorrows and sufferings, there come golden moments when one's heart becomes open to divine light. Occasionally an exceptionally hard blow comes as an eye-opener, and man turns away from the life of the senses, away from the world and its vanities, and looks up to the other majestic 'bird', the Supreme Self or Lord, the silent witness, free from attachment to the body and its pairs of opposites (*dvandva*). He is dissatisfied with his present state of affairs and longs for that supreme life of blessedness. But more often than not his selfish desires and impulses, his false sense of honour and prestige, make him a helpless victim of circumstances and compel him to follow willynilly the dictates of his fleshly appetites. So, after catching a glimpse of the Divinity in the inmost recesses of his pure heart, man again forgets and is tossed about in the ups and downs of the workaday world. Thus madly careering he goes on, pursuing the *ignis fatuus* of pleasure, wealth, and power.

None but a nincompoop can believe in the ushering in of a perfect world, containing only goodness or happiness, to the exclusion of its opposite. Progress does not take place in an unbroken straight line of an ever increasing quantity of unmixed pleasure or comfort. We are overawed by the marvels of the modern industrial civilization and its advantages to mankind. Even the confirmed cynic cannot but feel thankful to our modern technocrats for their gift of scientific appliances, gadgets, and labour-saving devices. But a closer scrutiny reveals a most deplorable state of affairs. The skeletons in the modern man's cupboard have become too many to be hidden from public gaze. The monstrous engines of death and destruction cast a chill over the enthusiastic proponents of the scientific and secular civilization. The advance of

technology is closely followed by a growing insecurity and despondency. The atomic age connotes triumph as well as dread. Man is scared by the forces he has himself unleashed. The extent of harm does not lie so much in the weapon as it does in the hands of the man who uses it. Seized with an inextinguishable thirst for material gain and power, consumed by selfishness and greed, individuals and nations are striving to increase their possessions by keeping others from sharing them. One shudders to imagine the ruinous consequences of the misuse of such war-weapons. It is very unlikely that such misuse will not be resorted to by nations who have banished the higher spiritual values from the scheme of life.

A godless secularism, fed by the craze for a sort of 'environmentalism' and 'relativism' is taking a heavy toll of what little spiritual urge is left in the modern man. Spiritual poverty is the major tragedy of the civilized world today. It is as though man *himself* is not expected to progress, but only his material surroundings and his bodily comforts. As Benjamin Disraeli has very rightly pointed out, '... amid arts forgotten, commerce annihilated, fragmentary literatures, and populations destroyed, the European talks of progress, because by an ingenious application of some scientific acquirements he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilization'. The disease calls for a more searching diagnosis of the subjective symptoms and a drastic preventive treatment. Tinkering with the superficial social, economic, and political symptoms by applying quack remedies of a communistic or 'socialistic' or even democratic manufacture may serve to feed the vanity of intellectual internationalists; but it will not contribute to the preservation and advancement of peace and mutual understanding among nations.

The present distress in world affairs is largely due to a materialistic conception of the nature of man and his destiny. Biologists, evolutionists, and psychoanalysts of the West

give us a very sorry picture of man. Is man, then, a living machine, a human automaton, eating, drinking, and begetting in mechanical precision? Has he any independent thinking power apart from a bodily process? Is man no better than a performing ape trained to behave involuntarily for the entertainment of the community and the State? When man's condition is so pitiable, the position of his 'Maker' is worse. God and religion are summarily dismissed as the imaginary projections of a fear complex. The trite arguments that God is a myth, not bearing a logical or rational scrutiny and that religion is an opiate to keep the people in submission are repeated *ad nauseam*.

The scientist fights shy of God as he has yet no laboratory apparatus to experimentally demonstrate the existence of God. But his apple-cart has been upset by recent revolutionary changes in scientific thought and the shortening of the hiatus between physics and metaphysics. The incorrigible naturalist views the pursuit of spiritual values as a sort of escapism, implying a retreat from the world of secular affairs and duties. An integral conception of life and Reality appear to him unnecessary or unenlightening. Even the lofty ideal of creative altruism is explained away as a cloak under which a person hides his inglorious failure to face the 'realities' of life. Truth itself has been degraded into a relative, variable commodity in many parts of the world, its validity depending on its 'applicability' and 'practical efficiency'. Perversity can go no further. Thus under the shade of the upas-tree of moral destitution and secular power-politics the stage is set for the total dehumanization of man. A stimulating all-round spiritual regeneration alone can save the world from its otherwise inevitable doom. In the absence of self-restraint based on spiritual discipline, there is nothing that can deter man from becoming a fiendish aggressor. And, in fact, the modern man sees no reason why he should not behave like one whenever it suits him.

The human situation today urgently demands an intense spiritual revival on a broad ethical and rational basis. All the powers of good have to be combined in order to face the challenge of aggressive evil stalking along the unhappy world. Spiritual life must be built on the solid foundation of moral laws. It is clear beyond doubt that a moral solidarity, based on the Vedantic realization of the unity of existence and divinity of man, is an indispensable prerequisite for a lasting peace. The Upanishads declare unequivocally that the immortal goal of life, beyond all sorrow and suffering, can be reached through the practice of true renunciation and service, and 'not through selfish actions, not through a life of the senses, not through accumulation of wealth' (*na karmanā, na prajayā, na dhanenā, tyāgenāike amritatvamānashuh*). Through the knowledge (*aparokshānubhūti*) of his oneness with the Supreme Reality (*Brahman*), man rediscovers his innate greatness and overcomes grief and the limitations of the body.

From whichever angle we approach the problem of present-day chaos in the lives of individuals and nations, the conclusion is irresistible that the chief weakness of our times is secularism of a most subtle and pernicious type. For, though it speaks the language of morality and idealism, it is far removed from both. In a world dominated by those who are without spiritual vision and moral fervour, there is little or no hope of social, ethical, or cultural regeneration. The leaders of nations will fail to inspire confidence in and properly guide their people unless they themselves are

divinely inspired and spiritually enlightened. If we seek to intensify our drive for luxury, power, and enjoyment at the expense of the higher ideals and transcendental values, the tragedy of events will not fail to teach us, to our great cost, the hard lesson of history.

Humanity is passing through critical times and a calamity of unprecedented magnitude may overtake it any moment. The physical and mental sciences have placed in the hands of man immense knowledge and power. The healthy consolidation of the powers of science and technology, and their co-ordination with moral and spiritual values, in order to be useful to the life of the individual and the community, is a hard but noble task. But this has to be achieved at all costs. We say 'at all costs' because the only alternative is too hideous to conceive. Though the final spiritual realization transcends the phenomenal existence in time and space, yet its practical application in our mundane sphere—national and international—is the need of the hour. The world expectantly turns to India for that supreme spiritual knowledge which harmoniously synthesizes science (*jnāna*) with religion eternal (*vijnāna*), reason with intuition, and action with meditation. Nay, India has an obligation to mankind in this respect. She has to take the lead, as in the past, in initiating, once again, a grand spiritual revival throughout the world.

Shall India fail to rise to the occasion in order to serve humanity in its hour of great need?

'All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly. Each individual has to work out his own solution; there is no other way, and so also with nations. . . .

—Swami Vivekananda

THE MECHANISM OF MORAL PROGRESS

BY DR. RADHAKAMAL MUKHERJEE

MORAL PROGRESS IS A TOTAL CONFIGURATION

Moral progress can be neither defined nor understood from the viewpoint only of the ethicist or the sociologist. Like the myriad-faceted structure of the human personality that yet shows a coherence and integrity, moral progress exhibits several distinct phases. It implies the enrichment of personality, the increase of social integration and a qualitative improvement of the values of life. These trends inhere total configuration of the progressive organization and adaptation and ordering of life, mind, and society. The progress is of the whole configuration or system. Moral progress is, therefore, to be looked at from the synoptic viewpoints of social psychology, sociology, and ethics by which alone we can achieve the functional inclusive meaning of the entire process.

Moral progress is obviously directed by social symbols as it has begun in the human community with language and communication. Not before man perfected the use of language and developed his mythology, religion, literature, and the fine arts that he could add a new dimension to the social reality and make of collective responses of adaptation to his environment moral aspirations of progress. The French sociologist, Mauss, remarks, 'The activity of the collective mind is still more symbolic than that of the individual mind but in the same direction'. Thus the special evocative agencies of religion, art, education, law, and ethics disseminate through a variety of symbols, myths, and rituals the ethical command, legal and social regulation and acquiescence of the community. All such imperatives are developed and understood by man not as physical but as symbolic notions. The world of law and morals is not the actual world but an ideal symbolic world. It is not the existential but the possible environment of man, pregnant with his moral potentials of justice, love, and goodness. It can, therefore,

conquer his moral inertia and habit and invest him with a new capacity to remould his environment and transform ecological adaptation and economic efficiency into moral progress.

Man's symbolic means of social control and evocation of social conscience form a unified system in every society; and in every type of grouping these function in a definite order or hierarchy according to their appropriateness. Thus the family, the interest-group, and the state have different systems of social control to deal with deviant behaviour. Fear of punishment and insecurity, shame and honour, and finally the super-ego or conscience—such are the prime factors in the development of moral ideas and regulation of social deviance. These represent three depth-levels of forms of self and social control from the coercive and crystallized to spontaneous and flexible patterns associated with the development of both self and social consciousness. Moral progress as a total configuration exhibits a system of scaling of the means of social control according to the depth-level of experience.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD'S MORAL STRUCTURES

The super-ego or conscience and the associated inner sense of guilt and self-censure protect the essence and moral worth of the deepest and most intimate self and ensure its aloofness from public opinion and judgment. It originates in the identification of the child with the father, the focus of the ambivalent tendencies of love and hate, and later on with such superiors as elders, teachers, friends, leaders, and chiefs, all of whom elicit strict obedience as well as love and admiration. Gradually the child builds up into the structure of his personality the infallible external authority not only of the parents, elders,

leaders, and elite of his group or community but also of the social and moral norms, and of the almighty gods and spirits and other external 'projections'. As the stern, cruel, and forbidding parents and other commanding persons are 'introjected' i.e. incorporated in the self, these become, as Flugel suggests, more stern, cruel, and aggressive than the actual persons, being reinforced by the child's inward recoiling, hate, and aggression, aroused by frequent and inevitable frustration of his desires.¹ Another factor contributing towards the harsh and tyrannical morality of childhood is the employment of symbols and fantasies of coercion and punishment that have to be disproportionately severe because the mere image or symbolical envisagement of the punishment has to serve as an adequate deterrent. If the symbolical threat does not suffice to prevent deviation, the threat has to be carried out in actual life. The tyrannical character of the super-ego is strikingly manifest in the case of the melancholiac, who gives himself up to self-censure and self-torture, the super-ego holding the ego completely in its mercy. With return to normalcy the ego would sometimes indulge in the pleasures of the senses with redoubled zeal. Recent workers in anthropology and psychoanalysis now find that the purely instinctive and biological approach of Freud cannot adequately explain all the elements in the establishment of the super-ego.

The family, the circle of friends, the school, the club, and the church,—all are sources of moral valuations. From the child's early dependencies, loves, and adorations of its supposedly perfect parents, friends, and leaders, whether actual or fictitious, whose roles it attempts to recapitulate, it develops notions of perfection which constitute an important element of conscience, expectation, or goal. Where these are lacking and the child develops affectionless, deprived of the normal relation with parents or any parent substitutes with its attendant primal sense of

¹ See Flugel: *Man, Morals, and Society*, p. 87.

guilt, shame, and moral conflict, he fails to develop morally. Normal upbringing in the family and social environment with its ministrations and loves, is indispensable for the evolution of his normal ethical mechanism as represented by the super-ego or conscience. Such is the conclusion of a study of forty-four juvenile thieves by Bowlby who shows that morally defective characters usually arise in home environments of little affection, apathy, or hostility.² Modern economic and social institutions engender and exaggerate individual rivalry, competition, and aggressiveness, resulting in emotional insecurity and isolation of the individual and hence in an intensified desire for affection as a remedy. It is for this reason that absence of affection or positive hostility in the home becomes an emotional calamity in modern culture. Karen Horney well points out that modern civilization in so far as it exhibits definite contradictions, provoking on the one hand an exaggerated need for affection and satisfactory personal relations, and, at the same time, frustrating these is a fertile ground for the development of neuroses.³ Difficult experiences in the family lead to the projection of the child's fear and anxiety to the outside world, and the formation of a distrustful or spiteful attitude towards everyone. The neurotic is rightly called 'a stepchild of culture'. The normal projection of the ambivalent desires of love and hate to the mother and the child's burden of unconscious guilt which is repressed by the tyrannical primitive super-ego, are the necessary conditions of his acquisition of the core of moral sense, without which he becomes a misfit in society.

MAN'S ACQUISITION OF THE SENSE OF ABSOLUTENESS AND COMPLETENESS OF MORAL LAWS

The child's relatively definite core of moral sense and perfection, partly inherited and

² *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*: Vol. 25, 1944.

³ *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, pp. 286-287.

partly acquired, both hardens and expands as he grows and becomes the permanent central nucleus of his ethical attitudes and sentiments. The sense of guilt, shame, self-censure, honour, and perfection are all built up into this primal moral structure. Man thus learns to make automatically subtle distinctions between right and wrong, good and bad, although hereditary endowment determines in some measure what kind of conscience he develops. Of course the verbalized concepts and approving and disapproving gestures in the group situations assist the individual in shaping and remoulding his inherited conscience. Thus conscience becomes the focus and carrier of the moral legacy of the community. The 'Thou shalt' and 'Thou shalt not' of society become an intimate part of man's psyche through the demands and aspirations of the super-ego, and hence are much harder to challenge or disobey than if imposed on him from outside, especially as there is always some amount of aggression intimately fused with the super-ego.

The role of man's normal, primitive super-ego in the evolution of his morality and culture can hardly be over-estimated. Conflict-torn man would not have the energy for any higher urgings and fulfilments of life or develop into the evaluating, symbolizing, responsible being as he is. Without the harnessing of the unconscious forces of the mind and acquisition of feelings of certitude and completeness in respect of social prohibitions and injunctions, his social adjustment also would have been considerably more difficult, chequered, and uncertain. Moral progress is grounded on both these psycho-biological features of man's evolution. Man exhibits another aspect of conscience that is rational, creative, and venturesome, and that appeals especially in a crisis to his reason and faith in values-ideals-norms. Such conscience has been through the ages the main lever of his moral progress. Here he is not the creature but the creator of moral laws and norms, experiencing the highest self and social con-

sciousness as well as self-status and esteem with associated emotional feelings of competence, completeness, and joy that are the perennial springs of moral adventure. The moral man is a man of moral habits. The 'super-ego' or the irrational and tyrannical aspect of conscience establishes this. He is also the critic and judge of morality. The rational, creative, unique aspect of conscience representing the acme of self-consciousness safeguards this distinctive feature of ethical conduct.

In every individual the respective strength of the two aspects of conscience varies, resulting in differences in moral responsibility and initiative. The rational aspect of conscience always influences the dogmatic, irrational, harsh aspect of conscience, the internalized replica of the injunctions and prohibitions of overawing external authorities and models. Finally, the unique, rational creative conscience projects its values and norms to the entire external, authoritarian code of society and contributes towards refashioning this as well as its interiorized echo.

THE ROLE OF PRE-CONVENTIONAL SENSE OF SHAME AND HONOUR IN MORAL PROGRESS

Conscience is the deeply entrenched acknowledgment of the social and moral order. In a less deep stratum of self-consciousness, the sense of honour, shame, and social expectancy act as the 'conscience' for good conduct and morals. Honour has positive while shame has negative and limiting functions. Max Scheler, who is one of the first to stress the role of the sense of shame in moral life, points out that the most notable area of application of this sense is sexual life. Sexual shame prevents the apperception of or behaviour towards the partner in sex relationship as a body, not as the expression of full and complete personality. But the meaningful feeling of shame develops secondary elaborations and functions in social life and relations. Shame, in the first place, safeguards, directs, and regulates the sex

impulse in the social milieu by contributing towards the integration of sex attitude and behaviour in the context of *Gemeinschaft* relations without which group life would have been impossible for an over-sexed creature like man. Secondly, the social expressions of shame tend to prevent all kinds of exploitation of fellowman, treated as mere body, chattel, or goods and subordinates the biological to the social, intellectual, and moral values in every sphere of human relations. The use or 'exploitation' of human beings as slaves and animals, as physical bodies for the satisfaction of lust, as guinea-pigs for laboratory experiment or, again, as blood, tissues, or bones for utilization as fertilizers is forbidden and prevented by the universal feeling of shame. Shame protects and fosters the dignity of the human body and the human person. Thirdly, shame maintains a high standard of behaviour in society through attaching blame or discontent to man's low or mediocre goals and achievements. The latter aspects have not been discussed by Max Scheler in his well-known treatment of the social function of shame.

From the viewpoint of depth-psychology shame may be considered as the product, both of man's desire for superiority, (Adler) and 'secondary narcissism' attached not only to the real self but to the ideal one (Freud). 'Pitch thy behaviour low and thy projects high' represents the wide-spread endeavour of the ego-ideal to reach a high standard of moral goal, attitude, and conduct; and shame, as it dominates over complacency, spurs effort and increases efficiency and moral worth. But sometimes 'secondary narcissism' from which shame and the sense of guilt and unworthiness originate becomes pathological due to the unrealistic and unreasonable aspirations and requirements of the super-ego, causing both chronic misery to the individual and annoyance and embarrassment to his fellows. Such a neurosis can be successfully treated only by the reduction of goals and demands

of the super-ego so that the individual may be contented with less.⁴

The sense of shame and honour is a universal element in the structure of human experience. Virgil C. Aldrich indeed identifies the voice of conscience with the feeling of shame that he regards as the pre-conventional matrix of all moral conduct. Man feels shame as he runs counter not to a convention or custom that gives rise to embarrassment or annoyance but to human nature. There are shame-produced and shame-producing conventions in all societies which guard morals. The shame-produced ones are more enduring and less artificial. Thus shame has been 'a potent factor in the production of civilization. Civilization is at lowest depth in those societies where shame plays least part.'⁵ On the other hand, where shame flickers feebly and threatens to be extinguished in some persons, it is rekindled in others. Thus shame-motivated persons lead moral reform and contribute towards moral progress through a 'conflagration' of shame in society. Whenever there is deviation from the established hierarchy of values and from social and institutional norms, the social expressions of shame help to fight such deviance.

Unlike shame, honour connotes a positive ethical attitude. The sense of honour represents a strong positive feeling of self-esteem or social approval of one's conduct or existence. Stanley Hall writes: 'Conscience is no longer the supreme oracle it once was thought to be. In this twilight of conscience the guide most would now turn to is honour, which is a very different sentiment. A slur upon it makes the most cowardly boy fight, the most unabashed girl blush and weep, and the dread of the loss of it impels men to face death in almost any form. Life is a paltry thing if it must be lived in dishonour.'⁶

⁴ Flugel: *Man, Morals, and Society*, p. 49.

⁵ An Ethics of Shame, *Ethics*, 1939-40, p. 73.

⁶ *Morale*, p. 6.

HONOUR AS A POSITIVE MORAL SENTIMENT

Psychoanalysts emphasize that the sense of self-esteem and status is most significant in the development or organization of the ego feeling and ideal in both infantile and adult situations. On the other hand, the sense of shame, worthlessness, and insecurity due, for instance, to prolonged unemployment is associated with basic anxiety corresponding to the child's emotional loneliness and distress at the loss of parental love and support. Crime, and especially juvenile delinquency, are fought by social workers through engendering in the deviant a sense of shame, honour, and enthusiasm in some work of social importance by which he can find his true role and position in society. The sense of self-status which the sense of honour positively and the sense of shame negatively protect is transferred easily to what the individual is identified with, viz. the family, the caste, and other primary groups and the class, the profession, or the nation. Thus personal shame, honour, and dignity and honour of the small or exclusive and large or accessible group equally tend to maintain a high morale and level of performances in society. Depending as it does upon the social composition of groups and communities, the code of honour whether of feudal landlords and chivalrous knights, or of burghers, merchants, and artisans or, again, of thieves, beggars, and prostitutes, is elastic, capricious, and sometimes fantastic. Social distance among the classes makes such discrepancy in standards of right and wrong possible. Yet, no doubt the sense of honour binds man and man in each group and contributes towards protecting the whole society against brutality, impropriety, and misdemeanour.

In the middle ages in Europe the code of honour and chivalry contributed immeasurably towards the refinement of courtly etiquette, manners, and ways of living under precarious semi-barbarous conditions. 'But the age of chivalry is gone', observes T. V. Smith. 'The feudal aristocracy of Europe with its mixed

ideals of chivalry, of chastity, of the sanctity of private property—this is the background of our code of honour. One notes little original unity between codes of honour and norms of social welfare.'⁷ The social groupings of the middle ages are now replaced by vast depersonalized anonymous associations that are amenable to control only by the instruments of law. Codes of honour persist now only in families and the professions and in shrivelled, distorted forms among the *declassé*. Man encounters divergent codes of honour in the family, in business, in the professions, and in politics. Where morality is compartmentalized and segregated in different fields of social relations it is at a low ebb everywhere.

It is noteworthy that the world-wide supersession of *Gameinschaft* relations characteristic of the modern industrial age, has greatly diminished the role of the sense of shame and honour and their behaviour and symbolic manifestations in the maintenance of the moral ideal. Social cultures condition different degrees of the sense of honour and shame among peoples. The Chinese and the Japanese in particular are, for instance, more strongly endowed with 'social' shame, as the irrepressible universal sentiment and shame-produced conventions of 'saving face' imply, and less strongly with sexual shame. Hundreds of Japanese soldiers, especially air-fighters, trained in the chivalrous code of *Bushido*, preferred death by *hara-kiri* to the dishonour of surrender during the last war. In India the sense of sexual shame and chastity is most marked, and the preference of death to dishonour by her womanhood (that was responsible in the past for many mass 'suttee' celebrations before the onslaughts of the victorious Moslems) persists today in the midst of communal riots and atrocities.

THE HIERARCHY OF IMPERATIVES IN MORAL PROGRESS

What elicits moral behaviour depends as

⁷ Article on Honour in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.

much upon the total social situation as upon the level of individual experience. In the superficial level of self-consciousness it is the fear of punishment, physical constraint, and need of security that promote conforming behaviour. The sense of honour and shame regulates conduct in a higher level of experience where the individual feels and acts neither from fear of the law and punishment nor as the result of conforming moral habits, but derives his standards of 'right' and 'wrong' from his intimate and cherished connection with his group, whether the family, the class, or the profession with which he identifies himself. Here physical coercion hardly operates as a sanction of good conduct; and more than the sense of insecurity or loneliness and moral inertia, it is the positive sentiment of self-status and esteem rooted in rapport with the group that is effective. Finally, 'the still small voice of God' impels man, at least the man above the average, when a conflict situation makes him plumb into the depths of his self and social consciousness, from which he derives the unquestionable standards that appraise both the code of honour of his group and conventional morality of the social culture as a whole. Conscience, shame and honour, fear and insecurity are matrices of good conduct according to the social situation and the level of self and degree of intensity of group participation involved.

DISVALUES AS GROUP AND INSTITUTIONAL PRODUCTS

Moral progress can be viewed from another angle, that of the progressive elimination of disvalues or unvalues—falsehood, injustice, wrong, and ugliness—all that is dysteleological in human life. Inadequacies in the hereditary constitution of the individual as well as distortions in the personality structure, emerging from early or permanent social relationship, lead to certain limits or fixed boundaries within which mental adjustment can take place. The pursuit of disvalues is determined by group attitudes, ways of action, and

opportunities. Dewey observes: 'Deliberate unscrupulous pursuit of self-interest is as much conditioned upon social opportunities, training, and assistance as is the course of action prompted by a beaming benevolence. The difference lies in the quality and degree of the perception of ties and interdependencies, in the use to which they are put.'⁸ The individual's egoism, aggressiveness, anger, hate, or fear are to be attributed less to his hereditary equipment and more to his dispositions and attitudes in the group, such as the crowd, which also determines the ways of their social expression. The attack of a mob of industrial workers in a sudden outburst of anger or the flight of the panic-stricken crowd in lemming-like suicidal confusion or disorder is a social event occurring within the crowd in its total situation. Similarly any further development of mass behaviour such as an exclusive and unscrupulous, though less aggressive, emphasis of the claims of industrial workers as against those of the employers by the trade union, due to the rise and intervention of cautious and shrewd leaders, depends upon the concrete social goals of the interest group. Anger, hate, fear, and other primitive passions that were formerly aroused are inhibited and replaced by conscious, organized trade union activities that obtain moral justification from the union leaders as well as from some intellectuals—prestige-bearers of the masses. Yet the action or policy of organized trade-unionism may be socially unjust and disruptive though pursued as a concrete socially recognized goal or policy. What is significant in this kind of anti-social behaviour is that the particular group pattern, viz. the interest group, with its fixed moral boundaries, conditions the mode of conduct and morally justifies it.

Soon, however, the social intelligence and judgment of the entire community assert themselves and exercise pressure upon the interest group and upon its goals, judgments, and

⁸ *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 317.

plans. When social pressure or expectancy leads to the recognition of new moral demands such recognition originates not outside the group but within it, and gives an added meaning to its goals and ideals. The coercive and selfish attitudes and programmes of the trade union emerges, to be sure, out of economic conditions and opportunities that the industrial structure has guaranteed to organized unionism as a social institution. Further, the goals and ideals of a trade union are what they are because of insecurity and struggle for power and privilege in the economic system. In this way social disvalues are institutional, and coercive or violent anti-social actions of groups, and 'social'.

The recognition of the above fact is fundamental for the improvement of morals. It is the reorientation of the group pattern from the crowd and interest group to society and abstract commonalty, with associated change in the habits, sentiments, and interactions of individuals, that introduces new moral principles and ways of action. From epoch to epoch the norms of equality, justice, and sharing have changed, sometimes stressing equality and freedom of contract and opportunities for individuals, sometimes emphasizing the solidarity of the community that in some measure supplants justice to the individual. In each epoch the norms of individual and distributive or collective justice are adjusted to the social stratification and institutional trend in order to remove flagrant social disvalues. The latter also change their guise and grow like the values and norms themselves, out of the necessities, tensions, and possibilities of dominant, exclusive groups in society. Thus new ethical categories seek to renovate the moral quality of groups and institutions. Moral principles are good or bad in, and because of, group and institutional goals and ways of life, always pursued as standards and norms by individuals whether these be right or wrong.

The social insight that man biologically and mentally lives in, or because of, his

groups now dominates modern psychiatric treatment. Group psycho-therapy now insists upon the methods of reintegrating diseased individuals and groups by working upon the total sociological situation or the group context rather than by isolating the individual and his deviance and its consequences from the milieu. There is less emphasis on the purely intellectual phases of development and more on matters like social adaptability and personality.⁹ The entire social-cultural complex is often actively involved in the ego-conflict and disorganization, which utilize childhood traumas and insecurities as well as adult psychic tensions in the repressive social-cultural milieu for the development of neurosis as an established, accommodative pattern of life. Thus the whole problem of reorientation of groups, cultural values, and aspirations in which the abnormal individuals can find a new adjustment that may break the vicious pathological circles of causation obtains a new significance.

PRINCIPAL FEATURES OF MORAL PROGRESS

Moral progress implies, in the first place, the removal of all fundamental disvalues and evils that are universal, rooted as these are in man's physical and social inequality, inadequacy, and maladjustment. Such disvalues and evils are aggressiveness, selfishness, injustice, hatred, and cruelty, that constantly change their guise in interpersonal relations and social interactions. Their elimination is a condition and prerequisite for the fulfilment of the higher values of life.

Secondly, moral progress emphasizes affirmation and advance towards the complete and perfect life, and not mere negation. It implies the progressive realization of the positive creative values of justice, love, and solidarity that vitalize and permeate all social interactions and relations, leading to a qualitative improvement of personality and moral character. Man's complete development and

⁹ Griffith: *Principles of Systematic Psychology*. p. 434.

character are expressed in love, sympathy, and sharing, rather in reciprocity of relation and action. Thus there is the qualitative improvement of values as embodied in the supremacy of love, sympathy, and solidarity over justice and equity in social relations.

Thirdly, not only in the individual must such completeness, expansiveness, and depth of character be developed, but also in every group, institution, and society. Society and the individual by ideal creativeness create and experience new values and situations. Initiative and variety are *sine qua non* of the improvement of moral standards. The individual constantly quests for enhancement of values in both himself as well as in his group and institutional situation. Society, nation, humanity, constantly call for creativeness and new possibilities in the individual. Individual aspiration and collective wisdom march hand in hand on the road of moral progress. The life of commonalty, the whole cosmic movement, speaks to the moral man not as something arbitrary, alien, or external, but in the innermost depth of his being.

Moral progress is impelled not only by the majestic sweep of laws of the organic, cosmic wholes but also by the joy and reverence of the individual. The road of moral progress ever stretches onward. Man does not reach his goal. Well does Martin Luther characterize human life with its imperfections and struggles: 'It is not yet done, and accomplished, but it is in working order and in full swing; it is not the end, but the way. All does not yet glow and shine, but all is being burnished.'¹⁰

TESTS OF MORAL PROGRESS

We may now briefly summarize the principal tests of moral progress: (a) With moral progress morality depends less upon physical coercion and external social pressure than upon inner controls—honour and shame,

conscience and faith. (b) Morality being a net emergence of group expectancies and judgments, moral progress is judged by the intimacy of social bonds developing from those in an interest group, society or community to an abstract commonalty, (c) Moral progress expresses itself in the substitution of the spirit of love, sympathy, and service for reciprocity, justice and equity as principles of conduct. (d) Moral progress implies the full maturation and deepening of the personality that identifies the highest morale, competence, and happiness with the most perfect communion and the widest society. (e) Mature morality relies upon self-transcendence and communion of self or personality with the whole of mankind and the total whole of the cosmos that constitute the beyond-human ground of morality. This presupposes a metaphysical conviction or religious experience of a group or cosmic mind and gives cosmic meaning to the moral life. (f) Moral progress implies acceptance of the ideal of cultural democracy based upon the assumption of the worth of the common man, and on equality of opportunities for all to share in the material and cultural heritage of the community. It is judged by the democratization that deepens and accelerates the whole cultural process. (g) Moral progress places a premium upon social intelligence and communication as embodied in literature and the fine arts that constantly enrich the common pool of values of humanity, and maintains an experimental attitude towards both the transformation of ideal motivations and values of individuals through education, cultural persuasion, and guidance and the adaptation of moral norms and institutions to changed conditions in the environment. (h) Moral progress expresses itself as much in the ideal creativeness of society as of the moral freedom and initiative of the personality that both grow along with a growing, changing world. Without the risks of moral adventure in new and unknown ethical realms, there is only mechanical and slavish conformity to rigid codes and systems,

¹⁰ Quoted in Encken: *Ethics and Modern Thought*, p. 104.

and mankind cannot experience the genuine spontaneity and freedom of experiments with truth and goodness, which alone can unfold the infinitely rich variety of human goals and values and complex relations between man and man.

WESTERN VEDANTA

BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

Vedanta, which is the philosophy of *total* experience or *limitless* consciousness, knows no distinction of race or colour, clime or country. Though it came to be discovered first in India, it was not meant for India alone. Among the qualifications which make one eligible for the study of Vedanta, there is not included any particular locality of birth or geneology. The Upanishads which are the fountainhead of the Vedanta address their call to 'All ye, children of immortality'. The perennial philosophy which flows from them can slake the thirst of all—the thirst for the Eternal. It is true that at any given time in the world only a few may become conscious of this thirst. As an Upanishad text puts it, 'Hard it is for many even to hear it (the supreme Spirit); hearing it many do not comprehend. A marvel is he who can teach it, and able is he who finds it; and a marvel is he who knows it, taught by an able teacher.' Those who seek the Imperishable Self are as rare as the seeking is difficult. But those rare seekers are not the exclusive products of any particular time or country. One may meet them in the most unexpected places. They may appear in the least expected of times. Space-time conditions do not apply to the Self. It is their wrong application that constitutes Maya. A philosophy which aims to liberate us from the space-time bottle-neck cannot, therefore, countenance the false doctrine of territorial rights in spirituality. While the physical dimension of India has its limits, the spiritual commonwealth of India has no frontier whatsoever. As in the

days of old, so now again, India's gospel of the Spirit has its votaries in all parts of the world. In the so-called West, and especially in America, the sphere of Vedantic influence is slowly expanding, thanks to the pioneering work of our Swamis there. Some of the best intellectuals of the West have begun to recognize the excellence of Vedanta and follow the way disclosed therein. A new chapter is being added to human history—the chapter of re-awakened Western interest in Vedanta.

During my sojourn in the United States of America in 1948-49, I had the privilege of visiting several of the Vedanta centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in that country. One of the unforgettable experiences I had was a week's stay with Swami Prabhavananda at his Vedanta Temple in Hollywood. It is a quiet, unostentatious place, removed only by a few yards from the fashionable and busy Hollywood Boulevard. The central building is the Temple in white, blending the gracefulness of the Taj with the serenity of the Hindu shrine. By the side of it are the living quarters and a cottage with the Spanish look. Sister Lalita, former owner of the property and Swami Vivekananda's American disciple, was then living. Her ardour for India, the land of her Guru, was so great that she was looking forward to re-visiting India with Swami Prabhavananda. The weight of years sat so lightly on her. I had seen her in India with the Swami during her earlier visit. The passage of a dozen years and more had wrought little change in her personality. Here was a fine example of unreserved devotion to the cause

of Vedanta! Though her physical body has gone, obeying the law of transient things, the Vedanta Temple will remain as a unique symbol of her Vedantic life. Swami Prabhavananda has a charming way of introducing Vedanta into the life of those who seek his guidance. Not only some of the well-known writers like Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, and Christopher Isherwood, but also several young men and women—Brahmacharins and Brahmacharinis, have been profoundly influenced by the teachings of the Swami. About 80 miles to the north of Hollywood, on the picturesque mountain range of Santa Barbara, there is the Sarada Convent for the girls. About 65 miles to the south, on a range of rugged hills at Trabuco, a Retreat for the boys was being got ready at the time of my visit. With these two as the wings of the Hollywood Temple, the Vedanta Mission in Southern California is making its influence felt in that part of the world in an increasing measure every day. Right in the heart of the Glamour-Capital of the globe, if there are individuals, especially the youth, who are prepared to lead a dedicated life for the cause of Vedanta in response to the call of Sri Ramakrishna, it shows how powerful the hold of Vedanta can be and how irresistible that call is.

The problem of teaching Vedanta to the West is being solved in Hollywood and at other Vedanta Centres in U.S.A. Though the spirit of Vedanta is the same, its expressions have varied even in India. Ranging from the unadulterated Absolutism of Shankara to the uncompromising Pluralism of Madhva, there has been a variety of Vedantic doctrines, all claiming their authority from the Vedas. Of the two main Vedic currents of religio-philosophic thought—the Absolutistic and the theistic—one or the other dominates each of the schools of Vedanta. But there is one common feature about all these schools, viz. the acceptance of a fundamental Reality which the Upanishads call *Brahman*. The most crucial difference among them is whether to

regard this Reality as a personal God or as an impersonal Absolute. Advaita or the Vedantic non-dualism of Shankara adopts the latter view, while the other schools favour the former. Swami Vivekananda saw clearly that the form of Vedanta best suited to the Western mind was Advaita. Those who, after him, have been carrying on his work in the West, have also discovered by experience how unerring was the Swami's discernment.

Several reasons are there as to why Advaita Vedanta is the best that India has to offer to the West. While for the non-Advaitic systems of Indian thought there may be found parallels in the West, for Advaita there seems to be none whatsoever. Even the thought-patterns of philosophers like Fichte and Bradley, to which Advaita is sometimes compared, differ from it in essentials. Advaita has, therefore, a unique place in the thought and experience of mankind; and if the Western mind has to go out of its climate for a vantage-point wherefrom to look at and comprehend Truth, then, that place must be such that it is not to be found within that climate. Advaita, I believe, has a distinctive character; it is distinctive, judged not only by the Western standards of philosophic thought but also by the Eastern and the Indian, except in so far as these attempt to rise above the relative and the relational. Moreover, Advaita is inclusive of, and not opposed to, the theistic approaches to Reality. It is idle to argue that God has no place in Advaita. Shankara, the great exponent of the non-dualism of Spirit, which is Advaita, has left behind him soul-moving poems of adoration to the myriad forms of the personal Deity—poems that constitute a grand testimony to the intense devotion of their author. The worshipper-worshipped relation is a genuine relation; and it is a sublimation of all other relations. But even this, says Advaita, is transcended in the final distinctionless Experience. What is more cannot be less. If Advaita is more than theism, it cannot be atheism or anti-theism. While the various

theistic doctrines may quarrel among themselves, Advaita has no quarrel with any. An old teacher of Advaita—whom tradition regards as Shankara's grand-teacher—describes Advaita as the whole and the original whereof the different religio-philosophic systems are parts and variants.

To the modern Western mind the non-dogmatic character of Advaita has a great appeal. The European philosophers of an earlier day used to revel in different types of 'isms'. But now, many a modern thinker is hesitant of embracing an 'ism'. To the question 'To what school of thought do you belong?' many American philosophers, I found out, had no ready answer. The old-time barriers, such as those between idealism and realism, materialism and mentalism, etc., would appear to be vanishing today. And consequently, the Western mind is in an advantageous position to appreciate Advaita which is not an 'ism'. But, then, one may ask: 'Is not Advaita non-dualism?' The reply is: the negation signified by the prefix *non* applies not only to duality but also to *ism*. One of the aims of Advaita is to show that the rival views which are called philosophical systems have their limitations, and are serviceable only in so far as they lead to something beyond. It is the total experience that is the goal. The supreme objective of Advaita is to urge man not to rest till he has realized that experience.

I referred above to the non-dogmatic character of Advaita, and mentioned one of the reasons for so characterizing it. There are other reasons also. Let us take for instance the attitude of Advaita to logical reason as the instrument of knowledge. The traditional religions do not trust reason, their appeal being to faith. Many of the systems of philosophy in the West and some in the East have no use for any mode of knowledge except the rational. Both these attitudes, it is not difficult to see, are dogmatic. The religions are dogmatic in their belief that there is no place for reason in faith. The philosophies

are dogmatic in believing that there is nothing above or beyond reason. While assigning to reason its rightful place in the religio-philosophic quest, Advaita points out that the goal of man is not attained with a mere theoretic understanding of the nature of Reality. Philosophy is experience and not mere logical knowledge, though logical knowledge is necessary to interpret that experience. While the absolute experience transcends the logic of reason, it is not opposed to it. In his commentary on Gaudapada's four-chaptered work called *Mandukya-karika*, Shankara explains that the principles of Advaita which are established in the first chapter on the authority of the Veda, are shown to be intelligible in the next three chapters through logical reasoning. So, reasoning has its use. But at the same time, it should not arrogate to itself omniscience and claim that there is no experience beyond its ken.

The non-dogmatic nature of Advaita will be evident to those who have taken the care to study its history. There are doctrinal differences in Advaita owing to the fact that the teachers of Advaita have found it necessary to adopt different modes of expounding the Truth. To questions like, 'Is the soul one or many?' 'What is the status of the world?' exponents of Advaita have given different answers. Even as regards the means to release they have differed among themselves. Is it the path of knowledge that leads to release, or is it the way of devotion to God? While Shankara voted for the former, a late follower of his, Madhusudana by name, while accepting without reservation the Advaita metaphysics, argues that devotion is the easier path to the realization of the Absolute. Thus, there are alternative modes of approach to Advaita. A book which seeks to set forth the doctrinal differences in Advaita compares Advaita to a mighty river, which, though originating from one source, gets diversified on reaching the plains and serves the interests of diverse people. Seekers are not all of the same mind. To suit their different aptitudes

and temperaments, teachers of Advaita adopt different methods of setting forth their doctrine. In an age when Buddhism was popular in India, Gaudapada borrowed Buddhist modes of expression to teach Advaita, Shankara, in one of his hymns, makes use of the terminology of Kashmir Shaivism. An Advaita work called *Paramarthasara* is patterned after the first-known text of the Sankhya system. So, if Advaita Vedanta which has found its way to Western lands has

to be expounded in a manner suited to the Western mind, there is nothing to wonder about. It is in perfect consonance with the tradition and genius of Advaita.

All lovers of this philosophy, wherever they may be, will be eager to watch the course of its development in the West. Not only India, but the whole world will gain by the induction of Vedanta into Western life—an induction which is quite the antithesis of religious fanaticisms and campaigns of conversion.

THE WORKS OF TULSIDAS (IV)

BY MRS. C. K. HANDOO

(Continued from the March issue)

Walking through the forest with Lakshman and Sita, Ram came to the Ashrama of Valmiki. After telling him the cause of his leaving Ayodhya, he asked the sage if he knew of a place where he could live with his brother and wife for some time, without disturbing the hermits. Valmiki was one of the few sages who had recognized Ram to be an incarnation of God. So, at this simple enquiry, he goes into raptures and openly acknowledges Ram as the All-knowing and Incomprehensible God. He pays homage to him as being the Formless Brahman who is a witness to the great drama of the world, in which Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, as the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, are the wire-pullers behind the scene. He finds the fulfilment of his austerities in the living presence of Ram, and, out of the fullness of heart, he replies to him thus:

*Pūchhehu mohi ki rahaun kahan, main
pūchhata sakuchāūn,
Jahan na hohu tahan dehu kahi, tumhahin
dekhāvaun thāūn.*

'You ask me where you should live, but your question embarrasses me. If there is any place where you are not

to be found, then I could tell you where to live.'

*Vālmīki hansī kahahin bahorī,
Bānī madhura amia rasa borī.*

'Then Valmiki said laughingly, in a sweet voice, as if steeped in nectar,—

*Sunahu Rama aba kahaun nicketā,
Basahu jahān Siya Lakhana sametā.*

'Listen, O Ram, now I shall describe to you that place where you should live with Sita and Lakshman.'

*Jinha ke shravana samudra samānā,
Kathā tumhāri subhaga sari nānā.*

'Whose ears are like the sea, and the stories of your life are like many rivers,'

*Bharahin nirantara hohin na pūre,
Tinha ke hiya tumha kahun griha rūre.*

'Though ever being filled, they are never satisfied, their hearts are your home.'

*Lochana chātaka jinha kari rākhe,
Rahahin darasa jaladhara abhilāshe.*

'They whose eyes like the Chātak bird are ever longing for the rain-cloud of the vision of God,'

*Tinha ke hridaya sadana sukhadāyak,
Basahu bandhu Siya saha Raghunāyak.*

'O giver of joy! O Lord of the Raghus!

Live in their hearts with your brother
and Sita.'

*Jasu tumhāra mānasa vimala, hansini
jīhā jāsu,
Mukatāhala guna gana chunai, Rama
basahu hiya tāsū.*

'Your name is like the pure Manasarovar
lake, and they whose tongue like the
swan picks up only the pearls of your
divine qualities,—live in their hearts,
O Ram.'

*Prabhu prasāda suchi subhaga suvāsā,
Sādara jāsū lehai nita nāsā.*

'He whose nose smells only the sweet
fragrant offering to God;—

*Tumhahi nivedita bhojana karahīn,
Prabhu prasāda pata bhūshana dharahīn.*

'He who offers his food to you before eating,
whose very clothes and ornaments are
an offering to God;'

*Sisam navahīn sura guru dviḷa dekhī,
Prīti sahita kari vinaya viseshī.*

'He whose head bows down to the gods,
to his Guru, and the Brahmins, with
love and humility;'

*Kara nita karahīn Rama pada pūjā,
Rama bharosa hridaya nahin dūjā.*

'Whose hands daily worship the feet of
Ram, whose heart depends on Ram
and looks up to nothing else;'

*Charana Rama tīratha chali jāhīn,
Rama basahu tinha ke mana māhīn.*

'Whose feet ever walk to the places of
pilgrimage,—O Ram, live in their
hearts.'

*Kāma krodha mada māna mohā,
Lobha na chhobha na rāga na drohā.*

'Those who have neither desire nor anger,
no pride, delusion, or madness, who
neither covet nor fear, and are without
attachment and aversion;—

*Jinha ke kapata dambha nahin māyā,
Tinha ke hridaya basahu Raghurāyā.*

'Who have no hypocrisy, conceit, or Māyā,
O Ram, live in their hearts.'

*Saba ke priya saba ke hitakārī,
Dukha sukha sarisa prasamsā gārī.*

'Who are loved by all and are well-wishers
of all, who are the same in sorrow and
happiness, praise and abuse;—

*Kahahin satya priya vachana vichārī,
Jāgata sovata sarana tumhārī.*

'Who speak sweet words of truth, having
pondered well on them, who sleeping
and awake seek refuge in thee;—

*Jananī sama jānahin parā nārī,
Dhanu parāva visha ten visha bhārī.*

'Who look upon the wives of others as
their own mothers, and on the wealth
of others as the worst poison;—

*Je harshahin para sampati dekhī,
Dukhita hohin para vipati viseshī.*

'Who rejoice to see the prosperity of others
and sorrow to see their misfortune;—

*Jinhahi Rama tumha prāna piyāre,
Tinha ke mana subha sadana tumhāre.*

'They who love you more than life, their
hearts are auspicious homes for you
to live in.'

*Svāmi sakhā pitu mātū guru, jinha ke
saba tuma tāt,*

*Mana mandira tinha ke basahu, Sīya
sahita dou bhṛāt.*

'They who look upon you as master, friend,
father, mother, and teacher, to whom
you are all in all,—dwell in the temple
of their hearts, both ye brothers with
Sita.'

*Jāhi na chāhia kabahun kachhu, tumha
sana sahaja sanehu,*

*Basahu nirantara tāsū ura, so rāurā nijā
gehu.*

'They who never wish for anything, whose
nature is to love you,—live in their
hearts, it is your home.'

When inner consciousness is deepened and
widened through prayer and meditation,
usually a good insight into human nature is
developed. Tulsidas is no exception to this
rule. The reader will observe that the above
passage is not mere poetry. Though it seems
to be the spontaneous overflow of a devotee's
heart, it is not devoid of method. Tulsidas
seems to be telling us that the first step in

the path of God-realization is the controlling of the senses through dedication of all activities to God. So he first speaks of the dedication of hands, feet, ears, eyes, and nose. Then only does he bring in the higher qualities such as desirelessness, the conquest of anger, etc. Such perfection of character seems to be beyond human endeavour and fills the heart with despair. But it is only when the human soul is linked with the Divine through a total self-surrender, that the sleeping spark of divine fire, hidden in each heart, awakens and transcends the mere animal existence in man. The mistake that modern thought makes is that it divorces morality from religion. But religion is the inspiration of morality, and without it, morality becomes an eternal striving, a perpetual growth, and an endless aspiration towards the unattainable. In religion all this is turned into realization; it is then only that man reaps the harvest of that perfection of character, so deeply loved in the world, impressing itself on the hearts of generations to come, and known to us by the name of saintliness.

No story of Ram is complete without a description of Ravana, the powerful king of Lanka, proud and ambitious, and bent upon the fulfilment of his desires at any cost. Though the villain of this drama, he was not without his good qualities. Firstly, he was so strong and invincible that God Himself had to be born to kill him. He had an inheritance of learning and culture, and his name of *dasa-sīsa* (the ten-headed one) was a tribute to his intelligence. In many ways he is a typical man of the modern times. The appreciation of higher values that he occasionally showed gives us a glimpse into the working of his mind and is of great interest to us who are also suffering from a conflict of ideas and ideologies at the present moment. Hearing of the death of his brothers Khar and Dūshan, he thinks to himself :

Khara Dūshana mohi sama balavāntī,

Tinhahi ko mārihi binu bhagavantā.

'Khar and Dūshan were as strong as I am,

who could have killed them except God Himself?'

Sura ranjana bhanjana mahi bhārā,

Jau bhagavanta līha avatārā.

'If God, the giver of joy to the Devas and the remover of the weight from the earth (the old idea being that Mother Earth was unable to bear the weight of the wicked) has been born,—

Tau main jāi bairu hathi karaūn,

Prabhu sara prāna taje bhava taraūn.

'Then I shall force the enmity of God on myself and will die with His arrow in my heart, thus crossing the ocean of birth and death.'

Hoihi bhajana na tāmāsa dehā,

Mana krama vachana mantra dridha ehā.

This indolent body of mine is incapable of prayer; hence, by thought, word, and deed (I will seek the enmity of God)—this is my determination.'

Jau nara rūpa bhūpa suta koū,

Harihaun nāri jīti rana doū.

'If they are the sons of a king and mere human beings, I shall defeat them in battle and carry away the wife.'

But in practice, his behaviour was very different—

Sūna nīcha dasa kandhara dekhā,

Āvā nikata jāti ke veshā.

'When Ravana saw that the Ashrama was deserted, he approached it in the garb of a hermit.'

Jāke dara sura asura derāhīn,

Nisi na nīnda dina anna na khāhīn.

'Through fear of Ravana the gods and the Rakshasas could neither sleep at night nor eat during the day.'

So dasasīsa svāna kī nān,

Ita uta chitai chalā bhadihān.

'That same ten-headed one, as fearful as a dog who goes to lick the leavings of food, looked on all sides before he went on his reprehensible mission.'

Imi kupantha patha deta khagesā,

Raha na teja tana budhi bala lesā.

In this way, those who follow the downward path lose their strength, intelligence, and self-confidence.'

When he revealed himself to Sita, she spoke brave words expressing her anger and contempt.

Sunata vachana dasasīsa risānā,

Mana mahun charana bandi sukha mānā.

'Her words angered Ravana, but in his heart he touched the dust of Sita's feet and felt happy.'

This original conflict, so strongly expressed in the above line, does not appear again, and Tulsidas speaks of him only as the wicked one, full of anger, arrogance, and pride. Shiva also remarks to Parvati—

Umā Ravanahi asa abhimānā,

Jimi tittibha khaga sūta udānā.

'O Uma, Ravana's pride is like the *Titihari* bird which sleeps with its feet upwards and imagines that it is holding the sky.'

Ravana says of himself,

Jāsu chalata dolata imi dharani,

Chadhata matta gaja jimi laghu tarani.

'When I walk the earth trembles, just like a small boat when a mad elephant tries to get into it.'

When Sita heard the news that though the fighting was fierce Ravana still lived, she became anxious and wept.

Kaha Trijatā sunu rāja kumārī,

Ura sara lāgata marai surārī.

'Trijata (the only friendly companion amongst the women's guard appointed by Ravana) said: "O Princess, listen to me, as soon as an arrow pierces Ravana's heart he will die."'

Prabhu tâte ura hatai na tehī,

Ehi ke hridaya basati Vaidehī.

'The Lord does not aim his arrow at Ravana's heart, knowing it to be the dwelling place of Sita.'

Kātata sira hoihi vikala, chhuti jāihi tava dhyān,

Tava Ravanahi hridaya mahun, mariharin Rama sujān.

'When he is wounded in the head, then

his constant remembrance of you will be broken through pain, then Ram the wise, will pierce Ravana's heart with his arrow.'

There was a closely contested battle again and Ravana had the worst of it.

Garjeu marata ghora rava bhārī,

Kahān Rama rana hataun pachārī.

'At his dying moment, he roared in a thunderous voice—"Where is Ram? I shall challenge him and kill him."'

Thus died Ravana, meeting his death in a manner befitting a brave warrior, but the world already oppressed by his misdeeds heaved a sigh of relief. His ignoble cause and overbearing ways had already weaned the sympathy of his near and dear ones, and there was no one to lament him. And what a reputation he has left to posterity! For thousands of years India has sung of his evil ways, and has rejoiced again and again at his death. His name, now a word often used in common parlance, stands for the forces of evil. He is looked upon verily as the Satan of the Indian tradition. When on *Vijaya Dashami* day, in Northern Indian district towns, a big effigy of Ravana is burnt, little children clap their hands in glee and a wave of happiness passes amongst the onlookers.

But let us look at the other side of the picture. In the strictly devotional tradition, Ravana is looked upon as a devotee—not one whom we should emulate—but one who stormed his way into the very gates of Heaven, as it were. It seems that he inherited a dual legacy in keeping with his dual nature, and blained by man, he was yet liberated by God. The former was his just and deserving retribution for the breaking of the moral law, and the latter was his reward for his enmity to Ram. Had he lived longer, his constant remembrance of Sita would certainly have transformed his character even here on earth.

The greatest liberality of thought is shown in the Hindu Shastras regarding the approaches of the human soul for the attainment of God. Innumerable are the methods recognized by

the great masters—the Rishis of old—who laid down that love of God may be cultivated by looking upon Him not only as father, mother, son, or brother, but even as an enemy. The point they emphasized was to keep our thoughts fixed on God whether through dedicated activity or love, or anger, or fear, or hatred. They had developed introspection into a science, and the most practical and verifiable one at that. They knew that once the search sets in, the Divinity, immanent in man, will do the rest. In devotional language this is called the working of divine grace. Most of us are mixtures of good and evil in various proportions. So the liberation of a sinner like Ravana cannot but bring hope to our weak hearts and strength to our faltering foot-steps. The compassion and mercy of God that Ravana epitomizes so forcefully in his death is the main theme of the songs of *Vinaya Patrika*. To quote one of the popular ones—

*Jau pai Hari janake auguna gahate,
Tau surapati kururāja Bali son kata
hathi baira bisahate.*

‘O Hari, if you looked to the faults of your devotees, then why would you force the enmity of Indra, Duryodhana and Bali on yourself?’

*Jau japa jāga joga vratā varajita, kevalā
prema na chahate,*

*Tau kata sura munivara vihāya vrajā,
gopa geha basi rahate.*

‘If indifferent to Japa, Yajna, austerities, and fasts, your heart was not won only by love,—then, why would you abandon the homes of the gods and the good sages and live in Vraja in the house of cowherds?’

*Jau suta hita liye nāma Ajāmila ke agha
amita na dahate,*

*Tau jama-ghata sānsati-hāra hāmse vris-
habha khoji-khoji nahate.*

If you did not destroy the innumerable sins of Ajāmila, who called on his son, taking your name, then the messengers of Yama would have searched for

bulls like me and yoked them to the plough.’

*Jau jaga vidita patita-pāvana, āti bānkura
virada na bahate,*

*Tau bahu kalpa-kutila Tulasī se, sapanehun
sugati na lahate.*

‘If you had not taken upon yourself the courageous and world-famous role of purifying the sinners, then the wicked like Tulsī would not even dream of attaining liberation for ages.’

It is said that no Sādhanā can bear fruit without the grace of the Divine Mother. So Tulsidas pays a high tribute to the name of that great mother Sita, loved and worshipped by every man, woman, and child in the land of her birth.

Jāsu ansa upajahin guna khānī,

Aganita lachchhi umā brahmānī.

‘She from whose parts are born innumerable Umas, Brahmānīs, and Lakshmis—the abode of all virtues,—

Bhrikuti vilāsa jāsu jaga hoī,

Rama bāma disī Sita soī.

‘Through whose mere glance of the eyes the universe is created, the same Sita is seated on the left of Ram.’

But in human form she appeared quite different to the people around her. Kaushalya, Ram’s mother, perhaps because of her tender affection for Sita, speaks with some exaggeration when she says to Ram, on the eve of his departure to the forest—

Palanga pītha taji goda hindorā,

Siya na dīnha pagu avani kathorā.

‘Sita sits either on the bed or on my lap or on a swing; her foot has never touched the hard ground.’

Siya bana basihi tāta kehi bhāntī,

Chitralikhita kapi dekhi derātī.

‘How will Sita live in the forest, my son? She fears to see even the picture of a monkey.’

Surasara subhaga banaja bānachārī,

Dābara joga ki hansa kumārī.

‘Can the daughter of the swan, who skims over the lotus-filled waters of

the Manasarovar lake, live in the stagnant dirty water that accumulates in the hollow of the ground?’

But we know how the delicate Sita braved the hardships of the forest life, without a murmur. We also know of the deep and tender love she bore for Ram. When she dwelt in the Ashoka garden, as a prisoner of Ravana, Tulsidas describes her mind thus—

Jehi bidhi kapata kuranga sanga, dhāi chale Shrīrām,

So chavi Sita rākhi ura, ratati rahati harinām.

‘Sita kept the picture of Ram in her heart, as she had seen him last, running after the magic deer, and was always repeating his name.’

When Hanuman first saw her—

Krisa tanu sīsa jatā eka benē,

Japati hridaya Raghupati guna shrenē.

‘Her body was emaciated, and hair was all matted together, and her heart dwelt on the glories of Ram.’

In touching words, Hanuman describes the sorrow of Sita to Ram, on his return. He says,

Nāma pahārū divasa nisi, dhyāna tumhāra kapāt,

Lochana nija pada jantrita, prāna jāhin kehi bāt.

‘Your name is like the watchman that guards day and night, concentrated thought on you is like a door, her eyes fixed on her feet act like a lock,—then which way can life depart from her body?’

The message of Sita to Ram was as follows—

Mana krama vachana charana anurāgī,

Kehi aparādha nātha haun tyāgī.

‘By thought, word, and deed am I devoted to your feet; for what fault, O Lord, have you forsaken me?’—

Avaguna eka mora main mānā,

Bichhurata prāna na kīnha payānā.

‘But I admit one fault, that I did not die

the very moment I was separated from you.’

Nātha so nayanānhi ke aparādha,

Nisarata prāna karahin hāthi bādha.

‘O Lord, for this sin my eyes are to blame, for they would not allow life to depart from my body.’

Viraha agini tanu tūla samīrā,

Svāsa jarai chhana māhin sarīrā.

‘Separation from you was like fire to me, my breath was like the breeze which would have burnt my body like cotton wool in a moment.’

Nayana sravahin jalu nija hita lāgī,

Jarai na pāva deha virahāgī.

‘But water in the form of tears flowed from the eyes continuously for their own good, and this body was unable to burn in the fire of your separation.’

Ram’s love for Sita is also too well known to bear repetition. When Sita was carried away by Ravana, sorrow-stricken Ram wandered about like a madman, asking the trees and creepers of the forest for news of Sita.

He khaga mriga he madhukara shrenē,

Tuma dekhī Sita mriganainā.

‘He said again, calling to the birds, animals, and the line of honey bees,—“Have you seen Sita whose eyes are as beautiful as the deer’s?”’

Kimi sahi jāta anakha tohi pāhīn,

Priyā vegi pragatasi kasa nāhīn.

‘How can you bear to be angry, beloved, why don’t you appear soon?’

He sent the following message to Sita through Hanuman—

Kaheu Rama viyoga tava Sita,

Mo kahun sakala bhaye viparītā.

‘Ram says that in your separation everything has become unfavourable to me.’

Tava taru kisalaya manahu krisānū,

Kāla nisā sama nisi sasi bhānū.

‘The new and tender leaves of the trees are like fire to me, the nights are like the call of death and the cool moonlight like the burning sun.’

*Kuvalaya vipina kunta bana sarisā,
Bārīda tapata tela janu barisā.*

'A forest of lotus flowers is like a forest of spears, and the clouds seem to be raining hot oil instead of refreshing rain.'

*Je hita rahe karata tei pārā,
Urāga svāse sama trividha samārā.*

'Those who were good to me now give me pain, the threefold wind, soft, fragrant, and cool, is like the breath of the snake.'

*Kahehu ten kachhu dukha ghati hoī,
Kāhi kahaun yaha jāna na koī.*

'Though the burden of sorrow is somewhat lightened by speaking of it, but whom shall I speak to? No one can understand my feelings.'

*Tatva prema kara mama aru torā,
Jānata priyā eka mana morā.*

'It is only my heart, beloved, which knows of my love for you.'

*So mana sadā rahata tohi pāhīn,
Jānu prīti rasa etanehi māhīn.*

'That heart is always with you; from this you must understand how deeply I love you.'

The banishment of Sita is often the subject of criticism by those who accept superficial Western standards of judgment, but is it possible that such a loving husband like Ram could mete out harsh and unjust treatment to his wife and send her in exile to the forest? It was in fact an act of supreme renunciation on the part of both Sita and Ram, planned together for the welfare of their people. Their greatness and nobility came to a culminating point, in the evening of their lives, and though, since then, more years have passed by than can be reckoned by the ordinary standards of history, yet time has been unable to dim the brilliance of this sacrifice. The role of an incarnation is an extremely difficult one. Firstly, when God is born on earth as man, it is in itself an act of sacrifice. Secondly, keeping Himself within the limitations of human nature, He has

to fulfil some ideal, the full implications of which are yet unknown to the world. The Indian ideal has ever been that of renunciation—strong and brave, and a life of the spirit; and again and again great ones have arisen in this country, who have walked on some untrodden path and scaled some dizzy heights. An inextinguishable light of idealism, therefore, burns in the heart of India and radiates itself to the world at large. We know that happiness and sorrow are but fleeting, and neither the one nor the other is the goal of life. They are ultimately to be reduced to the same unit of existence, but it is only the heroic hearts that can march on unaffected by happiness and undaunted by their own personal sorrows. In the *Gītāvali*, Tulsidas says that before Ram was able to arrive at this momentous decision, Sita herself expressed a wish to live in the forest, in the company of hermits. This shows that she also felt that as queen-mother she was called upon to sacrifice her own happiness for the sake of her people. Ram and Sita henceforth lived not for their own smaller selves, nor for one another, but they rejoiced in their great renunciation because it brought happiness and peace to their beloved subjects, the citizens of Ayodhya, whose welfare was entrusted to them by the inscrutable hand of Providence. To quote the words of Tulsidas—

*Girā aratha jala bīcha sama, kāhiyata
bhinna na bhinn,
Vandau Sita Rama pada, jinhahi parama
priya khinn.*

'Like words and their meaning, like water and its waves, which are identical but spoken of differently, so are Sita and Ram, whose hearts are filled with love for those in sorrow,—I offer my salutations at their feet.'

Last of all we must say a few words about Hanuman, the chief helpmate and friend of Ram. His early life in particular is so shrouded in legendary language that we find great difficulty in understanding it. In our own

times, no one has tried to bring the mythological life of Hanuman in line with modern thought or phrasology. Rationalistic and critically minded Hindus are, therefore, inclined to ignore or belittle the greatness of this mighty hero. It is, however, superfluous to add that Hanuman is well known to be a king amongst devotees and is worshipped by all devout lovers of Ram to this day, as one whose grace can bring us into the divine presence with greater ease than the worship of Ram himself. In support of this, one has only to observe the comparatively few temples dedicated to the worship of Ram and the abundance of Hanuman shrines in every nook and corner of all Indian towns and villages. Popular imagination has been captured by his heroic deeds and he is looked upon as a friend of the common man and a mediator between him and God. For lack of space we shall only summarize his services in the words of Ram :

Sunu kapi tohi samāna upakārī,

Nahin kou sura nara muni tanudhārī.

‘Amongst gods, saints, and human beings there is not a single embodied being who has helped me more than you.’

Prati upakāra karaun kā torā,

Sanamukha hoyi na sakata mana morā.

‘What can I do for you in return? I feel greatly embarrassed even to face you.’

Sunu suta tohi urina main nāhīn,

Dekheun kari vichāra mana māhīn.

‘My son, I have pondered over it well, but I cannot repay you and will remain indebted to you.’

Though Ram, in the form of Saguna Brahman, withdrew himself from the world, but it is said that he left Hanuman with us for all eternity, and, therefore, wherever the name of Ram is mentioned in conversation, song, or recital, Hanuman, in his untiring devotion, is always present there.

Tulsi, no less than Hanuman, is a devoted servant of Ram. Each word of his is like a

beacon-light floating on an ocean of Bhakti, intermingled with the sublime truths of the Advaita philosophy. Its very wealth is bewildering and to do it justice is beyond ordinary ability. So having brought a few drops of this brimming overflow of his heart to the readers, we shall end by joining our voices with him in prayer :

Deva—

Tū dayālu, dīna haun, tū dāni, haun bhikhārī,

Haun prasiddha pātakī, tū pāpa-punja-hārī.

‘O Lord—

Thou art compassionate and I am lowly,
Thou art generous and I am a beggar.
I am a well-known sinner, Thou art the destroyer of the load of sins.’

Nātha tū anātha ko, anātha kauna moso ?

Mo samāna ārata nahin, āratihara toso.

‘Thou art the Lord of the lost, and who is more lost than me? There is no one more miserable than me, nor is there a destroyer of miseries like Thee.’

Brahma tū, haun jīva, tū hai thākura haun chero,

Tāta-māta, guru sakhā, tū saba vidhi hitu mero.

‘Thou art Brahman, I am Jiva, Thou art Master, I am servant. Thou art father and mother, teacher, and friend, Thou art my well-wisher under all circumstances.’

Tohin mohin nāte aneka, māniyai jon bhāvai,

Jyon tyon Tulasī kripālu! charana sarana pāvai.

‘Many ties exist between me and Thee, accept anyone of them in accordance with Thy liking. But, O Kind One! However it may be, let Tulsi have the refuge of Thy feet.’

(*Vinaya Patrika* 79)

(*Concluded*)

'MAYAPANCHAKA' OF SHANKARACHARYA

BY K. R. PISHAROTI

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenal world and the world of reality are entirely different. The former is the creation of Maya and is an illusion, like the creations of a magician; both last only so long as the illusion lasts. The moment we are able to pierce through the magic, we realize that what we have been seeing is unreal. Such is held to be the existence of the world as we see it and know it. It is real only so long as we are under the sway of Maya or nescience. The moment it is lifted, the reality we have been associating with the world around us disappears and we realize that the phenomenal world was the creation of Maya. What Maya is and what Maya does form the theme of this short hymn.

Differentiating things where no differentiation exists and identifying things which are essentially different, Maya spreads the pall of ignorance, hiding the real from the unreal and transforming the values of men and manners and things into something different from what they really are, and withholds from man the eternal verities which ought to guide him in every endeavour of his. It introduces new values, creates fresh attitudes, rouses wild passions, entangles him deeper and deeper in the coils of existence and finally makes him a veritable beast fighting with shadows for shadows. In other words, it tosses him about in the ocean of Samsāra and leads him on to the quicksands of life in the shape of glamorous materialism to leave him there to shift for himself as best as he can. This is what Maya does for man.

Maya thus begets for man his pet child, ignorance, which grips him like a boa-constrictor and throttles him. With his vision clouded and coloured, he fails to see things in their real perspective, and, in due course, gives up the placid calm of spiritual realization for glamorous materialism, and ignores the

effulgent bliss ever radiating within him and runs after the mirage of pleasure that seems to extend as far as his eye could reach and even beyond. Veiled by ignorance and overwhelmed by materialism he loses all contact with the spiritual, toils wearily along the road of life—tortuous and long and beset with pitfalls and snares—and finally succumbs, nothing done, nothing gained. This process of merely living to die is repeated again and again till the sun of knowledge rises and shrivels up the mists of ignorance; then he turns the right corner and reaches the spacious Broadway, well-lit and straight, leading to the glorious shrine of the Godhead.

We have no doubt to live our lives in this phenomenal world—the world as we see it and as we know it—and we have no escape therefrom till the dawn of wisdom. Naturally, therefore, a knowledge of what Maya does goes a long way in helping us to realize what we are and what the world is. And that realization alone will enable us to give the correct orientation to our lives, so that we might live not merely to die, but to grow and become human in the fullest sense of the term. When once we know that the pursuit of wealth is not the end and aim of life, that there is something more valued and valuable to attain and achieve, namely the blossoming forth of God within every one of us, then and then alone does life become a life of service, a life of dedication to a higher, nobler cause, then alone does the godhood of man become manifest in him. At this stage comes the realization that all men are alike, as all sparks of fire are alike, that despite their differentiating labels all gods bespeak the same supreme godhead, as all conflagrations are alike, and that all of us are identical with Parabrahman. Thus and thus alone can we reach the cherished goal of human life, and thus alone can humanity attain to its predestined end.

The *Māyāpañchaka* is profoundly significant for all of us to be learnt and comprehended, if, indeed, it is our desire to avoid the pitfalls of life and rise up to man's fullest stature and thus make the world we live in a better and a happier place for ourselves and our brethren, if indeed it is our wish to rescue the world from the clutches of the octopus of a material civilization.

मायापंचकम् ।

निरुपमनित्यनिरंशकेऽप्यखंडे

मयि चितिः सविकल्पनादिशून्ये ।

घटयति जगदीशजीवभेदम्

त्वघटितघटनापटीयसी माया ॥१॥

1. Maya,¹ skilled in associating the dissociate,² introduces differentiation between Jagadisha and Jiva³ in me that is Chit,⁴ unrivalled,⁵ eternal,⁶ and void of parts,⁷ whole⁸ and entire, and devoid of all doubts.⁹

[¹ The term means illusion or delusion, that is, ignorance. The Vedantins believe that the phenomenal world has no reality, that it is unreal, like the creations of a magician. Hence Maya makes things seem to exist—things which really do not exist.

² This is an interesting phrase. The skill of Maya consists in maintaining an apparent connection between things which are really unconnected. The whole phenomenal world has its existence rolled up with associations between things. The reverse also is true. In the same way as it creates relationship between the unrelated, so does it establish dissociation between things which are really related, which are undifferentiated and which are undifferentiable.

³ Jagadisha means Paramatma and Jiva means Jivatma. These are identical. In spite of their identity, Maya differentiates them and makes them appear as distinct entities.

⁴ *Mayi chiti*: The real 'I' or Atma is Chit.

⁵ This describes the nature of Chit. It is (*nirupama*) incomparable, unrivalled, or unequalled.

⁶ *Nitya* means eternal—what continues unchanged, what is unchangeable.

⁷ *Niramshaka* means what is void of parts, i.e. it is not composed of parts. Compare, for instance, the human body; though it is a whole, still it has very distinct parts which have their own specific attributes and functions. Hence it is *Sāvayava*. On the other hand, compare the sun or moon: it is an entity and has no distinguishable parts, that is, it is *Niravayava*. Jivatma is of this variety, that is void of all parts.

⁸ *Akhanda* means what is one, what has no parts.

⁹ Chit or Atma is void of all doubts.]

श्रुतिशतनिगमांतशोधकान-

प्यहह घनादिनिदशनेन सद्यः ।

कलुषयति चगुप्पदाद्यभिन्ना-

नघटितघटनापटीयसी माया ॥२॥

2. Maya, skilled in associating the dissociate, confuses by a show of wealth and the like¹⁰ even those men—as if they were no better than quadrupeds—who have probed¹¹ to the very end a hundred Vedic and Vedantic texts.¹²

[¹⁰ Even those who are well versed in Vedic and Vedantic lore and have acquired spiritual knowledge have their minds ruffled by Maya, by becoming interested in wealth, etc. in which respect they behave like animals, that is, like irrational creatures. Power and pelf, wealth and enjoyment entice them from the path of learning and wisdom, thanks to the metamorphosis wrought in them by Maya. Here, then, we have an association established where no relationship exists. Thus dissociating Jivatma and Paramatma and associating the former with ephemeral things, men are thrown into the ocean of misery.

¹¹ Note the term *Sodhakān*: it means those who have examined and analysed and found out the core of the texts.

¹² *Shrutisahasra* means a hundred Vedic texts. *Nigamānta* means Vedantic texts. The idea is that those who have studied fully all Vedic and Vedantic texts get confused, thanks to the work of Maya. It may be mentioned that the Vedantic texts are many in number and are often contradictory, and hence the need for an analytical, critical study. The whole expression, therefore, means: 'Even those people who have critically and analytically studied the numerous Vedic and Vedantic texts and have correctly grasped their real significance.' Such as these would have realized the essential identity of Jivatma and Paramatma and the ephemeral nature of the phenomenal world. Even such people get lost in the glammers of material aspects.]

सुखचिदखंडविबोधमद्वितीयम्

वियदनलादिविनिर्मिते नियोज्य ।

भ्रमयति भवसागरे नितान्तम्

त्वघटितघटनापटीयसी माया ॥३॥

3. Maya, skilled in associating the dis-

sociate, tosses about in the ocean of existence¹³ the One without a second, which is bliss, consciousness, and knowledge-full,¹⁴ after connecting it with what is composed of ether, air,¹⁵ etc.

[¹³ *Bhramayati* has been rendered as 'tossed about' and this is apt with reference to the latter phrase *Bhavasāgara*. The term literally means confused, perplexed.]

¹⁴ The first Pāda describes Jivatma and its nature. It is one without a second and is of the nature of Sukha (bliss), Chit (consciousness), Akhanda (whole), and Vibodha (true knowledge).

¹⁵ This refers to the body which is just the opposite of Jivatma. Yet the two are rolled into one and are then confused.]

अपगतगुणवर्णजातिभेदे
सुखचिति विप्रविडाद्यहंकृतिम् च ।
स्फुटयति सुतदारगेहमोहम्
त्वघटितघटनापटीयसौ माया ॥४॥

4. Maya, skilled in associating the dissociate, manifests Ahankara of the nature of Brahmin, Vaishya,¹⁶ etc., and love for son, wife, home, etc.¹⁷ in the consciousness which is of the nature of bliss¹⁸ and which is divorced from Guna, Varna and Jati.¹⁹

[¹⁶ It is Maya that creates the sense of 'I', differentiating it as Brahmin, Kshatriya, etc.]

¹⁷ It is again Maya that creates love for son, wife,

home, etc. All family and social relationship arises from this.

¹⁸ *Sukhachiti* means *sukharūpe chiti*, that is, in the consciousness which is of the nature of bliss.

¹⁹ The chit is void of all differentiations based on Guna, Varna, and Jati, that is, differentiations arising from character, caste, or race.]

विधिहरिहरविभेदमप्यखंडे
सत विरचय्य बुधानपि प्रकामम् ।
भ्रमयति हरिहरभेदभावा-
नघटितघटनापटीयसौ माया ॥५॥

5. Maya, skilled in associating the dissociate, confounds completely even the wise²⁰ by the acceptance of the differentiation into Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, after introducing the distinction²¹ in what is an entity.²²

[²⁰ The second phrase in the third Pāda, as it stands, must be taken with *budhām*. As it is, it is difficult of construction.]

²¹ Maya introduces difference in Jivatma. Similarly, it introduces differentiation in Paramatma as Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma, in spite of the fact that it is an entity and is incapable of being conceived as having different parts.

²² Here is set forth what *Maya* has been able to achieve—achievements which are indeed wonderful. It introduces difference where there is none, it rouses animal passions even in the learned and thus tosses the soul about in the ocean of life.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

It is a truism that morality ends in spirituality and spirituality begins in morality. Yet there are many today who believe that a purely instinctive and physiological sense of honour and shame is all that is required for maintaining the norm of civilized life. Though this is not borne out by facts, even highly educated persons in modern times are seen to ignore the essential spiritual foundation of moral life. In order to remove these misconceptions and with a view to emphasizing the true plan and purpose of *The Mechanism*

Moral Progress, Dr. Radhakamal Mukherji, the renowned economist and sociologist, contributes an illuminating article on the subject, based on a lecture delivered by him at the Harvard University, USA. As the learned writer has rightly pointed out, moral progress, though it has an immediate importance in man's social and physical adjustment with his environment, essentially implies the removal of all fundamental disvalues rooted in man's lower nature, leading to the integral enrichment of personality and the trans-social fulfilment of the higher values of life. . . .

Swami Vivekananda, in his message to the West, preached the universality of Truth and Religion Eternal contained in the perennial philosophy of India. Ever since, the non-dogmatic and non-sectarian teachings of the Vedanta have immensely appealed to Western minds. In *Western Vedanta*, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, who visited the United States some time ago on invitation from American universities to deliver lectures, shows why Advaita Vedanta, as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, is most suited to and appreciated by the West.

Mrs. C. K. Handoo concludes her learned and highly illuminating series of articles on *The Works of Tulsidas*. . .

The *Māyāpañchaka* is, as the title indicates, a poem of five stanzas on the wonderful workings of Maya, by its great expounder Shankaracharya. Sri K. R. Pisharoti, a learned Sanskrit scholar and writer, makes a lucid translation of this short but profoundly significant Sanskrit metrical composition. The translator's Introduction and Notes are thoughtful and enlightening.

PROMOTION OF AYURVEDA

The faculty of medicine is one of the ancient sciences in India which has had a long period of development in its various branches including surgery. Indian medical science is significantly termed Ayurveda—the knowledge of the science which ensures health and longevity of life—, and the ancient standard works of Charaka and Sushruta are well known scientific treatises on Indian medicine. No one who has studied the history and practice of Ayurveda can say that it is unscientific. The value and importance of Ayurveda has not been sufficiently recognized by Indian doctors most of whom study and practise the allopathic system of Western medicine. There is not the least doubt that medicine and surgery in the West have made extraordinary progress, and modern science has helped their advancement to a great extent.

In ancient India, Ayurveda was highly advanced and held the field till a couple of centuries ago when the Western system was introduced into India. However it cannot be denied that due to lack of State support and facilities for proper study, training, and research, this once glorious scientific system fell into disuse except for a few Ayurvedic physicians who have staunchly maintained the traditional indigenous system. It is unfortunate but inevitable that under these circumstances not a few quack doctors should have taken advantage of the situation. But the foundations of the science of Ayurveda are sound, and there is no doubt if the necessary State aid and public interest are revived, as in olden times, the study and development of Ayurveda will prove of immense benefit to the country. The few teaching institutions of Indian medicine already in existence have to be put on a sounder basis and more such institutions started in other parts of the country.

Inaugurating the recent annual session of the All-India Ayurvedic Congress at Delhi, Dr. S. P. Mookerjee, Minister for Industry and Supply, Government of India, appealed for more intensified research in the ancient Indian system of medicine, and said: 'Treasures lie hidden in Indian herbs and medicinal plants and research can do a lot by unearthing those treasures, not only for India's sake but for the sake of the entire world.'

'It has been proved beyond doubt that the system of Ayurveda travelled from India to distant lands like Egypt, Arabia, Rome, and other places. It would not be wrong to say that our system laid the foundation, may be in an indirect way, to the very system of Western medicine of which the world is so proud.'

Sri R. R. Diwakar, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, pointed out that 'the very fact that the system is still alive after centuries of vicissitudes and non-recognition by the State, shows that it has a vitality and natural roots in this land. . . It

happens that many of the preventive aspects of the Ayurveda have been incorporated in religious and social observances of the Hindus. However, they require a rational explanation and a more modern presentation in terms of modern science, so that the people would take to them or continue to practise them not merely as a mechanical discipline, but as a regular and necessary recipe for good health and for the upkeep of proper hygienic conditions.'

At the Tamilnad Ayurveda Conference held some months ago at Madras, several speakers discussed the possibility of usefully combining Ayurveda and allopathy, and urged the necessity of establishing an Ayurvedic University in order to give regular training to students on modern lines. Ayurveda is in no way inferior to other systems in the treatment of tropical diseases. And the country is rich in medicinal plants, herbs, and salts which can be utilized to great advantage. Of course, the modern benefits of the Western systems of medicine—allopathy and homoeopathy—will have to be fully made available to the people even in the villages. But, in addition to these, the people should not be deprived of the cheaper but equally efficacious indigenous medicines.

Now that the country has become independent, the Government and the people should strive to resuscitate the indigenous system, suited to the climate, temperament and physical constitution of the people.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Both Science and Religion are engaged in the search for truth. Their attitudes are fundamentally the same; but the fields of application vary. Truth, to reveal itself to man, dictates its own terms of procedure and where such procedure is lacking, either in science or religion, there truth is not revealed. Science is, in a way, Religion as applied to the investigation of truth in finite Nature outside—the Object—and Religion is Science as applied to the realization of the Infinite

Spirit, the Reality underlying all existence—the Subject. The divorce of science from religion is the cause of much confusion in our times. Where this harmonious relation between science and religion has been recognized, as in India, there has never been any real conflict between the two. The spirit of objective enquiry, accompanied by a passion for experiencing the religious truths by a systematized method and seeking corroboration of these experiences in other lives devoted to their realization has been a characteristic of Indian religious Sadhana which is fundamentally a scientific method.

In this connection, Sri C. Rajagopalachari's observations, on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the National Physical Laboratory, are highly illuminating. He said: "There are then people who look on science as an enemy of religion. Nothing can be farther from truth or more unjustified. Science, that is truth, is an enemy to superstition but not to religion. The ancient Rishis of India did not think so. They said, in immortal words:

*"Satyameva jayate nānritam
Satyena panthā vitato devayānah,
Yenākramanti rishayohyāptakāmāh,
Yatra tatsatyasya paramām nidhānam."*

"Truth wins ever, and not untruth; with truth is paved the divine road on which walk the Rishis, with desire quenched, to reach the supreme abode."

"This emphatic dependence on truth is the dominating characteristic of the teaching of Indian seers. A superficial knowledge of the laws of nature and the wonders of science, especially when that knowledge is acquired second-hand, without the chastening influence of effort and investigation, may act as a heady wine on some natures.

'But those who struggle to obtain a deeper knowledge of the physical sciences automatically develop, towards the mystery of the universe, an attitude of reverence which is the essence of religion. "Flower in the crannied wall' sang Tennyson, "I pluck you

out of the crannies. I hold you here root and all in my hand, little flower. But if I could understand what you are, root and all, and all in all. I should know what God and man is."

'Men of science, on account of their very knowledge of some of the secrets of nature, contemplate with increased humility and reverence that which must ever remain outside the pale of human analysis.'

Similarly, men of religion, inspired by their realization of the eternal Spirit, have perceived the ecstatic 'Dance of Shiva' in the wonderful grandeur of Nature. Mystics are transported with infinite bliss into Samādhi in close communion with the beauties of Nature.

THE SCIENTIFIC TEMPER

During the last two centuries the achievements of science for the comfort and convenience of man have been so vast that generally science has come to be associated in the mind of the majority of people with such achievements, inventions and discoveries. They do not realize the mental attitude which has led to these discoveries and the trial of errors and failures behind it. 'Those who talked glibly of science,' Pandit Nehru once said, 'forgot that science was not a matter of test-tubes mixing certain things, but it provided training to the minds of men and women for functioning effectively in social and other functions. . . . The development of a scientific mind and scientific temper was therefore more important than the actual discovery because out of this many more discoveries would follow.'

It is the cultivation of the true scientific mind and temper behind these discoveries that will help us to build up a character and a personality, and ensure success in every department of life. The scientific temper is characterized by a sincere passion for truth as a whole, suspension of judgment in the absence of evidence, cautiousness of statement, an objective detached view of things free from

all personal likes and dislikes, seeking corroboration from others for results arrived at, and a readiness to discard one's own theories—maybe the fruits of one's lifelong labour—if they are proved to be inadequate to explain later facts that have come to light. Theories must be able to suit facts and not *vice versa*.

It is not that the scientific temper has a limited field for its operation. The scientific attitude can be brought to bear on the study of any knowledge and for the solution of our day-to-day problems. It may be the movement of a bird in the air or the art of making a speech as much as the investigation into the properties of matter. Everything can be done scientifically, and that alone ensures the best results. According to an Indian saying, it is easier for one to give up a son than one's 'mental sons'—one's pet ideas to which one has got attached. It shows that the cultivation of the scientific temper is a difficult process requiring all our energy and attention, for it means the building up of a character. It is not enough to carry a scientific frame of mind to a laboratory or some special field of work; the scientific attitude must penetrate our lives through and through. It is interesting to note what the great Shankaracharya has said in his commentary on the *Gita*: 'To one whose mind is subject to the passions of desire and aversion, *there cannot indeed arise a knowledge of things as they are, even of the external world*; and it needs no saying that to a man whose intellect is overpowered by passion there cannot arise a knowledge of the Innermost Self inasmuch as there are many obstacles in its way.' (*Gita*, VII. 27).

A well-disciplined and trained mind is a *sine qua non* of success in any walk of life. Those who are anxious to foster the scientific temper cannot but condemn the prostitution of scientific knowledge for purposes of political aggrandizement. How often is the pure passion for truth sullied by mercenary and commercial interests?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GAEKWAD'S ORIENTAL SERIES (VOLUMES XCVIII TO CVI). Published by The Oriental Institute, Baroda.

The Oriental Institute, Baroda, has been doing laudable service to the country by resuscitating and publishing the old palmleaf manuscripts of Sanskrit works which would otherwise be lost for ever. Undermentioned are some of its recent publications brought out between 1942 and 1948, adding to the series of valuable books already published. The quality of the works in general is above discussion, as this series has always been. The earnest student will ever be charmed by the scholarliness of the introductions, mostly in English; the clear Nagari types used for the text are an additional attraction for the connoisseur and the layman in Oriental research.

KRITYAKALPATARU: EDITED BY K. V. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR. (i) Vol. I, *Brahmachārikānda*. (Series No. CVI, 1948). Pages 116+328. Price Rs. 11; (ii) Vol. II, *Grihasthakānda*. (Series No. CI, 1944). Pages 152+511. Price Rs. 12; (iii) Vol. VIII, *Tīrthakānda*. (Series No. XCVIII, 1942). Pages 92+300. Price Rs. 8; (iv) Vol. XI, *Rājadharmakānda*. (Series No. C, 1943). Pages 117+273. Price Rs. 10; (v) Vol. XIV, *Mokshakānda*. (Series No. CII, 1945). Pages 77+355. Price Rs. 12.

Shri Rangaswami Aiyangar presents his unique edition of Lakshmidhara's *Krityakalpataru*, the most complete treatise on the Dharma Shastra—a huge standard work on this subject, and at the same time the earliest reliable text. The edition of this monumental work had been rendered difficult as the work was exceptionally hard of access, and by far the most important portion of this invaluable digest was found to have been lost. We are thus indebted to the editor for producing substantial matter on a topic which, queer enough, has never commanded much attention of international Indology—viz. ancient Indian legislature and jurisprudence. We hope the other available volumes of the works will also be published soon.

The *Brahmachārikānda* contains all the rules, regulations, and practices incumbent on the Dvija youth of yore. The text adduces all pertinent quotations from Shruti and Smṛiti.

The *Grihasthakānda*, easily the most compendious volume, gives us an exhaustive over-all survey and everything connected with the life of the Aryan householder.

The *Tīrthakānda*, besides establishing the rules of conduct at places of pilgrimage, and elucidating the attractions and merits of the Tirthas in detail, also enumerates almost all the well-frequented shrines of Aryavarta, depicting their site, quality, history, and the injunctions for their visit.

The *Rajadharmakānda* is a detailed account on statesmanship in general, and on the duties, rights, honours, and infringements of the monarch in particular.

Lastly, the *Mokshakānda* is Lakshmidhara's very own conception of things esoteric. The means and the end of spiritual achievement are compiled here comprehensively, with the comments on Yoga by the great ancient authorities.

All the volumes are prefaced by elaborate introductions in English which make the works appreciable for students who have no mastery over the Sanskrit language.

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1863-1902). BY TRILOCHAN DASS. Published by Co-operatif Book Depot, 54, College Street, Calcutta 12. Pages 40. Price Re. 1.

This booklet is a study of Swami Vivekananda from the point of view of his social philosophy. The influence of the life and work of Swami Vivekananda which made an indelible impression on the older generations and which was in the forefront of national consciousness during the earlier decades of this century, giving impetus to the national movements for Indian regeneration in the various fields was, for a time, apparently sunk into the subconscious of the nation due to the political upheaval and the preoccupation of the national mind in the day-to-day problems of this aspect of national life. But all the same it moulded silently the national character in a myriad ways, including the political thought of the country. As the author points out, 'It may justly be said that India's destiny was changed by Vivekananda and that his teaching re-echoed throughout Humanity. He gave birth to a mighty new India—the India of to-day and India that is yet to be. And what we see to-day is that behind all the modern movements of India,—political, economic, social, cultural, educational or whatever else it may be, there is Vivekananda's teaching and ideal.' Now that India is politically independent Swami Vivekananda is again occupying the national mind and his thoughts are being studied from various points of view for 'Vivekananda's messages and activities are encyclopaedic in character.' The author has brought out within the compass of this small booklet the social philosophy of Swami Vivekananda briefly touching upon its various aspects under the heads—*The Creative Individual, Social Reforms, The Cult of Dāridra-Narayana, The Householder and the Sanyasin, Violence and Non-Violence, Hindu-Muslim Unity, Religion, Universal Gospel, Cosmopolitanism, and Vivekananda and After*. In Appendix 'A' the author has given quotations of 'What great men say about Swami Vivekananda' which show that the Swami continues to be not only the moving force behind the nation but also a world force for the uplift of humanity. The Appendix 'B'

gives a selection of his utterances revealing the Swami's 'message on Human energism, his will, and his faith.'

The booklet will stimulate others to a detailed study of the subject.

ASPECTS OF THE VEDANTA. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Sixth Edition. Pp. 231. Price Rs. 2/-.

This is a collection of twelve essays by eminent authorities on the subject.

N. Vythinatha Aiyar, in his lecture recorded here, gives a brief but clear exposition of the main aspects of Vedanta philosophy, at the same time comparing and partly refuting some related doctrines of Western philosophy. He points out the inadequacy of the latter with regard to a final solution of the problems of life.

Max Muller, the founder of scientific Indology and to whose memory this book is dedicated, makes in his article on *Veda and the Vedanta* an ardent appeal to all those who are interested in the study and search of true philosophy to turn to Vedanta putting forth the supremacy of Vedanta over all other systems.

In a lecture delivered in the USA on *Vedanta towards all Religions*, Swami Abhedananda elucidates the Vedantic conception of unity and shows how this all-comprehensive notion forms the basis of absolute tolerance. He shows how all the faiths of the world can be accommodated within the scope of Vedanta, as included in one or the other of the three of its graduated points of view and stages of spiritual evolution.

In an essay styled *The Vedanta in Outline* Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan gives a detailed account of the various schools, pro and contra Vedanta, as well as an instructive, matter-of-fact survey of its teachings.

Three authorities have contributed to the topic of *The Ethics of the Vedanta*. Swami Saradananda tells us how Hindu Ethics, based on the four stages of Aryan life, are a preparatory means only, not an end themselves. The basic Truth of Universal Oneness, however, is rightly put as the most compelling stimulus to ethical life. Vedantic Ethics have influenced or even lie at the root of, as the case may be, the ethical teachings of the West, ancient and modern alike. Mention has been made of the fact how recent foreign influences, on the other hand, are causing a deterioration of Indian ethical life.

N. Vythinatha Aiyar, again, dwells on the subject of the relation between Karma and will, liberty and virtue.

Vasudeva Kirtikar shows how Hindu ethics and morality are all subordinated to the one underlying theme of the *tattvamasi*. He adduces many quotations showing wherein the Hindu moral ideas agree with or differ from Western ethical conceptions.

Lastly, there are included articles by Prof Deussen and Swami Vivekananda on Vedanta Philosophy whose writings need no special introduction to the public.

A better production in bigger types of this valuable book is desirable.

HIGHER CULTURE (A Guide for Rising Countries.) BY SWAMI MADHAVATIRTHA. Published by Sandesh Karyalaya, Ghee-kanta Road, Ahmedabad. Pp. 172. Price Rs. 1/8.

The improving of scientific or secular education in progressive countries does not bring about a proportional growth of their culture. A higher standard of life, on the other hand, makes for stronger desires. Western education draws the pupils' attention only to their physical well-being, for morals cannot be taught where teacher and student are lacking in the spiritual background. Education, however, must be for the full life and not merely for livelihood. Pedagogical systems that do not aim at teaching self-control are imperfect. According to the author of this book, the caste-system was originally based on the graded capacity for self-control in individuals and communities.

Misdirection of love and sympathy is at the back of most of the failures of modern society. The author maintains that religion can cure these failures: It has two functions, viz. (1) Control of the senses and (2) The giving of spiritual pleasure, the latter being of particular importance, considering the fact that it is pleasure, above all, which is sought and striven for by each and everyone. The use of the word 'pleasure' is, however, unhappy in the context, as it is likely to create confusion.

In connection with this, the author mentions, among some other kindred topics, the necessity of pre-nuptial restraint for both the sexes, in spite of the fact that the Western ideas on the point are being condoned in many quarters.

The chapters on Self-Realization, the Mystic Light, Yoga and Vedanta, though they are excellent depictions in themselves, seem to us to be somewhat outside the scope of the book indicated by its title.

There are two appendices; one of them is a very well-meant, but perhaps ill-directed, open letter to the late Mr Jinnah, and the other a summary of the Mahatma's life and teachings, serving to corroborate some claims put forth in the volume.

As printing mistakes abound in this edition, it will be advisable to revise it very carefully for the next one.

EARLY INDUS CIVILIZATIONS. BY ERNEST MACKAY. (REVISED AND ENLARGED BY DOROTHY MACKAY). Published by Luzac & Co., Great Russel Street, London., W.C. 1. Pages 169. Price 15 Sh.

The archaeological excavations at the ancient sites of the Indus Valley have laid bare the extensive ruins of flourishing cities that existed in that part of India in pre-Vedic times. These remains, which bear witness to the high degree of material prosperity attained by these cities, enable us to study the successive cultures that prevailed there at different periods of time.

Mr. Mackay himself conducted the excavations at Mohenjodaro during 1926-32, and at Chanhudaro in

1935-36; and so his observations are based on a first-hand study of the subject. The information gathered in the course of subsequent excavations has been utilized and incorporated in this revised edition of the book.

Mr. Mackay has treated the subject in a very lucid manner, under different heads, and has traced the connections existing between the Indus Valley people and their contemporaries in Western Asia and elsewhere. He has also discussed the available data bearing on the date of these pre-Vedic civilizations.

This publication is undoubtedly a very useful handbook to a student of the Indus Valley culture, and especially so to the general reader who has no access to the voluminous reports of the Archaeological Department.

The book contains a number of plates, plans, and maps which substantially add to its usefulness.

B. K. DIKSHIT

SWARAJ FOR THE MASSES. BY J. C. KUMARAPPA. *Published by Hind Kitabs Ltd., Bombay. Pp. 104. Price Rs. 1/12/-.*

This little book shows how the ideas preached by the Mahatma can be carried out into practice in the essential spheres of modern life in this country. The author, who was a close companion of Gandhiji, has taken great pains in his various articles collected here to give reasonable suggestions of practicable reforms in agriculture and industry. He deplores such maladjustments as the taxation of the wrong people, the preponderance of interest vested in the production of goods not essential for the uplift of the farms, and the misdirection of research-work in the Agricultural Colleges.

The second portion of the book contains a village-centred agricultural plan, which stresses individual growth as natural and wholesome. The villages should discontinue to be the customers of townmade articles, nor should they be the supplying factor for the raw material needed in urban manufacturing. The pattern of rural development is to be mainly based on self-sufficiency.

As the most adequate means for the prevention of famine, the author recommends restriction in the use of money and encouragement of barter. He further suggests measures for the control not only of prices but also of production by the Government.

Lastly, Shri Kumarappa presents a table giving a balanced vegetarian diet and explains the feasibility of the same. Wealthy consumers are admonished to purchase indigenous foodstuffs.

MAYA—ITS SPIRITUAL EXPOSITION BASED ON THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY. BY SWAMI MADHAVATIRTHA. *Published by Swami Swayamijoti Tirtha. Gnana Sadhana Ashrama, Ajol (N. Gujarat). Pp. XXXIII + 107. Price Re. 1/-.*

This book is an attempt at reconciling Einstein's Theory of Relativity with Vedanta philosophy. The

author is familiar with both the systems, and what he says is clear, cogent, and deserving of attention.

Time, Space, and Causation belong to the realm of Maya according to Vedanta. Modern physics says the same thing, though the terminology may widely differ. The relativity of the cosmos with all its phenomena has been emphasized by both Vedanta and Science. No absolute standard for knowledge can be had in this world of phenomena.

Motion, too, has no absolute existence; only 'motion toward new values' could be defined as real motion. In the domain of causality, Nature abhors exactitude.

There are many graphs and sketches interspersed in the texts which help to make the doctrines clear. The whole work is a good exposition of Prof. Einstein's findings in the light of Vedanta philosophy. Yet, its objectivity and absence of bias make it all the more readable. It is complete in itself and does not presuppose the knowledge of the Theory of Relativity. People will derive great pleasure and benefit from its study.

INDIGESTION—ITS CAUSE AND CURE. BY L. RAMACHANDRA SARMA. *Published by The Nature-Cure Publishing House Ltd., Pudukottai, South India. Pp. 88. Rs. 1/8.*

This brochure is a valuable treatise on the subject. It not only contains an elaborate description of the facts connected with nutrition but also details precautions and mindfulness with regard to an activity which we are inclined to let go as it will.

Indigestion, so common to civilized mankind, is traced to wrong feeding of the system, and the author will not admit of any other explanation. He bases his counsels on the experiences of Nature-Cure, and he refutes the opinions of the votaries of allopathy, who believe in plentiful supply of nourishment to the body.

Two things are held responsible for all digestive troubles, viz. wrong choice of food and over-eating. The chief rule is not to exceed the capacity of digestion, and very practical means of control are given. The author warns against the superstition that expectant mothers ought to eat 'for two', and says that over-feeding of pregnant women is a crime.

The second half of the booklet deals with the various kinds of digestive disorders. Fasting is stated to be the best cure, next come remedies like water-cure, and bearing in mind the strict adherence to 'vital economy'. The application of these cures are dealt with extensively. Pictures of certain useful *asanas* are also added in the end.

PRANAYAMA OR BREATHING FOR BETTER HEALTH. BY K. LAKSHMAN SARMA. *Published by The Nature-Cure Publishing House Ltd., Pudukottai, South India. 5th Ed. Pp. 24. Price As. -/6/-.*

This little book does not pretend to give a full knowledge of the yogic practice of Pranayama, which, as the author stresses, can only be learnt direct from an

adept teacher. It is pre-eminently meant for the followers of Nature-Cure, for whom it may be regarded as indispensable.

Present-day clothing is far too heavy to be conducive to good health especially in a country like India. It is often unhealthy to wear shoes and trousers of the western pattern in our country. The natural breathing of the skin being thus obstructed, bad consequences become inevitable.

THE WAY TO PEACE. BY MRS SHIRIN FOZDAR. Published by The Local Spiritual Assembly, P. O. Box 63. Ahmedabad. Pp. 28.

In this pamphlet the author analyzes the world-situation and the efforts that are being made for securing peace by international bodies like the UNO. She opines that the plan laid down by Bahauallah, the founder of the Bahai sect (born in 1817 in Persia and died in 1892), for world peace and unity, which is based on love of mankind rather than on love of one's country, is much superior to these and that sooner or later the world will have to follow his plan, if peace is to be secured.

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD STUDIES (1948)
—IN 3 VOLUMES. Published by The University of Allahabad, Senate House, Allahabad. Pp. 46, 112, and 26.

These studies pertain to the Economy, Arabic and Persian, and Philosophy Sections.

The study in the Economy Section is done by Sri Jagadish Narain Tewari, M.A., the subject dealt with being 'Price Mechanism in Planned Economy' in all its aspects.

In the Arabic and Persian Section Sri Saeed Hasan, M.A., Ph.D., gives us 'The Early History of the Buwahids.'

The Philosophy Section contains two studies, one by Sri A. C. Mukerji, M.A., on 'The Foundations of Knowledge' and the other by Sri R. N. Kaul, M.A., LL.B., D.Litt. on 'Idealistic Logic.'

All the studies are technical and original. The printing and get up of the volumes are good.

BENGALI.

PAGODAR DESHE (LAND OF THE PAGODAS), BY SWAMI TYAGISWARANANDA, *Vina Library, 15, College Street, Calcutta, Pp. 2+197. Price Rs. 3/8.*

Since India attained independence, she has lost no opportunity to renew and revitalize her old contacts with Asiatic countries—contacts, though once so deep and intimate, foreign domination had practically obliterated or reduced to a mere form. She is vitally interested in each of them, and, in spite of her own many troubles which have appeared in the wake of her

independence, she has not failed to champion the cause of a weaker neighbour and stand up for her rights whenever they have been in jeopardy. In order that she can play her part more fully in the shaping of Asia's destinies it is essential that she gets to know the sister countries of the continent.

Burma, her next-door neighbour and not long ago part of her polity, has had the closest ties with her in many fields of activity, India supplying to her not only the leaven of her spiritual life, but also the labour and personnel of her many essential professions. Yet it cannot be said that her knowledge of that country is very satisfactory. The reason is that there is not much reliable literature about Burma—not at least in the vernaculars. The book under review, an attempt to remove that want is, therefore, most welcome.

Written in a lucid and attractive style and bearing the most appropriate title, it is the travel-diary of a Hindu monk whose mission of service made it necessary for him to travel extensively in that country and mix with the commonest folk as well as the highest. He used this opportunity to study the country in its many aspects and the result of the study is this book. Not pedantic but authentic, the book records the impressions of a sensitive and unbiassed mind, giving a panoramic view of the life of Burma as lived in the towns as well as in the country. Here is a faithful account of its simple and joyous people, their care-free and irresponsible ways, their love of beauty and pomp, their reckless generosity and kindness, their religious practices and social customs, their peculiar habits regarding food and drink, etc. It is a simple yet complete picture and those who read the book will know Burma, and knowing, will love her, and those who love her already, will love her still more.

MALAYALAM

1. NAMAMBIKA. Pages 45. Price As. 4.
2. MANDAKINI. Pages 95. Price Re. 1.

BY OTHUR SUBRAHMANYAM (UNNI) NAMBOODARIPAD. Published by the author, Mayanoor, Ottapalam.

Namambika, through some ennobling verses, tries to bring home to the reader the greatness and efficacy of God's name to acquire and develop devotion. The author has successfully brought out a combination of the beauty of poetry and sweetness of *Bhakti*.

Mandakini is also a work of a devotional nature in poetry.

The author's illustrations from various spheres of knowledge to elucidate aspects in devotional life are very apt and striking, and need special mention.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, TRICHUR

REPORT FOR 1948-49

Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur, has been doing useful service to humanity since the year 1924. The following is a brief report of its work for the period—January 1948 to March 1949.

Gurukul: The Gurukul, a charitable hostel, with its two sections for boys and girls, had a strength of 52 of whom 27 were Harijans. Regular religious classes were held for the inmates, and they performed their daily worship, *bhajan*, and *Gita* chanting in the temples attached to each of the two sections. They received education in the Vidyamandir run by the Ashrama and were also given training in self-help and practical household work. Games and gardening formed part of the curriculum. A permanent building, Saradamandir, to accommodate 50 girls was newly opened during the period under report.

Vidyamandir: The Vidyamandir provides education up to the Cochin SSLC standard and has three departments—Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary. The school had a strength of 694 (385 boys and 309 girls) at the end of the period under review, of whom 97 were Harijans and 132 were Christians. The students came out successful with good results in the various examinations.

The school library had 3456 books at the beginning of the year to which 432 new ones were added during the period. The reading room received several dailies, weeklies, and other periodicals.

Extra-curricular activities included regular literary meetings and debates in the four languages, namely, English, Sanskrit, Hindi and Malayalam. Four issues of the manuscript magazine *Viveka Vijayam* were brought out during the year to which articles were contributed by the pupils.

Free Reading Room & Library at Pankunnam: The branch, started in 1945, is intended to form the nucleus of the cultural and preaching activities in the town. It had 752 books and was receiving 9 dailies and other periodicals. The Swami-in-charge also held *Gita* classes in the town.

Charitable Dispensary: The dispensary served 6441 cases of which 2695 were new. 14 in-patients were treated in the indoor department and 34 minor surgical operations were performed. An isolation ward, attached to the dispensary, to accommodate six patients, in times of epidemics, was constructed during the period.

Poor and Destitute Relief: Under this head a family of two invalids was placed on the regular list. Occasional relief by way of food, clothing, medicine,

house-thatching, and help in cash was given to about one hundred persons. Besides this, the Ashrama allowed fee concession to twenty-four poor pupils which amounted to Rs. 371-2-0. About a hundred day scholars on an average, most of whom were Harijans, were also fed at noon on all school days.

Industrial Section: The industrial school provides vocational training. It has 19 looms of which 10 are reserved for Harijans. The trainees are paid for their work and the pupils earn between Rs. 10 to Rs. 45 per mensem. The Khadi centre is separate, with its own building, and has been operating as a branch-centre of All-Cochin Khadi Society. It had 4 looms and 25 charkas.

The School Co-operative Society: Besides dealing in school requisites, also undertook the sale of cloth produced in the industrial section.

The Harijan Co-operative Society: Started with a view to provide economic and social amenities for Harijans on a co-operative basis, the society has been operating here under the auspices of the Ashrama since 1946. The society first undertook the work of quarrying and selling laterite stones. Then it started the Harijan Textile Industries at Puranattukara. Last year both these concerns were running smoothly, and the society was able to provide work for some thirty persons through these efforts.

Harijan Welfare Work: Apart from the special attention given to Harijans in the above activities, three years ago a centre was opened in the midst of a colony of Harijans in the nearby village of Adat. Last year a pukka building with all equipment was built with Government and public help. About 15 boys and girls are given training in the three R's, spinning, and music during day time. At night some 12 adults are given lessons. The centre is also meant to serve as a children's creche where they will play, learn, work, and worship.

On Vijayadasami day another centre was opened in the colony of Parikatt, close by. It runs on the same lines as the above.

Religious Activities: The Ashrama carried on several activities such as discourses and classes both in the Ashrama and in the town, for the dissemination of Hindu culture and the teachings of the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, etc. Religious festivals as also birthdays of great prophets of the world were observed with special *puja*, *bhajana*, discourses, and feeding of the poor.

Urgent needs: The Ashrama urgently needs funds for carrying on and improving its wide variety of activities.

EAST PAKISTAN REFUGEE RELIEF

AN APPEAL

Since the month of October 1946, refugees have been coming to West Bengal off and on. The Ramakrishna Mission has from the beginning been carrying on Relief work for these people in its humble way. We are at present maintaining many students, both boys, and girls, who have suffered or have been displaced as a result of the communal troubles in East Pakistan. We have put some of these students in our institutions.

The Mission is also building up a colony near Agartala for rehabilitating displaced persons who have crossed the boundary of Pakistan and entered Tripura State. As many refugees from East Pakistan were going to Assam and their condition was pitiable, we started relief centres for them at Lunding in the Nowgong District (Assam) in the month of December 1949. The work is still going on. It comprises giving free doles, selling rice at cheap rates, giving medical aid to sick persons, distributing milk to babies and patients, and supplying small capital for running petty business and productive cottage industries. This work is carried on in co-operation with the Government.

The work has been extended, and we have recently opened two new centres at Karimganj and Silchar in the district of Cachar (Assam). Besides this, in East Pakistan itself many refugees took shelter at our Dacca Centre. Under difficult conditions we made arrangements for sheltering and feeding them. The latest information about them is that there are about 300 refugees in our Ashrama at Dacca.

The Mission has just started Refugee Relief Work at Jayantipur three miles away from the Bangaon railway station and close to the Indian border. Another centre is being opened at Coochbehar for the same purpose. Details will be published in due course.

Funds are required for all these works, which have to be conducted on an extensive scale so as to give adequate relief to these unfortunate people. We appeal to the kind-hearted public all over India to help us financially, as they have always generously done in the past, so that we may do our best to alleviate the sufferings of our sisters and brothers in this national catastrophe.

All contributions for this purpose may be sent to any of the following addresses :

1. The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
2. The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta 3.
3. The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta 13.
4. The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 111, Russa Road, Calcutta. 26.

and will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged by the undersigned.

P.O. Belur Math,
Howrah.

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA
General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission