PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LV — *MAY 1950* — No. 5

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Allahabad

17 January 1925. It was the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vijnanananda exhorting the devotees present to co-operate in the celebration, said, 'A little festivity is necessary. But if the worship is done in the true spirit, nothing else would be required. When there is music and discourse we come down to the material plane. Why should the offerings, then, be excluded? These also should be done. The work of the great ones is done by them, not by us; we are but mere instruments.'

In the evening the Swami called the devotees and said, 'Come all of you and see the stars in the sky. How wonderful is the constellation of stars in the sky. How they are stationed in their respective places? They are so placed by the laws of space or the fourth dimensional laws. The souls after their release from their bodies go to those regions. When the soul is freed from the shackles of the earthly body it gets tremendous speed. It migrates to the different stars according to its nature. It also goes to the region of the sun or the moon, or the world of the manes which seems to exist in the higher zones of this atmosphere, though not visible. The wonder of it all is that the stars which we see outside are also inside, only in a different form as knowledge, will, volition etc. The stars are perceived through the eye to be at a great distance; but when perceived through the mind they are very near. We and those stars are both one from the cosmic standpoint. Because they exist we exist, or rather, because we exist they exist.'

A devotee: 'Maharaj, we understand the theory all right, but do not have the realization.'

Swami: 'Make yourself the witness; then you do not require any explanation. You will see how the mind acts and creates everything. What is the purpose of this celebration? It is to have a true realization of the Self, to know the pure, blissful, omniscient

nature of the Self. Being perfectly selfless you have to participate in the celebration. Of the Homa that you do you are the fire, you are the priest, you are the requisites. If you wish to "enjoy bliss" you will have to keep your individuality separate; but if you wish to "be blissful" you must be identified with bliss itself. Today is the sacred birthday of our illustrious Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda). Meditate on him intensely. Who else was selfless like him? Sri Ramakrishna did not touch money, nor did he take part in any public activity. But Swamiji did all work quite unattached. Wealth and honour came to him unasked, but I personally saw that he had not the slightest attachment for these. Such renunciation is rarely seen elsewhere. It is unique in our age.'

A devotee: 'Maharaj, we have taken shelter at the feet of a great soul. He who has brought us here will guide us to the goal.'

Swami: 'You are the guides of yourselves. You have come here today; it is because you wished to do so. If you adhere to truth, everything will be all right. He who knows Brahman is afraid of nothing. May you have the knowledge of Brahman.'

* * *

18 January 1925. It was the day of the public celebration of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary. Many devotees had come to the Math. Swami Vijnanananda said to them, 'Do you know the Mantra for today?' Saying this, he chanted a famous verse from the *Katha Upanishad* (2.2.15) which means: 'There the sun shines not, nor the moon and the stars, nor even this lightning—not to speak of this fire. Because the Atman shines, all else shine. All luminous bodies shine through the light of the Atman.' Then the Swami entered the shrine while preparations for Homa were made outside. The Swami himself offered sweets to the devotees before the Homa saying, 'There is no harm if you take sweets before a religious observance'. All followed the Swami's advice except one. The Swami, however, allowed him to adhere to his own faith in such matters. All chanted the invocatory verse to Gayatri: 'Come, O Mother Goddess, Thou art the giver of boons. Thou art three-lettered and the sound symbol of Brahman. I salute Thee, O Gayatri, the mother of metres and the creative power of Brahman.' This was followed by the performance of Homa. At the end, all chanted the verse of salutation: 'O Narayani, we salute Thee. Thou art the source of all good. Thou art ever gracious to us. Thou doest good to us always. O fair-complexioned mother! Thou art the refuge of the helpless and the loving progenitor of the three worlds.'

When arrangements were made for discourses on the occasion, the Swami called upon a young man saying, 'You deliver a lecture today'. The Swami was highly pleased with the youth for his short but substantial speech, and said: 'It is not so difficult to deliver a lecture. What is there to be afraid of? What you know you speak; only systematize your ideas beforehand by clear thinking. But there must be harmony between your speech and life if you impart any moral instruction. It is good education for the speaker as it awakens self-confidence in him. In this way this nation of ours may get back its faith in itself. When that happens there is no further cause for worry. He who has self-confidence can work miracles. There is nothing impossible for him.'

* * *

12 December 1931. Swami Vijnanananda said: 'A Sanyasin is he who throws off the bundle of latent tendencies (*samskāra*), and surrenders himself to the Divine Mother in thought, word, and deed. Once a rich man came to offer some money to Sri Ramakrishna, who, however, refused to accept the money, saying, "This devil has come to drag me away from the Mother". A Pandit prayed to the Master for the grant of wisdom. The Master replied, "I do not know anything, the Mother knows everything". When the mind is detached from sense-objects the light of

Brahman is seen in all beings. Man is scorched in the fire of the world by his attachment to sense objects. As the Master was absorbed day and night in the thought of the Divine Mother, the fire of the world could not touch him. As a result of constant absorption in the Divine, the Master enjoyed perennial bliss. He was overwhelmed by bliss, sometimes laughing, sometimes weeping in the joy of ecstasy. I never saw him devoid of bliss. It pained him to see us cheerless. He was eager to share with us the eternal joy in which he remained immersed twenty-four hours of the day. In the presence of the kingdom of Light, all work and study of this world seem mere trash. These are as nothing when one gets even a glimpse of the Divine Light. As our eyes ever see the world of matter so the Master constantly saw the Light of Brahman.'

After some time, an elderly Swami came to see Swami Vijnanananda. The former read out to Swami Vijnanananda the written speech on the ideals of the Ramakrishna Order which he had delivered before an association in the city. Swami Vijnanananda said : 'Two important things—the glory of God's name and loving charity—are omitted in your lecture, but you have mentioned all other things nicely. In this age, God's name is the only hope for an aspirant. The name (Tāraka Brahman) of Hari or of the Divine Mother is enough to save us. The next life will depend on how you spend this and how you pass away with God's name on your lips. Let me tell you a story. The angels have come from heaven to show a picture of Jesus Christ to a dying Christian devotee. But the devotee, instead of looking at it, turned his eyes away, at the instigation of Satan, to look at the likeness of his lovers, and gazing at it, passed away. For this he had to go to hell. As he succumbed to the temptation of Satan, he had to undergo the sufferings of hell.'

Swami Vijnanananda continued : 'Sri Guru Maharaj (Sri Ramakrishna) is installed on the altar of our hearts ; we need not go elsewhere to seek him. The function of the heart is love and that of the brain is discrimination. Both love and discrimination should be combined in our life. One should cultivate the faculties of both the heart and the brain. One can be omniscient if he succeeds in awakening the dormant power of the Kundalini. To such an illumined soul the three divisions of time,—past, present, and future—are revealed as an open book. He is merged in eternity, and conquers time, the all-destroyer. He becomes Mahākāla and on his breast dances the Mother Shyāmā. Sri Ramakrishna was the human form of that Mahākāla. What is Mahākāla doing ? He swallows the entire cosmic phenomena, and laughs, and dances the dance of destruction, though ever absorbed in Brahman.'

* * *

January 1932. Swami Vijnanananda said : 'The Master's mind soared constantly in the highest regions of the spirit. The world was almost non-existent to him. When he spoke with the people of this world, he had to forcibly bring his mind down to the lower plane of the body. Swami Vivekananda also had a similar exalted state of mind. His mind ever tended towards profound meditation. As we have to live in this world, let us take shelter in truth and be ever on our guard so that untruth can never assail us. Truth, love, kindness alone should be harboured in the mind. When the time arrives to leave this world, we can easily throw away the "playthings" that keep the mind tied down and lift ourselves up to a higher level. The mind does not ordinarily want to soar high. It must be whipped to do so. The mind must be kept in constant communion with the eternal and effulgent spirit. "The Light of lights illumines the dark cave of the heart." The mind must be trained by regular practice to perceive the eternal Light. At the time of death, trifling thoughts of earthly life should not be allowed to occupy the mind. Towards the end of life, the mind must experience the Reality so that after death it may become one with it. For this blessed final union one

should prepare oneself by striving daily heart and soul. Let a current of spiritual thoughts always flow in the mind. Even if the mind turns to other mundane objects, it should not lose hold of this thought-current. Pray to the Lord earnestly that you may not be dragged into the tomfoolery of this world, and that He may guide you properly in this life, and that, at the end of life, you may find refuge at His holy feet. May we remember at the time of death the blissful form of the Lord, our only solace. Everything else is unreal.'

* * *

April 1932. The topic turned to the excavations at Sarnath. Swami Vijnanananda said: 'After the first excavations in 1897 or 1898, sculptural images were placed in their proper place and looked so living and grand. But, when they were removed to the museum, that grandeur and liveliness were lost. But statues or photos or images of the great ones, kept in any place or position, are always living and, at the same time, are life-giving.'

The Swami continued: 'This world and its creation, men and creatures living in it and whatever else is seen, are there from time immemorial, like the stream of a river. As images are made from a lump of mud and broken and then re-made, so the creation and destruction of this world have been going on eternally. It is repetition of the same thing over and over again.'

The Swami, referring to an illustration given by the Master, said: 'Once some blind men went to an elephant. One, touching the elephant's ear, said, "This animal is like a winnowing fan". Another, touching its big belly, said that the elephant was like a huge pot; and, another, feeling its legs, thought the animal to be like a pillar. Thus, they began to quarrel about the likeness of the elephant. In fact, none of them could give a true description of the elephant. He who has seen the elephant knows very well that it is neither like a winnowing fan nor like a pot nor like a pillar. It is something different from all these. So the true nature of God is known through the process of negation—"not this, not this". Affirmative descriptions of God are inadequate.'

THE BASIS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

By the Editor

'Na sāmparāyah pratibhāti bālam pramādyantam vittamohena mūḍham,
Ayam loko nāsti para iti mānī punah punarvaśamāpadyate me.'

'The Hereafter (knowledge of the soul's survival after death) never reveals itself to a foolish person (devoid of discrimination), heedless, and perplexed by the delusion of wealth. "This (sense-perceived) world alone exists," he thinks, "and there is no other". Again and again (through endless transmigration) he comes under my (King of Death's) sway.' —*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I.ii.6).

'Yato abhyudaya-nihśreyasa-siddhiḥ, sa Dharmah.'

'Dharma is that from (the true observance of) which result general well-being and supreme beatitude.'—*Vaiśeṣika Sūtra.*

We are at one of the most decisive moments in the life of mankind. We are living in a period of history full of tragicomic events of a revolutionary character. The world wars,

with their attendant evils, have driven home to us the painful truth that man is still, at bottom, no better than an animal with all its base instincts. Pbysical enjoyment and blind selfishness seem to be the chief aims of human existence, and all our education, intelligence, and energy are being used for these ends. At the conclusion of each catastrophe humanity has fondly cherished hopes of establishment of everlasting peace and order by looking up to one party or ism after another in vain. The glamour of material prosperity and comfortable living, augmented by the so-called marvels of modern science, has given the go-by to the spiritual and ethical foundations of social solidarity and progress. A life of insensate self-indulgence in place of sacrifice and service, of the supremacy of force and fraud over matters spiritual, and of disingenuous 'manners' masking natural feelings and motives has robbed modern man of his wealth of noble instincts and higher values. In many parts of the world even fundamental human rights of social decency and justice are denied to the minorities by a communal, political, or racial majority. The very structure of civilized society is gradually disintegrating owing to lack of a true and lasting basis of social organization.

In India, the present-day distemper of our social life is traceable to the ever increasing complexity and confusion of ideals, norms, and values. Since her contact with Western nations, India has been subjected to a process of continuous transformation under the influence of powerful alien political, social, and economic forces. The potent indigenous civilization of pre-historic antiquity, representing the growth of a long and natural process of evolution and rooted in the very soul of the social organism, has become solidly concretized in the life and institutions of the people. The new civilization of the West with its imposing grandeur of science, commerce, and industry, and, till recently, with its power of political and economic suzerainty, sought to foist on India an outlandish and definitely uncongenial milieu, largely in conflict with the time-honoured traditional life of the people. This 'cultural conquest' has succeeded in ushering in a class of persons who are Indian by birth but Western in taste, opinions, morals, and intellect. This conflict between the old and the new—often spoken of as the East and the West or the Orient and the Occident—is growing keener every day as our relations with other countries and peoples are becoming more and more intimate.

There was a glorious time in India when she was fully her own, and she went forward freely, adhering to the great spiritual truths which form the bed-rock of her stable society and welcoming anything new as an advance in power and knowledge. In ancient India the centres of national life were always the intellectual and the spiritual and not the political. Unlike the modern West, in India political and social power has been always subordinated to the spiritual and the intellectual. Keen analytical power and rare poetic and artistic insight form, as it were, the keynote of the Indian national character. The aim of individual and social progress was and is ultimate spiritual realization and supersensuous perception of the one indivisible Truth. While admitting absolute spiritual equality of all persons, social disparity was maintained as a convenient system of differentiation of persons according to individual occupations and the preponderance of their natural endowments and qualities. The ancient law-givers, fully recognizing both the spiritual and the temporal aspects of life on earth, clearly laid down the supreme ideals of a perfect state of society in which it is best possible for each individual to obtain legitimate enjoyment of the pleasures of this world (*abhyudaya*) and also realize the ultimate goal of human existence (*nihśreyasa*). Every student of ancient Indian history knows too well how harmoniously and successfully this mighty and complex social organization of the Hindus has worked for thousands of years,

and how it has always served to stabilize peace, order, and progress.

But now the world has come to such a strange pass that we know how to fly in the air and navigate over unfathomable oceans, but how to live and let live we do not know. Though the evil effects of a purely materialistic social order are now apparent, yet perplexed humanity is far from those ideals and values that have done so much good and that have stood the test of time and experience. Many of our present-day social reformers and their apologists continue to tread the unhelpful path of ridicule, destruction, and substitution of everything that is to them ancient or orthodox. It is admitted on all hands that a fresh adjustment of the old civilization to new conditions is an absolute and urgent necessity. The task should be one of preservation and reinterpretation of our ancient spiritual and cultural heritage to suit the imperative needs of modern conditions and environments, without tampering with the allegiance of the people to the fundamental ideals and values. Even today these ideals and values which form the heart of the body social are full of strength and vitality. It is the silent and steady influence of this spiritual basis at bottom that has served to animate social life in India and to keep it in working order. From time immemorial, in India, the scriptures, saints, and philosophers have declared with one voice that the spiritual ideal is the supreme ideal of life for every man and woman, and that social values and institutions must subserve the ends of this ultimate spiritual ideal.

It is unfortunate but indisputable that side by side with our attainment of political unification and commercial and scientific progress, long years of foreign domination have brought about a slow disruption of our social organization and a steady weakening of social authority. Hindu society now seems to be drifting along with neither definite aims to pursue nor leaders to follow. Of course, the eternal truths of the scriptures and the immortal lives and teachings of the prophets and seers are all ever present before us to inspire and to guide, and to lead us on to the haven of peace, blessedness, and illumination. But thanks to modern education and the rage for secularizing everything, the younger generation is out for a wholesale rejection of whatever has come down from the past and a blind acceptance of every fascinating novelty, Indian or non-Indian. The elders, partly cast in the mould of the eternal past, naturally view with deep concern the unwholesome tendencies manifesting themselves in the growing generation. They cannot but helplessly look on as they are painfully conscious of their own shortcomings, and find themselves unable to inspire or to exert a healthy sobering influence on their proteges and protegees.

The spell of imitating the conventions and creeds of foreign social systems is getting such a strong hold upon Indian youth that what is good or what is bad is no longer decided by reasoned judgment or discrimination born out of an intimate knowledge of our Shastras. Whatever ideas and ideals are praised and propagated by Comrades and Supermen in other lands are uncritically accepted in toto. And whatever they dislike or condemn in our own time-honoured civilization will have to go lock, stock, and barrel. There cannot be a more tangible proof of foolishness than this! In the name of personal freedom and comradeship, we find that reverence for elders, regard for the preceptor and the knowledge he imparts, and even family loyalties are treated lightheartedly if not shockingly disregarded. Mental and moral discipline is yielding place to aberration and refractoriness of a dangerous type. Social and economic doctrines and systems tried elsewhere and found severely wanting are being welcomed with open arms by some of our countrymen who are evidently ignorant of the richness and variety of our old and living civilization. Young India thinks: 'If we only adopt Western ideas, Western socio-economic systems, and Western

methods of revolution, then we shall be as strong and powerful as the Western nations. What the Western nations have done and are doing must surely be good for us too, for, have they not become so great?' But Old India sounds caution: 'Fools! By slavish imitation others' ideals never become our own. If we copy alien revolutionary methods, ignoring the path of true and orderly progress in conformity with our national genius and social pattern, we may bring incalculable harm to our country, to its people, and to their priceless cultural legacy. Even as a flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment, these pseudo-scientific and pseudo-economic Mumbo Jumbos of the West are dazzling your eyes. Look out, boys, and beware!'

Society is to the individual what a fertile soil is to a plant. The force that would contribute to the healthy all-round growth of every individual must come from within the body social. It is the spiritual basis of social life that can prevent periodic social maladjustment from working havoc with the human personality. Ordinarily life in any society is characterized by disharmony and frustration manifesting themselves in social and other forms of lawlessness. From the sociological standpoint, religious dynamism and mystic intuition are great and potent factors that go to reconcile conflicts and strains that often crop up even in the best social organization. From the earliest times social life in India was organic and whole, and conducive to the moral and spiritual progress of man. True to her cultural heritage, India has, through several centuries, evolved a balanced social order, ethically progressive, culturally advanced, and psychologically sound, founded on principles and ideals which have sprung from a spiritual foundation. The elimination of social disvalues was sought to be achieved through a positive integral conception of man and society and a harmonious blending of the emotional and the intellectual attributes that guide life and actions. The real ideal of the Hindu social organization is not one of personal enjoyment but of self-sacrifice and service, not one of self-interest or group-interest but of renunciation, love, and charity.

The root cause of social disequilibrium and the consequent cultural regression is the lack of spiritual enlightenment and a living active faith in the divinity of man. To set store by inadequate substitutes for religion and insufficient factors of altruism is but to increase social confusion and widen the schism in the soul of man. Societies which countenance shifting standards of right and wrong, of love and hate, and of good and evil cannot but make this social confusion worse confounded. Unless social reconstruction is effected in the light of religious ideals, such reconstruction or reform is bound to meet with ultimate failure. It is futile and often disastrous to the country and the people as a whole to set one class or caste against another, to despise the cultural treasures and traditions of the past, or to reject all that is valuable and good in our religious and social life. For, 'We cannot just disrupt and hope for something better without having some vision of the future we are working for, however vague that vision may be. We cannot just create a vacuum, or else that vacuum will fill itself up in a way that we may have to deplore. In the constructive schemes that we may make, we have to pay attention to the human material we have to deal with, to the background of its thought and urges, and to the environment in which we have to function. To ignore all this and to fashion some idealistic scheme in the air, or merely to think in terms of imitating what others have done elsewhere, would be folly. It becomes desirable, therefore, to examine and understand the old Indian social structure which has so powerfully influenced our people.' (Jawaharlal Nehru: *The Discovery of India*).

The organizers of ancient Hindu society possessed a great deal of wisdom, true knowledge, and intimate experience of human values

and tendencies. In formulating principles and disciplines that should guide society, they laid great emphasis on the integration of personality and the subordination of all egos to one supreme superconsious value. To them the unit of social life is the individual, with his innate divinity of the soul and his apparent physical limitations, possessed of the power of discrimination to choose between right and wrong. The Indian social ideal is extremely democratic, steering clear of the defects of narrow individualism and secular socialism, and offers to every person full freedom to govern himself through voluntary self-control, and to attain to the highest state of self-realization by following any one of the spiritual paths that lead to ultimate Truth or God-consciousness. What the Hindu sociologists aimed at was the building up of a broad-based and well-knit society in which everyone's physical, psychical, and spiritual advance is amply secured. Nothing short of a gradual and complete transfiguration of man and the sublimation of his animal propensities into divine attributes was constantly insisted upon.

Two main theories of society—the material and the spiritual—have been adhered to and followed by different social groups at different times. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* makes mention of these two distinctly disparate bases of individual and social life, through the story of Indra and Virochana. Both sought from the Creator that knowledge of the Self which would lead to 'the conquest of all the worlds and the possession of all the values'. Virochana and his demoniac followers (*asura*) failed to rise above the sensory values of this world, and identifying the Self with the physical body, continued to adore a Godless and purely materialistic civilization—cruel and insatiable in its pursuit of power and wealth, egotistic and aggressive beyond measure. Indra and the other gods, on the contrary, did not rest content with the corporeal and ephemeral view of Self but pursued their inquiry still further till they realized the ultimate imperishable reality. They meditated on this true Self, and, as a result, all the worlds and all the values came to their hands. Therefore, the Upanishadic seers assure us that 'any one else who learns about this Self from his teacher and realizes It, gets all the worlds and all the values'. It is clear from the Upanishadic teachings that each individual as well as society of which he formed a part were expected to direct all their energies and endeavours to the search after and realization of the Self by subordinating the lower aims of life to the higher spiritual goal.

The failure to harmonize the superficial conflicts between individual and universal outlook, between social group-interests and world purpose, is the root cause of much unnecessary and avoidable misery in the life of people. The antagonism between individualism and socialism is one of degree and not of kind. The call of socialism has the passion of religion and its general appeal lies in its sympathy for the masses and in its struggle against social injustice. The higher classes consisting of the upper ten thousand, enjoying every form of special privilege, are apathetic to the miseries of their own less fortunate fellowmen. The excellent institution of the Hindu caste system was never worse off than it is today. Those who passionately strive for resurgence and social solidarity of the Hindu community find, to their dismay, the wind taken out of their sails by narrow caste prejudices, social exclusiveness to the extent of untouchability, and callous disregard of the poorer members of society. And naturally their opponents have not been slow to make capital out of these glaring but regrettable evils of modern Hindu society. The individualistic outlook has to be broadened, and the wrong notions of 'high' and 'low' in caste or class should be eradicated through a spiritual understanding of the verities of life. And the socialistic outlook should cease to look upon men as merely producers or con-

sumers, or as products conditioned by social and economic factors alone.

Is caste-prejudice or class-struggle inevitable in society irrespective of its high ideal? If individual needs and aspirations differ from man to man, yet cannot society be so ordered as to minimize the clash and conflict, and provide for the establishment of neighbourly love and self-perfection? 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' was not a platitude uttered in vain. Vedanta, while recognizing inevitable differences in relative existence, boldly proclaims that all men are equal on a spiritual and divine basis. But this divinity has to be manifested before we can claim equality. The mystics and seers who had realized the oneness of all existence made no difference whatsoever between man and man on grounds of caste, creed, or nationality. A forced equality or a violent fight for rights or privileges can only end in perpetuating mutual hatred and disharmony. Good men need not necessarily belong to the higher caste. The true spirit of progress does not decry or deny the heritage of the past, but fulfils its promises. Progress is organic and not discontinuous, and no complete break with the past is ever called for. Morality or humanism cannot be the ultimate goal of society, for there can be no lasting solution on the moral level which is variable from group to group. Perfection is in the spirit which is beyond all dualities. The fundamental problem of human relationships is often lost sight of in the welter of political and economic conflicts. If it is possible to form a society wherein the knowledge and poise of the Brahmin, the valour and culture of the Kshatriya, and the distributive and adventurous spirit of the Vaishya, and the ideal equality and hardihood of the labourer are all kept intact, it will be an ideal social organization. In the achievement of this, who will lead the way but India?

MYSTICISM—TRUE AND FALSE

By Swami Pavitrananda

The English word 'mysticism' has been much misunderstood, if not much abused. It is used in a variety of meanings. In its highest sense it means union with God, in its worst sense it denotes or connotes occultism, mystery-mongering, or even fraudulent display of supernatural phenomena. So mysticism is looked upon with adoration by some, it is used also as an expression of ridicule, if not of reproach by others. As against genuine mystical experiences, overwhelming numbers of persons have practised fraud in the name of mysticism upon credulous people in all countries. It is therefore that mysticism is viewed with disfavour by critically minded persons and men with scientific outlook. But nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that there are genuine mystical experiences. For only when there are good coins as legal tender, counterfeit coins appear in the market.

It is very difficult to find an equivalent for the English word 'mysticism' in Indian languages. The Sanskrit expression *Ātmānubhūti* might be the nearest approach to it. But the Sanskrit equivalent leaves aside much of the undesirable things that are associated with the English word. In any case let us use the word in its best sense—that is, in the sense of self-realization or spiritual experiences—and see whether it can bear critical study and scientific scrutiny.

'There are more things in heaven and earth ... than are dreamt of in our philosophy', said a character in Shakespear. In our

life also there are many experiences which are mysterious or which cannot be explained with human reasonings. Death, for instance, is an experience which has not as yet been adequately explained. Could we explain death, our life would have taken entirely a different turn.

All that we know of death is that it is an end—to all intents and purposes—of all our human activities; it is a dropping down into a mid-ocean from which there is no return. It is purely a subjective experience, and it cannot be repeated. So it cannot be investigated with one's intellect or reasoning faculty.

There are three kinds of experiences: those which are below reason, those which are in the plane of reason, and those which are above the level of reason. They may be called unconscious, conscious and superconscious states. We all feel and experience our conscious states. We know also that there are many things in us of which we are unconscious but which come out in the surface level to our great joy or agony. The real difficulty is with regard to the superconscious state. It is hard for us to experience it, so it is difficult for us to admit its very existence. There are many things which exist but we are not aware of their existence. Only because we do not experience it, we cannot justifiably declare that it does not exist. The same thing is true of superconscious state or supersensuous experiences.

From time immemorial there have been persons in the world who had supersensuous experiences, and their number is not limited to any particular country, race, or religion. They existed in the past, they exist even now. We are only to sift the genuine from the false types. Founders of each religion had supersensuous experiences, and belonging to each religion there had been persons who had similar experiences—though not of the same degree. The Vedic Rishis, Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed got their rare wisdom direct from the superconscious states and not through any book-learning. The same thing can be said of Buddhist Arhats, Christian mystics, Sufi fakirs, and innumerable saints belonging to all sections of the Hindu faith. With reference to saints in India within historic memory, we can mention the names of Tulsidas, Mirabai, Nanak, Chaitanya Shankara, Ramanuja, some Alwars, and a host of others, including Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in the modern scientific age. We cannot set aside their experiences so easily or deny them so glibly. By doing so we shall only display our ignorant prejudices. In trying to be rational we shall only show ourselves to be non-rational. Such tendencies are neither scientific. Science does not deny facts. We cannot deny the facts of spiritual experience, however difficult it is for us—ordinary mortals—to explain them.

There are different phases of mystic experience. The highest is that when the body-consciousness vanishes, when even the mind dissolves and the devotee becomes completely identified with the ultimate Reality. There, as the Vedanta says, distinction between the knower and the known vanishes, only the Knowledge remains. There only One without a second exists. Between the highest mystical experience and the ordinary normal state there are many phases through which one passes according to one's temperament and mental make-up. Some mystics see forms and visions of the Deity they love or hear the 'voice of God' or even talk with That.

With regard to the mystics who lived very long ago it is difficult to prove historically the genuineness of their experiences, but from circumstantial evidence we are forced to admit that they were not false. The songs of Mirabai, Tulsidas, Ramprasad, the Nayanars, Tyagaraja, and many other saints bear internal evidence that they would see visions of and talk with the Godhead in the same way as in the ordinary plane of existence two men meet and talk with each other. These mystic experiences of forms and visions

come as a result of hard struggle on the part of a devotee, sometimes they come quite unsought for. In Christianity they are called 'conversions'. A man may not have any religious hankering, or he may have even anti-religious feelings, but all on a sudden he gets some mystic experience, and his whole life changes : he becomes a deeply religious person. St. Teresa, a Spanish mystic of the sixteenth century, said : 'I did not seek Christ. Christ sought me.' In her young age, one day, quite unexpectedly, she saw the vision of Christ. From that moment her mind turned towards religion and afterwards she became one of the most important saints of Christianity. Many such instances can be cited from also the lives of Hindu saints, as a matter of fact, from the history of any religion. Some mystics, along with their religious experiences, incidentally develop psychic or supernatural powers—such as prophetic visions, the capacity to change another man's mind, the faculty to do things without having recourse to ordinary human methods and so on. These powers come as bye-products, as it were, when the mind passes from the ordinary to the highest supersensuous state. But it is admitted on all hands that one who is caught in the snares of these bye-products, that is, one who is enamoured of and utilizes these bye-products for secular ends, cannot grow any more in spirituality. So those who fail in spiritual life or are pseudo-mystics—not to speak of definite charlatans—make a display of their supernatural powers to the gaping wonder of ordinary people. One should, therefore, beware of pseudo-mystics, as one should not be loath to admire and properly evaluate a real mystic.

Now, how to distinguish between a true and a pseudo-mystic ? Well, a tree is judged by its fruits. The conduct and character of the man will show whether he has got genuine or false mystical experiences. A true mystic, who has touched the feet of God or has experienced his unity with the Godhead, will be absolutely pure in character, extremely unselfish in conduct, and, above all, loving to one and all without any distinction whatsoever. An ordinary human being may develop those qualities to a certain degree through extreme effort but they come to a mystic spontaneously and in a degree beyond compare excepting with a fellow-mystic of the same level. A mystic is totally unconcerned with the material ends of life, the ego in him is completely dead and his surrender to God or the Higher Power is complete. But he releases a power whose effect defies time and circumstances. Think of the influence of a Buddha or a Christ. Though they are physically non-existent for about two thousand years, yet people worship them almost as God. The same thing is true —more or less—of other mystics. During their lifetime they ceaselessly radiate joy and peace and whoever comes into contact with them receives them consciously or unconsciously. Even their very silence is a great power and instrument for giving others divine bliss. The world lives, society exists, because at the apex of all human ideals stands the goal attained or indicated by the mystics. Sometimes one of them is sufficient to save a whole nation from moral degradation. The ideal and teachings lived and preached by them restrains ordinary people when there arises a tendency in the latter for going astray.

Mystics belong to a class by themselves. Wherever they may be born,—they may be ancient or modern—they speak of the same truth though their language differs according to the place or race they are born in. They have a universal message for humanity and they transcend all barriers of time, space, and nationality. Wrongly do the critics accuse mystics of escapism or of being other-worldly. Their love for humanity is immense and their vision of universal brotherhood all-embracing. They, as it were, live for others after they have attained the goal of their lives. No sacrifice they consider too great if they can thereby make a single individual happier and better.

No mystic claims exclusive monopoly of

his spiritual experience. If he did, he would expose himself to doubt and suspicion. On the contrary all mystics are eager to share their experiences with others. What high bliss they have got access to, they want to have for their less fortunate brethren. To enjoy that by oneself only would have been a form of selfishness. A mystic is farthest from being selfish. It is a common story that Ramanuja went so far as to risk his whole spiritual life and prospect in order that he might make the common people, or at least as many as he could gather in that particular moment, the recipients of that bliss which was his own. He gave his own Mantra—the key by which he was to unlock the gate of his spiritual life —to others, against the express advice even of his own Guru. Ramanuja's was the extreme case. But all mystics are more or less of the same type—cherishing a great desire to help others at any cost.

The path by which one can expect to get mystical experience is called Yoga in Hinduism. Whereas, according to Hinduism, there are as many as four Yogas—namely Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga—according to other religions there is only one path—the path of contemplation and prayer. Hinduism has very critically analysed the personality of man and indicated that by the proper utilization of his various faculties he can attain to his highest spiritual goal. As such, instead of one, different doors have been opened to an aspirant. One can follow one or more paths according to one's temperament or liking.

Some may think that in this age of science, the days of mysticism are gone and gone for ever. But, perhaps, just the opposite is the fact. The discoveries of science have deepened the mysteries of the universe. Nowadays we know more of the marvels of Nature than our ancestors were privileged to know. As such our wonder is greater and one is seized with a hunger to know what is beyond or one is stupified at the knowledge of the vastness of the universe or of the intricate way in which the tiniest atom works. This creates in one the desire to know what is at the back of the universe. To follow that desire is to go into the path of mysticism.

In the modern age also the existence of mystics has not been altogether absent or their number rare. The very fact that so many false or pseudo-mystics are thriving in every country indicates that with all our boast of scientific discoveries or our pride in having a scientific outlook, the hunger for mysticism is deep in the heart of every human being. Pseudo-mystics are only taking advantage of this universal hankering in order to run their flourishing trade. What is needed is not to decry mysticism but to study it properly and give it a right direction for the universal good of mankind.

'... This world is nothing. It is at best only a hideous caricature, a shadow of Reality. We must go to the Reality. Renunciation will take us to it. Renunciation is the very basis of our true life; every moment of goodness and real life that we enjoy, is when we do not think of ourselves. This little separate self must die. Then we shall find that we are in the Real, and that Reality is God, and He is our own true nature, and He is always in us and with us. Let us live in Him and stand in Him. It is the only joyful state of existence. Life on the plane of the spirit is the only life, and let us all try to attain to this realisation.'

—Swami Vivekananda

EVOLUTION AND ETHICS—THE SOCIAL DESTINY OF MAN

By Dr. Radhakamal Mukherji

Stress of Solidarity of Life in Social Ecology

Man is a unique creature in the evolutionary process, and society a distinctive achievement. Out of the give-and-take between man and society the good life springs and thrives, whose roots hark back to the pre-human world, and which carries man as a rational and moral creature into an ideal goodness that he alone can conceive and actualize in his evolution. In the course of organic evolution, it is man's tools, speech, and traditions, perfected as these are by him alone among the animals, that have given him biological dominance. Man on account of the intelligent use of his twofold tools, his hands and his voice, has built up a richer, more complex, and more adaptive external social legacy than any social animal. This consists not merely of his tools, artefacts, stores, and dwellings, his domesticated animals, methods of production and transport and so on, but also of intellectual, aesthetic, and moral traditions and values that now lift his advance into a higher level and order. It is society's external registrations in the form of the various kinds of traditions, values, and institutions that act as a sieve of selection, making for man's advance in love and goodwill, freedom and organization, discrimination and control of the environment. Man's advance rests less on the constitution of the germ plasm, as in the case of the animal, and more on the structure of his extra-organismal heritage that acts in his case as the more effective agency of selection and advance.

This external heritage of man, considered as the biological animal, corresponds to the complex system of linkages that interlock the lives of a single animal or species of animal, and subordinate these to the welfare of the species or the biotic community as a whole. Modern ecology in unravelling the multitudinous threads of the web of life finds that in the perspective of evolution the interrelations between plants and animals, between flowers and insects, between herbivores and carnivores of different sizes and ways of living, and between various other parts of the living world become more intricate, subtle, and coherent. Variation and selection are always in relation to the web of life that surrounds, interpenetrates, and overreaches the lives of single organisms. It is in this intricate web of life that the great gains of the past are in some measure recorded and systematized. The correlation of organisms and solidarity of life in an ecological area come to direct evolutionary progress.

Man also is a part and parcel of the ramifying, subtle, and fine chain of action and interaction that link his economic life, health, and security to soil, vegetation, and the animal kingdom, and in old areas of settlement often has brought ruin upon himself by snapping these threads. Human ecology now gives a warning to civilization and a lesson for mankind to supersede a one-sided exploitation of soil, waters, and trees by a more farsighted and wide-minded co-operation with the bio-ecological forces, so that society may be more immune from perils and crises on the bases of a sound working relationship between its land-water culture and the heritage of the earth. The ecology of ancient civilizations that deals with the recurrent crises and downfalls of peoples, rooted as these are in the spendthrift management or dissipation of their physical heritage, sounds an ethical note in so far as man's security and advance rest on the thought for the morrow, on his sacrifice for unborn generations, as his shortsightedness, extravagance, and selfishness in the use of resources

in soil, vegetation, and waters spell degeneration that brands the parasite.

In the case of animals the ecological interrelations are a matter of reciprocal physiological adaptation and adjustment of mutual habits and ways of living that make up a balanced, self-regulating organization of the life-communities. In man social traditions, values, and institutions establish co-operative relationships with the ecological complex, and weed out habits, attitudes, and ways of living that are 'ecological' misfits. The consideration of animal ecological interrelations suggests that evolutionary advance depends upon the care of offspring, division of labour, and mutual co-operation, the raw materials, at least, of ethical life. Ethical principles dawn in organic evolution with symbiosis and co-operation, with the capacity of animals for sexual tenderness, brood-care, and subordination to the leader of the group for community welfare. With man such principles are extended and deepened for the good of the community; while the social community that encompasses man also gradually extends in range in space and time. Social ecology is the biological aspect of ethics or evolutionary ethics. The development of ecology in large measure dispels the apprehensions of Huxley as regards the contradiction between the ethical and the cosmic process. Ecology definitely teaches man that it is by attuning himself to the social and environmental interrelations that he can best safeguard the continuity of his group and permanence of his species.[1]

The Moral Aspect of the Use of Tools

Man's tool of language and tools created by his hand as well as traditions of social and economic co-operation that are responsible for his biological dominance have played a significant role in the development of morality. The tool of language built up through use is fundamental. Language focuses reflection on new situations and predicaments, and thus promotes practical adaptation and prevention. Only after words are in vogue for social situations and experiences can customs and traditions also operate. By linking emotions of praise and blame with conduct that are expressed in words, language develops moral habits and social conformities. To all expressions of value appreciations and experience in fellowmen man immediately gives his own emotional response. This underlies the process of valuation. Language in the case of man expresses not only emotions as in the case of animals, but also value-judgment and choice in respect of desirability and undesirability, truth or falsehood, beauty or ugliness, rightness or wrongness of emotions and behaviour. He can not only ponder over right and wrong but express his approval and disapproval for the same as no other animal can. Man is thus the evaluating animal. Human values can only emerge through the medium of language and symbols that serve as channels of communication and rational discussion between members of a social group. Man alone is capable of conceptual thinking and expression. The distinction between right and wrong in conduct has been indeed profoundly aided by man's capacity of using words and signs expressive of goodness and evil, virtue and vice, self-esteem and humiliation. Further, such distinction refers to both the past and the future, while animal speech deals only with the present emotional or behavioural situation. Thus man's language aids the development of moral values and traditions that may be transmitted to posterity, stimulating right appreciation, understanding, and conduct as a selective agency disapproving and rejecting individuals who fail utterly to act up to these. In order that man's biological impulses and needs can be crystallized and transformed into values, there must intervene, in the first place, the exercise of individual reason, judgment, and will in respect of the desirability or undesirability of such values and, secondly, collective discussion, judgment, and communication that in fact largely determine individual

[1] See Mukherji: *Social Ecology*, Chapter I.

choice and mode of fulfilment of values. All values are social products and as such these impel the activities of man. all of whose desires could be met only through the instrumentality of groups and institutions. All values are bearers of society's appreciation and judgment. Man's extra-organismal inheritance of judgments, ideals, signs, and symbols not only represents a conscious formulation and choice of values but also the goodness and wisdom of the race transmitted by one generation to another that may yet differ in its adoption of the scale of values. Human language, then, is the chief factor in giving a meaning and a conscious ethical direction to human evolution. Man's experience and judgment of values as recorded in his rich legacy of literature and of the arts, symbols, and conventions lifts progress altogether to another level.

Like human symbols, man's tools of his hand, traditions, and sense of territory also invest human evolution with a unique ethical and spiritual significance. In spite of Benjamin Franklin, tool-making is not the prerogative of the human species. Man alone is not a tool-using animal. For many animals, from spider to ape make and employ tools in a crude manner. Monkeys use stones and crabs sea anemones for fighting. Many animals have their routine 'industries'. But man is the tool-changing animal. He can adjust his tools to his varying needs, values, and ideals in a manner that no animal can. Human speech and traditions, and sense of ownership of territory lead to a far greater elaboration and variegation of man's tools, implements and techniques than is possible in the animal world, Swords can be converted into ploughshares, and *vice versa*. Tools used for the same objective also compete with one another and are selected according to their efficiency and flexibility of adaptation. As specialized tools are invented to cope with special tasks, and the tools themselves fit into one another in a smoothly working mechanical system, man's life and outlook are dominated by purposefulness and the sense of power. All tools, biologically speaking, are extensions or amplifications on the animal's body and its organs. In the case of animal tools their strength and elaboration are obviously limited by the physical condition of the animal. It is only in the case of the beaver-dam, the ant-nest, the bee-hive, or the termitary that permanent social products are built up outliving and far eclipsing the tools of the individual animal. Such works however, belong particularly to those species of animals, among whom the instinctive mechanisms of social co-operation are highly developed. Man's tools and implements have indefinite possibilities of extension and power, due to his mental development and the advantage of accumulation and transmission of skill and heritage through many generations. And this introduces a serious biological issue in which the future of *homo sapiens* is implicated. For man's evolution and use of tools have progressed much faster than his moral and social adaptation to the conditions of his milieu as refashioned by the tools. The misuse of his science and technology now threatens him with extinction. Man has to show himself a more socialized animal to prevent his enslavement and annihilation by his own handiworks—atomic science and technology. He has emulated the toil, devotion, and enthusiasm of the worker bee and ant as they build their nests, but not their co-operativeness. The question is essentially one of the scale of valnes for the use and direction of tools.

Ethical Significance of Human Evolution

The increase of man's dominance, freedom, and control of the environment accompanies a progressive improvement of human tools, implements, and skilled techniques. Simultaneously man projects a whole world of values to his instruments and intermediaries, ranging from sticks and stones to hammers and guns, swords and ploughshares and the most complicated useful or destructive machinery.

The progressive specialization and improvement of human tools and machinery, and techniques implies, to some extent, a moral transformation. There is gain in man's foresight and anticipation and tension of collective feeling and endeavour. There is also gain in interdependence of specialized jobs and tasks, systems of production, distribution, and exchange and of economic groups and social classes that all integrate themselves into a balanced pattern, bending a multitude of means towards common objectives, and regulated by laws of property and competition, rules of contract and exchange as well as common attitudes, interests and values. On the one hand, man deliberately selects and controls technology and the institutional pattern according to his collective scale of values and ideal that he redefines and reshapes from time to time. On the other hand, it is the technology and institutional pattern that sifts out variant or aberrant individuals who do not fit in with the prevailing social or economic system—autocracy or republic, capitalism or collectivism and the code of property and legal, economic, and social freedoms these postulate.[2]

There is, in the first place, the hereditary element in man's pattern of values and moral code requiring but little conditioning in order to fix them. Secondly, there is social conditioning of the individual in childhood by the scale of values adopted by society. Thirdly, it is the network of tools, institutions, symbols, habits, and ways of living that serve as sieves eliminating undesirable mental traits and moral habits of individuals. Man's ethical life deepens and widens as the result of the interaction of these three aspects of social evolution and selection, aided also by man's intellectual progress that emancipates him from an affective relationship to the environment. Thus man can contemplate abstractly and dispassionately. He can ponder not merely over things but over his own emotional conflicts and experiences that animals cannot. Animals show an organic and mental harmony. Man, who is not instinct-bound, is beset with organic and mental disharmonies and conflicts. But his intellect, memory, and imagination give him the wherewithal to resolve his conflicts, and fashion moral concepts and ideals. If some insects instinctively sacrifice their lives for the welfare of the larva yet unborn, man's imagination enables him to create and radiate goodwill that seeks to abolish the egoism and selfishness of his own species on the one hand, and the cruelty and destructiveness of the system of Nature, on the other.

The gifted individuals. the 'makers and shakers' of the world, play indeed a significant role in shaping the framework of the extra-organismal institutional heritage of man that largely supersedes Nature's regime of cruel, haphazard sifting. The exhilaration and enthusiasm of love, sweetness, and goodwill that the poet, the mystic, or the artist discover in their detachment from society and their inner illumination and ecstasy are writ large in the social idea, and subordinate the selfishness, the cruelty, and the misery of the human struggle for existence. Man largely eliminates the methods of natural selection for himself. The operations of disease, hunger, seasonal hardship, and war hardly account as effective and widespread methods of human selection and survival. Man's individual life is invested with a biological and ethical significance unknown in the pre-human world. But the institutional framework that man fashions is slowly built up. It is not flexible and cannot be changed in form and functions quickly. In human as contrasted with animal societies, the proportion of post-mature individuals to the total population is much greater, and this increases with the advance of civilization. The dominance of the old is a factor distinctly

[2] For an able discussion of the same issues see T. H. Huxley and Julian Huxley: *Touchstone for Ethics*, and Waddington's three articles in *World Review*, June, July, and August, 1946.

favouring social inertia and aversion for inventions and novelties. Thus all the while an outworn social heritage of institutions, traditions, and symbols may be 'conditioning' the individual, establishing his associated reflexes, states of consciousness, and mental and moral habits. Nor can the legacy of institutions assume that rigidity, consisteny and balance, and smoothness of working characteristic of nature's mechanisms of control and selection. Individuals who are hereditary weaklings and defectives, who are tainted or diseased, whose habits are unwholesome and harmful, and who seek vice and aggression and organize themselves for achieving anti-social goals can live and thrive in society. Their inordinate multiplication frustrates the activities of the physician, the teacher, and the philanthropist, and prevents the realization of satisfactions and values of normal men to the detriment of man's advance. Man's progress is further chequered by uncertainty in the realm of human goals and values. There is a veritable medley of values in society; individuals at cross-purposes and groups in search of anti-social values make man's evolutionary advance a tardy, uncertain, and chequered process.

Causes of Uncertainty and Conflict of Human Values

Such confusion and conflict of values are of course biologically rooted in the prolongation of human infancy and, in contrast to any other animal, the greater plasticity of the human brain and consequently greater flexibility, modifiability, and learning capacity of the human infant who is conditioned by divergent social and cultural influences. Thus although the basic urges, desires, and interests are fixed and similar for the human species, man in the setting of his social and cultural milieu variegates, qualifies, and extends both his desires and values and the manner of their satisfaction. Biologically and psychologically, in striking contrast with most other animals, individuation is more important to man than conformity of type. Thus the discord of individual preferences and of social codes is bound to emerge. Man's instincts are much less rigid and specialized than those of any other animal. He is torn normally, in a manner as no other animal is, by psychic conflicts, the stress and strain of which are minimized by certain automatic mechanisms, especially repression and sublimation. In the development of human mind, social taboos, prohibitions, and norms that have been selected by social evolution and that are painful and unpleasant to it are largely excluded from consciousness to unconsciousness. These constitute what the Freudians call the blind, tyrannical, super-ego, which has both conscious and unconscious parts, and which makes for the socialization of man with minimum psychic conflict and distress through the automatic processes of repression. The super-ego or the voice of society would permit his sexual, aggressive, and explosive urges to come to consciousness only in modified, disguised forms that do not seriously upset either his mental equilibrium or his social adjustment. The psychological mechanisms such as sublimation, symbolization, rationalization, and phantasy-making, with which psycho-analytical literature has made us familiar, change the levels of satisfactions and values and modes of their fulfilment and serve the important biological function of adapting the behaviour of the individual to the inevitable frustrations and repressions in society without the development of psychoses. As man's basic urges are thwarted, blocked, or repressed, his mental equipment and dynamism provide ample scope for large variations in emotional adaptability and for new reconciliations and integrations of urges, satisfactions and values that achieve his mental poise and harmonious maturity. Some factors in man's genetic history are also perhaps responsible for variations in valuation, viz. early man's mixed descent, his variability due to extraordinary mixtures within a single inbreeding species, and his

wide range of migration and acclimatization in new habitats; while the social conditioning by different cultures and groups also brings about significant differences in man's attitudes, interests, and scale of values that integrate themselves into divergent type-values of different peoples. In social evolution the development of speech, tradition, and tools has permitted of a wide divergence, and thus a variety of groups with a continuity of their own based on organized tradition and culture has emerged constituting the individual's immediate social milieu. Groups with values of their own exist as social integrates and superimpose upon man's genetic variability the even greater mental variability due to differences of conditioning and regional pressure.

There are again, certain biological peculiarities concerning sex and reproduction that differentiate man from other animals and make behaviour problems chronic and difficult of solution from the very start of his evolutionary career. Among animals sexual interest and activity are confined to a fixed mating season governed by an automatic cycle of chemical, neural, or hormonal regulation. Either a sexual season or a sexual cycle or both generally operate to restrict mating among the higher animals. Man, on the other hand, is continuously sexed. He has no fixed mating seasons but exhibits a perennial sex interest with his reproductive system functioning normally at any time. This has several effects on man's behaviour and morals. Gregariousness and social life were forced on early man after he descended on the *terra firma* due to his adoption of omnivorous food habit and continuous struggle with his more powerful carnivorous enemies, the small family group or horde, as of the present-day great apes, consisting of an old hunter who was absent from home for a considerable part of the time and a band of females and a few weak or immature males and offsprings. Zuckermann who has studied the mate life of apes and monkeys offers the valuable suggestion that without partial freedom from the internal chemical control exercised by the hormones in the body, the proto-men could hardly have undergone either the ecological change in food habit which ensured human survival or the first major social revolution of the human species, viz. the stabilization of the family unit. An enduring association of the sexes that alone would ensure constant and careful nurture of the human offspring was only possible when human sexual life became continuous and not punctuated by the rhythm of the seasons. Any kind of neuter existence, as that of the higher mammals, would have endangered the survival of the human species in which both the childbearing mother and the child are more helpless than in any animal species. It is thus a change in the sexual and reproductive system of the human animal that initiated the beginnings of the bi-parental family and of his social life. Yet the motivation provided by male sex hormones was not strong enough to prevent the forest men from abandoning at least overtly the full exercise of polygynous tendencies. With polygyny family life and care of offspring were haphazard and precarious. The stability of the family group or horde postulates that the other males do not encroach upon the sexual privileges of the leader in his absence or presence, and thus incest taboos comprise some of man's earliest code of morals. Rules regulating endogamy and exogamy and prohibitions of adultery and mating within certain degrees of relationship are met with in all societies, savage or civilized, and these are as often challenged as they are implicitly obeyed. If man has won partial emancipation from a predetermined and hormone-determined framework of social relationships, he has to pay the penalty through the shifting and individual character of human relationships. Furthermore, it is because the contact between the sexes is not hormone-determined or seasonal, but may be durable and hence intimate in the human species that disharmonies arise between social

and sexual interest and activity. These are inevitable in the human social evolution as the kindred comprise a group of males and females who live together in the same or contiguous dwelling or territory, establishing a division of labour and close association between the sexes that improve with social integration.[3]

(*To be continued*)

[3] Mukherji and Sen Gupta: *Sex and Culture* (not yet published).

THE MESSAGE OF THE BUDDHA

By N. Aiyaswami Sastri

Going through the religious history of India as represented in the Nikāya literature, one is sure to gain the impression that the Brahmanical spirit of the Upanishadic period was in a low ebb. Sectarian and ritualistic aspects of Brahmanism were unduly stressed. It is often reported that Brahmanas were engrossed in the pursuit of worldly pleasures, and that they were not living up to the spirit of the ancient sages. It is said that Gautama Buddha raised his voice of protest against this sort of Brahmanism, proclaiming to the world that a true Brahmana is one whose mind is free from all kinds of ambition and that such a one is a Buddha.[1] We can in no way doubt the fact that the Buddha had great respect for the ancient sages. This is evident from his conversation with Ambaṭṭha, a Brahmaṇa pupil, wherein he draws a sharp line between the ancient Rishis, the authors of the Vedic hymns, and the Brahmanas of his day (D. Sutta, 3-9-10). Once some Brahmanas of Kosala approached and pressed the Buddha to explain the true Brahmana-Dharma of the ancient Brahmanas not explained by any of the Brahmanas of their time. The Buddha took the opportunity to elucidate what he considered was the true Brahmanical way of life. 'Ancient Brahmanas', said he, 'had their wealth not in cattle and gold but in their *svādhyāya* (Vedic study). They lived the life of Brahmacharya for forty-eight years, and did not purchase their wives.' He also describes how Brahmanas degenerated subsequently (Suttanipāta, p. 50 f.-M. II. Sutta, 92).

Once there arose some dispute over the proper and improper paths of spiritual advancement among two learned Brahmana pupils, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. Their teachers are said to be big, wealthy, and learned inhabitants of Manasākaṭa, namely, Chankī, Tārukkha, Pokkharasādi, Yānussoni, Todayya and others. These two pupils went to the Buddha to solve their dispute. The Buddha points out that the real path leading to the companionship with God Brahmā is to practise four Brahmavihāras (Metta etc.). He puts his view in his usual argumentative way and convinces the Brahmana pupils of the futility of their belief that mere Vedic rites and knowledge would lead to their goal. Here again he pays his homage to the ancient great Rishis, and relying upon their tradition he argues that Brahmā being *aparigraha*, wifeless and pure-minded, a man of impure mind cannot approach him (D. I, 13, Tevijja-Sutta). From this discourse, it will be clear that the ultimate goal of Brahmanical life in those days was the reunion or companionship with God Brahmā, and not *Brahmībhāva*, oneness with Brahman, the universal principle as we find in the earlier Upanishads. There

[1] E. g. Udāna 1, 4-10; Maj. II, O. 144; Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 118.

are many other discourses of the Buddha and of his pupils which strongly confirm this view (cp. D. I, M-Govinda-Sutta etc.).

One noteworthy instance may be cited here. Dhānanjāni, a Brahmana who had a close acquaintance with Sāriputta, fell ill and sent word to the latter for help. Sāriputta, approaching the bed-side of the Brahmana, enumerated all realms in succession from hell up to the Brahmaloka, and finding his predilection to the Brahmaloka, Sāriputta preached the four Brahmavihāras as the path leading to it (M. II. s. 97). The discourse on Makhādeva also proves that the path of Brahmavihāra was practised by the ancient successive kings of Mithila to gain the same goal (M. II. s. 43). This discourse, however, testifies that the Brahmavihāra practice was an ancient one[2] and not the Buddha's original teaching. We find on several occasions in the Buddhist Suttas that a saintly person reaching spiritually the highest goal is spoken of as *Brahmabhūta* and *Brahmabhūtena attanā hoti* etc., the same as in the Upanishads. It appears, therefore, that the companionship with God Brahmā was the ultimate object of Brahmana life in the days of the Buddha and such Brahmanas were generally of lower order, including the adepts in the three Vedas. Some similar conception seems to have been echoed in the following verse of Vālmīki (Ramayana, II. xiv. 50) which declares in a way that all the Vedas aim at exalting the God Brahmā :

Vedā ssahāñgavidyāshcha yathā hyātmabhuvam vibhum,
Brahmāṇam bodhayantyadya tatha tvām bodhayāmyaham.

The Dharmasūtra of Gautama, probably of the Nikaya period, happily corroborates our above surmise. (Cp. the Sutras : III. 9. VIII. 22-23, IX. 71, which speak of Brahmaloka as the fruit of the religious life.) According to Prof. Oldenberg, the conception of the abstract Brahman was modified into personal God Brahmā, progenitor of all worlds, the first-born among beings (*Buddha*, p. 58).

There was another occasion when the Buddha happened to criticize the belief of the common people. He was once preaching at Sāvatthi to his monk disciples that one should tame the mind so as to get it released from the three kinds of Asava. A man who fulfils this mind's release can be called a *sināṭaka*, a bathed man, i.e. a man who has fulfilled the vow of one's own duty. At that time, Sundaribhāradvāja, a Brāhmana who was seated nearby said, 'But do you not go to take bath in the river Bahuka?' The Buddha retorted, 'What will the river Bahuka do?' The Bahuka is believed by many persons to be conducive to Moksha and Punya. And in the waters of Bahuka men can wash away the evil deeds that they have committed. Further the Buddha said, 'Of what avail Sundarikā's flow, Payāga's flood, the waves of Bahuka? The man of enmity and evil deeds remains uncleansed of his soil and guilts. If you clean your tongue from lying speech, do not harm, do not take what is not your own and be faithful of heart, what do you seek at far Gayā?' (M. I. p. 39, Silachara, Discourses, I. pp. 40-41). This attitude of the Buddha has been more elaborately discussed and upheld in the Chittavishuddhi of Aryadeva.

In more than one discourse there has been created some situation under which some Brahmana pupils and householders, generally not learned but only proud of their birth, contended against the superiority of the Buddha over their teachers. The teachers, however, being fully aware of the circumstances, disclaimed the honour that was attributed by others, and paid due homage and respect to the Buddha. The Brahmanas Soṇadaṇḍā, Kūṭadanta (D. I. 2 and 3), and Chankī (M. II. s. 95) are well known instances here. Whenever these Brahmanas paid a visit to the Buddha, some topics of great dispute were generally discussed. We shall cite a few

[2] E. J. Thomas confirms this view. V. *Life of Buddha*, p. 127 with note I.

of them so that we may have an idea of the social and religious conditions obtaining in those days.

It was on the occasion of Chankī's visit, that Kapathika, a young Brahmana pupil who was introduced to the Buddha as a good debater, put this question : 'The ancient Brahmanas study with utmost care the hymns that have been transmitted orally and traditionally, and say that this alone is true and the other untrue'.

Assalāyana, who was chosen as a good debater and deputed to conduct debate with the Buddha, asked : 'The Brahmanas say that only Brahmanas are superior and entitled to spiritual advancement, and are born of Brahmā's face, while others are not so' (M. II. 93). This very question was again put by the King of Mathura, sometime after the Buddha's *parinivvāna*, to Mahākachchāna who criticizes it on the basis of arguments quite different from those of the Buddha (M. II. 84).

Another Brahmana, Esukāri by name, asked the Buddha the question as to the mutual services amongst the four Varṇas. It is to the following effect : The Brahmanas declare that a Brahmana deserves service from a Brāhmana and the other three Varṇas. A Khatriya deserves it from a Khatriya and the other two Varṇas, a Vessa from a Vessa and a Sudda, and a Sudda from a Sudda alone (M. II, p. 177-8). A Brahmana has good wealth (*bhikhacharya*), a Khatriya bow and arrow (*dhanukalāpa*), a Vessa agriculture and cattle breeding (*kasikamma*), and a Suddā menial service (*asitabyabangi*).

Once a Brahmana pupil called Subha happened to meet the Buddha. He, with permission, asked questions on the five Dharmas as declared by Brahmanas for accumulation of virtues. The five Dharmas are : Satya, Tapa, Brahmacharya, Ajjhenam, and Chagam. When the Buddha criticized and remarked that the views and traditions of Brahmanas are just like those of blind persons, Subha got angry and began to abuse him (in the words of Pokkharasādi) saying that certain Shramaṇas and Brahmanas claimed that they had attained to a supramundáne knowledge (i.e. omniscience) and that this declaration was false. Sometimes this unbelief is attributed to the Buddha himself who had to give out his intention about what he had stated. (See Kannakatthala Sutta, M. II, p. 127).

We may note that all these questions are based on Brahmanical practices and customs. Vedas and Vedic hymns are absolute authorities for Brahmanas ; hence they study them with utmost care. Assalāyana's question is sound on the authority of the Vedic passages, and many Dharmasūtras and Smriti works pronounce that the Brahmanas alone are entitled to the Sanyāsa stage of life. Esukāri's query also arises from the Smriti and Dharmasūtra books which prescribe duties and other necessaries for each Varṇa. The question of the Brahmana Subha sums up the ideal and moral conduct of each Traivarṇika as prescribed in the Manu and other Dharmashastras. Although the Buddha criticizes the Brahmana views about the above five Dharmas, he does not deny them absolutely but accepts them as applicable to the path of calming the mind. If a person keeps up his mind free from jealousy and ill-feeling he should be called a truth-speaker (*sachchavādi*). It is also stated incidentally that the Buddha knows very well the path leading to Brahmā's companionship.

Another important question which the Buddha had to solve was that of caste distinction by birth. There were many occasions when the Buddha happened to pronounce his views on this question. When the Brahmana pupil Ambaṭṭha brought forth charges against Shakyas for disrespecting Brahmanas openly, the Buddha, refuting them, remarked that caste, clan, and rank distinctions could be observed only in the domain of marriage and similar other social affairs and not in the field of spiritual advancement (D. I, p. 99). This view was also supported

by some Brahmanas of higher intellect like Soṇadaṇḍa who, on behalf of the Buddha, said that of the five factors of Brahmanahood, viz. Jāti, Manta, Vanna, Sīla and Panná, the last two really constituted the Brahmanahood (D. I. s. 4). He has cited an instance from his own family (D. I. p. 121).

Again there arose some dispute over Brahmanahood between Vaseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. The latter held that when one's parentage is pure for previous seven generations on both sides, one becomes a Brahmana. Vaseṭṭha, on the other hand, maintained that by keeping perfect Shīla and other religious vows one is considered to be a Brahmana. Thus they being unable to convince mutually, approached the Buddha who, after detailing the definitions of many professional men, declared that one could not become a Brahmana merely by virtue of birth (Suttan. IX, v. 650). The King Pasenadi once sought clarification on the problem. His question was: 'Is there any distinction or demarcation among the four classes of men ?' The Buddha replied, 'Two of the four classes of men, Brahmana and Khatriya, occupy the foremost rank and deserve salutation, homage, obeisance, and due ministry'. When the King expressed his intention that the question related to spiritual progress (*sāmparāyika*), the Buddha categorically denied any distinction with good many illustrations. Whoever is possessed of of the five fundamental factors (*padhaniyanga*) viz. Saddhā, Appabādhā, Asaṭha, Araddhaviriya, and Paññā, there could be no distinction amongst such persons, which proposition has been proved with the illustration of fire. No fire being produced from different woods can be differentiated on that account (M. II. 90. pp. 128-130). Further the Buddha was once approaching the house of Bhāradvāja, the fire-worshipper (Aggi-Bhāradvāja). The Brahmana observing the Buddha coming at some distance shouted, 'Stop there ! O shaven one, stand there ! O Vasalaka !' The Buddhá asked, 'Do you know, O Brahmana, who is Vasala, and what áre the things thát make one Vasala ?' The Brahmána, was unable to answer the question. The Buddha asserted that no one is a Vasalá or Brahmana by birth, but one is called so by one's deeds alone (Suttan. VIII. 136). He pronounced the same answer when he was asked his caste by some Bhāradvāja dwelling on the bank of river Sundari. He said, 'Do not ask me my caste and my Vedic branch. I am pacified in truth and a wayfarer in the ultimate knowledge'.

Now it appears that in all his discourses the Buddha denies the distinction[3] of caste and clan only with regard to spiritual matters and admission into his order, and not absolutely and for all other purposes.[4] This is the reason why his teaching has been characterized as *Chatuvanni-Suddhi* which was endorsed by the King Pasenadi (M. II. s. 90 p. 132) and which was nevertheless challenged in vain by certain sections of Brahmanas, e.g. Nānāveranjaka Brahmanas (M. II, s. 93, p. 147). Nor wás the removál of the caste distinction even with regard to Pravrajyā attempted for the first time by the Buddha, because, as Prof. Oldenberg has stated, before his time, probably long before his time, there were religious orders which received members of all castes, both men and women (*Buddha*, p. 154).

The Buddha's teachings are mainly concerned with the community of Bhikhus and Bhikhunis and their spiritual career and

3 See *Gautama*, S. Radhakrishnan, 1938, p. 12; Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 156-8 with notes. The contrast of Buddha with Brahmanas is that the former does not approve any restriction being made to Pravrajyā, the fourth stage of life, but accepted such one in respect of matrimonial alliance; whereas the latter accept polygamy but say that the Pravrajyā is applicable to Brahmanas alone. The ancient Kshatriyas were very particular in maintaining the purity of blood. Cp. B. C. Law, *India as described in early Bud. and Jain texts* (1941).

4 'There is nothing to show that Buddha tried to abolish caste as a social institution', E. J. Thomas, *Life*, p. 128.

progress. They could not have any direct bearing on the reforms of society or the lay world at large. He has even referred to and appreciated that the purity of blood has been kept up among the royal and other ranks of men. He did not make any attempt to introduce wholesale reforms in the social order of the day. He has instructed the laymen not to deflect from discharging the customary functions of their families. According to Prof. Oldenberg there was not any sharply drawn line between his regular Upāsakas and non-Upāsakas in the lay world (p. 382-3). Nobody was to alter his social rank by virtue of becoming his lay disciple except that he had to take refuge in the Buddha. Almost all Brahmanas who held conversations with him generally became his Upāsakas. It does not at all follow that they have altered their social rank and given up their Brahmanical customs and culture.[5] In other words, there was no incongruity in one's becoming his Upāsaka and at the same time maintaining his customary duties, religious or otherwise, in so far as they did not vitiate some optional rules. The clear intention of the visits of several Brahmanas to Buddha is stated as follows: *sādhu kho pana tathārūpānam arhatam dassanam hoti* (D.s.6. 1. M.I.pp. 385, 401; M.II, pp. 55, 133, 141, 164). It is the traditional belief in India that a visit to a holy person is meritorious. So it is evident that those Brahmanas paid visits to the Buddha with the main motive of obtaining merits. It is more interesting to note the purpose of Subha's visit. He happened to be at Sāvatthi staying with a householder. Having heard that Sāvatthi was frequented by Arhats, he asked his host, 'To which Shramaṇa or Brahmana shall we páy homage today' (M. II, p. 196). His object, as a pious Brahmana, was no other than to pay homage to a man of higher stage in life, i.e. Sanyasin.

Of course Buddhism enjoins on its lay votaries the observance of the 'eightfold obeisance', refraining from killing, etc. (*Buddha*, p. 383, note). Nevertheless it is not at all enforced on the laity. The Buddha's lenient attitude towards meat-eating may be cited as a proof of the fact.[6] Neither has Buddhism been in a position to keep watch over the conduct of the laity nor was it intended by its illustrious founder to introduce any reform in society so far as the worldly activities are concerned. The Buddha, of course, discredited the sacrificial rites involving animal-killing. Yet Brahmanism as a whole could not have died out even amongst the trustworthy lay disciples of Buddhism. Brahmanism as adapted to the local conditions must have existed side by side with Buddhism.[7] This surmise can be happily corroborated by the history of the state of affairs in the Buddhist countries in olden days. In Burma, all the court rituals in the Pagan Dynasty were deeply tinged with Brahmanical religious practices in which Narayana, Ganesha and Brahmā had places of honour (N. R. Ray, *Buddhism in Burma*, p. 148). This fact only goes to confirm that Buddhism was in no way contradictory to Brahmanism with regard to the temporal functions of religion. We may presume, therefore, that the same state of affairs must have been in existence in Buddhist India too.

It is generally supposed that Brahmanas in ancient India had only the profession of priesthood. Wherever some reference to Brahmanas is found in the records of antiquity, Orientalists are wont to draw *a priori* conclusions that the Brahmanas under reference must have been connected with priesthood. This is nothing but sheer folly. We have clear and definite evidences in the Nikaya

5 Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 162, nn. There were no ties which prohibited the Buddhist Upāsaka from being at the same time the Upāsaka of another church, etc.

6 This is confirmed by E. J. Thomas, *Life*, p. 129 with note.

7 'Thus Brahmanism was not to Buddha an enemy'. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 171.

literature to prove the reverse.[8] There is, for example, the case of Kasibhāradvāja, a Brahmana ploughman, to whom the Buddha once paid a visit. It is on this occasion that the latter compares ploughing and monkhood by way of apparent similarities[9] (*rūpaka*). There were some Brahmanas of Kosala and Magadha who were employed as messengers and who, during their stay at Vesali, took the opportunity to visit the Buddha (D. I. s. 6). Nālijangha, a Brahmana, was also a learned messenger. (M. II, s. 87). There were many Brahmana householders, such as Sāleyyakas and Veranjakas (mentioned in M. I. ss. 41, 42, 60; M. II, s. 95). That they were not much learned in Brahmanic lore can be well inferred from the manner of their approach and behaviour before the Buddha. When the latter enquired whether they had any strong faith in any teacher, they replied in the negative. The Buddha's preaching to these Brahmanas is interesting. He condemned all the heretical teachings, including the sceptic attitude towards Dāna, Yiṭṭha, fire offering, cause, result of good and bad acts, saintly teachers, monkhood and Brahmanahood, etc. (M. I. s. 60). Sañjaya of Ākāsagotta was probably an employee in the palace of King Pasenadi.[10] There were a number of Brahmana villages, the important of which are mentioned. Ambasaṇḍā in Magadha, Ichchānankala in Kosala, Khānumata in Magadha, Manasākaṭa and Sālā in Kosalà.[11] The Buddha reports to Ambaṭṭha that the ancient sage Kaṇha went to Dekkan, to the city of Janapada, and learnt Brahmanical hymns[12] there (D. 3. p. 96, 23).

It is all the more important to note that the Buddha in many of his discourses has characterized his preachings as Dharma conducive to ascetic and Brahmanic life. Prof. Oldenberg may profitably be quoted here. 'It is certain that Buddhism has acquired, as an inheritance from Brahmanism, not merely a series of its most important dogmas but what is not less significant to the historian the bent of religious thought and feeling which is more comprehended than expressed in words' (*Buddha,* p. 52). Further he has, in several places, shown that Brahmanism has been a dominant force with Buddha and his discourses[13] (vide, *ibid.* pp. 214, 283, 304, n). Therefore, according to the Buddha a man who has conducted his career closely and strictly in conformity with his teachings is to be called Samaṇa, Brahmana, Vedagu, Arhan, etc. (M. Sutta 39, p. 280). A saintly person is several times spoken of as Tevijja, Vedantagu, and Vedagu. He is called Tevijja[14] not because he has studied three Vedas, as understood in Brahmanical literature, but because he is in possession of three kinds of knowledge, viz. knowledge of previous birth, knowledge of birth and death, and knowledge of destruction[15] (*kshayajñāna*); and he is Vedantagu because he has reached the ultimate knowledge. It now appears that the Buddha deemed his own teaching alone to be Brahmanism in the true spirit. This

8 Cp. Rhys Davids, *Dialogue,* I, Soṇadaṇḍa, Introduction, p. 141.

9 Sam. Nik. Vol. I, p. 172.

10 Cp. B. C. Law, *India etc.* (1941), p. 150.

11 There are also other villages mentioned: Ekahāla (Sam. Nik. I, S. 172). Khānumata (Dig. Nik. I, 5, Kūtadanta). Ambasaṇḍa (D. N. 21, Sakkapañhas). Panchasālā (S. N. I, 113) Khomadussa (S. N. I, p. 184, Sakkas). Jatakas, II. 368, III. 293, III. 276; Mahavagga, V. 13. 12.

12 B. C. Law has collected from the Pali literature the following groups of Brahmanas: (1) Udichchadesa Brahmanas (Jat. I, 178, 216, 240, 263). (2) Kasi Brahmanas (Jat. II, 50, 59, 115). (3) Brahmanas of Rajagaha and Magadha who were very superstitious, held false views, believing in luck (Jat. I, 215). (4) Brahmanas of Bharadvaja Gotra (D. N. Tevijiasutta). (5) Kaṅhāyana Brahmanas. (See his article on Caste in the *Buddhist,* Nov. 1947).

13 Cp. also S. Radhakrishnan, *Gautama,* p. 26, and note where Max Müller is cited: 'Buddhism is the highest Brahmanism popularized ...' His last Essay, 2nd series, 1901, p. 121).

14 Cp. Luders, *List of Br. Inscriptions* No. 1171, *Ep. Ind* Vol. X. Tevijja—one who knows Tripitaka.

15 R. Davids, *Dial,* I, Soṇadaṇḍa, Introduction, p. 138 f. References for similar explanation.

claim has humorously found expression in a verse of a famous Kashmirian dramatist of about 700 A.D.: 'Some heterodox persons have, for the benefit of human beings, proclaimed the Buddhistic ascetic way of life, viz. to maintain a healthy body by taking timely lunch in the former half of the day, not to have bodily itches on account of shaving all the hair, to bathe at all times as it may suit one's own health, and to become Brahman according to one's own desire, which state is never governed by the caste prejudice and sectarian motives' (See Anangaharsha's Tāpasavatsarājanāṭaka, Act III, Verse 3).

Most of these conclusions are happily corroborated by the evidences collected by Richard Fick in his book *The Social Organization in North-East India in Buddha's Time* (English translation by Shishir Kumar Maitra, Calcutta University 1920). It may not be without interest to quote some strikingly identical conclusions arrived at by this learned author. As regards the Buddha's or rather early Buddhist writers' attitude to the worldly social order and caste distinctions, he remarks: 'Buddhist writers never cared in the least to contradict the caste-theory as such and thereby introduce a better organization of society; what they tried to do so was simply to show that caste is of no value for striving for emancipation'. 'The castes continued after the spread of the Buddhist doctrine quite as well as before; the social organization in India was not in the least altered by Buddha's appearance.' 'Bnddha's doctrine does not aim at a transformation or improvement of the social conditions. The worldly life and its forms are a matter of indifference to the virtuous Buddhist who renounces the world.' He writes further on the precise nature of caste prevailing at this time thus: 'We can suppose that the Jatis of this age were endogamous; marriage within one's own Jati was the rule. Everywhere in the Jātakas, we meet with an effort to keep the family pure through marriage confined to people of one's own standing and profession and not to allow it to degenerate through mixture with lower elements.' Writing on the homeless ascetics the same scholar remarks, 'No new thing was created, and nothing that was not known to Brahmanical law. The entrance of a Brāhmana into the state of a hermit (*vānaprastha*) was well known and was introduced into the life of the Buddhist order.' The disciples are all to be looked upon by us not as members of a well-organized order of monks—such an order was created centuries later—but rather as Samaṇas (*ibid.*).

Speaking of the condition of the Brahmanas of the land, the learned scholar says that the picture of the Brahmana caste is quite different from that found in the Jātakas which represent the Brahmanas as they are in their daily lives. 'We see him now as teacher, now he meets us behind the plough, now in the court of the king, interpreting signs and dreams or predicting from constellation of the stars the future of the new-born prince, now as a rich merchant in the midst of his accumulated treasures, now at the head of a big caravan.' He has ably pointed out that two kinds of Brahmanas are to be distinguished: True Brahmana and worldly Brahmana. A true Brahmana is much respected by Buddha[16] even in the Buddhist lands, and this we have already seen. It is the true Brahmana who is given certain privileges even in the eastern lands such as *archa* (honour), *dāna* (presentation), *ajyeyatā* (unmolestability), and *abādhyatā* (immunity from being killed). The same privileges are also claimed by Buddha for true Samaṇas, i.e. Arhants. He is generally known in the east as Udichcha Brahmana (North-Westerner). The worldly Brahmanas represent chiefly the Brahmana caste in the eastern lands in Buddha's time. They are known as Brahmabandhus in the

[16] Read Mrs. Rhys Davids' paper on 'The Relations between Buddha and Brahmanas' where she proves very well that the said relation was very cordial and Buddha no where contradicts true Brahmanas' opinions. *Ind. Hist. Quarterly*, Vol. X, p. 274-287.

Brahmanic texts. The majority of them were agriculturists. This worldly Brahmana caste, according to Buddha, stands in a rank second to Kshatriyas. A true Brahmana is above worldly rank and stands on a par with Samanas and Arhants. Who is a true Brahmana is hinted at in the course of the narratives of the *Dasabrahmana-Jataka*. King Koravya in the family of Yudhishthira made a large gift to be presented to the persons who possessed the five moral qualities. He accordingly asked his minister Vidhura to seek Brahmanas who, eschewing sensual pleasures, would enjoy his gifts. Vidhura remarks that very difficult to find are Brahmanas who would be virtuous and learned, and who, eschewing sensual pleasures, would enjoy the gifts. Then picking up the local Brahmanas, he classifies them according to their professions. The king finds to his regret the improper professions and behaviour of those Brahmanas. It follows from this narrative that a person who is possessed of the five moral qualities (as enumerated in the Dig. I. Sutta 4. or in Maj. II. Sutta 90) and abstains from indulgence in such pleasures must be understood to be a true Brahmana.

It will not be wrong if we observe that Buddhism of Buddha and his immediate disciples is mainly concerned with the reformation, or 'popularization' in the words of Prof. Max Muller, of the fourth stage in the scheme of Brahmanic life, viz. true Brahmanism.

BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGY

By Dr. Herbert Guenther

The interest in Eastern spiritual life is increasing steadily in the Western world and already many people are fascinated by the teachings of the Eastern sages. The reason is obvious: the Western philosophies are no longer able to meet the needs of the human soul. At the same time this interest appears like a counter-attack by the East. It would have been astonishing, indeed if the East had not reacted in some way or other after the West had brought or, to state it more exactly, forced its material civilization upon the East and in so doing brutally interfered with the Eastern organism. The counter-attack has been launched from whence no one would have expected it: the Western world has been attacked by the spirit of the East and is taken hold of by it. Nevertheless, the Eastern spirit, so different from the Western one that busies itself with external things almost exclusively, is a most precious gift which we must strive to gain before we may say that we own it. It will be gained and owned only when we earnestly try to understand it. The mere belief in words or a simple imitation will not do. That would only be a pitiable misunderstanding and the shortest way to Bedlam. In view of what has been said about the Eastern discernments it must, however, be admitted that we are still very far from a true understanding. We have blocked and even made impossible the way to an understanding by a mere word—and this word is called philosophy. Works dealing with Indian philosophy have flooded the book market, but all of them bear traces of the fact that the authors did not get on quite well with the subject-matter. This rests upon the fact that they use the term philosophy in a way which proves that they do not see the difference between Eastern and Western philosophies. It is true that a definition of philosophy is hardly possible, because every philosopher defines it in his own peculiar way. In one

respect, however, philosophers are all of one mind : the aim of all philosophies is to understand the world, especially the outer world, in a better way ; to search out the most general causes and principles of things ; and, in so doing, to secure a happier world for man. Such a striving for knowledge, characteristic of the extrovert attitude of the West, has been foreign to the Indians throughout the ages. They too strove for knowledge but the direction of their thoughts was different. They were not interested in the Without but in the Within. They wanted to find out what were the hidden forces working within man. This was the reason that the Indian philosophies never departed from religious thinking to such a degree as happened in the West and that Indian thinking always remained a striving and a search for knowledge in a religious sense. The aim of all the Indian philosophies and sciences which branched off in course of time was Liberation, Illumination. It is, indeed, an indubitable fact that every discernment of the depths of the human soul inevitably takes on the tinge of an awe-inspiring religious experience when a certain stage has been reached. On account of this fact that Indian thinking was differently related to knowledge, what up till now has been termed philosophy is much better called *psychology* or *psychotechnic*, or even *psychosynthesis*. Since it was Buddhism that deliberately cultivated introspection and made full use of the discernments won by this procedure to an almost unimaginable degree I prefer to speak of *Buddhist Psychology*.

In the same way as the Western world has been occupied with the Without, has endeavoured to subjugate and master nature, the Eastern world has looked at the possibilities of the development of man's inner nature. The development and actualization of the hidden potentialities of man's nature, that is, to live one's very own life, has always an *esoteric* character. The term esoteric does not mean something that is concealed from a larger public ; every judicious person knows too well that the secret of spiritual development cannot be disclosed, because this development depends upon the faculty of the individual. Nor does the term esoteric mean that spiritual development has been reserved by nature for a few distinguished persons. Spiritual development, which may also be called a development of personality as the sum-total of the individual in a well-integrated fashion or as an adjustment to the higher demands of life, is but the fulfilment of the law of life. It has nothing to do with intelligence, which is not a quality but a modality ; it may be achieved even if intelligence is lacking, in which case other factors will be helpful. Nor has the development of personality to do with the intellect. The intellect is not interested in the quality of the discerning and cognizing subject, inasmuch as it thinks only logically. But life is not made up of logic exclusively ; much exists which may appear illogical to the intellect. Therefore the development of personality is incommensurable with the intellect which has never been a creator of spiritual worlds.

The existence of the esoteric means only that very few individuals have felt the necessity for developing a personality and for adjusting themselves to the higher demands of life. In so doing they were instantaneously separated from the undifferentiatedness and dullness of the masses. Esotericism means that the individual has become lonely, because he has become a stranger to the conventional ideas by which the masses live. But let no one confound personality with the many unfit who imitate those who under most difficult conditions have worked themselves up to the climax of human destiny ! These imitators are despicable and their assumed 'personality' is not convincing. Esotericism means that the development of personality and the discernment of what lies hidden in the depths of the soul have always been fit only for contemplative people who wanted to know *what* they were living and who wanted to see how the world is born out of the soul. Contemplativeness

is not identical with brooding. Brooding is no work but is a vice, it leads to nothing, it is sterile in itself. The development of personality, however, is a creative process; it is also like entering the realm of the Beyond and, therefore, inseparably connected with religion. True religion, unlike its ersatz or confession, aims at the Beyond which is not a state beyond death primarily but a psychological Beyond, freedom from all debasing entanglements, the birth of light in a world of darkness and ignorance. What the world thinks of such a religious experience as the attainment of personality is insignificant. Those who have had this experience have found the inexhaustible treasure that became a source of life, meaning, and beauty to them. Because it helps man to live, is there really any other treasure that deserves this name? The rationalist stuck in his conventions cannot understand all this; he is inclined to denounce all that is beyond his faculty of understanding as 'nonsense'. But when is one entitled to declare something as sense and something as nonsense? History has proved that what once was believed to be nonsense has become sense and what once was sense has proved to be nonsense. Furthermore, it has never to be forgotten that between the secret of being and human reason creating limited categories of reality, there is some discrepancy. The human mind with its tool called intellect has achieved much that is extraordinary, but whenever the question of life was involved it has failed to find out the paths that lead to this greatest mystery.

The *psyche* is the *object* of psychology and unfortunately also its *subject*. This is a deplorable fact that cannot be altered. The necessary conclusion is that mere objectivity written by all sciences in capital letters is absolutely impossible; there is always a subject that makes the statements as regards an object. In order to comprehend an object totally man ought to be omniscient, but since man does not know all and everything, every fact, every object still possesses something unknown. If we speak of the totality of an experience it is restricted to the conscious part of experience. The nature of an object can only be determined as far as the human organism allows it, that is, we are only able to see to the best of our own ability. Since it is impossible to see merely objectively, it is sufficient if the individual does not see too subjectively and does not conceive the subjective disposition to be a universally valid and fundamental truth. This would be no longer science but belief engendering intolerance and fanaticism. The one subjective disposition has the same range of validity as has the other one, and though it would be very convenient if only one truth prevailed, we have to acquiesce in antinomies and guard ourselves against the mistake of considering the one as a pitiable misunderstanding of the other. Of course, I do not mean that the subjective disposition is a unique phenomenon—in this case it could not be understood at all. On the contrary, it is a well-known fact that the opinions of a scientist are shared by many other people, not only because they repeat them mechanically without thinking—this may be so, of course, depending upon human laziness and inclination to indolence—but much more so because they have understood them thoroughly and approved of them.

No science can get rid of the subjective condition of cognizance, least of all psychology, because, as I have said above, in this branch of science subject and object are identical, the one psychic process has to explain the other process. Psychology is only applicable if the scientist is up to the object he wants to explain, that is, he must be able to understand the various points of view, and therefore preconceived theories are fatal; they will assuredly lead him astray. All this implies that science cannot be concerned with dogmatism; only opinions standing on tottering feet take refuge behind dogmas, while scientific theories are but suggestions as to how a phenomenon may be regarded and

have only a heuristic value. It is, furthermore, commonly known that man does not learn by truths exclusively; on the contrary, in practical life he will learn much more by errors. These are not an obstacle to the progress of science. Only conservatism, clinging to discernments once made, and the fear of making mistakes, obstructs the development of sciences. When, having followed up the wrong track, one candidly admits tó having gone astray this confession will be helpful to other researchers. Science is not made up by a single individual but by many men, and every one is under an obligation to say what he has found on his way; perhaps it will be a fertile soil, perhaps it is but a barren desert. Time will teach what has been useful and what not, but never the personal opinion of one individual. Everything is undergoing probation. Since all sciences are dependent upon the subjective constellation their aim can only be to formulate laws that are the concise expression for processes which, though they be diverse, yet have been experienced in a uniform way. True science must be like a servant, not like the master; it must be a tool for a wider and better understanding. Strictly speaking, science, this most powerful tool of the occidental mind, has no boundaries at all; wherever one branch of science comes to an end another branch of science must assist in procuring a wider and deeper understanding. This is, above all, necessary for the Buddhist texts which over and again unfold a vast field of spiritual matter before our eyes, and it will certainly not do to reserve those texts for one branch of science and to withhold them from all others, for the simple reason that every science is insufficient in itself and needs the other sciences, equally insufficient in themselves in order to achieve that practical importance which is needed in life. Moreover, what has been laid down in the Buddhist texts is of human concern and may become an experience that is to be taken seriously, although generally the Western mind tends to reject with horror a real sympathy for unfamiliar matters and prefers to classify Eastern spiritual discernments, which have been born out of a thoroughly genuine life, as ethnological or philosophical oddities, out of the reasonable fear that by treating these discernments seriously its own air-tight world, so cautiously built up, might go to pieces. It is, indeed, psychology that assists in understanding the Eastern spirit in a better way, because the human psyche is the central point from whence all and everything has started. The psyche underlies all kinds of thinking, be it philosophical thinking or be it the thinking of a lunatic; and furthermore, the world is not 'per se'; on the contrary, it is much more 'as I see it', which again implies psychic activity.

What then is the psyche? The psyche presents such a variety of aspects that it may be viewed from innumerable angles. It presents so many puzzles that it is simply impossible to reduce it to a definite system, and every attempt to do so is not only ridiculous but also the most conspicuous sign of incapacity and inadequacy. The psyche is not limited as are all theories; it is not static but is inseparably connected with the continuity of life, so that, on the one hand, it appears as something created but, on the other, it also appears as something creative. Every psychological moment is but a passing through from the past to the future. It is the one and only immediate reality, and since it is manifesting itself in ever-changing forms it inevitably destroys one-sidedness. Although one-sidedness is very effective in achieving a desired end it always stresses one aspect only, which may be sufficient for the time being bnt whenever the whole is demanded it will fail, and it must never be forgotten that one-sidedness overdone will lead to barrenness and torpidity, but not to life. Here lies the immense difference between Eastern and Western modes of thinking; the Western way of thinking is analytic, it wants isolated facts; the Eastern way,

however, is synthetic, it is not so much concerned with the minutest details but endeavours to comprehend the whole, especially by way of intuition. This attitude, so very different from the Western way of thinking, often creates the impression that the Eastern mind is vague or confused or even unintelligible. It is so only for him who does not or cannot understand that the whole defies all attempts to stretch it on the dissecting-table of the intellect which is but part of the whole, but one psychic function among many others, and is unable to create a picture of the whole because of its inherent limitations. The comprehension of the whole is beyond all dualistic modes of thinking and reasoning and cannot be enslaved by formulas set up by the intellect. The Western mind tends to reduce all and everything to some well-known banality or other, the Eastern mind uses symbols which are expressions for dynamic processes and hint at the future.

A psychology that actually deserves the name 'psychology' cannot afford to cling to theories which in advance determine what qualities the psyche must possess. Just as physiology does not consider the human body as figurative only but is convinced of its reality, so also psychology must consider the psyche as a factor *sui generis*. It certainly cannot work on the hypothesis that the psyche is but an epiphenomenon that in some way or other can be reduced to physical or chemical processes. It must take for granted the reality of the psyche which, indeed, is so obvious that only a blind person fails to see it. It is true, the actual psychic phenomena cannot be seen through a microscope, and for this reason the rationalist is inclined to deny their reality. Since he is concerned with the outer tangible reality alone he is unaware of the deep and secret source of all being. His concept of reality is so narrow that for him only what can be produced in a retort may claim the predicate 'real' and consequently he is always eager to derive the within from the without. But there is absolutely no reason for considering the psyche as a paltry appendage to the material world. Nor are all our activities mere reactions to certain stimuli; on the contrary, they are influenced and directed by most complicated psychic conditions; everybody responds to a stimulus in a different way. The logical, 'fact-considering' thinking of the rationalist is often called 'reality thinking' and contrasted with 'fantasy thinking', which is said to be a left-over from childhood; the consequence of a fixation or a recrudescence of childish modes of thought in maturity as a consequence of the blocking by complexes or by the tendency to regression. It is true, 'fantasy thinking' not infrequently presents a morbid character, especially when the individual is unable to assimilate the pictures created by soul, but the fact should not be overlooked that fantasy is much more often the expression of the highest and most valuable psychic activity. What we call fantasy is perhaps reality for the psyche and may be of overwhelming importance. Has not everything that we call 'real' nowadays existed in fantasy beforehand? All this only shows that the reality categories set up by the intellect do not hold good for the psyche. 'Everything is outside, in the material objects'—such are the words of the rationalist; 'nothing is outside, nothing is inside'—thus speaks the Buddhist, because he knows that within and without are but the contraries by which the psyche manifests itself, without, however, being emptied into any of its forms. While for the rationalist no value at all attaches to the psyche, because he cannot localize it in any outer object, for the Buddhist the psyche is of immense value, for him it is the vessel of all that is sublime and lowly, it is the awe-inspiring mystery that is beyond words. Therefore the Buddha is said to have uttered the following words:

'The psyche, O Kashyapa, is perceived neither within nor without nor in the midst of these two extremes; the psyche, O Kashyapa, is immaterial, it cannot be seen, it cannot be run against, it is not an object, it defies all

notions, it is not localized anywhere, it has no fixed abode ; the psyche, O Kashyapa, has not, is not, and will not be seen by all the Buddhas ; how can one say of what has not, is not, and will not be seen by all the Buddhas, that such is its moving about, unless one suffers from illusions !'

Or in one of the Tantric works, which are the greatest contribution of Buddhist wisdom to the world, the sublime greatness of the psyche has been spoken of in the following words :

'The psyche alone is the germ-cell of all and everything ; out of it both the continuation of the world (*samsara*) and the Nirvana come to light. Worship what is like the wish-fulfilling gem ! It grants all boons.' and

'Friends, do know that the variety of the world is but a manifestation of the psyche.'

But best of all the grandeur of the creative power of the psyche is expressed by Ananga-vajra who states that :

'The possessor of the adamantine nature calls the world of woe a manifestation of the psyche when it is overwhelmed with the darkness of manifold false thought-constructions, as fickle as a flash of lightning in a storm and besmeared with the dirt of craving and the like not easily to be removed.

'But he also calls it the excellent Nirvana, when, it is radiant and free from thought-constructions, when it is devoid of the ointment of the dirt of craving and the like, which cannot be known and does not know and is the highest reality.

'Therefore there is nothing more sublime than the psyche. It is the foundation of multiple woes ; it is the cause of the rise of infinite bliss. You who strive for liberation must know that there is nothing more sublime than the psyche.'

With these words he continues an old tradition, for the Buddhists knew and were convinced that out of the psyche something useful may come, in opposition to a widespread notion in the Western world that out of the soul, which is called divine and immortal, only the most vile things can spring up. Being for ever at work, the psyche is like an artist creating manifold works (*karman*), but these works become snares and traps that cause man's downfall so that he gets entangled in every-day life, attaches himself to the objects of the world and finally is engulfed by them ; then the psyche acts like a terrible demon preying on its victims and devouring them ; for destruction is the inevitable companion of creative play. Therefore, the *Kāshyapaparivarta* exclaims :

'The psyche, O Kashyapa, is like an artist, because it creates works of many kinds.' and

'The psyche, O Kashyapa, is like a life-sucking ogre, because it always goes out marauding.'

Since the psyche is of such an overwhelming import for the life of man it is absolutely impossible to derive it from simple formulas, or even to outline with certainty the range of what may be experienced. Although it is thought to be 'scientific' when the psyche is derived from physical processes, when, in a sense, the psyche is thought of as a secretion of the brain, because sound psychic functions are connected with an unimpaired brain, and although this materialistic nonsense is fervently believed, it is no less nonsensical to consider the psyche as a mere reflex phenomenon that has not the slightest autonomy in its working. The psyche copies our empirical world only partly, while for the greater part it moulds those pictures according to the psychic disposition and in so doing describes in which way the physical process together with all its accompanying circumstances is experienced by the psyche. Sometimes it acts in such a sovereign way that the tangible reality is simply ignored or cannot be recognized. Only partly does every comprehension of an object start from the objective mode of the object, much more does it start from intropsychic facts, especially when consciousness has not yet attained a very high degree of brightness, as is the case with all primitive people, so that

what is subjective and what is objective penetrate each other indiscriminately.

The psyche is, furthermore, not identical with consciousness or the ego, which is but a segment out of the whole of the psyche and for ever exposed to perturbations that come out of the invisible, yet real and effective, field called the unconscious. Although the concept of the unconscious has been much contested it will be recognized at once that there are many instances of conscious processes appearing in the stream of consciousness which are totally inexplicable in terms of any of the preceding conscious processes. Inspirations, sudden notions, and the spontaneous occurrence of ideas, are good examples of such apparently uncaused processes. The course of consciousness is always too seriously interrupted to be thought of as a continuum, and it is these very gaps that are filled by the unconscious.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The fundamental experiences of mystics, to whatever country or community they may belong, are universal in essence though varying in form and content. Swami Pavitrananda briefly elucidates the essential characteristics of *Mysticism* and tells us how to distinguish between its *True and False* aspects.

Modern man's endowments of fear, greed, and lust for power have been steadily overshadowing his innate preference for the development of gentleness, usefulness, and altruism, and are becoming serious handicaps to his progress. In *Evolution and Ethics—The Social Destiny of Man*, Dr. Radhakamal Mukherji makes a bold analysis of modern psychological trends in the interaction between the creativity of human personality and the growing artificiality of social relationships. He emphasizes, and rightly so, that the integration and development of man's spiritual personality and the cultivation of the ideal values of truth, power, and goodness—in short, the truly Vedantic basis of ethics and social progress—can alone lead man to the achievement of the full enrichment of his good personality, *pari passu* contributing towards the enhancement of the welfare of society. The article will be concluded next month. ...

The thrice sacred festival in commemoration of the Birth, Enlightenment, and Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha is celebrated in the beginning of this month all over the world. We present to our readers two illuminating articles suitable to this occasion. Pandit N. Aiyaswami Sastri, a great scholar in Sanskrit and Pali, and well-versed in Buddhist lore, deplores the tendency in modern Buddhism to represent it as entirely divergent from or even opposed to Brahminism, and shows, in his original and convincing manner, that *The Message of the Buddha* is neither opposed to nor condemnatory of the the ancient Vedic religion. Those who are not interested in the latest accretions that surround Buddhism but only in the original foundations ordained by Buddha Himself will be glad to find a happy reconciliation between Buddhism and Hinduism in this learned dessertation. Buddhism is a product of the Indian mind, and psychological formulations and disciplines generally regarded as peculiar to Buddhism are to be found in the earlier orthodox schools of Indian thought. ...

Dr. Herbert Guenther of Vienna has made

a close study of Buddhism from original sources in Pali and Tibetan in particular. He is also a student of the celebrated psychologist Jung, and holds with him that a purely intellectual approach to the deeper problems of life is incapable of yielding either Truth or a satisfactory solution of them. His present study of *Buddhist Psychology* is chiefly concerned with a knowledge of the mind at its deeper and broader levels since it is fundamentally a technique for achieving *Nirvana* which Dr. Guenther rightly regards as the perfect integration of personality. There is much to be said in favour of such an approach. Though later-day Buddhists emphasized the negative aspect of Buddhism, in India Buddhism is not regarded as essentially different from Vedanta which accepts *Nirvana* as a positive conception. Dr. Guenther is a deep scholar and a fine writer, and we are sure our readers will welcome his writings with interest for their lucidity and enlightenment. The concluding portion of the article will be published in our next issue. ...

OUR DEBT TO AND DUTY TOWARDS SANSKRIT

Many people have been talking vociferously of our great Indian culture but have done nothing to revive it and make it living in our social and national life. Our leaders appeal to the people in the name of Indian culture to behave in a noble manner. But what have we done to acquaint the masses with the glorious aspects of our culture? Being cut off from the fundamental roots of our own ancient civilization, many of us today are not aware exactly what this culture is except for a vague idea gained through second-hand sources. It is only the original literature that can transmit to us the ever-inspiring cultural treasure of the country and the philosophy of life-values behind it. Culture penetrates through the entire life of the individual and the community and becomes part and parcel of our thought, word, and deed.

The importance of Sanskrit in our national life can never be exaggerated. From whichever point of view we look at it—linguistic, literary, historical, cultural, or political—the service that Sanskrit can render to our national progress is immense. All other Indian languages are either directly derived from or highly influenced by Sanskrit. Without this source of sustenance most of them would have lapsed into mere dialects or remained unprogressive. Their literary as well as thought forms have been derived from Sanskrit. It is noteworthy that Bengali has become a very rich language in modern India by profusely drawing upon Sanskrit.

Even from the historical point of view—whatever history we have, economic, cultural, or political—we have to depend on the Sanskrit language. Being the oldest extant language in the world,—the mother of many of the world's languages—preserving the records of the strivings of the human mind from time immemorial, the necessity of Sanskrit for philological studies and for the study and development of the arts and sciences cannot be denied. Sanskrit has overflowed into Tibet, China, Japan, and the countries of South-east Asia and closely links India with all those countries.

In the cultural field it can be said that the whole of Indian culture, in its essential aspect, is Sanskritic. The Sanskrit language interpenetrates our cultural life inextricably. Our great ancient works which inspire and guide us in the material as well as spiritual sphere are in Sanskrit. Sanskrit soothes our ears and elevates our minds and spirits. If we take away Sanskrit from Indian culture, there will be nothing much left in our culture to speak highly of.

In the political sphere, Sanskrit is a great force for bringing about enduring unity in the country. Sanskrit alone can compose our linguistic differences and bring harmony and co-ordination between the Aryan and Dravidian languages. By the encouragement and spread of Sanskrit the linguistic provincialism that is raising its ugly head can be made

innocuous.

It is a happy augury that the claims of Sanskrit have been recognized to a certain extent by making it the fountainhead of our national language and by placing it on the list of recognized regional languages. But great tasks lie ahead of us. For the development of Sanskrit suitable Tols should be opened in towns and villages and Sanskrit study must be encouraged and popularized in all schools and colleges. We need many Sanskrit universities, at least one in each State, with a central all-India university for advanced studies and to co-ordinate the Sanskrit studies in the State universities. To begin with, wherever Hindi is the mother-tongue Sanskrit can be compulsorily introduced as a second language without difficnlty. This will not only help the development of Sanskrit but also the growth of the national language.

The immediate difficulties have always a tendency to thwart proper and long-range thinking. There is a section of people which advocates the use in Indian languages of Western scientific terminology in the scientific field on the plea that they are international. We are afraid by excluding the claims of Sanskrit in this respect we would be making a wrong start, and like the two sides of a triangle, ever diverse from our intended purpose as we go further and further. By making a wrong choice now we will find ourselves in a situation which we may have to rue afterwards. The suggestion to adopt Western terminology in preference to corresponding Sanskrit equivalents may appear harmless and be appealing now. But we will be committing ourselves to a position in which we will be ever tied up to a terminology based on foreign classical languages such as Greek and Latin. In these days of research and specialization, technical terms multiply by leaps and bounds, and they will exert their influence on the other subjects as well. The acceptance of one scientific term will bring in its train a host of compound words derived from or based on it, and thus unawares we will find that our language has become a medley. This will defeat the very purpose of our education through the mother-tongue. In course of time we may have to face the only alternatives of either going back to the English medium or discarding the foreign terms. It is better to face the problem now than when it will become acute. In this connection, the article on *Scientific Terminology—Its Nature and Interdependence* by Dr. Shridhar Dattatraya Limaye in the *Mahratta* Weekly of February 24, 1950 is very illuminating. He gives therein numerous illustrations showing how one scientific term brings in its train a large number of others.

Another important task that faces the country, in the interests of the nation's history and culture, is the collection, preservation, and publication of old and precious manuscripts—mostly of palm-leaf—which might otherwise become lost to us owing to age and decay. Lots of ancient *MSS.* still lie undeciphered and uncared for, and many are scattered outside India. Great efforts are needed to recover them and arrange for their preservation and publication with the help and coordination of other governments where necessary. The hugeness of the task can be well imagined if we remember that the *MSS.* may run into several millions of folios, being the rich products of a vast number of highly civilized and intellectually active people extending over several thousands of years. There is also the work of preparation of an extensive descriptive catalogue of all the available *MSS.* all over India in a suitable manner so as to help scholars in their advanced study and research.

Dr. V. Raghavan, Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Madras University,—who is working in a commendable way on cataloguing the old Sanskrit *MSS.* found all over India, as far as possible, and has already brought out the first part of the *New Catalogus Catalogorum,* a monumental work—in the course of his presidential address at the Fifteenth

All-India Oriental Conference (Classical Sanskrit Section), held in Bombay in November 1949, said: 'There is one pressing matter, one which at least those research scholars working on the literary side feel as requiring top priority, which the Government must attend to immediately. Their blue-prints for a National Museum and a National Library may go through their own time-scheme, but the constitution of a fullfledged *Manuscripts Survey of India* cannot brook delay. The question of literary records, of ancient manuscripts pertaining to religion, letters, arts, and philosophy (we may add science, economics, politics, medicine, and various other subjects as well) cannot be merged in the archaeological department of the archives office in which their importance will never meet with adequate appreciation ... It is a matter of common knowledge that research in Sanskrit classics is somewhat in a stalemate today, and unless discoveries are made of *MSS.* of important missing links known from citations, scores of which could be mentioned in each Shastra, we will be only going round and round indulging in *pishtapeshana.* Collections made decades ago are known to lie still uncatalogued in museums and other places where interests are too wide to permit urgent attention being paid to *MSS.*; expert staff to prepare accurate descriptive catalogues and publish them regularly and without delay are necessary; and selections for publication should be made with an eye to the importance of the text in the history of its particular branch of knowledge.'

It is a welcome idea that the Conference proposes to hold a symposium on 'Simplified Sanskrit'. If the various all-India bodies for the promotion of and research in Sanskrit make a joint effort, it should not be difficult to evolve a simplified Sanskrit, without loss of its fundamental beauty, in order to make this once glorious language once more living, active, and popular.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RAGAS & RAGINIS. By Prof. O. C. Gangoly. *Published by Nalanda Publications, Sir P. Mehta Road, Bombay 1. Pages. 224. Price Rs. 20.*

This is a standard work of rare quality, being a pictorial and iconographic study of Indian musical modes from a new aspect. Prof. Gangoly, author of many text-books on Indian and Oriental art, has put his life and soul into the work, which is regarded as his *magnum opus.* There is a second volume in addition to the one under review. The first one, however, is complete in itself. The second volume contains the tables and illustrations covering the whole subject-matter. The first volume also contains beautiful prints of various Ragamalas.

The introduction gives us a clear definition of the term 'Rāga', so vaguely used and often mistranslated as tune, air, or key. The author suggests to render it as 'melody-mould', 'melody-type', or 'musical pattern', after having quoted most of the Western authorities on this point.

A historical outline of the Rāgas traces the cleavage between Northern and Southern music, and the more liberal development of the Northern style under the influence of Persian music. Amir Khusrau, the Persian poet, is given a deserved and unbiased tribute here; the assimilation and integration of Iranic airs into the Indian Rāga system has been inaugurated by the Amir, and what renders North Indian music more appreciable even to the occidental connoisseur may be the fact of its having absorbed these non-indigenous elements. Charges made so often against Indian music having thus been estranged from its own tradition are well refuted by the author. 'Indeed, Indian music quite held its own against the tide of Persian culture, and by adopting new Ragas tinged with Persian airs, did not sacrifice one iota of the principles of its raga-composition, or the basic foundations of Indian musical science. The sympathetic interest and patronage that was extended to Indian music under the influence of such an able connoisseur, lent an impetus to the indigenous art which had no parallel, even before the Moghuls.' (p. 41).

Following the development of Rāgas in their chronological course, Prof. Gangoly adduces the various classical and semi-classical treatises on the subject, giving their main contents in outline; important Shlokas are quoted verbatim, throughout the whole book, in Roman transcript.

Interesting light has been thrown on the time-theory—the one feat that gives Indian music a unique stand among the world's systems of music —the theory that holds that particular Rāgas are suitable for performance at particular times of the day or seasons of the year. This idea is absolutely strange to Western music, if we recall that Schumanu's 'Evening Songs' is on the regular morning-programmes of the B. B. C. and Continental stations. Though these rules must have an essentially psychological background, the fact that different authorities have been differing on the co-ordination of tunes to their times proves, that the emotional response to the melody is by no means the same with each individual listener. The author states how one and the same tune has been ascribed to so many different times in course of its existence by different music scholars.

The chapter giving standard novelty to this book is the one on 'Deification and Visualization of Melodies'. 'There is a doctrine inherent in the Indian theory of melodies which helps one to understand the fundamental psychic values of rāgas, and to apply them to requirements of particular emotional situations, or interpretations. It is believed that each rāga, or rāginī has its peculiar psychic form, corresponding to its sonal body over which the former presides as a nymph, deity, or devatā (presiding genius, or god) of that particular melody.' (p. 96). This formula is then carefully elucidated and supported by textual quotations. Musical practice, therefore, is invariably a spiritual practice, if done in the right spirit and with the right skill,—a very definite kind of Sādhana. The various sound-forms and the principal image-forms attributed to the musical groups (Rāgas and Rāginīs), are conceptions quite parallel to other forms of Sādhana, particularly of the Tāntric sphere.

The Dhyāna-formulas, intended to conjure up the image of the deity presiding over the respective Rāga, are described in a separate chapter, dealing with their history and authenticity.

The author also adduces Hindi texts which at their time served to popularize the classical works which were written in Sanskrit and were thus hard of access to the musical professionals of the day. A new name, hitherto unmentioned in the entire literature on the subject, is that of Harivallabha, who wrote a vernacular version of the Sanskrit *Sangīta Darshana,* a classical text-book, in the seventeenth century.

These Rāgamālās, or painted melodies, form a unique combination of music and pictorial art. Though a faint resemblance to this kind of mutuality may be traced in Italian medieval art, this agreeable encroachment has nowhere in the world been so well elaborated. Prof. Gangoly quotes a very substantial number of Rāgamāla texts in his volume, although he does not claim completeness.

A short criticism of the different claims on the psychical import of music in general concludes the text-portion of the book.

The various appendices form a valuable compendium in themselves. These are lists of musical texts in Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian, and Bengali; an exhaustive bibliography, covering the whole field of Indian music, giving works written both by Indians and Westerners. The 36 appendices proper give a precise survey over the classical Rāgas, with their sub-divisions, Jātis and Rāginīs, each of them preceded by a short summary, and all these presented in a tabular form for the benefit of the student.

The author and the publishers deserve the gratitude of the scholars and students of classical music as well as the general reader.

R.

THE POWER OF NON-VIOLENCE. By Richard B. Gregg. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. New Ed. Pages 184. Price Rs. 2/8.*

Though true non-violence can be practised only at the highest spiritual level, still it can be practised in a relative form in other levels of existence, with advantage. It is a difficult weapon to handle, involving great personal sacrifice, and calls for high moral and spiritual qualities. And as a mass ideal it is still more difficnlt. The subject is vast and its implications varied. It cannot be reduced to a simple formula. What is violence and what is non-violence in a particular context cannot be decided upon by a common yardstick, and varies from one person to another, as man is a complex being. Mere outward expressions, though useful in their own way, cannot be of intrinsic value. In recent times the principle of non-violence has been elaborated and its application has been developed as a science, especially by Gandhiji. It is still at the experimental stage and is capable of being perfected hy the experience of humanity and there is no doubt it will find progressive application in society. The practice of love and non-violence in life—individual and collective, in private as well as public—is a desideratum of happiness and world peace. But as Nirmal Kumar Bose says in the preface to his book *Selections from Gandhi,* 'non-violence cannot be suddenly forced upon an unprepared humanity, and in a hostile social environment. There the man of non-violence has to move cautiously, adapting his step to the exigencies of every special set of circumstances.'

Mr. Gregg, in this remarkably well-written book, approaches the subject in a practical manner, drawing facts and illustrations from a wide sphere of life and activity of humanity. The idea of non-violence is tested

here 'with the recent findings of psychology, military and political strategy, political theory, economics, physiology, biology, ethics, penology, and education.' The author has succeeded in showing that non-violence is not a mere negative method but it is a positive power, that it is capable of being applied for individual as well as mass purposes in different situations, and that it can be inculcated in the people by a clearly defined training just as in the case of any other aspect of human life. Though the author mainly relies on Gandhiji's life and works, he draws facts from other sources as well. He answers ably many objections levelled against non-violence.

In this new edition three new chapters have been added dealing with the role of persuasion and training in non-violence, but eight other chapters from the previous edition have been omitted to restrict the size of the book and keep down its price within the reach of a wider public.

FOR EVER INDIA. By G. Venkatachalam. *Published by Nalanda Publications, P. O. Box No. 1353, Bombay 1. Pages 129. Price Rs. 8-4.*

Sri G. Venkatachalam, a poet and a lover of fine arts, has enhanced the worth of Indian art by this beautifully illustrated and adorative approach to the artistic glory of India from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin. He has spared no pains in justifying with examples the art-ideals of India, especially to the average Indian whose vision is still impure with the motes of Western standards and prejudices. The volume is highly educative and quite timely in that it is essential to the Indian youth to re-find their ancient moorings, natural to their Dharma and spiritual heritage.

The author is bold, honest, and unsparing with himself and others. His regrets at the ugliness of present-day architecture often seen in the modernized cities of our country are reminders to us to Indianize our future architectural structures, to make them centres of learning, and to preserve our art-treasures properly. His descriptions of these art-treasures of historical significance are remarkable in that he has transported himself into their genuine atmosphere, and interpreted their spiritual message in an entrancing manner.

But the volume needs a sharp proof correction; and it would have been better if specific descriptions of many of the Plates such as 'Buddha', 'Temple Panel, South India', 'Detail', 'Gommateswara', had been included, and the Plates properly distributed to appropriate places. Nor would one fail to notice his summary disposal of the artistic glory of the 'Hampi Ruins', and that of 'Amaravati'. It is quite possible he has not studied them in the manner he has done the others. His 'Fragments of a Forgotten Empire' requires, therefore, a standard revision. On the whole the contents are as fascinating as the title. For, in the words of a famous art critic, 'To everyone who really knows India, India always held a special significance—the significance of an inexhaustible repository of every type of beauty and transcendental thought'. If a cheaper edition is issued it will enable his thoughts to reach a wider public.

P. Sama Rao

A LAYMAN'S BHAGAVAD GITA, VOL. I. By A. S. P. Ayyar. *The Madras Law Journal Press, Mylapore, Madras 4. Pages 260. Price Rs. 5.*

Sri A. S. P. Ayyar is a well-known writer, and is the author of many books. Sri Ayyar, at present a Judge of the Madras High Court, is a creative artist in literature. He is a lover of realism and, as such, he has rightly attempted an evaluation of the *Gita* for all of us. The very title tells us his purpose, which is to propagate the teachings of the *Gita* so as to enable the common man to understand and follow them in life.

The *Gita* is a way of life; it has a sound philosophy, based on action, without an eye to the results. Our great spiritual and national leaders like Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi have stressed the importance of the teachings of the *Gita*. The virile gospel of the *Gita* is an unfailing and uplifting source of strength for one and all in moments of distress. The *Gita* is rightly regarded as a storehouse of inspiration, power, and divine light. Who will not like to read it and benefit thereby?

Sri Ayyar has, in his own fascinating manner, concentrated the attention of the common man on the teachings of the *Gita*. His interpretation is simple but penetrating. Sri Ayyar has emphasized the essential truths of the *Gita* by successfully enunciating the fundamental tenets of the practical philosophy of life contained in the *Gita*. In the book under review, there is a new and easily intelligible philosophy for all those who take care to read it with sincerity. Sri Ayyar has prominently brought out the aspect of devotion to the Lord without which nothing can be achieved that will give us lasting peace. This book, written in simple English, is a worthy attempt in trying to bring the lofty teachings of the *Gita* to the door of every man and woman.

B. S. Mathur

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL GAZETTE—SILVER JUBILEE NUMBER (1924-1949). *Edited by Santosh Kumar Chatterjee, Corporation Buildings, Surendranath Banerjee Road, Calcutta. Price Rs. 3.*

The Calcutta Municipal Gazette, founded in the year 1924 by Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, the first Mayor of Calcutta, is the official organ of the Calcutta Corporation, the premier municipal institution of India. It has completed twenty-five years of its useful existence under the able guidance of its foundation-editor Sri Amal Home who edited it throughout this period until his retirement in 1949, thus setting up a high standard in civic journalism and amply fulfilling the aims set before it by its illustrious founders. This weekly journal, first of its kind in India, has provoked interest all over the country and inspired other municipal and

local bodies to work on similar lines. We heartily congratulate the new editor who has spared no pains in bringing out this worthy and attractive souvenir number to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the *Gazette*.

This special number contains a readable account of the work of the Corporation for the past twenty-five years, and brief life-sketches of its Mayors among whom are such great names as those of C. R. Das, J. M. Sen Gupta, and Subhas Chandra Bose. It also contains illuminating articles on various aspects of local self-government and civic administration. There are other interesting articles dealing with the historical development of the city of Calcutta and its contribution to the cultural and commercial life of India. The volume is profusely illustrated and excellently got up.

BENGALI

VANDE MATARAM. By Nishikanta. *Published by Nirmal Nahar, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Price Rs. 3.*

To the lovers of Bengali poetry, Nishikanta is known as a poet of considerable achievement and great potentiality. The book under review is a collection of poems and songs, devotional in spirit but in expression sumptuously poetic and sonorously melodious. In view of the modern tendency towards simplification, his choice of words, at first sight, may appear to be pedantic, but in point of fact has, in most cases, the inevitability of *'le mot propre'* in relation to various metrical patterns he has evolved for himself. The poet has shown in these poems not only a great skill in versification but also a rare ability to convert our common devotional feelings into the pure gold of poetry by turning, in his best specimens, rhythm into incantation and words into message. In spite of the occasional lack of sustained style in some of his, I believe, minor poems, the book amply rewards a careful reading.

A. Datta

VEDANTA O SUFI DARSHAN. By Dr. Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D. Phil. *Published by Prachyavani Mandir, 3, Federation Street, Calcutta. Pages 167. Price Rs. 2.*

This is a comparative study of Sufism and Vedantism. There are some four principal forms of the former philosophy and five of the latter and there are some ten questions regarding God, soul, ego, world, and liberation, and their interrelations. The authoress has patiently described the view of each of these nine philisophies on each of these ten questions, and has carefully noted the similarities and differences amongst these views. The result is a book that is thickly informative but a little tiresome. The treatment is scholarly, and cool too if not cold. The writer apparently addresses the philosophers and fact-finders; tbe common reader expecting from the title of the book inspiration or delight will be disappointed. But he will gain in many respects; he will like the book for its significant matter and appropriate manner.

P. J. Chaudhury

ASHRAMA. Journal of the Ramakrishna Mission Balakashrama, Rahara, 24-Parganas (West Bengal).

The Management and the young student-editors of *Ashrama,* a quarterly journal conducted by the boys of the Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara, deserve to be congratulated on the excellent publication of their fifth annual number. Its choice contents and elegant get-up speak highly of the literary and aesthetic accomplishments of the young inmates of the Balakashrama.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

India has lost a great spiritual personality of our times. Sri Ramana Maharshi, the well-known saint and and seer of South India, attained Mahasamadhi on the 14th of last month, at the age of 71, at his Ashrama at Tiruvannamalai in the State of Madras. He had for some time past been keeping indifferent health, and very recently his condition was reported to be giving cause for anxiety. But these bodily ailments could not in the least disturb his supreme serenity of mind, and those who went to meet and talk to him always found him in a happy and cheerful mood till the end. The passing of such an outstanding personality from the arena of the world will be deeply mourned by a very large circle of devotees, followers, and admirers in India and abroad. Though his soul has left the mortal frame and passed into the realm of eternal bliss, the blessed memory of his immortal life and teachings will continue to be an unfailing source of inspiration and guidance to spiritual aspirants in every land. He was a living example of the ideal of a Jivanmukta, and though he never travelled out of Tiruvannamalai where he spent nearly 54 years of his illustrious life, hundreds of spiritually inclined persons, including many from foreign countries, came to him, like bees to a full-blown lotus, seeking his divine guidance and blessings.

Sri Ramana Maharshi, known in his early days by his family name Venkataraman, was born in December 1879 of devoted middle-class Brahmin parents at Tiruchuzhi near Madura in South India. His school-days

were comparatively uneventful, and his relatives and friends could hardly discern any outward signs of his future greatness. It was in 1896, while a young lad of sixteen years, that the great turning point came in his life, and he left home for Tiruvannamalai where he entered upon an austere life of complete renunciation of the world and deep contemplation on the verities of existence. Ever since the hill-side of Tiruvannamalai had been the scene of his long and strenuous Sadhana, his transcendental illumination and realizations, and his spiritual ministration to humanity. The Maharshi's life was remarkable for his extreme simplicity, calm resignation, and unbounded love. He made no distinction between high and low, or rich and poor, in showering his love and helping eager souls along the path of spiritual progress. Following the path of silent contemplation, wise discrimination, and bold self-analysis, his main teaching lays emphasis on an intense and uninterrupted inquiry into the true nature of the 'I' or 'Inner Self'. Though he was known to have followed generally an impersonal and informal method of teaching, he was intimately human and possessed a large and sympathetic heart. There was nothing sectarian or dogmatic in what he taught. He came to the world in order to fulfil the plan and purpose of the Divinity and has gone back to the source after completing his task. May his memorable personality, his immense spiritual contribution, and his noble teachings ever serve as a beacon to care-worn humanity in its march to the ultimate goal of existence!

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, PATNA

Sri Ramakrishna Temple Dedication Ceremony

The opening and the dedication ceremony of the newly built temple and the 115th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna were held at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna, with due eclat and solemnity from the 28th March to the 4th April 1950. Some distinguished Pandits, well versed in Vedic rituals, were brought from Banaras and other places to perform the Puja, Homa and other functions appropriate to the sacred ceremony. Srimat Swami Virajananda Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and several other Swamis of the Order graced the occasion by their kind presence. On the 28th March, preliminaries of the dedication ceremony were gone through under the supervision of Swami Omkarananda from morning till noon, and in the evening there was 'Kali-Kirtan'. On the 29th March, a big procession was held within the Ashrama compound, and Srimat Swami Virajananda Maharaj performed the installation ceremony in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering. Special Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, Homa and other ceremonial functions went on throughout the whole day in the midst of universal rejoicings, and in the evening a celebrated musician delighted the audience by singing 'Rāsleela-Kirtan'. On the 30th March some renowned artistes of Patna entertained the gathering with vocal and instrumental music of a very high order. From the 31st March to the 2nd April, a famous Kirtana party, hailing from Darbhanga, performed 'Lila-Kirtan' in Hindi in the newly built Prayer Hall attached to the temple. On the 3rd and 4th April, Swami Omkarananda read selected portions from *Srimad Bhagavatam* and *Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* in the presence of a large audience. During these days more than 5,000 people, including a large number of Daridra-Narayanas, partook of the sacramental food (*prasād*) in the Ashrama premises. As a matter of fact, this sacred function, which was unique in the history of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Patna, was a splendid success.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SOCIETY, RANGOON

The Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon, first started as a Samity in 1901 by devotees of Sri Ramakrishna and later affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission under the present name, has been carrying on preaching and other cultural activities through discourses, class-talks, and lectures in the premises of the Society in Rangoon and in other parts of Burma. The activities of the Society also included relief work, a students' home, a rest house, library and reading-room, birthday celebrations of world prophets and religious teachers. The Society took active part in the Arakan Flood Relief in 1929, the Pegu Earthquake Relief in 1930, and the Cyclone Relief in South Arakan in 1936. The Society grew up steadily by expanding its activities, and its library and reading-room were shifted to a new building of its own in 1938. The classes and lectures drew large numbers of people and the Society became a popular and effective institution in the cultural life of Burma. During the period of war in Burma, the Society's activities had to be suspended. Again they were revived in 1946, notwithstanding the difficulties in post-war Rangoon. At present, besides conducting the library and reading-room, the Swami-in-charge holds regular classes and talks and delivers occasional public lectures. The library has nearly 9,500 volumes, and the reading-room receives 45 papers and periodicals in different languages. Recently the Society has started an Indian Culture Centre which affords facilities for the study of Indian culture in its various aspects.

The 115th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated by the Society on February 19th when the Hon'ble Mr. Thakin Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, presided and notable persons like Mrs. Aung San, Mr. C. R. N. Swamy, and Mr. M.A. Raschid spoke on the different aspects of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Many distinguished persons, both Burmese and Indian, were present in the large gathering at the meeting.

In his opening and concluding speeches, Hon'ble Mr. Thakin Nu, dwelt on the services of the Ramakrishna Mission and on some important features of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings. He observed: 'The

Ramakrishna Mission is well known in several parts of the world. In Rangoon or rather in Burma, its activities for the last forty years in the fields of medical relief, public education, and cultural development have merited universal admiration. Incidentally, it is fostering and maintaining the good relationship between India and Burma. To find out the dynamic factor which serves as a continuous and living source of inspiration for thousands of selfless persons to dedicate their lives for the suffering humanity, we have to look to the ideals embodied in the life of Sri Ramakrishna in whose name the organization has been formed.' In his concluding remarks he said: 'Sri Ramakrishna reached a plane of apiritual realization wherein all differentiation vanishes and wherein one sees and feels one's camplete identity with every being in inner essence regardless of outward distinctions of names and forms. This feeling of oneness, when one looks at and feels for every other being exactly as one's own being is really the culmination of all spiritual endeavours wherefrom flows the infinite love and compassion for all beings. ... Another salient feature of the life of Sri Ramakrishna is his doctrine that there is fundamental unity underlying all religions. 115 years ago Sri Ramakrishna was born to show this light to us. This light was necessary then, but it is all the more necessary to humanity now because of the darkening and widening clouds of selfishness and bigotry of this age of materialism.'

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
EAST PAKISTAN REFUGEE RELIEF

The Ramakrishna Mission has been conducting refugee relief at different places in W. Bengal and Assam like Jayantipur near Bongaon Railway Station (24-Parganas), Singabad Railway Station (Malda), Gitaldaha Railway Station (Cooch-Behar), Dowkie (Jaintia Hills), Lumding Railway Station (Nowgong), Silchar and Karimganj (Cachar) as also Agartala (Tripura State).

At the Jayantipur Centre from the 16th March to the 8th April, 198 lbs of dry milk were distrihuted to 5,940 children and the sick and 49 mds. 12 srs. of chira and 13 mds. 38 srs. of gurh among 23,672 persons. The Mission, in co-operation with the Red Cross Society, has been managing the Transit Camp at Singabsd Railway Station and has provided about 20,000 refugees, mostly Santal and cultivators, with shelter and food. At Gitaldaha Railway Station we have undertaken the daily feeding of 500 refugees and supply of milk to children and patients. Here 6,660 refugees have been served with food.

Our Transit Camp at Lumding at present provides food for 1,500 to 2,500 persons daily. From the 11th March to the 5th April, the Camp has catered for 30,000 refugees. The Mission is helping in the inoculation of new arrivals, registration of refugees, exchange of Pakistan currency notes to Indian ones, securing admission to hospital for those who are invalids. At Dowkie halfway between Sylhet and Shillong, the Mission has opened a new relief centre, which supplies parched rice, milk, barley water and medicines to about 1,000 refugees among whom there are many cases of cold, fever and acute dysentery. 196 pieces of cloth were distributed among them. Our Silchar Centre is feeding twice daily about 1,045 refugees and also giving on an average diet to 43 children and 40 patients. Of the 1,900 refugees received in this camp from the 11th March to the 8th April 712 have left for different places. The total number of refugees served from 8th March to 8th April in the three relief camps at our Karimganj Centre is 11,798. Here more than 3,125 persons are fed twice daily, 1,393 were vaccinated and 2,063 inoculated for cholera. Workers have been deputed to undertake rehabilitation work at this place. In all the above centres the sick and children are provided with diet and milk, and expectant and ailing mothers are attended to.

At Agartala during the week ending on the 8th April medical relief was given to 1,587 patients. Three qualified doctors are in charge of this medical relief camp. The Mission is also building up a colony for 100 families of whom 60 families have already been settled and the rest are being settled. All these families have been provided with sufficient agricultural land. Effort is being made to rehabilitate 200 more families.

In co-operation with the Provincial Peace Committee, the Mission is managing three camps sheltering about 10,000 refugees near the steamer ghats at Narayanganj. Free doles are being distributed and facilities secured for them to come to India. The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Dacca which had 300 refugees under its roof, has at present 160 refugees who are fed daily. Besides 325 pieces of new cloth have been distributed among them.

In this work of relief and rehabilitation the Mission is co-operating with the Government and other private organisations.

Clothes and medicines including preventive inoculations are very urgently required. It is needless to say that strenuous efforts should be made for the quick rehabilitation of the refugees to save them from disease and death. The misery of the people beggars description. The task of relief and rehabilitation is stupendous. We appeal to the generous public to help us with adequate funds to relieve these helpless people. Contributions in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, W, Bengal.

Belurmath
Dt. Howrah

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA
General Secretary,
Ramakrishna Mission.