Prabuddha Bharata

OR

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TO
PRABUDDHA BHARATA
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Editor: SWAMI VANDANANANDA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LVII *JANUARY 1952* No. 1

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

THE DIVINE AWAKENER

By Starson Gosse

Divine Minstrel, thou hast given a song,
Which when sung can ope the petals
Of closed buds ; Truth and beauty throng
Round golden purity ; lower metals
Are transformed into invaluable treasures ;
Each moment finds a meaning in the essence!
Out of Profundity come true measures
That tie sublimity with the ordinary cadence!

The universe joins in joyous invitation
And in that Bliss the soul does awake!
All discordants vanish ; out of limitation
Rises the sight of the glittering Lake!

What a song thou hast given unto the world
Which when sung makes the singer as one
With the silver tune ; till all is moulded
In that Profundity, whose race is run.

Kali the mother

The stars are blotted out,
The clouds are covering clouds,
It is darkness visible now,
In the roaring whirling wind,
Over the lands of a billion lunatics,
Locked in fierce embrace,
Wrenching lives by the hour,
Sweeping all from the path.
The sea has joined the fray,
And swells up mountain-waves,
To reach the pitchy sky.
The flash of lurid light
Reveals on every side
A thousand thousand shades
Of death heightened and black,
Scattering plagues and sorrows,
Dancing madly.

Come mother come.

For terror is thy name,
Death is in thy breath,
And every shaking step,
Destroys a world for ever.

Thou "Time" the all devourer,
Come O mother come
Who dares bravery love,
And hug the form of death,
Enjoy distortions dance,
To him the mother comes.

FACSIMILE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S ORIGINAL POEM

THE WAY TO SPIRITUAL STABILITY

By Swami Turiyananda

Taddinam durdinam manye meghācchannam na durdinam,
Yaddinam harisamlāpakathāpīyūṣa varjitam.

'A cloudy day is not a bad day. That day is really a bad day which is devoid of the nectar of the (inspiring) talks concerning God'.

Somehow or other, in happiness or in sorrow, in good or in evil, days pass away. But if days pass away without the contemplation of God, it shortens one's life, wasting one's time to no purpose.

Do spiritual practices with energy; be completely merged in Him; then only life becomes successful. Of course, one has got to do so much work as is necessary for the upkeep of the body; it is good to do it with a steady mind, because there is no gain whatever by being irritated.

Go on earnestly calling on Him wherever He may choose to keep you. Places do not matter much. But it is necessary to live in such a place where it is easy to contemplate on God. If it is easy to call on God at home, what is the need for going elsewhere? Try to perform worldly duties without attachment as far as you can. Everything can be done by practice in time. Try to be free from care by resigning everything to Him. He alone is doing everything. It is due to delusion that an individual thinks himself to be the doer and for that reason gets bound. Never forget this great Mantra: 'Not I, not I, but Thou, Thou'. Think of Him alone and you will find that all other thoughts will disappear. Of course, so long the mind remains tied to the body, that is to say, so long bodily ailments impinge upon the mind and hinder contemplation of God, try to do everything to keep the body fit and free from disease. The care of the body is not merely for the body itself, but it is very necessary to care for the body in order to be able to meditate on God.

There is no fear or anxiety if one resigns oneself to the Lord. He helps him in all possible ways and draws him unto Himself. The mind will have its ebb and flow. Sometimes there is felt great joy in and relish for the contemplation of God and the mind is easily and spontaneously drawn to Him; again, at other times, one does not find any joy in anything, the mind does not turn to the contemplation of God, and great unhappiness covers the heart like a shadow. But he who persistently continues contemplating on God in both the states of mind, who does not neglect it, who goes on practising without remiss whether he relishes it or not, gradually gets rid of the alternating states of ups and downs of his mind and attains to a state where the thought of God flows in an unbroken current. Then the mind automatically goes on thinking of God always, and happiness and misery cannot unsettle him any more. Such a person remains engaged in the contemplation of God in all states and feels great joy within. Man becomes blessed if by the grace of the Lord this spiritual stability is attained.

'Let the body and its suffering take care of themselves, but you, O my mind, be always happy'—by taking up this detached attitude of Sri Ramakrishna man may be free from all cares. To direct the mind always to that supreme Self—this is what is meant by enjoying perfect happiness. Pain and suffering are inevitable in the embodied state; but why should they make one forget the Lord? Pain etc. are not permanent—they come and go; but the Lord is the help and stay for all time. Let the body experience pain or pleasure, whatever it may be. But to refuse to acknowledge it by the mind and to try to devote the mind to the thought of the Self is the best thing to do in life.

INDIA AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

By the Editor

'Mark my words, this is but the small beginning; big things are to follow . . . this I know for certain that millions,—I say deliberately—millions in every civilized land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism into which modern money-worship is driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new social movements have already discovered that Vedanta in its highest form can alone spiritualize their social aspirations'.

—Swami Vivekananda

India has a long and great past. She stands out prominent among all the nations of the world because of her civilization—undying and ever creative, born thousands of years ago when many of the great nations of today were still unknown and undiscovered. Centuries before the Christian era, when the whole of the Western world was yet in its infancy, far removed from anything like civilized life, the dawn of true civilization broke in upon the horizon of India. This is the most ancient land on earth where wisdom of the loftiest kind made its earliest home before it went into any other country. The Indian heritage is a glorious and uniquely dynamic one, which has successfully nourished and sustained the nation through the vicissitudes of time and fortune. The two distinctly original characteristics of the cultural life of India, viz., the spirit of unity and the spirit of progress, have preserved her age-long civilization unimpaired, notwithstanding the numerous devastating alien inroads upon her cultural, political, and economic life. As Jawaharlal Nehru says, 'It is interesting and rather wonderful to think of the long range and continuity of Indian culture and civilization, right from the dawn of history, through long ages, down to us. In a sense, we in India are the heirs of these thousands of years'.

Though Indian civilization claims a hoary antiquity, it has, unlike the civilizations of old that took birth in Egypt and Babylonia, withstood the ravages of time and survived to the present day, maintaining intact most of its essential features. No other civilization, with the possible exception of that of China, has manifested such adaptability and continuity, such moral fervour and spiritual outlook as the civilization of India has done. It may safely be affirmed, notwithstanding the opinions of many a Western scholar to the contrary, that Indian cultural life, beginning much earlier than the oldest of the 'dead' civilizations, is still in its youthful vigour today, continuing with full confidence, fresh hopes, and great aspirations that are characteristic of its vital spirit. No doubt the civilization of India has gone through many alternate periods of shrinkage and expansion, involution and evolution, often making it difficult to probe into its depths and understand its different aspects without confronting much that is likely to appear nebulous, speculative, and controversial. Yet, it has never suffered any pronounced change in its fundamentals to show that it has lost its youthful nature, and even today it bids fair to continue to maintain its youth for even a far longer future than its long and glorious past. In spite of invasions and battles, persecution and conquest, the ancient civilization has continued to run, with more or less undiminished vitality, enduring to this day as the basis of Indian life and thought.

But centuries have rolled away. Now we are living in a world where conditions are unique and unprecedented in more ways than one. At no time in the past was the world so divided by hatred, greed, and political

conflict. All our interests today—material, moral, and spiritual—are coloured by enormous selfishness and a conception of power politics that rule the world. Doubtless a new world order is in the making, but at what cost? Unity and equality have been much misunderstood and misused. In this age of cultural iconoclasm and scientific disbelief, man's place in the universe has been seriously and unfavourably affected. Notwithstanding the increases in happiness that wisely used science and the growth of industrialism have rendered possible, human life has not been made a matter of unalloyed bliss. The failure of secular humanism and fanatical theocracy, together with a hedonistic philosophy that is being suggested by the triumphs of science, has led to a ferment in society, creating at the same time a vacuum in men's hearts—a vacuum which has, in the absence of right satisfactions, been filled by ideological perversions of a bewildering variety. A world order which aims at making life more complex and more dependent on political methods and economic creeds could hardly claim stability, much less universal acceptance. A world commonwealth cannot be composed of slave nations and cannot be fostered through capricious and irresponsible exercise of power and authority. Of what avail is a new world order which lacks spiritual vitality and ethical perfection and, as a result of this, suffocates the spirit of man and provides but shortlived satisfaction? The conflicts of power in modern culture cannot be resolved by social or political 'isms' which set store by material values and physical comfort alone, neglecting the essential spiritual roots of human personality.

In the ushering in of an enduring world order, it need hardly be emphasized that material progress cannot go far or last long unless it has its foundations in moral principles and spiritual ideals. Political freedom and economic stability and sufficiency are indispensable as means of satisfying human wants and achieving progress. But to seek material progress at the cost of life values and spiritual integrity is the height of unwisdom, for it will degrade the individual into a selfish opportunist who will not hesitate to be a villain and act unrighteously whenever it suits him. Self-interest, fear, and mutual distrust have been still playing an all-important part in the affairs of the world. Terrible preparations are going on in different parts of the world for purposes of offence and defence. Yet, every sane person detests war and hankers after peace. It is as though each nation is wanting and waiting to profit at the expense of and rise on the ruin of the others. But it is absurd even to think for a moment that such an aim could be cherished by any nation which sincerely desires the establishment of peace and world understanding. Not a mere self-sufficient freedom but an interdependence of peace-loving nations should be the goal of any stable world order.

A great stir of life is visible almost everywhere, more especially in India. In all fields, after passing through a short period of helpless imitation or frustration, Indians are now gradually coming to a sense of self-consciousness. The new awakening in India has opened our eyes to the greatness and strength as well as to the drawbacks of the nation. The urge to progress and the earnestness to regain India's worthy place in the comity of nations will make the people more determined to root out all social evils that are hindering the country's onward march. Swami Vivekananda, in some of his famous Indian lectures, has boldly and clearly indicated the way to national regeneration. His message is essentially a message of strength, faith (*śraddhā*), and fearlessness. His charge to national workers and patriots is to *feel* from the heart, feel for the masses, for the millions who are illiterate, ignorant, and poor. He says: 'When you have men who are ready to sacrifice their everything for their country, sincere to the backbone—when such men arise, India will become great in every respect. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for

the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance'.

Not long before the end of the last great war it was the general hope that there was going to be a new world, very different from and happier than the one that was crumbling away. A new world order, with better conditions of living and greater opportunities of striving, is no doubt a pleasing prospect to one and all. Have we been able to establish such an order yet? Or does it still appear a far cry? Referring to the kind of disposition that must be widely diffused if a happy and stable world is to be created and sustained, Bertrand Russell writes,

> 'It is a sad fact of human nature that the hope of happiness to unborn millions does not stir enthusiasm as much as the hope of unhappiness to one hated enemy. It is this that keeps evil in being: we have less desire for the welfare of our friends than for the punishment of our enemies. If this cannot be changed, it will be useless to create a good world, since it would cease to please as soon as those who opposed it were liquidated'.

Every nation cherishes some lofty ideal which it seeks to realize and propagate as the best ideal of a happier and better state of existence. Every individual too has his or her own conception of a new and more desirable social order. The desire for progress and well-being is universal, and everyone wishes the world order were shaped according to his own conception. Fascism, aggressive nationalism, totalitarianism, socialism, and communism—each one of these has put forth a powerful ideology of its own, often backed by military might, as the panacea for the malady of civilization as it obtains today. The one feature common to all these systems is their great concern for the rise and destiny of the common man. In addition to this there are other things that are indispensable if there is to be an end to all wars and rumours of wars, viz. a world government, political democracy, and the traditional liberal freedoms. Over and above all these, the most essential factor that can help mankind enjoy a far higher degree of well-being is the spiritual basis of society. Unless the secular superstructure of civilization is placed on broad and strong spiritual foundations, it is difficult to see how the world, as it stands today, can be saved from the threat of facing utter disaster.

With patterns of progress and blue-prints of world peace galore, nobody with the minimum of intelligence and understanding can minimize the importance of the roles of science and democracy in the making of a better order of society. But where does religion come in? Perhaps nowhere, as many a poet, politician, or scientist would have us believe! Finding that religion, in the West, as it emerged from the portals of the organized church, became a dogmatic protagonist of parochial illiberality, suppression of free thought, and abdication of critical judgment, the high priests of scientific materialism arrived at the conclusion that religion was more a hindrance than a help to human progress. But to attempt to detach ethics from spirituality and replace spiritual mysticism by political idolatry is not the way to achieve real progress either. If the testimony of historians is to be believed, one cannot ignore the patent fact that the signs of any new awakening in the cultural, political, or social field, in any country, is invariably accompanied by an equally, if not more, powerful revival in the fields of ethics, philosophy, and religion. Unfortunately, however, the ridiculous view that religion is like an 'opiate' and is the cause of manifold evils, and that it should therefore be ignored or suppressed has found favour with a section of people. It is obvious that those who hold this view do not know what real religion is and what its great benefits are. Such misinformed criticism is no better than the appraisal of a priceless gem by a brinjal-seller or a blacksmith.

The need for a lasting unity and understanding among men and nations was never so urgent and important as today. Social values and norms in every land are being revolutionized by world forces which are themselves in constant conflict. Notwithstanding the epidemic of severe political unrest that

has broken out in every country, India—the ancient land of peace, tolerance, and spirituality, the eternal home of love, Truth, and Dharma—has a sublime and soothing message to offer to the world. Though she herself is standing on the threshold of a new era of freedom and is just now launching forth on the biggest enterprise ever in the history of democracy, she has her great and substantial contribution to make in ushering in a new world order. In a nutshell, India's message to the nations of the world, both big and small, is: 'Help and not fight, Assimilation and not destruction, Harmony and Peace and not dissension'. It was given to her to preserve and proclaim the essential spiritual values of humanity, and to lead mankind from non-existence to Existence, from darkness to Light, and from death to Immortality. The ideals of democracy and of equality between man and man, which form as it were the background of the present-day social order everywhere, originally sprang from the basic tenets of Vedanta, viz., the divinity of man and the oneness of existence. The other two salient tenets of Vedanta, viz., the unity of God and the harmony of religions, have from time immemorial taught India and the world the great lesson of infinite tolerance, nay acceptance.

In India religion has ever been the pivot upon which all activity has turned; to realize the spiritual ideal has been considered the main purpose of life, and that purpose has always motivated the people. Hence India's chief contribution to the cause of world peace and international understanding is to spread broadcast moral and spiritual ideas before deluging the world with social and political ideas. She has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not mere theories but can be practised to perfection, thereby producing men and women of the most exalted character who alone can work for and establish the new world order for which mankind is expectantly looking forward. It is not merely the poets, politicians, and scientists who are the benefactors of civilization, for, the great spiritual leaders of mankind, who awaken the spiritual consciousness of man and secure for him the unfailing vision of a better order of society, do make equally, if not more, constructive and practical contributions to civilization.

India was never static or obstinately conservative in the course of her long and illustrious history, except perhaps for short periods in the very recent past and that for obvious reasons. She has remained as eager to give forth to and teach others unstintingly as to take in and learn from others unhesitatingly. It cannot be said that India ever tried to withhold her wealth of cultural and spiritual heritage from any other nation. She has rightly been mentioned as the 'cultural Guru' of the world, and Western scholars themselves conclusively admit the very great influence of Indian thought on the thought of the West. Victor Cousin, the eminent French philosopher, whose knowledge of the history of European philosophy was unrivalled, writes:

> 'When we read the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East,—above all, those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe,—we discover there many a truth, and truths so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which the European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East, and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy'.

The debt that the world owes to India is immense. She possesses in her spiritual ideals the key to the progress of humanity, through a world order firmly based on all that is noblest and best in human personality. She has demonstrated the practicality of the spiritual ideal by giving birth to God-men who have acted as beacon-lights to millions in all times and climes. The Indian ideal of a universal religion has sought to foster a unity among men of every land, lifting them above their social, national, and religious barriers—not by violently tearing down these barriers but by enabling men to rise above them through spiritual communion. No stable organization for human unification and the culti-

vation of love and brotherhood can be created or developed on the basis of violent coercion, dead uniformity, or class hatred, whatever its other benefits in the field of politics and economics. India's ideal is never to pull down man from a higher to a lower level but to lift him up from a lower to a higher level. Her method is always constructive, not destructive, slow but steady, never its opposite.

The time has come for India to conserve and release her immense spiritual power in order to counteract the destructive forces that subdue and dominate the human race. The ancient Indian ideal, which says—'May all be happy, may all achieve their real welfare', has got to be revived in the cause of the uplift of mankind. The whole world requires spiritual light and moral guidance. The demand for a new order of society is becoming more and more insistent, especially in view of the intolerable situation arising out of inordinate lust and greed of gain. India alone has the highest spiritual truth for which the entire outside world is waiting. Indian thought has to stand revealed in its fullness of synthesis—not as a sect but as a unity in diversity. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'This is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind'. This is the task before the nation.

WHAT VEDANTA MEANS TO ME

By Gerald Heard

'Define your terms', the reader will say, as he has a right to. For the phrase used above as a caption is, if not ambiguous, certainly double. It calls for both what I *mean* by Vedanta and also what Vedanta *does* for me. That is, what do I take Vedanta to be; and how for me does it seem to work?

Clearly then, I must take the first question first. The definition given in Vedantic literature seems to me satisfactory: the threefold statement that man's nature is divine, that it is the aim of man's life here on earth to unfold the divine nature within him, and that this basic truth is universal—that is, that every religion that has inspired mankind has been trying to state these facts. In short, Vedanta offers that system of thought and way of life for which increasingly men have been looking: a universal religion in which could be combined all men of goodwill.

I think, too, I would and may add something to the above answer to the question of what does Vedanta mean. What makes it seem to me the best theory of and reaction to the whole is, in a phrase, that its span is commensurate with its grasp. That is to say, it is vastly tolerant, or to be more precise, charitable. And it is also precisionally free from sentiment. In it kindness and truth are not in conflict. It secures these supreme values, these necessities of a universal religion, by its teaching that God is at once immanent and transcendent. To use a condensed technical term, it sees the problem of evil as arising from the problem of time, and the riddle of an objective world—which appears largely irrelevant—it perceives as an issue of epistemology. In consequence, it is neither careless nor despairing about pain and sin. It neither says they are just accidents soon to be swept away by more accurate science, nor does it say that each individual makes his own world. Either alternative is seen as too simple.

Vedanta would allow that we have made

this world as it seems to us, but it would also add that the 'we' who make it are no more the various egos who think themselves the final units of consciousness than that 'we' are the creator gods who in backward myths are said to be the makers of the world. Vedanta, as far as I know, teaches that within time there is evil as ruthlessly real as time itself. But rise above time and there is no evil. All the great religions have of course taught that God is eternal—not everlasting, for that is to be extended in time. Therefore he does not dispute with evil. But only the mystics have consistently taught that rising to union with Him is the one way in which that problem can be transcended; for only the transcendent and those who are united in the unity of the One are beyond evil. To say that evil does not exist and still to desire the appetites, love possessions, and claim recognition is to demonstrate ignorance, not transcendence.

Vedanta is then cosmologically satisfactory. It shows that what we call evil is a misapprehension, but it is a misapprehension more real because more persistent than that of the hypnotized patient whose skin swells into a painful blister when he is told that the cold penny let drop on his flesh was 'really' red-hot.

Of course one great religion, Buddhism, that sprang from Vedanta, criticized its parent for having *any* cosmology. Systems of metaphysics, Buddhism treated as fetters. But that Vedanta's minimum was and is necessary has been proved by four things.

First, Buddhism split on this issue and the Mahayana built up a metaphysic as vast if not vaster than Vedanta's.

Second, the Pali, 'southern' school, rejecting all metaphysic, tried to operate with nothing but a psychology. In consequence it has always been in danger of forging an instrument that could be used for bad quite as much as for good purposes. The most striking illustration of this is given by the development of Mahayana in Japan where the Zen teachers, anxious to rid themselves of the vast ritual and speculation of the late Mahayana, again tried to reduce Buddhism to an empiric psychology and made from many Zen initiates perfect instruments for the fanatic nationalism that brought Japan to defeat. In the meantime, in the Ceylonic schools we can say the doctrine of holy selfishness—a phrase coined by St. Jerome—was preached with a grim logical trankness. For where there is no doctrine of grace and no clear teaching as to what the enlightened state is and its relation is to the needs of others, then it is impossible to regard compassion as other than, in Dr. Hocking's phrase, the 'noble inconsistency' in the noble path.

Third, Buddhism had for some time no message for the layman and could not have. When it did it was committed to what it accepted as, and what in the West has been called, the doctrine of the two lives, lay and monastic. Inevitably also, as was the West, it became committed to a doctrine of *four* lives: that of the simple active, who can keep no more than the code of justice and avoid wanton cruelty; that of the just merchant; that of the chivalrous knight; and that of the specifically 'religious', who was to aim at the law of charity.

Fourth and finally, Vedanta not only originally taught that there were four lives—that is, four kinds of mankind incarnate—but Vedanta was as rich laterally as it was longitudinally. It had not only four stations for various types of mankind on the ladder of being; it had parallel places for those who might be similarly advanced, of equal spirituality, but needing different methods to help them to the final liberation and enlightenment. All religions lead to God and all converge on that final God—quite true—but till late on the path, people of great goodness may need to use different methods. This fact has often led to bitter intolerance, with ritualists persecuting those who were unhelped by its dramatic forms, non-ritualists treating as abominable idolators those who used images. Vedanta has avoided this danger also.

It would seem then that in Vedanta—once its universalism is understood—must lie the

religion of mankind. As it moves over the world, it will tend to express its eternal and universal truth in the vernacular of the era in which it is conveying its message.

These then very briefly seem to be some of the main reasons why one may believe that Vedanta, with its interpretive charity towards the other great faiths, may become the spiritual spokesman for mankind.

And now as to the further question: What does Vedanta do for a particular experiment and experimenter? There one may say that its particular blend of empiricism with metaphysic, the width of its cosmology, the vastness of the picture which it gives of human destiny, and the immediate practicalness of its advices and practices—this amalgam seems most suitable to anyone who wants a method which is psychological and a world view that can match modern knowledge of the cosmos.

The knife-edge in this respect runs between a faith that is rightly urgent and a knowledge that is vastly patient. In Vedanta there is what may be called 'the choice of dooms': a non-human birth, a repeated human birth that is bad, fair, or good, gradual post-mortem enlightenment through passing through the Brahma-loka, enlightenment at the moment of death, and enlightenment while still in the body. This richness of choice makes for neither panic nor for slackness. Many religions have sought to produce urgency by teaching the irrevocable finality of the choice made here and even the choice at the moment of death. As a matter of actual experience, this attitude too often leads to either despair or carelessness, the very things the teaching attempts to oppose and cure.

Vedanta does not neglect the importance of the death moment, but it teaches that you will not be able to avail yourself of that moment's full power of choice unless all your life you have been preparing for it, and also, that though the moment of death decides the course of the soul, maybe for an immense period, yet nothing is irrevocable bnt the final end of the story—to which all must come sooner or later—union with the one.

This doctrine then is neither slack nor does it make an offence against the moral law and the conception of compassion as of the nature of the universe. An eternal hell, whether it frightens a few people into panic behaviour or no, is one which is metaphysically, theologically impermissible. For its existence means that God has been defeated for good and all by some part of his creation. Even on the basis of providing an additional safeguard to police protection, no thinking person can entertain a proposition which is so absurd.

The other knife-edge that Vedanta seems to travel is between the opposed dangers of a doctrine of grace which removes all need for self-effort and one that teaches that there is no worker but yourself ; you save yourself or no one can. This, again, of course, dates from an inadequate psychology which thought of the individual as the one irreducible and unexpandable unit of consciousness. The teaching that the wind of grace is always blowing but you must raise—and keep raised—your sail; this is the only doctrine which in East or West has ever made complete saints, men who achieved entire wholeness. It does more ; it also gives the first insight into the doctrine of Karma, a doctrine which we must now remember is being forced on Western man, not by religion but by genetics—that we are born with a fate which we can modify but never disregard and indeed can modify only insofar as we accept it.

If we are really all much more members and parts of each other than the Renaissance conception of individualism thought, then Vedanta is not only more scientific than the Renaissance outlook; it also offers a way of life more truthful and at the same time more practical. Human nature can be changed, once we realize what human nature is. And he who changes himself *is* actually changing others. Private salvation is a contradiction in terms. For we are saved from isolation, privacy, egotism into the One who embraces all.

Human nature—that phrase leads to two further points which appear as important de-

finitions of Vedanta, showing how it balances between 'life rejection' and 'life acceptance', between despairing pessimism and unsubstantiated optimism. Western asceticism has tended to take that aspect of mortification which regards the body as a foul prison—this 'vile body', as the English translators rendered St. Paul's phrase—and this life as a vale of never-ceasing tears. The *Theologia Germanica,* following this tradition, says that Christ never had a moment's joy in his whole life, a remark that the Gospels would certainly seem to deny. Luther refers to the body as nothing but a sack of worms. Later Protestanism reacting from this, whirled around and has tended to say that the body should, with rational hygiene and giving it its head as far as the appetites are concerned, become a lasting delight. Likewise the world, properly tidied, should prove a paradise.

Vedanta teaches that the body is invaluable and must most carefully be kept in health, because—and only because—it alone can be the egg in which the soul may hatch. Likewise the world, it too is the shell of that egg in which we hatch. And the further we advance in growth the more we shall be able to see that this world appears as a heaven to him, but only to him, whose body and mind have become truly translucent. To him this experience of time and grace is as God sees it, Nirvana, the state beyond all conflict and separateness.

Vedanta, then, in regard to the physical body and the temporal world, finds the true attitude and balance. This is a middle world in which we are embryos, tadpoles of eternity. Heraclitus's phrase, 'here we are as in an egg', may be taken as a good definition of our physical condition and what we should do about it. We may define our environment in that saying of Jesus preserved for us, not by the Western canon, but by the Indian emperor Akbar when he had carved over the capital he deserted as soon as it had been built: 'Said Jesus, may his name be blessed, "This world is a bridge; pass over it, but build no house upon it".'

Such then seem to be very briefly the reasons, general and personal, philosophic and empiric, for our availing ourselves of all that Vedanta can teach us, and striving to practise it. For so only may we really learn to understand ourselves and become at length mobilized for the rightful service of others. The actual terminology in which such a system of thought and action is conveyed must always be modulated to the place and time in which it is being conveyed. Vedanta is so ancient that we can see it doing this throughout the ages. And because of this we can perceive the essential and unchanging under the topical and can now at present see that here and now by its present teachers and practicers it is growing for itself the instruments of expression and practice whereby it may speak in the vernacular of our contemporary lives to Western man.

'Man, after his vain search after various gods outside himself, completes the circle, and comes back to the point from which he started—the human soul, and he finds that the God whom he was searching in hill and dale, whom he was seeking in every brook, in every temple, in churches and heavens, that God whom he was imagining as sitting in heaven and ruling the world, is his own Self. I am He, and He is I. None but I was God, and this little I never existed.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

WHO ARE THE PEACEMAKERS?

By Swami Tejasananda

It has become the fashion of the day to talk of peace with atom bombs in one hand and an olive branch in the other. Bombs and bombers—the gifts of modern science—and a thousand other destructive weapons, forged on the anvil of inordinate greed for pelf and power, are being counted as one of the most effective means to ensure peace on earth by some militant nations of the world. As a consequence, a hectic race for an increase of armament has already started with breakneck speed. Everywhere in the East and the West the atmosphere has been electrified with this ideology of peace, though the sponsors thereof do not actually know what they mean by their glib talks. Needless to point out that the quick march of events in the great drama of politico-economic life of the present day has only proved the antithesis of what these peacemakers loudly profess. It has brought into bolder relief the clash and conflict of mutually repellent molecules of the body politic, struggling for self-assertion in their respective ideological spheres. Nazism, nursed at one time into the full flame of life by the insatiable craze for territorial expansion, has, in the opinion of some, met with its inevitable doom; but one still wonders whether the Aristos of yesterday has really handed his sceptre to the Demos of today or the old imperialism is once again raising its venomous hood under the cover of a new name. Communism—one of the most powerful forces of the day—has already spread, like an octopus, covertly or overtly, its ever expanding net, almost all over the earth. Socialism—an amalgam of the products of the great French Revolution and of the Oriental theory of social equity and justice—has also come to the fore, to grip the mass mind, for a better social order based on the recognition of the fundamental rights of human beings to live a moral, peaceful, and happy life on earth. There are, besides, various other 'isms' that have of late been ushered into existence as a result of the conflict of interests, and are demanding speedy solution and fulfilment—each in its own way. In fact, a revolutionary ferment is perceptible everywhere, which is symptomatic of a change that humanity wants for a better economic and social adjustment to ensure a peaceful order of life.

It is very often said that history is a great teacher and an eye-opener, and serves as a powerful check on human passions and emotions. For good or for evil, history records in characters of blood the darkest deeds of humanity, and paints in letters of gold the brightest achievements of mankind as well. This is a naked picture we find silhouetted, side by side, in the horizon of human history. But how far human nature has recoiled back once for all from such an orgy of bloodshed and glided into the groove of righteous activity,—the world is still to know, and history is yet to produce. Can swords, cannon, and bombers meet the requirements of the human soul that thirsts for peace? It has been aptly said by A. J. Toynbee, in his *Study of History*:

> 'The truth seems to be that the sword which has once drunk blood cannot be permanently restrained from drinking blood again any more than a tiger which has once tasted human flesh can be prevented from becoming a man-eater doomed to death; if he escapes the bullet he will die of the mange; yet, even if the tiger could foresee his doom, he would probably be unable to subdue his devouring appetite; and so it is with a society which has once sought salvation through the sword'.

As a matter of fact, our social life has become so complex and our demands so exacting that the politically-minded people, bound to the soil, can hardly approach the problem with that balance of thought and suavity of temper, that depth of wisdom and width of vision, which characterize a superman who

has transcended the sordid limitations of human nature and has earned the much-needed intellectual outlook and spiritual dispassion to look beyond the borders of his soil and to embrace the rest of mankind within the sweep of his catholic and synthetic vision. The much-maligned science, that has released unforeseen forces beyond control, has, in the eyes of these great souls, a blessed role to play in rebuilding human society. It is not merely a weapon for destruction but furnishes also a splendid material for construction. In the hands of blood-thirsty monsters it is utilized for devilish ends. But it is a blessing when properly manipulated. Its claim as a salutary force to solve the arcana of the universe, in co-operation with philosophy, has been recognized by master minds. Scientific geniuses like Einstein, Max Planck, Heisenberg, Jeans, Eddington, and others have brought about a mighty revolution in the realm of thought. Science of the West and the philosophy of the East have now begun to shake hands with each other. To quote a well-known European writer:

'The enthusiastic activities of European scientists can now be harmonized with the calm contemplation of Oriental sages. The butterfly of true integral wisdom can ere long burst forth from its cocoon, wherein it has matured and sheltered during the past. This union may presage the new East-West civilization which may one day arise when the spindle of time has spun far beyond our counting and the primacy of materialism has been deposed, and when truth may sit enthroned to direct the real renaissance of all human life and labour'.

Placed in the midst of these mighty revolutions that are happening in the thought-world of mankind, we are perforce to ponder seriously over where India stands today and what role she is now to play in the shaping of human destiny. The old order has changed almost beyond recognition, yielding place to the new. Distances of time and space have been killed through the magic of science. Continents, races, and nations were never so close as they are today. The marvels of science 'fill our home, throng our streets, float on the five oceans, and move invisibly through space. It has shifted the foundations of human life, affected the spirit of our time, and altered our outlook'. Any novel thought, springing anywhere into life, finds a welcome response in the twinkling of an eye in the farthest end of the earth. It no longer eddies only within the confines of a single race or nation but transcends its limitations, geographical or other, and becomes the possession of the whole of humanity the very next moment. India, once the spiritual mistress of the world, can hardly stand as an idle witness to these movements of thoughts in the context of modern revolutionary changes. With the achievement of independence her responsibility to shape human culture to a nobler end has increased a thonsandfold, and every eye is now focussed upon her for proper guidance. Cultural forces, travelling with the speed of lightning from land to land, from continent to continent, are silently seeping not only into the lives of different peoples but are imperceptibly infiltrating into the soul of India as well. The struggle between Capitalism and Labour, between 'haves' and 'have-nots', and between similar other opposites of the Western brand has begun to invade the soil of India also and create a ferment unprecedented in the history of the country.

The solution of this raging conflict of principles and ideologies, as is noticeable in all its ugliness both in India and the world around can never come from the clang and clatter of arms or threat of atom bombs. They have been tried and found wanting. They may decimate into pieces the finest achievements of arts and science, convert in a moment a rich and prosperous land into a trackless desert, and make a holocaust of innocent lives, but can never bring peace and happiness to human society. Has war brought the horizon of peace nearer or made it recede farther and farther to the vanishing point? War after war is being waged from time immemorial in the holy name of peace and happiness; but it is peace and happiness of mankind that are being murdered from day to day by the so-called sponsors and advocates of peace through violence. What a tragic irony!

Peace generally presupposes equilibrium

of forces and uniformity of thought, which in their turn negate loss of balance and posit cessation of conflicting activities—a condition of life which the history of the human race has up till now failed to produce in the collective life of mankind. It is but common knowledge that variety and clash of thought is the matrix of creation and sign of life. To think of humanity professing only one religion or following only one principle is not only preposterous but is a presage for a coming dissolution and the silence of the cemetery where there may be uniformity but no activity or sign of life. But still we dream of peace, talk of peace, and run after peace in the material world! There is a plethora of peacemakers, holding *pourparlers* and entering into secret pacts from age to age, and even at the present moment. But the big interrogation still remains: Have we gained peace?

As a matter of fact, in all our vain search for peace, we are, all the while, by-passing the real peacemakers—the torch-bearers of truth—those prophets of mankind who have proclaimed from age to age the eternal principles that would furnish the *terra firma* on which to build the edifice of peace. Hatred begets hatred, fear begets violence, and peace begotten of such violence is never the stuff of peace that humanity wants. It can never be that golden peace that harmonizes all conflicting interests and sees unity in diversity and fills every home with unspeakable joy. Rightly did Nietzsche, the great German thinker, feel, in his silent solitary home on the mountain top, and declare with the force of his conviction, 'The greatest Events—these are not our loudest; on the contrary, the quietest hours. The world turns itself not around the discoverers of new noises, but around the discoverers of new values'. In fact, this writer's reference to the discovery of new values indicates the new angle of vision from which the problem of peace can be approached. Politicians and economists, bereft of the deeper insight and balanced wisdom of the spiritually enlightened Columbuses of the world, can at most pounce upon the surface-value of life and things, and attempt at a patchwork. But that can never serve as an anodyne for the ailments of humanity. The world has had enough of such *soi-disant* saviours who cannot see more than what meets the eye and have as such created more wars and more harm than good to human society in the name of peace.

The world is still proud of the rich heritage of spiritual culture bequeathed to posterity by the real Prophets of peace—Buddha, Jesus, Shankara, Nanak, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and the like—who saw the 'Face of Peace' and discovered the real values of life, and whose voice was the eternal voice of Truth and whose life was one eloquent process of dedication and prayer, renunciation and service. Did not Buddha sacrifice his all for the sake of peace and lay down his life for the service of humanity? Did he invoke the aid of the sword to inaugurate peace in the world? Did he adopt the politician's or the economist's methods for the achievement of this supreme end? Far from it. His voice of peace has rung down the corridor of centuries in superb eloquence, and even now one-third of humanity pays loving homage to this shining 'Light of Asia' with all humility and reverence. Similar is the history of Jesus Christ—another great Prophet of Peace, born in the holy land of Asia. 'All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword'—such are the words of the great Jesus of Nazareth who first healed the wound which Peter's sword had inflicted, and then voluntarily delivered his own person up to suffer the last extremes of insult and torment. Such a Prophet of Peace would welcome death on the Cross rather than sell the self for pelf or conquer with the sword. Toynbee again puts the poser and himself answers it significantly :

> 'What inspires the Nazarene Saviour to take this tremendous new departure? . . . The answer is that these others knew themselves to be no more than men, whereas Jesus was a man who believed himself to be the Son of God. . . . Now that we have weighed and found wanting those *soi-disant* saviours who have avowedly been mere men, let us turn, as our last recourse, to the saviours who have presented themselves as Gods'.

The lives of Shankara and Nanak, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna, and similar other torch-bearers of Truth tell the very same tale. They discovered new values and viewed the march of mankind from a higher platform of life. Everything has for them a meaning and a significance, which is foreign to an earth-bound eye of a rank materialist—a Marxist or a Machiavelli—whose vision can hardly go beyond the tip of his nose. Immured in the prison-house of his own passions and prejudices, such a materialist peacemaker can hardly get above personal predilections and sordid interests—political or other, and dictate real principles of peace to humanity. Time is ripe when one must rush out into the open from these peace-breakers' stuffy chambers to see the calm, radiant face of those God-men, the real peacemakers, who felt peace, lived in peace, diffused peace all around, and sacrificed all for the sake of peace.

It is these great seers of Light who discovered men not as men of mere flesh and blood but as children of Immortality (*amṛtasya putrāh*)—bringing with their discovery a new hope and a new assurance. They visualized the one universal principle that harmonizes all apparent contradictions and binds the entire universe with the golden chain of the Oneness of Being. In their eye, a man is not merely a man of flesh as he appears to be, but he is more than a man, as he bears within him the spark of the Infinite—the great Soul that governs the universe. This is the boldest utterance of the Indian Rishis and the dictate of Indian philosophy. Universal brotherhood, love for fellow beings, and the spirit of heroic self-sacrifice and service are but the natural outcome of such deeper understanding of this universal principle. This is the Magna Charta of peace which the bewildered world needs today. When a man or a nation runs mad for self-aggrandizement and brutally cuts the throats of others for the sake of earthly possessions, the gifts of these great God-men come as a saving revelation and show the golden vista to cry halt to the crescendo of murders and orgy of bloodshed that are tarnishing the pages of human history from day to day in the holy name of peace. Peoples are off their balance today and, in their intoxication from pelf and power, do not know what they actually want. Peace will ever remain a phantom and a hope unless that introspection and poise which characterize the real discoverers of peace are cultivated and developed, unless steps are retraced to find out the real home of peace of which the war-mongers have become totally oblivious today. The Upanishads declare, 'One that sees the universal Reality within one's self enjoys everlasting peace and none else' (*tamātmastham ye anupaśyanti dhīrāsteṣām śāntih śāśvatī netareṣām* (*Kaṭha Up.*, V. 13). That meditative calmness and purity of motives, that divine madness that casts off selfishness and material greed, and, above all, that spirit of sacrifice and universal love born of a deeper plunge into the core of Reality are the sterling possessions of spiritual giants who have changed the face of the world from time to time and have converted the war-arena into a garden of goodwill and peace. Let us look up to their noble teachings, their lives of inestimable value, and listen to their soul-enthralling voices that are calling ever and anon all fighters to their side. All distinctions of caste, creed, or colour vanish into air before their penetrating gaze and they feel all as part and parcel of their own being. There is no room for hatred in their scheme of life and no war in the march of their ideas. The golden sword of wisdom which they wield tears into shreds all veils of differentiation and brings into clear light harmony and peace and the real values of life. But it is the greatest tragedy in the drama of human existence that these teachers of humanity have been rolled back from the horizon of life to make room for political Titans for the solution of the problem of world peace! As a result, the entire humanity is standing today on a big precipice for a catastrophic fall into the abyss of death and darkness.

India must also play her significant role at this critical juncture. Truly has Swami Vivekananda said: 'Here is the same India

whose soil has been trodden by the feet of the greatest sages that ever lived. . . . This is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind'. But to be eligible for delivering the goods and to make her voice heard in the din and bustle of this great war of Kurukshetra, India should not only be spiritually and morally strong but must be politically alert, industrially efficient, and materially great as well; for, no nation with weak-kneed impotence can play any useful role in the shaping of human destiny.

The voice of the great Rishis and Prophets of the world is still a potent force, as it is the song of the Soul immortal and the voice of Peace eternal. Let us hearken to their universal gospels and lofty messages and find out from the glowing pages of their great Book of Life the way out of this cataclysm that threatens to engulf the world today. Have we the patience to hear?

DEATH AND DEATHLESSNESS

By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

The problem of death may be approached for solution from two levels of experience, the theistic and the absolutistic. At the theistic level, the fear of death drives one to the feet of God. At the absolutistic level, no such fear arises, because that is the state of fearlessness (*abhaya*) and deathlessness (*amṛtyupada*).

Sri Ramana says in his *Poem on the Nature of Existence*:

'Those people, who have intense fear of death, seek as their refuge only the feet of the great Lord, who is without death and birth. Those who are dead to themselves, along with their adjuncts—will they harbour thought of death? They are deathless'.

The great turning-point in the life of Sri Ramana was itself made possible by the fear of death. One day, when he was seventeen and quite healthy, the fear of death seized him, and he took up the challenge. He dramatized death and worked out the consequences in his own mind. And the great discovery dawned upon him that the Self is untouched by death, that he is the deathless Self. Recalling this experience long afterwards, for the benefit of spiritual aspirants, Sri Ramana says:

'The "I" or my "Self" was holding the focus of attention by a powerful fascination, from that time onwards. Fear of death had vanished at once and for ever. Absorption in the Self has continued from that moment right up to this time. Other thoughts may come and go like the various notes of a piece of music, but the "I" continues like the *Śruti* or the unvarying basic or fundamental note which accompanies and blends with all other notes'.[1]

One sees the face of death everywhere, and yet one does not want to die. The desire for deathlessness is universal. Then, there must be something wrong with the common-sense view of death. Meditation on death is an essential part of the discipline for the philosopher and the saint. The *Bhagavad Gita* includes the realization of the misery and defect of death among the ingredients of wisdom (*jñāna*).[2] To the question 'Is philosophy the practice of death?', Plato answers 'Yes', and adds that the philosopher is he who knows how to die with ease. Before proceed-

1 See *Self-realization*, p. 20.
2 XIII. 8.

ing to the land of Death, in order to make true the angry and unthinking words of his father, Nachiketas consoles his sire saying, 'Like corn does a mortal ripen; like corn does he spring to life again'.[3] If one understands the truth about death, one would be freed from the fear of death. This, however, comes only on the realization of the oneness of Self. In order to pave the way for that experience, the Shāstras urge man to seek refuge in God, so that death for him will lose its terror.

God, by common consent, is without birth and death. Even those faiths which believe in a changing God place Him beyond time. God is indestructible, and has no fear of death. One of the stories about Shiva is that He drank the poison emitted by the serpent Vāsuki when it was used as the rope in the process of the churning of the milk-ocean.[4] Alluding to this episode, a Hymn to Shiva, attributed to Shankaracharya, says:

'Is not this one great help enough, O Lord of souls! Seeing the assemblage of moving and non-moving beings resident in your stomach and resident without, in order to protect them, you placed in your throat the greatly flaming and fearful poison, as a remedy for preventing all the immortals from taking to their heels! You neither swallowed it nor spat it out'.[5]

In order to obtain ambrosia, the gods and the demons churned the milk-ocean with Mount Mandara as the churning rod and Vasuki as the rope. From the fangs of Vasuki came out the world destroying poison. To escape from its deadly effect, all began to flee, including the gods. Lord Shiva, then, gathered the poison in his palm and drank it. But He did not swallow it, in order that the beings located within His body may not perish; He retained the poison in His throat, thus receiving the epithets 'Śrī-kaṇṭha', 'Nīla-kaṇṭha', and 'Nīla-grīva' (He with the auspicious or blue throat).

The universal conception of God is that He protects those who seek Him as their refuge. He is described as the Friend-in-need (*āpat-bāndhava*), Helper of the helpless (*anātha-rakṣaka*) and so on. During the 'blitz' in England, a hymn was composed and set to music. It began with the lines:

God is our refuge, be not afraid,

He will be with you all through the raid.[6]

Some pious people seem to welcome crises so that they may turn to God and seek His protection. At the end of the Mahābhārata war, when Sri Krishna asked Kunti to ask for a boon, she said, 'Let misfortune befall us ever'. An English woman of fifty-five, when asked if she ever prayed, said, 'Well, I do when I think I've got more trouble than I can handle. But it's got to be something very bad to make me pray.'[7]

What can be worse than the fear of death? And to whom else can people go for refuge than to the One who is eternally free from death?

The story is told in the Purānas of Mārkaṇḍeya who, according to the decree of Destiny, was to die at the age of sixteen. He took refuge in Lord Shiva, and was saved from the clutches of death. He became immortal, an eternal youth of sixteen.

The fear of death comes to one only at the empirical level of plurality. Scripture declares: 'Verily, fear arises only from a second';[8] 'When, indeed, he makes but the smallest distinction in it (the Self), there is fear for him'[9] 'He who sees difference, as it were, here, goes from death to death'.[10] Fear (*bhaya*), plurality (*bheda*), and ignorance (*avidyā*) constitute a triad making for bondage. Fearlessness (*abhaya*) arises when the non-dual Self (*advaya-ātman*) is realized through knowledge (*jñāna*). The perception of an 'other', however attractive or friendly that 'other' may be for the time being, is the cause of fear. It is the sense of 'otherness' that is responsible for insecurity and all that goes with

[3] *Kaṭha Up.*, I. 6.
[4] See *Rāmāyaṇa*, I. 45.
[5] *Śivānandalaharī*, 31.
[6] Mass-Observation, *Puzzled People* (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1948), p. 59.
[7] Mass-Ohservation, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
[8] *Bṛhad. Up.*, I. iv. 2.
[9] *Tait. Up.*, II. 7.
[10] *Kaṭha Up.*, IV. 10; *Bṛhad. Up.*, IV. 19.

it. And, otherness or difference is brought about by ignorance. The so-called individual wrongly imagines that he is a denizen of a pluralistic universe, identifies himself with a particular psycho-physical organism, and is expectant of danger from every quarter, including Time otherwise called Death. Physical death is not so terrible as it appears, and solves no problems. It is but a change like that from childhood to youth. The Self's identification with the ego and its adjuncts, which together constitute the carrier of the soul from one physical body to another—which identification is, in fact, nescience or ignorance —is the root of all evil. It is the termination of this identification that constitutes *mokṣa* (liberation). This dying is truly auspicious. It is dying to live. When the ego dies, there is no more transmigration, no more sorrow. To the question 'When shall I be free?', Sri Ramakrishna answered 'When "I" shall cease to be'. To him who has attained freedom from the ego, there is no death; for he has realized that the real is the non-dual Spirit which suffers uo change and is beyond the snares of time.

CAN WE DISCARD RELIGION?

By Dr. S. C. Chatterji

There is at present a fairly wide-spread movement of thought which cuts the ground underneath religion and would consign it to oblivion. This is the communistic trend of philosophical thought. In the positivism of Auguste Comte a prediction was made that humanity would reach a future stage of thought and culture where religion would outgrow its utility and become a thing of the past. In the philosophy of communism, as expounded by Karl Marx and his followers, religion is declared to be not only useless but positively injurious as well. It is regarded as a tool in the hands of the capitalists to exploit the masses and as an opiate to make them forget or get reconciled to their miserable lot in the world. It is something which should be ruthlessly suppressed and totally abandoned. Hence it is that the saner section of the human race, which cherishes the religious faith, naturally asks the question: Can we discard religion?

Although the question is a simple one, yet the answer to it cannot be so simple. Any satisfactory answer to this question can be given only when we have answered two other questions, namely, what is meant by 'religion' and what is meant by the word 'discard'. To discard a thing may mean either to reject it as worthless or to abandon the use of it. On the basis of these two meanings of the word 'discard', our first question resolves itself into two other questions: (i) Can we reject religion as something worthless, and (ii) Can we abandon the practice of religion? Communistic writers would have us discard religion in both senses of the word. They are emphatically of opinion that religion is both useless for and detrimental to the wider interests of mankind. The religious faith has its origin in conditions of poverty and ignorance. The churches in which it is enshrined have proved themselves, in history, to be the instruments of injustice and oppression, wielded by the wealthy class to deprive the poor and the illiterate of their legitimate rights and privileges. As such, the sooner religion is discarded by men and banished from human society the better it is for mankind.

Let us now face the question fairly and squarely, and consider what the right answer should be. The communistic arguments

against religion do not stand to reason. They are not, as they should be, based on the intrinsic character and merits of religion, but on the abuses which have been made of it by some religious persons and institutions. It may be that some people and their organizations have sometimes used, or rather misused, religion as a means of oppression and exploitation of the general mass of their fellow beings. But it is no less true to say that there are other religious souls and their institutions which have done greater good to human society and sacrificed their all to bring relief to suffering humanity. Nor, again, is it true to say that religion has its origin in conditions of poverty and ignorance. If in some cases we find religion among the poor and the illiterate, there are at least some historic instances in which religion has been founded and followed and preached by kings, princes, and great intellectuals of the world. The communistic generalization about religion, from some instances of its origin and application, is rather hasty and unwarranted. Further, to judge anything by reference to the conditions of its origin and its uses or misuses is not always to judge it properly and correctly. Rather it is to misjudge it in the wrong perspective of its external conditions and associations. The value and validity of a thing do not depend so much upon its origin and uses or abuses, as on its essential nature, its place in reality, and its relation to human life. These are the more important points which we have to consider with regard to religion before we are in a position to say whether we can discard it or not.

Religion consists in man's unique experience of the spiritual Reality that lies within him and beyond him. It is to be noted here that the religious experience is unique in the sense that it is easily distinguishable from all other types of human experience like the sensuous, the moral, and the aesthetic. In his religious life, man stands face to face with a supersensuous, spiritual Reality which is the ground and reason for the existence of the physical universe, but is not itself physical or material. The way in which man has an experience of this spiritual Reality is quite distinct from that in which he has the sense-experience of physical objects. In his moral life, man is brought into certain social relations with his fellow beings who are his equals, and is interested in certain judgments about the goodness or badness, rightness or wrongness of their conduct and behaviour. There is here no trace of the feeling of awe and reverence for an intrinsically higher being, which characterizes the religious experience of man. It may be that in some cases we feel reverence for the moral excellence and perfection of some fellow beings. But even here it is to be observed that the moral experience in question is more of the nature of religious experience. We hold some sages and saints in reverence because we find, or at least believe in, the presence of certain divine characters and qualities in them. So also, man's aesthetic experience, although akin to the religious, is yet distinguished from it. In the one man does or does not enjoy what is beautiful or ugly, while in the other he enjoys the bliss of communion with the holy and the divine.

The unique spiritual experience which constitutes the soul of religion may, however, be expressed and embodied in different ways, in different cultures and civilizations. These give rise to different systems of ideas and beliefs, customs and practices, which distinguish the different historical religions of the world. The different creeds, dogmas, and practices which are connected with different religions are but the different ways in which different groups of men or different religious organizations and institutions embody the soul of religion. But once the spirit of religion is embodied in fixed forms and formulas in different religions, there arise clash and conflict between them. It is a conflict not between the original spiritual experiences which underlie all religions but between different dogmatic and institutional, communal and sectarian religions. It is here that the spirit of religion is sacrificed to certain un-

meaning forms and routine observances in different religions, and the followers of one creed or sect distrust and oppress those of another. Sometimes it so happens that such religions are utilized for political or communal ends and purposes. When religion is brought to such a pass, it ceases to exercise any beneficent influence on man's mind and becomes the means of tyranny and exploitation of the masses. If the spirit of sacrifice and service, of love and goodwill, be characteristic of religion in its original purity and beauty, that of jealousy, hatred, and selfishness is the natural outcome of sectarianism and communalism in religion. And, if by religion we mean such sectarian and communal religions, it is not only possible but very necessary to discard them for the good of mankind at large.

What has been said above with regard to institutional and dogmatic, or sectarian and communal religions is by no means true of religion as such. Religion, we have already said, is the expression of a unique spiritual experience through man's whole life and conduct. Man has this experience because both humanity and reality have a spiritual constitution. If religion as such is to be repndiated and discarded, reality must shed its spiritual character and man his spiritual constitution. So long as it is not proved that unconscious matter is the ultimate reality and man is a purely physical being or a conscious automaton, religion cannot be considered to be an opiate or an illusion cherished only by misguided, ignorant people. But if by reality we mean, as we must, that which is never and nowhere contradicted, then we are to say that Spirit is the ultimate reality of both man and the world. For, it is Spirit alone, as a self-conscious principle, that is not subject to the changes which overtake all things of the world including our body, mind, intellect, and ego. Now if man be a spiritual being, his spiritual experiences will be a natural thing for him. And, that man has really certain spiritual experiences appears clearly from the testimony of many saints and sages vhose veracity cannot be reasonably doubted. Hence we are led to the view that while religion as a matter of creed and dogma may be discarded, religion as the unique spiritual experience of man is a necessity for him and so can never be rejected as useless and worthless.

Let us now consider the question whether we can discard religion in the second sense of the word 'discard', that is to say, whether we can abandon the practice of religion. By the practice of religion we mean the performance of such things as prayer, worship, rite, ceremony, etc. The question, therefore, is: Can we give up the observance of the religious code of life? Our answer to this question is twofold. We say first that for ordinary religious men and women, the practice of religion is essential and very useful. It is through the careful and conscientious practice of religion that ordinary people become morally pure and spiritually enlightened. There is, generally speaking, no short cut to the Deity. The goal of religion, namely, God, must be approached through a strenuous and arduous course of moral and spiritual training. Religious practices and observances constitute the different steps in the training of man to make him a fit recipient of the grace of God and a participant in the bliss of communion with Him. Ordinarily, therefore, we cannot afford to dispense with the practice of religion.

Next, we are to observe that there are two exceptional conditions under which one may give up the practice of religion. When a man attains such spiritual perfection that a single thought of God or a mere utterance of His name is sufficient to evoke in him the highest religious emotions and sentiments, it is no longer obligatory on him to go through the routine of daily prayer and worship. The end being easily attained, the utility of the means and the necessity of their adoption naturally cease. So also, one who has gone high up the path of philosophic knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*) and realized the identity of his Self with the Absolute, may feel no urge for performing the worship of a personal

Deity, i.e. God who is the highest for man's religious consciousness. Hence we conclude that religion as such, being rooted in the spiritual constitution of man, cannot be discarded by him, although the practice of religion may, under certain special circumstances, be considered unnecessary and irrelevant.

"THY NAME IS SILENCE"

By C. T. K. Chari

Sri Ramakrishna is probably one of the best known figures of the renascent India. The growing spate of literature about him bears witness to that. Romain Rolland and Henri Bergson, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore have spoken of his greatness. Has he then been understood? But what an irresponsible question? Could he have endeared himself to millions if he was not understood? I wonder. Do we love only those we completely understand? The utter simplicity of Sri Ramakrishna's sayings conceals depths and profundities that the most daring metaphysician dare not plumb. Those who came to him loved him tenderly and yet they stood in awe of him. His experiences and thoughts were, not infrequently, alien to the ordinary human mind ; they were opaque to human intelligence. Swami Vivekananda, who probably had more right to interpret the Master than most others, was asked on one occasion why he did not preach Sri Ramakrishna as an *avatāra*. He replied : 'Truly, I tell you, I have understood him very little. He appears to me to have been so great that, whenever I have to speak anything of him, I am afraid lest I ignore or explain away the truth, lest my little power does not suffice, lest in trying to extol him I present his picture by painting him according to my lights and belittle him thereby'.[1] The confession will startle those who have read merely the many unchastened volumes on Sri Ramakrishna. They will be not less startled if they ponder long enough on the Master's teaching concerning God or Brahman. 'What Brahman is cannot be described. All things in the world—the Vedas, the Purānas, the Tantras, the six systems of philosophy—have been defiled, like food that has been touched by the tongue, for they have been read or uttered by the tongue. Only one thing has not been defiled in this way, and that is Brahman. No one has ever been able to say what Brahman is'. (*Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*).

What manner of man was he who could make these sweeping denials? By what authority did he make them? Are not the Vedas, the Puranas, the systems of philosophy, the sheet-anchor of Hindu religion? Are they? We are so firmly in the grip of the radical relativism of the historical method that, when we come to religion, we at once try to assimilate it to *our* ancestry, *our* scriptures, *our* social and cultural pattern, *our* nation, *our* era and *our* century. I make bold to say that Sri Ramakrishna went past these barriers taken singly and collectively. His apostrophe to God, 'Thy Name is Silence', can be paralleled only by the confessions of the greatest mystics and religious thinkers of all ages and climes. Dionysius the Areopagite said : 'Our speech is restrained in proportion to the height of our ascent; but when our ascent is accomplished, speech will cease altogether and be absorbed into the ineffable'.[2] 'I comprehend', Lao Tzu observed, 'the advantage of non-

[1] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V, p. 306 ('Conversations and Dialogues').

[2] *De Myst. Theo.*, cap. iii. *The Divine Names and Mystical Theology*, Eng. tr. by C. E. Rolt (S.P.C.K., London, 1920).

assertion and the lesson of silence'.[3] 'I beheld the ineffable fullness of God', Angela di Foligno testified, 'but I can relate nothing of it save that I have *seen* the fullness of Divine Wisdom wherein is all goodness'.[4] 'The most beautiful thing which man can say of God', according to Meister Eckhart, 'is that knowing His inner riches he becomes silent. Therefore prate not of God'.[5] Sören Kierkegaard, who (as Geismar told us long ago) accepted the essentials of the Christian faith embodied in the Athanasian creed, could say '. . . and so God loves silence. Silence in relation to God is strengthening. . . To talk in relation to God is a depletion. . .'.[6] 'What, O God', Nicholas of Cusa asked in his *De Visione Dei,* 'is my intellectual ignorance of thee, is it not an instructed ignorance?' And Dante[7] wrote :

'. . . O speech !
How feeble and how faint art thou to give
Conception birth. Yet this, to what I saw,
Is less than little. . .'[8]

There is no need to seek a laboured justification of mysticism such as this by going to Hegel. To be sure, we can learn from him that 'if those who recognize Mysticism as the highest truth are content to leave it in its original utter mystery, their conduct only proves that for them too, as well as for their antagonists, thinking means abstract identification, and that in their opinion, therefore, truth can only be won by renouncing thought, or as it is frequently expressed, by leading the reason captive'. But 'the reason-world may be equally styled mystical,—not however because thought cannot both reach and comprehend it, but merely because it lies beyond the compass of understanding'.[9] Now I do realize that *Vernünftiges* may transcend the limits of *Verstand.* 'Verily', Kierkegaard commented,[10] 'we do not need Hegel to tell us that relative contradictions can be mediated'. But that *Vernünftiges* should ever prove capable of being designated as the mystical in any worthy sense I cannot admit.[11] If Sri Ramakrishna was right, God lies beyond the *reach* and not only the *grasp* of thought. That is why His Name can never be defiled.

But is not the absolutely inscrutable the absolutely inaccessible or the sheerly meaningless? By no means. That is just one of the *a priori* assumptions of speculative philosophers which can be questioned.[12] The Absolute of mystical experience is a plenitude falling beyond the most massive, the most comprehensive, the most coherent system that reason may construct for itself. To find It, we must dig deeper into the ultimate conditions of awareness than ever Hegelians or Neo-Hegelians did. To glimpse something of the sweeping grandeur of Sri Ramakrishna's teaching, we must turn, not to German and Anglo-American Idealism, but to the Classi-

[3] Citation by W. E. Hocking in his *Types of Philosophy* (Scribner's, N.Y., 1929), Ch. XXX, p. 382.

[4] Angela of Foligno, *Book of Divine Consolations* (New Medieval Library, London, 1908). *Cf.* Beatae Angelae de Fulginio, *Visionum et instructionum liber,* Colonia, 1851 (Bibliotheca mystica et ascetica), c. xxii. '. . . in quibus non videbam nisi tantum potentiam divinam, modo omnino inenarrabili'. ('. . . But in all this I could see nothing save the divine power in a manner completely beyond expression').

[5] Cited by Rudolf Otto, *Mysticism: East and West,* Part A, Ch. III.

[6] *The Journals of Kierkegaard,* translated and edited by Alexander Dru, 1384 (entry of 1854).

[7] *Paradiso,* XXXIII, 121-123. Eng. tr. by H. F. Cary (Cassell and Co., London, 1903).

[8] 'O quanto è corto il dire, e come fioco.
Al mio concetto! e questo, a quel ch'io vidi,
E tanto, che non basta a dicer poco . . .'

[9] *The Logic of Hegel* (Eng. tr. by W. Wallace, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1892), Ch. VI, §82, p. 154.

[10] *Journals,* 286.

[11] I here emphatically dissent from N. O. Lossky, *Mystical Intuition,* p. 28. *Cf.* his article 'Hegel als Intuitivist', *Blätter für Deutsche Philosophie,* 1935. See my criticism of the Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian approaches to mysticism in my paper 'On the Denial of the Law of Excluded Middle' in *The Philosophical Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (July 1951), esp. pp. 68-73.

[12] *Cf.* R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy;* C. A. Bennett, *A Philosophical Study of Mysticism* (Yale University Press, 1923), esp. Part II, Ch. VIII, pp. 103-110; *The Dilemma of Religious Knowledge* (Yale, 1931), esp. Ch. I.

cal Russian Ontology[13] drawing its inspiration from the mysticism of the Eastern Church; to Vladimir Soloviev's doctrine of 'all-unity' in which every empirical manifestation is dependent on the Divine Being that permeates it; to N. O. Lossky's Absolute which cannot be a member of any determinate complex;[14] to S. L. Frank's *La connaissance et l'être*[15] which represents *l'être* as flowing far, far beyond *connaissance* with its laws of identity, contradiction, and excluded middle; to Léon Shestov's 'Night of Gethsemene' which transcends all relativities. To seek confirmation of mystical teaching in Kierkegaard's 'existentialism' may be to seek it in the most unexpected quarter. 'There is a view of the world', he wrote, 'according to which the paradox is above every system'.[16] 'The thing is we cannot form any idea of God's exaltation. We always get stuck in our aesthetic accountancy; the marvellous, the great, the far-reaching, etc.'.[17]

[13] For the characteristic features of this *Weltanschauung*, the prevailing ignorance of which has, in my opinion, resulted in utterly inadequate appraisals of Oriental mysticism, see S. L. Frank's paper 'Contemporary Russian Philosophy' in *Philosophy To-day*, edited by E. L. Schaub (Opencourt, 1929). *Cf.* Frank's 'Die russische Weltanschauung', supplement to *Kant-Studien*, Band 32 (1927). *Cf.* L. M. Lopatin, 'The Philosophy of Vladimir Soloviev' in *Mind*, N.S., 100, October 1916; Mrs. J. N. Duddington, 'The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov' in *The Hibbert Journal*, Vol. XV, No. 3. Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari's single paragraph, devoted to Russian mysticism, in his recently published *Mystics and Mysticism* (Sri Krishna Library, Madras, 1951, p. 140), is too short to convey any adequate notion about its ontological implications or its peculiar importance for Oriental mysticism. Frank regards the Russian approach as opposed to the West-European idealistic and rationalistic traditions.

[14] *The Intuitive Basis of Knowledge* (Macmillan, 1919), Ch. VIII; *The World as Organic Whole* (Oxford University Press, 1928), Ch. V; *Mystical Intuition*, esp. I, 'The Cognitive Value of Mystical Experience', pp. 1-3.

[15] The French translation of the Russian *Predmet Znaniya* ('The Object of Knowledge').

[16] *Journals*, 282. *Cf.* 153.

[17] *Ibid.*, 997.

Sri Ramakrishna was, comparatively speaking, an unlettered man. Nevertheless, I assert and maintain that he unfolded the ultimate presupposition and the goal of metaphysics. Speculative philosophy in the true sense can *live* only by perpetually trying to exhaust mystical intuition and ever failing to do so. It can move only by trying to conceive the inconceivable. We have here the possibility of endless progress and also an irremovable obstacle at any and every stage of speculative analysis and discovery. Knowledge is indefinitely corrigible or infinitely perfectible, judgments can go on correcting themselves, because there is awareness of That which is incommensurable with them. The mystical paradox underlies all consciousness or awareness.[18] Negation has a unique part to play in metaphysics; for through it alone metaphysics realizes her high destiny.[19] 'At every stage', as Kierkegaard put it,[20] 'philosophy sloughs a skin into which creep its worthless hangers-on'. As Giacomo Leopardi pointed out, the assertion 'All is Nothing' (*tutto è nulla*) will collapse into verbiage or meaninglessness unless the mode of assertion be such as to indicate that the words (which, by themselves, are 'errori')

[18] For this epistemological approach, see my article 'The Challenge of Mysticism' in *Prabuddha Bharata*, October 1951.

[19] C. A. Bennett, *A Philosophical Study of Mysticism*, Ch. II. *Cf.* Max Horkheimer's interesting remarks in his *Eclipse of Reason* (New York, 1947). 'Negation plays a crucial role in philosophy'. 'Each school is equally confident about its own thesis and hostile to the method of negation inseparably bound up with any philosophical theory that does not arbitrarily stop thinking at some point in its course'. (pp. 182-183). Aegidus Jahn maintains that 'our scepticism with regard to most of the categories can never be too extreme'. *The Silver World* (George Allen & Unwin, 1937), p. 4. Paul Cohen-Portheim insists that 'all attempts to make the truth comprehensible distort and detract from it. . . .' *The Message of Asia* (Eng. tr. by Alan Harris, Duckworth, London). The last two writers acknowledge that the mystical philosophers of India have been pioneers in this dialectic. Jahn, p. 291.

[20] *Journals*, 99.

are an expression of the ultimate truth which has been experienced, lived, or felt (*sentito*), not simply known. It is thus that negation or darkness solidified—the 'real and solid shade' (*ombra reale e salda*)—becomes the mystical image of reality.[21] 'Inscrutable is All' (*arcano è tutto*). 'The objective accent', Kierkegaard insisted, 'falls on what is said; the subjective accent on how it is said'. To expend our cleverness, ingenuity, imagination, sophistication, and cultivated scholarship on religion is all very well. But, like Kierkegaard's Taciturnus,[22] we have to discover that 'the same water at the same place is so shallow that a sheep can wade it, and so deep that an elephant can swim'. God, according to Sri Ramakrishna, is accessible to the unlearned and the learned.

I suggest that Pfleiderer's criticism that mysticism empties consciousness of all its contents and Vacherot's censure[23] that it frequently rests on a principle which represents the utmost degree of abstraction betray a radical misapprehension of the 'Divine Nothing' which, in mystical teaching, ranks as the Absolute Fullness of Being. Dean Inge, notwithstanding his severely critical attitude to Oriental mysticism, grants that 'The Greeks had no symbol for zero and could not anticipate Scotus Erigena's dictum that the Godhead or Absolute *non-immerito Nihilum vocatur*'.[24] The Christian Church has frowned and still frowns at mysticism. But there is no gainsaying the fact that Eckhart, Ruysbroeck, Jacopone da Todi and many others apprehended God 'the Infinite and the Unincarnate' as the 'Onefold and the Ineffable'. Julian of Norwich[25] discovered that 'No soul is rested until it is noughted of all that is made'. 'The Soul', St. John of the Cross taught,[26] 'must not only be disencumbered from that which belongs to the creatures, but likewise, as it journeys on, it must be annihilated and detached from all that belongs to its spirit'. It attains to its union with God by passing through the 'night of the senses' and the 'night of the intellect'; it renounces all its modes.[27] Al-Ghazzali tells us that 'The Science of the Sufis aims at detaching the heart from all that is not God. . .'.[28] What Hegel[29] said of philosophy may be said with far greater justification of mystical intuition. In its inward essence 'there are neither predecessors nor successors'. Just as little talk of 'constant improvements' can there be as of 'peculiar views' of mysticism.

[21] *The Poems of Leopardi,* edited by G. L. Bickersteth (Cambridge University Press, 1923), Introduction, pp. 91-92; p. 103, foot-note, *Cf.* F. A. Aulard's 'Essai sur les idées philosophiques et l'inspiration poétique de Leopardi' in *Poésies et oeuvres morales de Leopardi,* Vol. I.

[22] *Stages on Life's Way* (Tr. by W. Lowrie, Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 363.

[23] *Histoire critique de l'école d'Alexandrie.*

[24] *Philosophy,* Vol. X, No. 38 (April 1935), p. 152.

[25] *Revelations of Divine Love,* edited by Grace Warrack (London, 1901).

[26] *The Spirit of Flame: A Study of St. John of the Cross* by Prof. Allison Peers (Student Christian Movement Press Ltd., 1943), pp. 120-121.

[27] J. Baruzi, *Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique* (2nd edition, Paris, 1931), pp. 386, 479, 486, 504, 611. St. John of the Cross, who came to be known as 'Doctor of the Nothing' (*Doctor de la Nada*), was really 'Doctor of the All' (*Doctor del Todo*). *Cf.* Prof. Peers, *op. cit.,* pp. 96f. He who renounces all gains all. A few months before his death, when he had been deprived of all official standing in the Order, when his health was shattered, when contumely and misrepresentation assailed him on all sides, and he was banished to a lonely little house at La Peñuela, St. John of the Cross wrote to a nun: 'As to my affairs, daughter, let them not trouble you, for none of them trouble me. . . . Think only that God ordains all'. To a disciple he wrote: 'Son, let not this grieve you. . . . I am quite prepared to amend my ways in all where I have strayed, and to be obedient, whatever penance they give me'. This great Christian saint, by his life, proved the dictum of Plotinus: 'All those things in which (the soul) once took pleasure, power, strength, wealth, beauty, science, it now says that it holds in contempt. It would not say this if it had not come upon something hetter than these'. *Enneads,* VI. 7. 34.

[28] *Cf. Confessions of Al-Ghazzali* (Eng. tr. by Claud Field).

[29] *Werke,* I. 165.

Mystical intuition beholds itself as one and the same. The category of time is disabled right from the start and in a manner wholly different from that in which it is discredited in Western idealism. It is neither unequivocally affirmed nor unequivocally denied. Spirit is neither in time nor out of it.[30] Böhme's description of God is the paradoxical 'To Whom time is as eternity and eternity is as time freed from all strife'.[31] 'Thy Name is Silence': The apostrophe makes Sri Ramakrishna a representative not of Hindu mysticism alone but of mysticism at large.

(*To be continued*)

[30] See my paper in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, July 1951.

[31] 'Wem Zeit wie Ewigkeit
Und Ewigkeit wie Zeit,
Der ist befreit
Von allem Streit'.
Cited by Nicholas Arseniew, *Mysticism and the Eastern Church* (Student Christian Movement, London, 1926), p. 115. *Cf.* Angelus Silesius' *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, I. 177, 183, 185; II. 109, 111, 114. I cannot undertake here an extended enquiry into the mystical doctrine of time or exhibit its curious affinity to Kierkegaard's dialectical treatment of the problem, for example in his *Consider the Lilies* (2nd part of the 'Edifying Discourses'), Eng. tr. by A. S. Aldworth and W. S. Ferrie, (C. W. Daniel and Co., Ltd., London, 1940), II, pp. 50-52.

FROM THE OLD WORLD TO THE NEW

By A Wanderer

I have had the supreme privilege of visiting many places of interest in India—places of pilgrimage, of historical importance, of good scenic view, and so on. I have travelled the length and breadth of India and my wandering tendency thus being appeased I felt I should not travel any more. But destiny willed it otherwise.' One afternoon I found myself in Bombay ready to sail for America the next evening. I was surprised at the configuration of circumstances which had led to this event, and I was even more surprised to find myself about to sail.

I had come from Calcutta. At the Railway Station in Bombay I had a lot of trouble regarding my luggage and thus got a foretaste of what travelling abroad would mean. Greater trouble was experienced the next day when I was embarking the boat. Fortunately I had friends at the pier who greatly minimized my difficulties.

Himalaya was the name of the boat by which I was going. I had been long in the Himalayas. Therefore to find that this was the name of the boat by which I was to leave the shores of India gave me a great thrill. So I would be in the 'Himalaya' again for a fortnight or so! What a great association the name has—specially to Hindu minds; what memories it calls up when one thinks about it! It is said that Swami Vivekananda was once asked in the West why it was that people in India had so much religious inclination. At this the great monk looked grave and replied, 'Well, we have the great Himalaya mountains in India'. I remember that later, after four days at sea, I went ashore at Aden and as I was returning to the boat in the evening I saw from a distance the big letters of the word 'Himalaya' blazoned in electric lights at the top of the boat. My mind at once flew to the peaceful abode in the bosom of those great mountains where I had formerly lived. The thought instantaneously lifted me out of my surroundings and for a while I lived in the past. I heaved a deep sigh. What a difference!

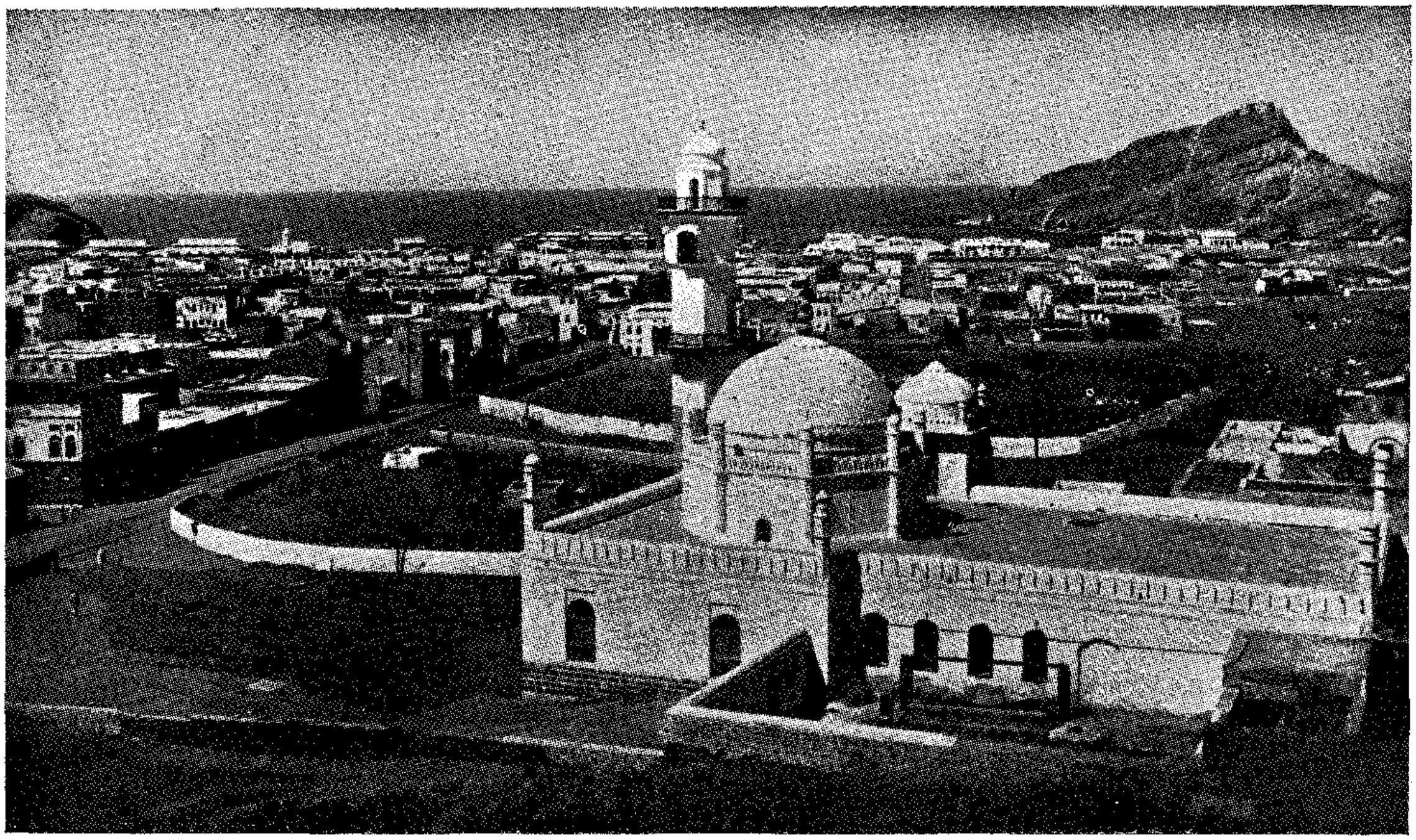
But to return to Bombay—we were to travel

by the *Himalaya,* a P. & O. boat, to Tilbury, near London. We boarded the ship in the evening. There was some difficulty about dinner as, being busy with the friends who came to see us off, we were very late in going to the dining saloon. However, there was some makeshift arrangement made for us. Some of us fretted at the inconvenience. . . . Why should we fret? Were we not wrong in being late? Did that not cause inconvenience to others? But it is also true that everything can be carried to extremes. A Chinese writer some time ago wrote that the three curses of Western civilization are Punctuality, Efficiency, and Success. He wrote, of course, humorously, but is there not some truth behind the statement? How much racking of nerves is there to keep up the high standard of things which, after all, are not vitally related to life! They disturb the even flow of life rather than bring poise and peace to it.

Though we embarked in the evening, the boat was not to start until early the next morning. I was eager to see the last glimpse of Bombay (or of India?). So I got up very early in the morning. But I was too late. The boat had come away a long distance. I could see only the cluster of lights (in the city) which had a magic look in the twilight of the morning hours across the blue waters of the Arabian Sea.

We were in an English boat. So we had to conform to the manner and the mode of living of the West. Accustomed to the free and simple life of a wanderer, I had considerable difficulty in doing this. Each nation or country has a particular way of living. Each follows a particular method with respect to eating food, wearing clothes, and so on. When a nation becomes very strong and powerful, it enforces its manners on other nations, or the latter submit to them from a sense of inferiority, or for the sake of convenience. But there is no denying the fact that there should be a common basic standard for the sake of convenience—specially at a time when, with easy means of communication, no nation can remain or afford to live isolated from the rest of the world. Unfortunately some fuss about it is still in existence, and a visitor from the East, unaccustomed to the Western mode of living, feels its pressure.

When we left the shores of Bombay, we were altogether in the Western atmosphere. Most of the passengers were Westerners; there was only a sprinkling of Indians, with one or two Ceylonese. This was the first time that I saw from close quarters, or by staying with them, what kind of life people in the West live. Before that I had read about them, heard about them, and only casually had occasion to mix with them in India. Formerly they were amongst us in India, now I was in their midst, in their own environment. Of course the life in a boat does not fully reflect the life of any people. In the boat the passengers are in a holiday mood and enjoy an air of freedom. I felt a great stranger in the environment that I was now in. But this was a great advantage, for with the detachment of a bystander I could observe their lives and ways of thinking. How joyous and virile they were! Even the older ones! It seemed they were out to enjoy life to the fullest extent. To break the monotony of staying in the boat, they arranged various sports and games in which many of the passengers took part in one way or another. There were music, dancing, fancy-dress fun, and many other such things. But were they really enjoying life? Could they get anything worth having from it? Or were they simply trying to drown the problems of life in a round of excitements? From the conversations I had with some of the passengers I could not get any impression that they were interested in the deeper problems of life. Nor did they seem to have any interest in the higher forms of culture and refinement. Everything was superficial or lip service. How long can one enjoy life in this way? Soon life will seem barren, and actions fruitless. One can drown the reaction of one excitement by another exciting pastime, but sooner or later one will have to face life in its naked reality. And then?



A VIEW OF ADEN

Stopping at Aden for a few hours, the boat reached the Red Sea on the sixth day of our journey, and we were at Suez two days later. We could not see much of the Suez Canal, as the boat passed through it at night. The Suez Canal was opened in 1869. It is about a hundred miles in length. When the boat passes through the canal the pilot is changed. At Port Said we could see from the boat, on the left hand side, the magnificent statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps, architect of the Canal.

We feared that the Mediterranean Sea would be rough and that there would be heavy rocking of the boat resulting in the seasickness of many passengers. Fortunately the sea was almost calm. And I missed the opportunity of experiencing what seasickness means.

On entering the Mediterranean we recalled the events that took place here and round about during the last war. So many engines of destruction invented by human brains were active here day and night for a long period. Passenger ships could not pass through. Human life had no value. Thousands of persons fell victims to the ravages of national hatred and the bid for power and supremacy. It seemed for a time that the clock of culture and civilization went backwards and that the world was coming to an end. Man can transform himself into a God. Man can degrade himself to a demon. It is a pity that both forces are there in the world. At one time a Buddha or a Christ comes to the world just to show mankind to what a divine height a man of flesh and blood can rise. At another time there comes a Nadir Shah, a Chingiz Khan, an imperialistic monarch, or an ambitious political leader who leaves to history examples of the worst brutality that the human mind can conceive of. Can we not have the former type without the latter?

When one has read and heard much about historical places, on actually seeing them—especially for the first time—they wear a new meaning, they become living personalities, as it were. So when we were passing through the Mediterranean and by Gibraltar and saw a glimpse of Spain and Portugal, each gave me great joy like that of meeting an intimate friend. The boat passed very close to Portu-

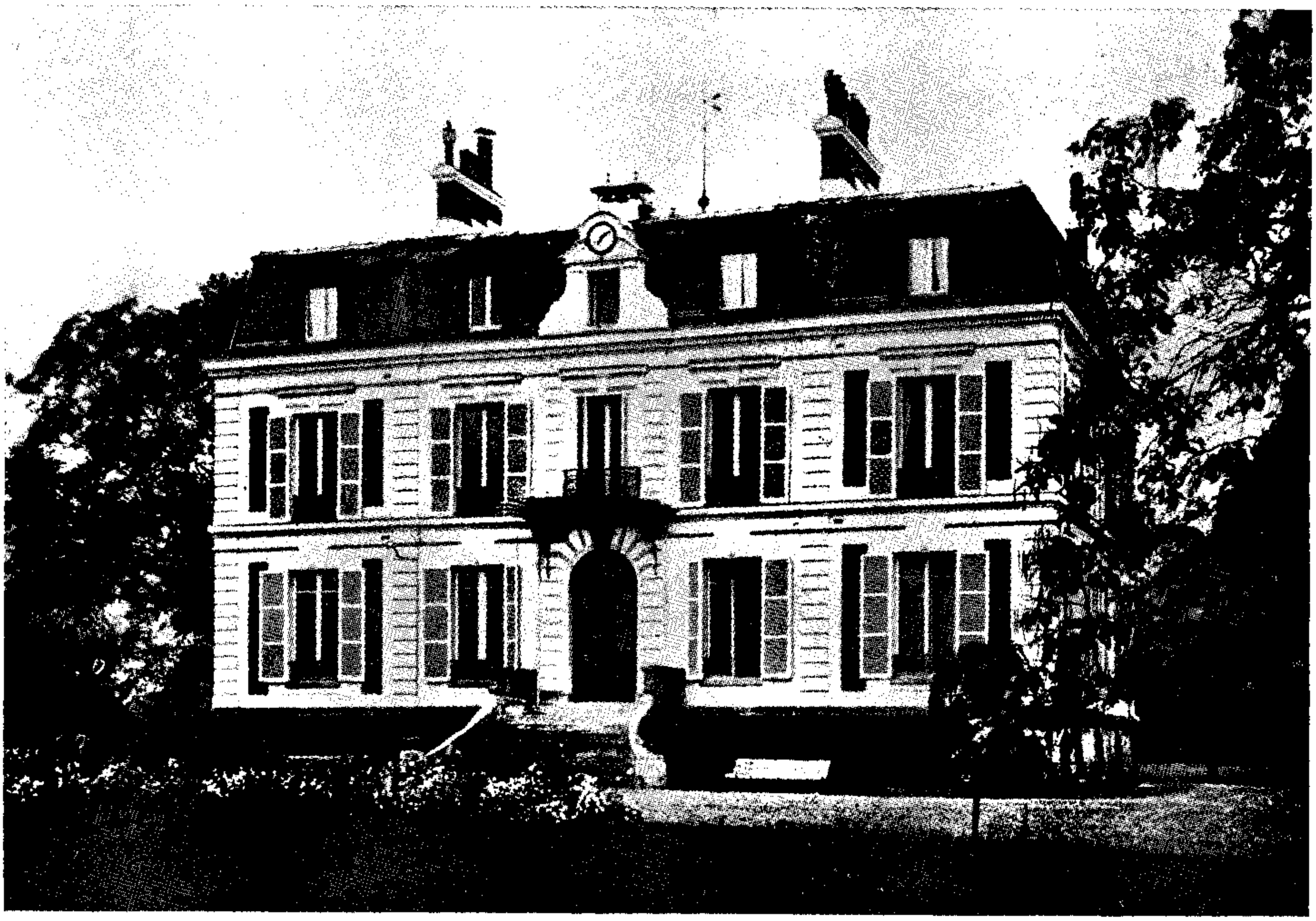
gal. That was the first land of Europe I saw. How many things come to one's mind on such an occasion! The history of Europe and its culture, how Indian thought travelled to Europe in the past, how European thought is now trying to dominate the world and how that has given rise to many conflicts, and so on. When one travels abroad one becomes a citizen of the world for the time being, and one can see and judge different nations and countries in right perspective.

Exactly after fifteen days' journey at sea, we arrived at Tilbury from where we were to go to London. Disembarkation and releasing our luggage from the customs office took nearly three hours. From the port to London we drove by car. The streets, houses, and trees on both sides seemed very familiar because we had seen many such pictures of England from the time of our school days. We were in foggy London with occasional drizzling rain. We had only five days at our disposal before we were to sail again for America, and in the meantime we planned to go to Paris. So we were in a hurry to see as much of London as possible.

The next morning we saw the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, Lambeth Palace (where the Archbishop of Canterbury lives), Westminster Bridge (about which we read in the poems of Wordsworth in our student days). In the afternoon we saw the National Art Gallery and the British Museum —everything in a hurry to ouh great regret. As we approached Buckingham Palace we found a lot of people standing there. When we inquired why so many had flocked there, we learnt that the King would come out at that time and these people were eager to see him. We were surprised to know that the people had so much personal regard for the King even in these changing times. But each country develops its own traditions which persist in spite of the influence of circumstances.

In our boyhood we read a poem in Bengali ridiculing those Indians who were too enamoured of England and English ways. The first line of the poem read: 'The land in England is after all made of earth and not of gold'. So one should not be unbalanced in one's admiration and regard for England. Two World Wars have undermined the prestige of England. And after the independence of India, Indians have ceased to regard everything English with awe. Was it, after all, subjective, that everything we saw in London seemed to have no glamour about it? A few things surely stirred up our imagination, but they awakened in us a historical sense more than any feeling of personal or national adoration. All of a sudden we developed the *Gita* attitude of supreme indifference or detachment to life!

The marks of the War were still visible in the dilapidated buildings of England that have not yet been repaired. Even after five or six years one can see what great havoc German air raids did to London. But how much grit and determination the English people showed in not being cowed! A nation lives, grows, and prospers because it has some supreme qualities. But England has now fallen on evil days. She has to struggle against so many handicaps to solve so many problems. On the boat we had pretty good food. That was not possible in London. Many important foodstuffs were rationed. One cannot say that this has not given rise to dissatisfaction among the people. Our guide—a well-informed, cultured man—was narrating how the Labour Government had failed to fulfil many of the promises it had made, and for that people were losing faith in it. We did not pay much heed to his words. For we knew that the masses are led by propaganda and they cannot realize the difficulties against which any Government, however well-intentioned, has to fight. Does not the same discontent exist in India? Our guide had an ethical understanding of the problems of the world. While recounting the hardships the English people were going through, he said, 'The root cause of the trouble in the world is jealousy, greed, and love of power. So long as man is not better, evils will exist in the world, and people will have to suffer'. We were surprised at these



CENTRE VEDANTIQUE RAMAKRISHNA

unexpected words of wisdom falling from his lips.

More than anything else in England I was eager to see an English village and the slums in London, just to know how the poor people live there in comparison with similar folk in India. So the next morning we started for a place called Denham, about twenty miles from London. But it could not be called a village, for more amenities of life could be found there than in many small towns in India. Everything was so neat and clean. There was a church which was built in the sixteenth century and which administered to the spiritual needs of the so-called villagers. By special request we had the church doors opened, went inside and sat there for a while. There was no rich paraphernalia as was seen in some city churches. Everything was so simple and at the same time so neat. It was a very quiet spot. It had such a good atmosphere. Yes, religion thrives in simplicity. The pride of wealth and display of riches simply wither it away.

We saw a primary school, housed in a nice building, where free milk and lunch were supplied to the boys. Their health was regularly examined. There was even a special dentist for them. On inquiry we learnt that a portion of the expenses of the school was borne by the county, and the rest was given by the Government.

We approached a house which seemed to be a poor man's cottage. We met the two elderly men who owned it. Hearing of our curiosity to see how they lived, they took us inside. The house was four hundred years old. Passing through various hands it had come to them. In comparison with others, they were poor, but they were very healthy and sturdy-looking. It did not seem that poverty had any depressing effect on them.

CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE DAME

They had on their tables some books—two or three dealing with religion—and a newspaper. So they were up to date as regards general knowledge.

In the evening we started for Paris, to reach there next morning. Over the English Channel, our train was carried bodily on the boat. So our sleep was not disturbed. From Paris we drove to Gretz, a distance of about twenty-two miles, and put up at the Centre Vedantique Ramakrishna. After struggling hard to adjust ourselves to Western conditions and modes for more than a fortnight it was a relief to be here. For in the Centre pervaded the atmosphere of an Indian Ashrama. The institution was situated in a fine, quiet spot. There was a beautiful shrine which was made a living reality through the devotion and earnestness of the members and students.

While the East revolts against the imperialistic domination of some Western nations, is it not surprising to see how Indian thought is slowly and silently penetrating into the life of the West? It is spreading on its own strength; not through the help of any material power—political or economic, but through its being able to fulfil some vital need of the soul. People are attracted because they find peace and solace, their hearts are soothed and minds strengthened. There is no compulsion or persuasion. Of their own accord people come; with perfect freedom of choice they identify themselves with the cause. We were surprised to see and hear of the influence the Centre has over a very wide circle of people, not only in France but in other European countries as well.

It was a pity that our programme allowed us to stay only for two days in this place.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

But it cast so great a spell on us that we could hardly think of visiting even Paris where there are so many things of importance to see. We did visit Paris, but rather reluctantly!

It was such a great joy to visit the Indian Embassy in Paris and to talk with some of the officers. They were also very glad to receive us. They showed us how they were working. Incidentally they discussed with us some of the cultural activities which India should undertake in relation to foreign countries.

We were greatly impressed by the Cathedral of Notre Dame which may be called the 'Spiritual Centre' of the capital of France. It was built in the twelfth century and is a masterpiece of medieval art. Inside the building we saw some people saying their prayers. Their devotion was manifest in their faces.

We visited also the Palais Du Louvre which houses countless valuable art treasures. Unfortunately, we had to see them so hurriedly, for want of time, that we could see very little. Nevertheless some of the paintings moved us greatly. No wonder the Louvre is a great source of attraction to every visitor to the city of Paris.

Returning from Paris we could stay only one day in London. We spent a good deal of time in seeing Westminster Abbey which has an atmosphere of its own. Sitting here quietly for some time, one is automatically led to think of the deeper aspects of life. The Abbey is associated with the memory of hundreds of great men—poets, politicians, thinkers, writers; where are they now? Only a name is left behind! Such is the empty breath of life for which man struggles and spends his whole energy.

We saw also the Indian Embassy in London. They are doing some cultural work as well. They have a free reading room in which newspapers and journals from India are kept. In some rooms were pictures and paintings of Indian scenes. At the time we were there, a film on Kashmir was shown and was well attended.

STATUE OF LIBERTY

In the evening we attended a meeting organized by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre of London. The audience was small, but the earnestness and the rapt attention with which the members listened to the speakers brought pointedly home to me how great is the responsibility of those who go abroad to preach Indian religion and culture.

The following morning we went by car to Southampton—a distance of eighty miles from London—to catch the boat for New York. Here we could see the beautiful scenery of country places in England—big fields ploughed

by tractors, healthy cattle grazing, small and big houses on both sides. When we saw these things, irresistibly did we remember the conditions in Indian villages where things are getting worse and worse from day to day.

We were travelling by the ship *Queen Elizabeth* of the Cunard White Star Line. It is the biggest passenger ship in the world. It is one-fifth of a mile in length. Its gross tonnage is 83,673 and it has 4,000 miles of wire. It has a crew of 1,200, and the number of passengers it can carry is about 2,300. It is, as they say, one of the most majestic enterprises in the history of British engineering and is one of the finest examples of tenacity and courage in the story of Britain's conquest of the sea. It is like a floating town. It has almost all the amenities of a town including as many as three banks. It was astonishing to see how everything was organized and done with a very high degree of efficiency. It was almost the last word in comfort in a ship. Seeing all this, we thought within ourselves: What marvellous powers of organization these people have! Has this no meaning? Has it not a great lesson to teach others?

It took us five days to cross the Atlantic. Some days the sea was quite rough. Some of the passengers were seasick. Fortunately I escaped and could enjoy the sight of the rolling waves dashing against the boat and throwing up spray all around.

On the sixth morning we entered the Hudson River. As I was busy with the formalities before the Immigration Officer, I could not see the Statue of Liberty which welcomes travellers to New York.

After a while I landed in New York, the largest city in the world, with a population of eight million souls. New York is a city of magnificent buildings and skyscrapers, the highest building—the Empire State Building—being nearly a quarter of a mile high. In New York there are 43,000 electric lifts which carry seventeen and a half million passengers up and down daily. There are nine million miles of telephone wire, and seventy million letters are daily carried by the mail. There are 18,000 policemen who walk 31,000 miles of streets. When I saw these things I was simply amazed.

I have now been nearly nine months in the States. Many Americans ask me abruptly, 'How do you like New York? How do you like America?' Well, it is very difficult to say anything in a short answer. Everything has its good and bad sides. Unmixed evil and unalloyed good are not to be found in this world of relative existence. When I look at the healthy appearance of the people, the joyous faces of the children, and see the amenities of life they enjoy, I marvel at the way they have solved the problems of life. But are comforts—automobiles and telephones, radios and television, well laid out parks and long, clean highways—everything in life? It is too early for me to give my opinion of America. A nation cannot be so virile and strong, resourceful and determined, unless it has some innate qualities. What are they?

But in many respects I long for the sights and sounds of India, in spite of its stark poverty and wretched misery. There is something there which you cannot get anywhere in the world.

'Those that want to help mankind must take their own pleasure and pain, name and fame, and all sorts of interests, and make a bundle of them and throw them into the sea, and then come to the Lord. This is what all the masters said and did.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

SCIENCE AND MODERN EDUCATION

By P. S. Naidu

The atom bomb has given a rude shock to our self-complacency. Men and women who laboured under the delusion that the advent of science ushered in an era of peace, plenty, and unlimited progress towards perfection, have been suddenly awakened from their dreams. And one begins to wonder whether there is not an element of evil inherent in scientific discoveries and inventions. Of course, the protagonist of science will deny vehemently any such implication in the 'blessings' which science is supposed to confer on humanity. But the uncomfortable thought that science is not altogether blameless in the present crisis haunts even the most ardent champions of science. These good men excuse themselves and the field of knowledge which they cultivate by saying that science cannot and should not be held responsible for the misuse of its discoveries. The results of science are amoral. It is the *use* to which you, non-scientists, put them that turns them into agencies for moral or immoral consequences, and you, the non-scientists, the politicians and statesmen in particular, who are to blame for the present chaos in the world and not the atom bomb. At the same time the scientists admit that man's moral nature has not kept pace with the rapid advance of his intellect. Man's head has developed enormously, while his heart is lagging behind. We agree. Man has a swelled head. But who is to blame for this disproportionate development of one limb at the expense of the others? I have no hesitation in answering that it is science.

When one makes a careful psychological study of the effect which science teaching has on minds of boys and girls at school, one cannot but come to the conclusion that seeds of aggression, egotism, and intolerance are sown by science in the plastic and fertile minds of young pupils. Add to this the dogmatic denial by science of the great values of life, particularly spiritual values, then one cannot but accuse science of steadily guiding young men and women along wrong lines of thinking and acting.

An impartial student of science, of its psychology and philosophy, feels bewildered when on the one hand, he sees the help which science has given man in making his environment comfortable and easy for living and also in developing his body as well as his mind, and on the other, notices the devastating effect which science has had on his soul. It was, therefore, felt necessary by a very small group of thoughtful people that the foundations of science teaching should be analysed to discover where exactly the danger point is located. And this article sets forth the result of that analysis.

The questions that we have to ask ourselves in this context are: what are the aims which the teacher has in view when he teaches science? Are these the right aims? If they are not, then what should be the right aims? It may be said, in answer, that the ordinary teacher of science has no specific aim in teaching science. He is unaware of the psychological and philosophical foundations of science and is only concerned with the task of covering the course and preparing the pupils for the examination ahead. This is perhaps true, yet, the more thoughtful teacher, when questioned, gives the following as his aims:

(1) Development of powers of observing and gathering relevant facts;

(2) Teaching of the scientific method of dealing with these facts;

(3) Development of the ability to generalize correctly;

(4) Teaching how to solve problems;

(5) Imparting useful information and laboratory skill.

We are rightly impressed by this comprehensive list of aims, but when we study carefully what is being done in the class-rooms, we discover that only the last aim is actually kept in the foreground, while the first four aims are completely ignored. And the teacher is not aware that behind this neglect of four of the five aims, there lies a distinction which has escaped his notice. And that is the distinction between the *method* of science and the *content* of science. The first four aims relate to the method of science, rather to the scientific attitude to Nature, to the scientific view of life, while the last is concerned with the knowledge-content of science and the skills it develops. So far as their effects on the mind of the learner are concerned, there is a world of difference between *method* and *content* of science and this difference is perhaps, sub-consciously recognized by certain eminent scientists who are pleading for the systematic teaching of the scientific method. In his *The Scientist in action—A Scientific Study of his Methods,* the author, William H. George, writes: '... mankind might enjoy the blessings of science with less of its curses, if not only scientific facts were used, but if also *the kind of action used by scientists* in getting those facts were directed to social uses'. The author says that 'among scientists the study of scientific method has been unpopular'. The research worker has been apt to say, 'Never mind about the methods. It is the results that matter'. This attitude of the research worker towards his own methods is to be deplored, for a critical analysis of the methodology of science is bound to reveal the excellence as well as the limitations of the results. Prof. George has, therefore, taken great pains to study the method and publish his findings in the form of an excellent monograph.

Now, to the student of philosophy, the analysis of scientific method is valuable for an entirely different reason. And let me state it immediately. The teaching and learning of the so-called 'facts' of science or the *content* of scientific knowledge make one aggressive, egotistic, and power-crazy, while a careful critical study of the *method* of science will make one humble, non-aggressive, and non-material in outlook. This statement may take many a reader by surprise, but it is nevertheless true. If for a moment we consider the nature of scientific knowledge as it is imparted to young persons, we find that it is given to pupils along with a large dose of its practical application. In fact, it is the contention of modern teachers that the practical aspects of theoretical knowledge should be emphasized in class teaching. The subtle effect of such teaching on the minds of youthful learners is not readily seen by the teachers. Facts of science give a sense of power over Nature, and such power is, of course, to be desired. In the young ones it generates self-confidence, initiative, and drive. And under proper conditions, it canalizes the creative energy which may be struggling for expression. But, at the same time, it must be remembered that so far as the social environment is concerned, this power in the hands of the scientist tends to generate an intolerable sense of superiority. Often the young learner feels that those who have not learnt science are little better than fools. He goes about flinging his scientific knowledge at the heads of others, first at the less fortunate members of his family and then at others outside. He speaks of the 'unscientific' way of looking at things with thinly veiled contempt. And in this he is encouraged by the teachers of scieuce. Add to this the fact that science has a pronounced introvert effect on the mind, and you see at once what a potent power science can be for perverting the mind. And since aesthetic, ethical, and spiritual values are ignored by science, we see the stage set for perverting the young and impressionable mind of students.

We have been stressing the difference between the *method* of science and the *content* of science in respect of the different attitudes to life which they generate in the mind. We have also seen how the *content* of science

inflames the aggressive and possessive impulses in the human mind. Let us now turn our attention to the *method* of science.

The *method* of science, the inductive-deductive method *par excellence,* has the most desirable effect of making the learner self-disciplined, non-aggressive, and humble. And under proper guidance it is bound to lead the learner beyond science to higher philosophical and spiritual truths. Witness what is happening in nuclear physics and nuclear biology.

What then is the *method* of science which we claim to be a corrective to the impulses of aggression and superiority created by the *content* of science? It is nothing but the experimental method which is familiar to every student of science. There are four clear-cut stages in this method. In the first place, as the result of well assorted and dynamic knowledge present in the mind of the scientist, and also as the result of his keenly developed powers of observation, the scientist notices new and hitherto unobserved pheuomena in the laboratory or in the world outside, and immediately formulates a provisional explanation. The formation of a *tentative hypothesis* is the *first* stage in the scientific method. The *second* consists in the *development* of this hypothesis, that is, in the deduction of consequences from the acceptance of the tentative hypothesis as provisionally true. A hypothesis which does not yield suggestive conclusions is barren, and is of no use in science. The *third* stage is the stage of *verification* of the consequences deduced in the second. It is here that experimentation in the laboratory comes in. It is here that all the ingenuity of the scientist in making Nature give up her closely treasured secrets will be displayed. The scientist will search persistently till his verification either supports the consequences drawn from his tentative hypothesis in whole or in part, or refutes it completely. And the last stage and the *fourth* stage is one of *acceptance, modification,* or *rejection* of the tentative hypothesis framed at the first stage. If the second and third stages agree completely, then the provisional hypothesis is accepted as true and is raised to the status of a law of science. Otherwise it is totally rejected; a new hypothesis is framed, and the entire process repeated over and over till a law is established. If there is only partial verification, then partial modifications are made in the provisional hypothesis and the process repeated till there is full verification.

Such is the method of science, and the beauty of it is that even after a hypothesis is raised to the status of a law, the scientist is ready and willing to give it up, if new facts come to light. The history of science is full of discarded hypotheses. They serve to remind the scientist constantly that all his laws are only working hypothesis. Nature has steadily pushed the scientist to the corner where he has been forced to admit the exceedingly humble part he plays in building up knowledge. It is here that the disciplining effect of the *method* of science comes in. The method forces the scientist to recognize the fact that scientific knowledge is *relative* and never absolute, that it is always in flux and can never reach the final goal of truth, that the picture which science gives of the world is a very partial, incomplete, and distorted picture, and that reason which is the main tool of science is a very unreliable guide in the search for truth. While the *content* of science tends to stimulate the aggressive impulses, the *method* of science, if presented properly by the teacher, particularly if the young student is made conscious of its logical and philosophical implication at every stage, will tend to make the student humble and non-aggressive.

A reflection on the *method* of science, properly guided by the teacher, will thus tend to produce a harmoniously developed personality in young learners. Moreover, at the present advanced stage of research in nuclear physics, it is impossible for any one individual scientist to carry on original research by himself in an isolated laboratory. Team-work is the order of the day. And this forcible companionship with like-minded scientists will have a very healthy effect on the younger men

who are likely to become introverted in the ordinary laboratory. I have already hinted at the introvert tendencies likely to be developed by scientists. Advocated scientific research is itself the expression of introversion. But the situation which is developing in contemporary science will automatically check the growth of extreme introversion.

The question now is, how should the teaching of science be organized in order to make this discipline an ally in our efforts to kindle the spark of divinity hidden in the minds of young persons into a blazing flame.

It is, of course, not possible to teach the methodology of science to young boys and girls, but it is possible to give such an orientation to the teaching of science in the high school that it produces desirable effects on the minds of learners. Such an orientation was suggested by me time and again and I shall repeat what I have said on the matter:

In teaching science to young and plastic minds, we must see to it that the seeds of moral degradation are not sown by the denial of God, and the exaltation of matter and force. The best way of guarding against this danger is to impress on the tender minds of boys and girls, by constant repetition, that science, by the very methods it uses, can give at her best only incomplete, partial, and unsatisfying knowledge of a very narrow part of just one aspect of man's experience. The best way of doing this is (1) to show first the cosmic purpose of the phenomena to be studied by science, pointing out how science and scientific method are temperamentally incapable of dealing with purpose, and then (2) to deal with the purely scientific aspect of the question, declaring that the method of science has only the humble role of describing events in the grand scheme of human experience, and (3) to revert to purpose in the cosmos, and stress the need for recognizing the fact that science should seek its crown and culmination in philosophy and spirituality in order that man's personality may be kept in proper balance. In this way young pupils will be constantly reminded of the incompleteness of the knowledge provided by the method of science.

In the university, science should be made an adjunct to philosophy. The superstructure of science should be built on philosophic foundations. All students of science should be made to seek—as Jeans, Eddington, Whitehead, Haldane, and Kohler are seeking—the true function of science in its service to philosophy and spirituality.

The higher branches of science should be made accessible only to those who have a well developed moral and religious nature. Scientific knowledge, I mean research knowledge, should not be scattered broadcast before all and sundry. Like the great sages of old, the teacher of science, who must perforce be a sage himself and a Sannyasin, should first test the moral character of his pupil, and impart such knowledge as he is fit to receive according to the level of his moral development.

Finally, the highest reaches of science should be made accessible to one who has attained the stage of non-attachment to the world. Creative research in science should be undertaken only by Sannyasins of the highest order.

It is in this way that the non-aggressive and humble attitude indicated by the *method* of science may be pressed into service to counteract the impulses of aggression and dominance generated by the *content* of science in the minds of young learners.

'What is education? Is it book-learning? No. Is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education. . . . (True education) may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words, or as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

SAINT NAMADEVA

By Swami Lokeswarananda

Centring round the deity Viṭṭhala of Pandharpur, a long succession of saints, headed by Jnaneswara, flourished in Maharashtra for nearly four centuries beginning from the thirteenth. Of the many strikingly common features which marked their characters was the catholicity of their views as well as the simplicity of their faith. Never allowing themselves to be identified with any particular creed, they would concentrate on what they considered the essence of religion, strictly leaving alone all forms which they held in great contempt. Indifferent to all theological disputes, they concerned themselves only with the ultimate goal of God realization, to which they bent all their energy. Love of God was their chief trait which in some of them took on the form of a passion totally eclipsing all other aspects of life. Many of them were gifted poets who wrote short lyrical poems ('Abhangas') which in flights of imagination, in the beauty and grandeur of diction, or in the profundity of wisdom remain unexcelled.

One such saint of Maharashtra was Nāmadeva who claimed all the distinctions mentioned above besides a few others not attained by any other who either preceded or followed after him. Hailed by Jnaneswara as 'the light of the world', he was a contemporary of that great soul and also his peer in many respects. Together they toured many places of India, and though contrasts in temperament they found much in common between themselves so that a friendship sprang up between them which continued till the last day. Jnaneswara, whose approach to questions of religion was essentially intellectual and analytical, was nevertheless so drawn towards Namadeva (despite the latter's well-known bias towards emotionalism) that he often sought his advice and followed it, sometimes even against his own reasoning. The relations between the two were so close that their difference in outlooks was scarcely known outside the narrow circle of intimate associates, and a still more interesting fact is that after the premature passing away of Jnaneswara his admirers and disciples accepted him (Namadeva) as the natural successor of their leader.

From the evidence furnished by his own writings Namadeva's date of birth may be placed somewhere around 1270. Unlike Jnaneswara who died very young, he lived to a great age, eighty or more. Son of a tailor, Namadeva's early life gave no indication of the saint that he was to become in later years. Uncontrolled and uncontrollable, he found much delight in mischief-making which ranged from playing relatively innocent pranks on the unwary to committing violence. As he grew in years, the ferocity of the trait so increased that such crimes as murder, loot, and arson began to figure prominently among his daily doings. The climax, which proved also the turning-point in his life, occurred when one day he with his accomplices attacked and killed eighty-four horsemen. Visiting the temple of Āmvaḍhyā shortly after this, he found there a boy crying from hunger while his mother scolded him for being so unreasonable, for had she not already told him that she had no food to give him? On enquiry he learnt that the father of the boy was one of those unfortunate horsemen who had fallen victim to his cupidity. Stung by conscience he entered the temple and striking his neck with a sharp weapon made an offering of his blood to the deity as a mark of his atonement. He was turned out from the temple and from there he went direct to Pandharpur, determined that he would spend there the remaining years of his life in repentance and prayer. With the same ferocity which marked his earlier misdeeds he now

began his new life—a life of utmost poverty, a life of ceaseless prayer and bitter repentance. He continued like this for several years till at the end he had a vision of God. By now he had won recognition as a religious man and many began to visit him to receive instructions from him in matters relating to spiritual life. About this time a congregation of religious men took place at Pandharpur—it had to be Pandharpur, for, thanks to the influence of Jnaneswara, it had become the centre of attraction to all seekers of truth,—and with such eminent men as Jnaneswara, Namadeva also joined it. It so happened that among the leaders of the congregation there was one called Gorā who declared that a test should be held to decide about the fitness of those present to join a congregation meant for monks of the highest order. The idea was accepted and he undertook to carry out the test. Passing before each monk he pronounced judgment saying whether he was 'baked' or 'unbaked', that is, whether as a spiritual aspirant he had reached his goal or not. Coming to Namadeva he declared that he was entirely 'unbaked' and it would be many years before his 'baking' could be said to be complete.

Utterly dejected, Namadeva left the place and also Pandharpur resolving that he would not return till he could feel sure about his position among the monks of Pandharpur. He felt what he needed was the instruction of a competent teacher who would guide his steps to the goal. So he began to look for such a teacher and found him in one called Visobā Khechara. When he first met Visoba, it is said that Visoba was lying and his legs were on a Shiva-linga. Shocked, Namadeva began to scold him for such sacrilegious conduct. In reply Visoba suggested that he (i.e. Namadeva) might take the trouble to put his legs elsewhere, if he so objected to his legs being where they were. Indignant Namadeva removed his legs and as he put them elsewhere, another Shiva-linga sprang up on the spot immediately. He was struck by the extraordinary power of Visoba and decided that he was the teacher he was looking for. He besought him for his guidance which the latter agreed to confer on him, and from then onward he remained with his teacher till he had satisfied himself that he had received spiritual illumination in full measure.

Soon after this he returned to Pandharpur where the brotherhood of monks accorded him a warm welcome, Jnaneswara himself at their head. Although Jnaneswara was the first to draw the attention of the country to the deity Viṭṭhala, and the brotherhood of monks which his personality brought into being, none made both more popular than Namadeva.

Namadeva in one place describes what he experienced when he had his first vision of God. He says he saw a flood of light suddenly coming out from the skies—light as brilliant as that of a thousand suns shining at once. Voices, probably of saints, told him that God was coming. And when God came, He came in the manner as 'a cow rejoins her calf' after a long time. In another place he says, in the vein of a Vedantin, 'What lamp can we light in order to see our Self? He who gives light to the sun and the moon needs no light to be seen'.

Namadeva, as the name implies, was an apostle who preached that the Lord and the name of the Lord were one and the same. He used to say: 'The name of God is the form of God and the form of God is the name of God'; 'In the eighteen Purānas the only remedy suggested for the cure of man's evil nature is the repetition of the name of God'; 'God may conceal Himself but He cannot conceal His name'; 'Cling fast to the Lord's name, O young and old!'. Namadeva was, in his time, the greatest singer of devotional songs. With the *vīṇā* in his hand he would sing and dance with an ecstasy that was most touching. In his house, which still stands, there is the deity Keśirāja before whom his daily devotions in the form of singing and dancing used to be a great attraction to the people around. He would say that, if allowed, he would continue in this way throughout day and night, and he would not

stop even for food and drink. Such was his habit that at no time of the day would he stop repeating the name of God, no matter how he was occupied; and he would say if ever the tongue failed to keep on uttering the name of God, he would prefer that it were destroyed.

Namadeva has many Abhangas to his credit, all of them remarkable for their simplicity and clarity. And they had such a universal appeal that many of them have transcended barriers of narrow sects, having found acceptance among varying communities of people including the Sikhs. What is most characteristic of these Abhangas is Namadeva's yearning for God which is the common note which all of them strike. In utter desolation he says: 'Although you are called the Lord, strangely enough I remain helpless, a destitute, an orphan'; 'While people praise you as one who grants redemption to those fallen, I remain a fallen man all the same'; 'You are the Lord of the universe who controls everything; yet it looks as if the world has overcome you, for why else should your presence not be known?'; 'I care for nobody except you. Is it not, therefore, a shame that you should remain indifferent to me?'; 'I hate this world, yet you have made me cling to it. Is this not an act of betrayal?'; 'With tears in his eyes and hands stretched out to you, Namadeva cries out to you, O Lord!'.

Many stories are related bearing on the saintly character of Namadeva. Typical of them is one in which it is said that once a dog snatched away from him a piece of bread he was eating. With a pot of curd he ran after it, begging that it might kindly accept the curd also. Namadeva was lucky in being of a generation in which many saints flourished. Most of them were simple men and women, unlettered and of lowly birth. Those who deserve special mention among them are: Sāmvatā, the gardener; Narahari, the goldsmith; Chokhā, the untouchable; Kanhopātrā, the dancing girl; Janā, the maidservant. The last named was Namadeva's maidservant, who was with him till his last day. Like her master and teacher, she also sang and danced ecstatically before the Lord, and among women saints she was only second to Muktābai, sister of Jnaneswara. Kanhopatra, whose famed beauty brought her many suitors, declared that she would marry only him whose beauty equalled hers. And as according to her the only person who fulfilled that condition was Viṭṭhala, she would regard herself as his betrothed. Soon after this, the chief of a neighbouring State sent word asking for her hand. As it was impossible to refuse him, she stood before Viṭṭhala and put an end to her life. There is an unidentified tree marking the spot where she was buried and the tree stands to this day and is worshipped.

Describing the characteristics of a saint, Namadeva says that he is a spiritual washerman. He applies the soap of illumination, beats his linens on the rock of tranquillity and washes it in the river of knowledge. It is thus that he removes the spots of sins. His further signs are that he sees God in every being and to him gold is as if a clod of earth. His heart is free from anger and passion, and peace and forgiveness rule there. To him honour and dishonour are of the same value as they are to a tree. He recognizes no one as his enemy and his tongue is ever busy praising the Lord.

As to what we should ask of God, Namadeva says that all we need to ask of Him is that we may always think of Him alone in our hearts, utter His name alone with our lips, see nothing but Him alone with our eyes, use our hands in His service and worship only, hear only of His kindness, and that He should always be with us in this life and hereafter. Of such all-absorbing love for God there could not have been a better example than Namadeva himself, with whom it was like a fire which consumed him day and night. Till the day he passed away in 1350, his life was one long prayer, in which all his thoughts, feelings, and actions found themselves working in unison.

THE GREAT ILLUSION

By Manu Subedar

The most outstanding feature of human nature is the gap between profession and practice, promise and performance, slogans and achievements, and generally between declared faith and objective and the actual action.

This is true of individuals; but it is pardonable in so far as man proposes and God disposes. Events occur outside and through circumstances beyond one's power. Many a good intention is frustrated. High aspiration is a very good thing and hitching the wagon to a star brings about some progress, if not the full result.

It is less pardonable when a whole group of people or people of one locality or of one religion raise a cry and pursue it, while all their actions give a lie to the fundamental basis and principles of that cry. Those who speak warmly of maintaining Christian principles and decent life would be found often in some respects terribly removed from the tenets of the Sermon on the Mount. Similarly, among many of those who wish to preserve Islam, the life and actions of some are in many directions far wide of the principles laid down by the Prophet in the *Koran*. Certain sections in India, who earn distinction or notoriety for wanting to preserve and advance Hindu faith would be found indulging in practices and tolerating cruelties which are in direct contravention of the principles and the high teachings of the Rishis.

This failing is also noticeable in political parties, who advocate all sorts of reforms in pursuance of certain principles but are unable, very often, to secure normal efficiency and clean administration. Going out for improving the world in one jump has certainly brought about confusion and general deterioration which are lamentable.

In the teachings of the Rishis, the method adopted, in order to overcome any moral defect in an individual, is to cultivate the reverse virtue with assiduity. After some effort, there is a distinct achievement and the balance is cast so that where there was cruelty a tinge of kindness appears, where there was close-fistedness a shade of generosity comes up, and where there was revenge on many occasions the hands of a man are stayed from extreme and rash actions. The psychological principle beyond all this is merely to break the chain of tendencies inside one so that there is room for a conscious moral build-up.

The virtues to cultivate in order to get over divergence between profession and practice appear to be patience and cool reflection. It is necessary to see not only what is desirable but what is practicable. It is important that available resources be weighed up so as to emerge with a plan which could have a reasonable chance of success. Above all, what is needed is patience. The passage of time not only induces reflections but corrects singularities arising from first impulses. A follower of Vedanta who indulges in worldly joys on the plea that the world is 'unreal' (*mithyā*) becomes necessarily an object of contempt. A close examination would show that to some extent all individuals suffer from the same fault, though in a milder degree. The fault in this case is of an unduly rapid assumption not only of the truth of high principles but of its observation and adoption by the individual concerned. It is for this reason that stories of the *Mahābhārata* and the Purānas often illustrate how Yudhishthira was drawn into telling what amounted to untruth, how Drona and Vishvamitra had succumbed to anger, and others, who were undeniably great, had fallen from virtue at some time or in some manner.

For the seeker after truth, every one of the saints who have come on the scene has advised humility and constant self-examination in order that he may not bite off more than he can chew and he can build himself up little by little.

There is a time gap between the moment when a man thinks he is good and when he really becomes good. There are many who think themselves great, but there are others whom the world accepts as such. Greatness is thus relative. But virtue and truth are absolute.

Contact with a saint by reading his works and the more valuable contact by personal association with him often alters a man and draws him out of his normal indifference for a time. He is prone to think that he has already imbibed the teaching, but his physical nature, his mental habits, and some inscrutable factor, which may be called *svabhāva,* drag him back into his normal level. It is the persistent and conscious effort to rise up again and again which is required. Nothing is more fatal in this effort than the illusion (unfortunately too widely seen in individuals and groups) that they have already achieved, whereas all that is registered is that they are attempting to do something better.

All the saints and great teachers of mankind have repeatedly emphasized the warning in this direction, but it is not generally availed of. After a great teacher has passed away, the world relaxes into its own old ugliness and wickedness.

ORTHOBIOSIS

By Swami Vimalananda

'The wise and thoughtful man attacks his faults
One after other, momently,
In order due, and rubs them all away,
E'en as a smith blows off the silver's dross.
Just as the iron rust accumulates
Self-born, and eats itself away
So with the man who sinneth: day by day
His own deeds to destruction lead him on'.

—*Dhammapada*

Our actions, assertions, and beliefs are deeply influenced by passions and prejudices. The faculty of drawing correct inferences is not a universal gift. In the vast majority of men and women the power of understanding is so rudimentary that they are not able to trace precisely the implications of a combination of facts or suppositions. There are many even among those enjoying a reputation for learning and public career, who support their conclusions and validate their actions on presumptions based on collective or individual passion. Those who are capable of ordering life according to the prescript of right reason are not many. The number of those who attain to such singular purity of mind in which reason shines forth undimmed by the clouds of passion are few and far between. These earnest, mindful, virtuous souls, ever wedded to a steadfast aim, alone can be counted among the real benefactors of humanity, for, they proclaim by silent practice the principles of correct living, which is the sole basis of our well-being. The art and science of correct living according to spiritual, moral, and physical principles, tested by long experience and sound reason, is termed 'orthobiosis' in axiological terminology.

'I do not ask, O Lord, that life may be
A pleasant road,
I do not ask that thou wouldst take from me
Aught of its load.
For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead:
Lead me aright,
Though strength should falter and though heart should bleed.
Through peace to light'.

Religious poetry has time and again regaled

us with such beautiful outpourings, invoking the helping hand of God to lead us aright through the weary and burdensome course of life; and these tender sentiments have produced an exact echo in thousands of hearts. But often our hearts, awakened by the passing pangs of feeling, are again wont to fold themselves and droop without a strong intellectual impulse acting upon it constantly. Virtue, kindness, goodness, righteousness, and such other moral dispositions, in and through which a spiritual religion expresses itself, are acquired only by introspective alertness and constant repetition of suitable activities. In an unreflective creature habitual morality and good conduct cannot exist. Nothing is more spiritual than that which is moral. Intellectual understanding of principles and an irrevocable committal to their power are essential to moral virtue.

Excepting the far advanced in moral and spiritual life, every one of us at the bottom determines what is right and honourable by our own interests and enjoyments. Not a day passes without bringing to our notice instances to prove that we are not restrained by considerations of right from pursuing by hook or by crook what is to our selfish advantage. This is true also in the case of a class, a community, a party, or a nation because there too mass egotism and collective passion play their part in the same manner as in the individual; perhaps in a larger measure because of the powerful weapons of organization, discipline, and propaganda they have at their command. No wonder, a sensitive soul like Swami Vivekananda declared: 'Ours is the gospel of the oneness of all beings and all national feelings are but wicked superstitions'. Religions of the world, he said, have become lifeless mockeries; what we want is character. Reform of our society is impossible without reforming ourselves. In the words of Fichte, the individual is the base and apex of the universe. Our inner being has an incommensurably greater value than all our belongings. Each individual is to be judged ultimately by what he or she *is* and not by what he or she *possesses*. Only a mind-training system, originating in voluntary discipleship and governing the life of the whole society, can save us from moral disaster. The ancient orders of society and stations of life did this for those who came within their fold. We neglect this aspect of self-culture to our peril. Unless we set our mental house in order and reconstruct ourselves on a spiritual basis, our laborious civilization and boasted culture will lose their enduring worth.

All the changes that are brought about by the unprecedented advance of science and technology, or the universal assertion of the rights of man, have not transformed the fundamental nature of individual human beings. Greed and envy, malice and fraud, lust and cruelty, hatred and discontent, luxnry and aggrandizement, cynical selfishness and mutual antagonisms, ignorance and stupidity, are not mitigated in any measure. If bigotry, intolerance, and fanaticism have decreased in the religious field, they are predominant in politics, industry, and trade. Unscrupulous extortioners and cheats are not a speciality of any particular age. Even in 1952 human ways generally remain silly and often insane and criminal. Perhaps this difference may be striking: An increasing number of us are today inescapably impressed with a standard pattern of thought and behaviour by the universal prevalence of screen, radio, and the press, and we have become robbed of personality, character, and independent thought, being reduced to a helpless sport of our material circumstances. Even in the nooks and corners of the world, where the amenities of the industrial civilization are not available in an adequate measure, its baneful results are in evidence. Keen appetite for novelties and distractions have invaded even the hinterlands, without an enhancement of healthier tastes or saving ideals. Social, economic, and cultural parasitism has gained some respectability as a variety of cosmopolitanism. The golden rule, pithily expressed by Kālidāsa in the verse '*sva vīrya guptā hi manoh prasūtih* (children of Manu—humanity—have, indeed, no other

security save that of their own energy), ought to have a wider appreciation today than ever before. *Vīrya* and *citta*—energy and thought—are the very key-note of ancient Upanishads and Buddhist Suttas. If we suffer as a result of our own laziness to train ourselves for the use of the gifts of science, we cannot lay the blame on new discoveries and inventions. With a prolixity of mechanism and poverty of purpose civilized man is fast losing his purpose, value, and goal.

The strength and safety of humanity consists in the virtue and intelligence developed in the largest measure and largest number. Moral reflections in themselves would not make us moral. A spiritual ideal alone can give the backbone to the moral aspirations of man. When pleasure is made the ruling power, health and life are in peril. Every system speaking about the rudiments of self-treatment counsels methods of physical health—correct habits of eating, drinking, breathing, and thinking. We are asked to practise order, memory, concentration, and self-control for achievement of progress and success in life. Let us not forget that man is not to remain a glorified animal, practising precision and method merely in dietetics and exterual social behaviour. Poverty, sloth, carelessness, and love of ease do not exhaust the list of our impediments. The chief obstacle is that the moral clues to social life today are not derived from a deep faith in values realized by spiritual discipline. Unity of purpose and character is impossible without the spiritual ideal. Modern physics and psychology have taken away from us the supernatural basis of morality and therefore we suffer a grievous fragmentation of character. The will and capacity to implement moral rules and regulations cannot be adequately effective and sustained if they lack a sanction higher than social utility. It is the tone and colour of the feeling and attitude of the particular generation that determine the inner worth of reforms rather than the laws, legislations, and blue-prints put through by any government. Reconstruction of a society or a nation is impossible without reconstructing the individuals. For the estimation of learning we may accumulate knowledge paying no attention to living well; we may cavil at and dispute about any plan or programme adapted by any of the political, economic, and reforming parties; the best of our energies are spent out in this manner and eventually we bemoan our lot. Until good and godly men and women are produced in numbers there is no remedy for our maladies. This is a standing demand on humanity.

Arid, problematic reasonings or mental theories cannot help orthobiosis. A genuine spirituality—the true energizing influence of religion *without its dross*—alone can impel men and women to desire good and seek after the good. One who has received the least spiritual awakening need not be argued into the belief that it is infinitely noble to do right and infinitely base to do wrong. We have, no doubt, to seek the light of religion not in magic, mummeries, and charlatanism, but in the glories of the *real* man and highest spiritual truths. While morality is a structure built upon the pillars of praise and blame, spirituality is the recognition of our inborn divine nature and the manifestation of it in thought and activity. There cannot be a more sound foundation for the gospel of social raising up, gospel of equality, and gospel of individual perfection than the solidarity and inherent perfection of man. In the words of Macarius, the throne of the Deity is our mind. Self-denial, endurance, and other moral qualities often turn out to be a form of exquisite hedonism without genuine spiritual life. Since our normal consciousness is often at the mercy of invasions from the unconscious region, by sleeping passions and impulses which we are not able to track to their lair, we have no safety until we discover our inherent divinity through the concentration of our thoughts, will, and love upon the spiritual Reality at the root of the apparent man. When the love of truth rules in the heart the light of truth will certainly guide our practices. Thus reason, which is acclaimed as 'the candle of the Lord within', is not opposed to the

spiritual; on the other hand what is spiritual is the most rational.

Here we come to the inestimable help we receive from the outstanding personalities of spirituality, the divine centres or characters that have led successive generations to the goal and aronnd whom valuable elements of religion have gathered. They have all strongly exhorted us to strain and strive in every way for spiritual ends, keeping before us a perfect goal which can never become obsolete. To be saved from spiritual darkness, moral blindness, and self-destruction we have to trust in these unsurpassed natural rulers of humanity, who were unspotted by the world and yet were ever compassionately solicitous to train, discipline, and raise the rest of mankind to their own level. Having withdrawn their hearts from the love of visible things those who followed these great ones, strove in solitude to regain the balance and tranquillity disturbed by the world's market; and after having gained incomparable wisdom, they returned to society to apply the healing balm to all who were ill with the various diseases of the world. They lived the perfect life of righteousness in all purity and were free from wants, cravings, and prejudices. These are the really competent guides to show us the way of right living. Though the way shown by them might appear rugged and impossible to the foolish, unseeing, unknowing, passion-stung worldlings, a time will come in the course of inner evolution when even they will recognize that the former alone are really trustworthy. Every concession gained by the unregenerate man in furtherance of his self-interest and enjoyment only adds to his corruption or hastens his ruin. We have no right, as Bacon said, to what is not for our benefit. These great physicians of mankind have prescribed for us the principles of right living by their own example. They have given tone and strength to the very nature of man. A character formed in their mould can lead us to perfection and give us peace in this tumultuous world.

The great incarnations of wisdom and compassion never failed to bring home to mankind the supreme need of vigorous striving, clear intelligence, and practical reason. Like a party leader, raised to the crest of success by omnipotent propaganda, they were never consumed by the ambition to lead. Since suffering in some form or other is the lot of every creature, these great beacon-lights of morality and religion, extremely sensitive to the distress of others, were bent on striving for the good of all living beings with an all-embracing heart and vision. While the leaders of factions and sects are thrown into perpetual oblivion as soon as their discontented company of listeners turn their back upon them, the sons of Light have found a place in the hearts of all who seek freedom from the defilements and woes of existence. In his heavenly melody, Sri Krishna assured all aspirants, 'He who takes refuge within me, shall pass beyond Maya, suffering, and delusion'. Jesus Christ graciously called out: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'. Buddha declared, 'O Anurādha, it is just Ill and the ceasing of Ill I proclaim' and gave Ānanda this memorable parting counsel: 'Strive for your welfare, apply yourself to your own welfare, dwell heedful, ardent, and resolute'. Those who have a rational habit of mind and have the capacity to appreciate facts laid before them do not fail to see that the body of pure teaching, unfogged by later accretions and originating from these great teachers, is remarkably scientific, rational, and humane, and all the same rooted in transcendent realization. The great Buddha, by dint of rational thinking and spiritual insight gained through sharp discipline, revised and renewed an existing system of morality and spiritual values and proclaimed to the world the Four Aryan Truths consisting of the truth, emergence, ceasing, and the way leading to the ceasing of Ill or Suffering, and opened up the Aryan Eightfold Path of right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right contemplation by which he himself had attained to calm,

insight, enlightenment, and Nirvāna. No doubt, the welfare of the individual was the only sanction he invoked and he employed the inductive method to deduce general principles from observed facts. But to say that his Path has no other emphasis except that of the law of duty and morality will be to ignore the importance of the central concept of Nirvana. In a variety of ways the 'Welfarer' has vividly illustrated the importance of *śīla* or good conduct which is fundamental to right view and right living. The one point he has repeatedly stressed is that we should never fail to apply to ourselves the power of constructive criticism, and for this he has invoked *prajñā* and *vīrya* to the utmost capacity.

The gospel of right living, propagated by these great ancient teachers and their worthy disciples, have not become otiose even today and cannot be so for ages to come, so long as man's nature and environments remain what they are. The system of discipline which they propounded rests on detachment from worldly allurements and practice of self-discipline—*vairāgya* and *abhyāsa*. He who wishes to be near his ideal will have to abandon all that will alienate him from that ideal. The very first step is, therefore, detachment from natural antipathies and dislikes, from vanity of possessions and slavery of rank, and from tyranny of circumstances. Life really begins only with renunciation. In Carlyle's telling words, 'the fraction of life can be increased not so much by increasing your numerator as by lessening your denominator'. Only those who make the claim of wages zero can overcome the world. There is a sad limit to the extent to which a man can progress morally under the impulse of a worldly motive. Kant has rightly pointed out that moral virtue is strength of will in doing one's duty and resisting temptation. To strengthen one's will, one of the most effective methods is practice of renunciation. Only in a fully developed character we notice the best expression of will power. Psychologists advise the formation of an ideal of character as the primary condition for a strong will. Critical self-knowledge and self-judgment are of great service in this regard. What we admire that we become. 'Plato located the soul of man in the head; Christ located it in the heart', said St. Jerome. Almost all religions have done it and described all virtues as but the right ordering of love. Next to renunciation comes the supreme need of *abhyāsa*. Without care and diligence, without a downright condemnation of sloth, negligence, and misplaced levity, none makes any moral or spiritual progress. If one fails to translate into action what he thinks to be right, he remains a fossil. Buddha cited as an exemplary idler the person who said that he could not apply himself to work because it was too cold at one time and too hot at another, too early one day and too late on another, and because he was too hungry on one day and too full on another. He who proposes to himself a new life will never tolerate such a sluggish attitude. One who is impressed with the vanity and the transitoriness of the world, its undefined horrors, its senseless happiness, its catastrophies and accidents, its cruelty, perversity, and selfishness, its robberies, blasphemies, and treacheries, cannot live a lukewarm life; and naturally self-amendment will be his chief concern. He will seek happiness not in the abundance of temporal goods or the intoxicating shapes, sounds, scents, and savours they lay before him, but in the bright, happy, and joyous life of purity and righteousness. His inarticulate aspiration will be:

> 'Forgive and make my nature whole,
> My inbred malady remove;
> To perfect health restore my soul,
> To perfect holiness and love'.

THE SPIRITUAL QUEST

By Anirvan

The world of Spirit is as much real as the world of the senses; and mysteries abound in both. The adventures of the human mind in both these realms are equally justifiable, because their ultimate aim is the creation of some abiding values which will widen and enrich the consciousness—the last irreducible factor in the scale of being. What is occult, must be laid bare; and its forces must be mastered and made to yield to the growth of the being as a whole. Here Science and Religion meet as on a common ground: a leap into the beyond, whether it be with the aid of an imaginative flight of hypothesis or with the aid of a living faith sustained by an inchoate perception of some emerging truth, is the motive force in both. And both aim at converting knowledge into a currency of practical utility which will lead to a harmonious growth of the collective life.

But, in the recent past, there has been a tendency to create a cleavage between the science of Matter and the science of Spirit. Sophistication takes one as the quest of some objectively real truth, while it looks upon the other as running after something subjective and ideal, if not in the last analysis an illusion. The modern mind prides itself on its scientific attitude which seeks to build the structure of truth on the sensible and the obvious (*dṛṣṭa, laukika*) belonging to a public world. But surely this cannot take us far, because the field of experience is not confined to sensible facts alone. As the human mind can soar into the world of universals, so it can also pass judgments of values—aesthetic and ethical. These visions and judgments, though rising from a private and subjective source in the individual, tend to grow into a public order of things as the Law of Sympathy finds a wider and wider scope: at last it leads to the concept of a unitive human life—the Purusha of the Vedic vision.

From a free play of this urge of unitive growth and expansion in the human consciousness rise the spiritual values which are nearer to life, and thus, in a sense more primary and comprehensive than other creations of inner values. The obvious then deepens into the occult (*adṛṣṭa, alaukika*), and perception utilizes not a discursive reason but an integrative intuition to decipher its meaning. The movement is inwards, and yet not divorced from peripheral contacts. In fact, the Vedic seers frankly equated the spiritual urge with a sublimated life-urge, setting for its goal a complete mastery over the forces of decay (*jarā*) and death (*mṛtyu*). This motive has persisted throughout the ages in various forms. Sometimes it has appeared highly rationalized and almost overshooting itself as we see in the Buddhist venture and the like; but it has also been more attuned to the demands of Nature as can be seen in the appendage of occult practices in the Yogic and the Tantric cults. Naturally ethicism has come to the forefront in the one and aestheticism in the other, though the healthy instinct of the collective consciousness has always attempted at a harmonious blending of the two and so keeping the ideal of the spiritual achievement nearer to its Vedic original.

If the root-impulses are taken into consideration, Science and Religion do not seem to vary much in their objectives. If the aim of Science is to create such all-round life values as will ensure the fullest self-expression of the individual in a social group, this has no less been the aim of Religion too. The methods of attaining this aim will be fundamentally related to the same spirit of enquiry, powers of reasoning, and utilitarian motive common to the human mind, but they will be worked out in apparently different fields

with different assumptions. If Science lays stress on the tangible objective data, the spiritual quest is more concerned with an array of subjective phenomena which seem to elude the senses. In both, the mind is confronted with some indubitable *facts* of experience behind which it perceives the existence of some occult *forces* whose working it tries to seize and manipulate.

Whether these forces are to be regarded as material (*bhūtaśakti*) or spiritual (*devaśakti*) is an issue which may mean much to a modern mind, because its intellectual predilections have created a rift between Spirit and Matter. But it was not so with the ancient Vedic seers. A pristine purity of consciousness allowed them to see Reality as a whole; and in the scale of Matter, Force, and Spirit they could discern only a process of gradual illumination occurring in some ineffable neutral Being of universal extension and infinite potentiality. It is this integral vision on which rests the whole scheme of Vedic gods (*devāh*) and worlds (*urvīh, lokāh*) wherein Matter was as easily spiritualized as Spirit was materialized.

This can be seen in the use of the word *ātman,* which occurs so freely in the Vedic literature. Indologists have variously interpreted it as body, breath, or Spirit and have seen in it a gradual evolution of religious thought from a crass materialistic bias to some probable heights of spiritual abstraction. But this is a logical analysis of a total psychic experience in which the polarity of subjectivity and objectivity is not yet apparent. The experience is characterized more by feeling than by thought: it is the intimate *feeling* of Selfhood that is freely projected into different planes of existence which are never regarded as mutually exclusive and having no interrelation or interaction between them. Indeed the *ātman* is an integral whole of body-life-spirit—a triune entity whose constituents can be separated only in thought but not in feeling. Feeling there records the operation of what may be called a law of density and rarefication which determines whether one is moving up or down the scale of mutual transformation of Spirit and Matter. In no period of this process the triunity can be broken into three wholly disparate elements for the simple reason that, while thought is analytic, feeling is unitive; and in spiritual experience it is ultimately the feeling (*anubhava,* lit. 'a becoming in accordance with something') that counts more than the thought.

To recognize the supremacy of feeling in this respect may appear unpalatable to intellectualism which looks upon the former as something crude, hazy, and erratic. But it cannot be denied that it is only the feeling at its sublime height which can infuse the sense of a living realism into the abstractions of a schematizing intellect; it alone can make Reality whole again by bridging the gap which the logical mind has created between subject and object, between Spirit and Matter. Feeling is simple and primary, while thought is elaborate and evolved. But the things of the Spirit also are simple and retain their freshness and creative energy while they still rise unalloyed from the depths of the being. Their elaboration by the architectonic methods of the thinking mind is not a gain in terms of evolution. Indeed the current evolutionary canon may prove here to be a signal failure: when a man evolves intellectually, it does not mean that he is on the road to higher spiritual evolution as well. The great mistake of modern scholarship is to apply its intellectual standards in judging things which spring from sources other than the intellect.

And so, to assign a higher place to revelation as a source of true knowledge than to externalized sense-perception and reasoning, as is done by spiritual philosophy everywhere, is not to cherish a dogma. It is an extension of the field of perception by bringing about a radical change in its mode. This change is affected by seizing upon the natural power of universalization in the human mind and intensifying it by the Yogic method to such an extent as to make its abstractions appear in concrete forms. It, however, does not mean a hallucinatory return to the senses, but a dis-

covery of another world of Reality where the instrumentation of sense-perception (*jñāna*) is changed into that of idea-perception (*vijñāna*). It is an experience with the whole being—a total and living experience with a stamp of universality which makes it analogous to the feeling-experience of the normal mind. But we must bear in mind that the feeling-tone of *vijñāna* is not of the nature of a murky emotional disturbance, but of a serene illumination and of an ineffable joy whose creations depict Reality in meaningful forms of massed ideation.

It is a mistake to suppose that these things can be understood and rationally interpreted by an application of the laws of biological evolution. In evolution of forms, we can have a series starting from the simple and the homogeneous, and proceeding through a laborious and complicated process, we come to the complex and the heterogeneous. The last gives us some discrete sensate values. These can be clearly grasped by the mind and again pieced together to form a hazy notion of some universal concept or Idea. But we may suppose (and this will need nothing more than a change of perspective only) that this Idea, which is reconstructed by the reasoning of the sense-mind, was the original driving force behind the evolution of forms. We may go further and claim that a direct perception of this Idea through a supersensuous intuition translating itself into ideative sensations is not an impossibility. And then we have another way of looking at Existence—the anticipatory way. It will be a moving, not from the known to the unknown, from creation to its source, from a sensible Nature to an imagined God, but seeing God face to face as the inmost meaning of the Self, and deducing Nature from Him.

This vision is a total experience whose extent or intensity is beyond the computation of any graded scale. The school of thought which looks upon religion as wholly a social product and, in deference to objective methods, attempts to link its development with the progress of social evolution, can only give a superficial account of the collective and the average. But it cannot explain the appearance of outstanding individuals, nor can it plumb the depth of their experiences. Spiritual giants have appeared in every age and every land, even in circumstances most unfavourable to spiritual growth. And this points not to the strictly measurable culmination of some laborious ascent of evolutionary Nature from below, but the descent of the Spirit from above in a cataract.

The phenomenon can be best explained on the Sānkhya conception of Purusha and Prakriti—Purusha the timeless, the immobile, the Seer and yet an ingathered totality, and Prakriti its dynamism of Will in time. The life-urge rushes on, driven by some hidden force which pushes it from below or pulls it from above; but after reaching a point it subsides into quiescence which to awareness means a fusion of the Plenum and the Void. In itself, this quiescence is simple, colourless, and indeterminate; it is the final abstraction of pure consciousness. It is the dead end of all spiritual endeavours, of all adventures into the Beyond. Its value cannot be measured: it is at once the zero and the infinity. Values ascribed to it (as is generally done in academic philosophies trying to create a hierarchy in the Void) are simply projections of the values which have been created on this side of the line by measuring the intensity of the Prakritic drive and mapping the extent of the phenomenal existence it has covered or conquered. The sole positive value that can be given to this quiescence of simple consciousness (and, even then, this value can be made explicit only with a backward reference to the strain to which Prakriti has put herself to reach the point of self-annihilation) is a feeling of relaxation and expansion, a sense of a serene poise in the Void. And it may mean a Plenum which, like the consummation of Death, may burst in all its glory at any point of the Prakritic evolution.

The Vedic seers expressed this by the imagery of *div*, the luminous expanse, and of *vyoman*, the security of the Vast; their psycho-

logical counterparts were given by such terms as *Brahman* and *bṛhat* meaning the ever-growing vastness of consciousness. The imagery of *ākāśa,* which has been such a fruitful source of inspiration in mythology, is an exact symbol of the deepest spiritual experiences. And the ideas derived from it have dominated all subsequent speculations in philosophy about the ultimate nature of Reality. The soteriological outlook of the Indian mind, whether in the orthodox or the protestant schools of thought, has its source in this Vedic conception of the luminous Void. If we come to consider the problem of the origin of the religious instinct, this concept can be shown to underlie all shades of spiritual endeavours and achievements in man. Their aim is everywhere to reach an ecstatic condition to which he is driven by an inherent urge of going beyond himself—an urge which for him is a biological and a psychological necessity.

Paradoxically speaking, ecstasy may be called a simulation of sleep in order to see more clearly, a simulation of death in order to live more intensely. It is the secret method of conscious Nature for pushing ahead in her evolutionary endeavour which must henceforth be carried on along spiritual lines in the broadest sense of the term. The central fact of this ecstatic condition is a clear sense of the Void, whose ultimate value, as we have seen, lies in the irreducibility of simple and absolute consciousness. As such, it is beyond the scheme of Prakritic evolution. It is the neutral light which illumines all the workings of Prakriti and the illumination can rise into awareness at any stage. If *Self*-consciousness is the decisive factor which differentiates man from animals and is the definite mark of a saltus in Nature's evolutionary process, then all the deeper instincts which are distinctly human must have their roots in the Idea of the Self; but there, by Idea we do not mean any logical abstraction made by the analytic function of later thought, but an empirical seed-content embodying a direct feeling-awareness. The seed has life and it sprouts into Power.

Religious instinct, then, is not so much the product of an impact of the objective world upon an inchoate psychic structure as the dynamic expression of the Idea of the Self as it lives and grows. The Vedic seers symbolized this as the spark of Fire 'lying in so many ways at the root of life' (*śayuh katidhā cid āyave*), and spoke of the flowering of the spiritual consciousness as the 'awakening' of the Fire. The Self awakes and expands: the Fire is born and it consumes and assimilates its source, and spreads, burning whatever comes in its way until all is Fire.

There could be no better portrayal of the origin, growth, and end of the religious aspiration than the Vedic imagery. In reality, the spiritual quest is a phenomenon of Universal Life whose origin is bound to appear to the individual as shrouded in a mystery. But its kinship is none the less felt to be palpably real beyond the bounds of Time, in the sheen of the quickened moment which reflects eternity. It is not only an Awareness, but also a Power. In its creative vision, the barriers between Matter and Spirit break down and the Will in the individual becomes the magic wand of the Divine Magi awakening the slumbering dreams in the cosmic depths. And then, the quest of the Spirit discovers a perfect equipoise of *kaivalya* and *siddhi* in the nudity of the living Void.

THE CONTROL OF THE SUB-CONSCIOUS MIND

By Swami Yatiswarananda

In order to attain the highest illumination we all have to pass through a *second birth* or the spiritual birth. It is our awakening to the consciousness that we are spiritual beings in our essential nature; that we, as spiritual beings, are all parts or modes or reflections of the Infinite Spirit. Hindu teachers call that the Sat-Chit-Ananda (Absolute Existence, Consciousness, Bliss). Others call it God, Supreme Spirit, Allah, Tao, the Oversoul, and so on. Our spiritual birth is the beginning of a new life.

As a result of steady spiritual practice, or even before we take to spiritual life, all of a sudden we may be raised to a higher spiritual plane of consciousness. This first spiritual awakening shows us to what height we may rise, but not to what depth we may fall any time later. Our desires and passions are lying hidden deep in the sub-conscious mind. Unless they are controlled and transmuted, they may lead the soul to a premature spiritual death. Of course, the Spirit can never die; but, after a fall, the soul will have to begin its spiritual life over again, either in this life or in a future life. Such sheer waste of time should be avoided.

Instinct is the Memory of our past Experiences

Patanjali, the ancient teacher of Yoga, declares: 'Man is Spirit. He calls it Purusha. Purusha means a spiritual being, a spiritual entity. Owing to ignorance, the Spirit identifies itself with the ego. Egotism, again, makes the soul subject to attachment and aversions; then comes the great clinging to life, with fear of death, and the longing for self-preservation together with all troubles consequent on it'. He says in an aphorism, 'Clinging to life is found in the learned as well as in the ignorant'. Commenting on this, Swami Vivekananda makes the following very significant remarks:

'This clinging to life you see manifested in every animal. . . .In India this clinging to life has been one of the arguments to prove past experience and existence. For instance, if it be true that all our knowledge has come from experience, then it is sure that that which we never experienced we cannot imagine, or understand. . . . What is this instinct? . . . In the language of the Yogi, instinct is involved reason. Discrimination becomes involved, and gets to be automatic Samskāras. Therefore it is perfectly logical to think that all we call instinct in this world is simply involved reason. As reason cannot come without experience, all instinct is, therefore, the result of past experience. . . . The recurring experiences of various fears, in course of time, produce this clinging to life. . . . Why is this clinging to life? We have seen that it has become instinctive. In the psychological language of the Yogis it has become a Samskara. The Samskaras, fine and hidden, are sleeping in the Chitta. All these past experiences of death, all that which we call instinct, is experience become sub-conscious. It lives in the Chitta, and is not inactive, but is working underneath. The Chitta-Vrittis, the mind-waves, which are gross, we can appreciate and feel; they can be more easily controlled, but what about the finer instincts? How can they be controlled? . . . These feelings have to be controlled in the germ, the root, in their fine forms, before even we have become conscious that they are acting on us. With the vast majority of mankind the fine states of these passions are not even known—the states in which they emerge from sub-consciousness. When a bubble is rising from the bottom of the lake we do not see it, nor even when it is nearly come to the surface; it is only when it bursts and makes

a ripple that we know it is there. We shall only be successful in grappling with the waves when we can get hold of them in their fine causes, and until you can get hold of them, and subdue them before they become gross, there is no hope of conquering any passion perfectly. To control our passions we have to control them at their very roots; then alone shall we be able to burn out their very seeds'.

In the above, Swami Vivekananda is giving us a glimpse into the Hindu system of psychology which we moderns can also apply with great profit.

Past Impressions or Tendencies can be controlled

Freud, the founder of the modern psychoanalytic school, has done us a great service by his discovery of the importance of the subconscious and its dynamic influence on consciousness in relation to neurosis and mental troubles. It is strange that he refused to believe (when he was told) that the ancient Hindu thinkers knew well of the workings of the sub-conscious mind. As a matter of fact, the ancient Hindus knew much more than the modern Western psychologists.

During very ancient times, the Seers of the Upanishads, the most ancient of the Hindu scriptures, declared from their experiences, 'This body is the abode of the Self, the eyes are the instrument of seeing, the nose is the instrument of smelling, the ear is the instrument of hearing. He who knows, he who thinks is the Self; the mind is his divine eye, the instrument of knowledge'.

At the very beginning of his *Yoga-Sūtras*, Patanjali tells us that the Spirit is identified with the waves of the mind. Mind is likened to a lake and this lake is breaking into waves. Our thoughts and feelings are the waves. But how do these waves rise?

There is the outside object. Some stimulus comes from the outside object to the senses. Take, for instance, the eye. The stimulus is carried farther to the optic centre which is the seat of the sense of vision. From there it goes to the mind. The mind takes it to the Lord of the mind. There comes a reaction and this reaction is the thought or feeling. It is a wave. We are always identifying ourselves with such waves, in the form of thought, feeling, and willing.

According to the teachers of Hindu psychology, thinking, feeling, and willing are all like waves of the mental lake. There are no watertight compartments between thought, feeling, and willing. They all go together. Each wave, as a matter of fact, contains more or less something of all the three—thought, feeling, and willing. The name is given according to the dominating element. When a wave touches the head more than the heart we call it a thought. When it touches the heart more than the head we call it a feeling. And when the wave probably touches both the head and the heart, without any special preference to either of them, we call it will, which expresses itself in action. But all these are waves, and the soul is all the time identifying itself with them.

However, there are waves and waves. Some waves come from the upper layers of the mind, others from the depths of the mind. These latter waves are the most troublesome. At the very start, Patanjali tells us how the Spirit remains always identified with the non-Spirit,—maybe with fancies, building castles in the air, building a fool's paradise. He also says how, again, this Spirit remains identified with false notions, taking the unreal to be real, remains identified with egotism, attachment, and aversion, with ignorance in sleep, and also clinging to life. It is lost in unconsciousness, and again it remains identified with memory. How often we dwell on onr memory! We live in the past and are not anxious to live an active, intelligent life just now. Even when we try to understand things clearly, avoiding misconceptions, we remain identified with our own thoughts and feelings—maybe correct thoughts and good feelings—but identified we are. We do not know what we are in our essential nature.

In all states of our consciousness, we are identified in some form or other with these

waves. We are identified with what we are not on the conscious, sub-conscious, and unconscious planes, nay even in deep sleep. As already mentioned, some waves come from the surface layers of the mind and others come from the deeper layers of the mind, but all these stand in the way of Self-realization.

Ancient Spiritual Synthesis and Modern Psycho-analysis

Swami Vivekananda observes, 'Modern scientific men hold that impressions or tendencies belong to the physical body'. There was a time when 'medical materialists', as William James called them, used to explain all emotions in terms of nerves and glands. For example, they say, 'Extraordinary consciousness is due to over-instigated nerves. Melancholy is due to a torpid liver. St. Paul's vision on the road to Damascus was possible simply because he was an epileptic, St. Theresa, the Christian mystic, was a hysterical woman. George Fox's discontent with the shams of the world was a symptom of a disordered colon'. So, everything is explained in terms of the bodily glands and nerves.

Fortunately, times have changed. Had Swami Vivekananda been living today he would have changed this view of his regarding the modern psychologists to a considerable extent. We find how modern psychologists, especially after the discoveries of Freud, are revealing to us the ways in which the mind exerts influence on the body. So also, the body has influence on the mind. Many modern psychologists and psychiatrists think of the 'body-mind' as a unified organism. Formerly, everything was interpreted in terms of the body. Now they have changed, for the better, to the 'body-mind'. Some psychologists go even farther. They stress the mind very much more than the body. Of the two, body and mind, the mind is the more important factor. Some remarkable examples may be cited.

A psychologist speaks of a lady who became a diabetic patient. She developed some pains which were diagnosed as diabetic neuritis. She was happily married and had children. There was no special cause for worries. Yet she was ill. Psycho-analysis revealed that she had a deep-rooted hatred for her own mother—a tyrannical woman. She heaped a great deal of blame on her. As she relieved herself of her pent up grievances to the psychologist, she started feeling better. Her stiffness lessened, and the pain left her. After her treatment was over, she had learned that 'annoyance, rage, and fear caused more sugar in her blood than potatoes, candy, and ice-cream'.

There is another interesting illustration: There was a thriving business man who started having a mild stomach trouble. The pain in his stomach increased more and more, and the doctor diagnosed the trouble as ulcer. Strangely enough he felt the worst attacks in his own home; but when he went out on business trips he was almost free from the pain. The doctors studied the case and discovered that the cause of his trouble was his aggressive wife who did not allow him to relax. He confessed to the doctor: 'Sometimes I get so mad at that woman that I have to get out for a while. But she adores me and there isn't anything I can do to change her'. The doctor helped the man to realize that it was his own emotional conflict that created his illness and that it was he who had to change and not the wife. As he changed his attitude, he became free from the ulcer, and healthy again.

Now, these illustrations have a great moral for us all who are trying in our own humble way to live the spiritual life and purify our emotions. We ourselves must make a change while we want others to change.

There is the story of a king who was suffering from jaundice. The doctor advised him to see only green things. The king ordered that the whole city should be painted green. The people did not know what to do. The prime minister told the king, 'I have a better solution than that. Why don't you put on spectacles with green glasses'? By changing his glasses the king could see all

things green. By changing our glasses, coloured by our own emotions, tainted by our own mental troubles, we can see the world in a new light, and even attain peace and calmness thereby.

(To be continued)

GITA AND YOGA-VASISHTHA

By Akshaya Kumar Banerjea

Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha is a book of unique importance in the sacred literature of the Hindus. The authorship of the book is attributed to Vālmiki, the immortal sage-poet of the epic *Rāmāyaṇa*. The person who actually composed this great work must have flourished at a much later age. The work bears unmistakable evidence to show that its author must have been a great poet, a great philosopher, a great saint, a great observer of men and things,—a teacher and writer of extraordinary abilities. But he so completely and successfully wiped out his own personality, while sending forth his magnificent work to the world for the cultural service of humanity for all times to come, that even the most acute research fails to arrive at any definite conclusion as to who he was and where and when he lived in a physical body. He evidently did not like to immortalize his own name. He lives in his work and his work is immortal. Such noble examples of self-effacement are not, however, rare in the cultural history of this land of spirituality, where the ideals of renunciation and service have always most deeply embraced each other. *Yoga-Vasiṣṭha* has lived and will live with the holy name of Valmiki associated with it. It has all along exercised a great influence upon the minds and hearts of the truth-seekers of India and will continue to do so in future.

The problem with which the book starts and round which all its various topics revolve is a fundamental problem in the domain of Indian culture and perhaps of the culture of entire humanity. The problem is stated thus:

Mokṣasya kāraṇam karma jñānam vā
mokṣa-sādhanam,
Ubhayam vā viniścitya ekam kathaya
kāraṇam.

'Is Karma (a life of well planned, well regulated activity) the cause of Moksha (deliverance from all bondage and sorrow)? Or is Jñāna (a life of intensive and exclusive pursuit of the ultimate Truth) the sole means to the attainment of Moksha? Or is a combination of the two (a life of harmony of Karma and Jnana) the real path to the realization of this ultimate ideal of human life? Kindly give a definite and decisive answer as to the true way to the perfect fulfilment of human life' (I.i.6). An earnest truth-seeker, Sutikshna, approaches Agasti, who is believed to be a truth-seer, and puts this question to him. The sage Agasti at once gives the direct and decisive answer:

Ubhābhyām eva pakṣābhyām yathā khe
pakṣiṇām gatih,
Tathaiva jñāna-karmabhyām jāyate
paramam padam.
Kevalāt karmaṇo jñānāt nahi mokṣo-
'bhijāyate,
Kintūbhābhyām bhavet mokṣah sādhanam
tūbhayam viduh.

'Just as a bird flies in the sky with both the wings, so the *parama-pada* (the supreme end of life) can be attained through the co-operation of both Jnana and Karma. Moksha cannot be fully attained either by Karma alone or by Jnana alone, but by both together. Hence the enlightened teachers know both as

the means to the realization of perfection' (I.i. 7-8).

Thus the problem with which *Yoga-Vasiṣṭha* proposes to deal and the solution at which it will arrive as the result of its lengthy discourses carried on in thirty-two thousand Shlokas are both stated in the clearest terms in the very beginning of the introductory chapter. It is to be noted that this is the problem and this is the solution in the universally adored *Bhagavad Gita* as well, which has been recognized as the linguistic self-expression of the very soul of Indian culture. In human life Karma must be enlightened by Jnana, and Jnana must find dynamic self-expression in Karma. Man is a rational active being in this divine world order. His rational nature demands that he must realize in his consciousness the ultimate Truth of himself and this world order and put his life perfectly in tune with this Truth. His active nature demands that the divine energy individualized in him must be developed and refined and perfected and freely expressed in the world system in the form of voluntary work.

The demand for perfect self-realization, which is inherent in the essential character of every man, involves the demand for the perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth as well as the demand for the manifestation of his individuality in the form of the best type of work he is capable of for the good of the world he lives in. *Sādhana,* which means a systematic, well regulated, voluntary effort for perfect self-realization, must accordingly consist in the harmonious development and refinement and illumination of a man's whole being, rational as well as dynamic, intellectual as well as practical, spiritual as well as ethical. The rational and the dynamic aspects of human nature cannot be separated from each other, and neither of them can be fully developed and perfected except in the closest embrace with the other. A man's Jnana is not perfect until and unless it illumines his whole being with the light of Truth and his actions become the natural self-expressions of Truth realization. His Karma also cannot be perfect, until and unless it is thoroughly inspired by Truth and it flows out from his enlightened nature as its spontaneous self-expression.

Jnana and Karma are, therefore, aptly compared to the two wings of a flying bird. Man has to live and move freely, smoothly, joyfully, and beautifully in the atmosphere of this world. So long as he fails to put his life in perfect harmony with Truth and Order—*satya* and *ṛta*—of this atmosphere, he is under bondage, he has to suffer sorrows of various kinds, he is, with every movement of his body and mind, tormented and tortured by the apparently hostile forces of the world. Moksha consists in the realization of this perfect harmony,—the experience of the blissful unity of the ultimate Truth and Order of one's own existence with the Truth and Order of the world of the infinitely diverse forms of objective realities, and the consequent attainment of perfect freedom and uninterrupted bliss in living and moving and acting in this world. This is not the ideal of Mukti (deliverance or release) from life and the world,—not the ideal of Mukti after death —but the ideal of Mukti in life itself, the ideal of perfect freedom and joy in the very world. For the realization of this Mukti, the systematic cultivation of Jnana and Karma in union with each other is necessary in human life.

The *viṣāda* (sadness) and *vairāgya* (aversion to the world and the present worldly duties) of the great hero Arjuna is set forth in the *Bhagavad Gita* as the occasion for the philosophical discourses on Jnana and Karma and the true basis of their harmony, given by the divine charioteer, Sri Krishna, with the purpose of freeing Arjuna's mind and heart from such a one-sided view of the ideal of human life and bringing him back into the proper enlightened attitude for the performance of worldly duties with the mind and heart concentrated upon the ultimate Truth of himself and the universe. Just in the same way, the *viṣāda* and *vairāgya* of the divine hero Sri Rama, is set forth in the *Yoga-Vasiṣṭha* as the occasion for still more elaborate and variegated discourses, given by Vasishtha, with the pur-

pose of enlightening his mind and heart with the ultimate Truth about the world order and the human life in it and thereby removing his present sadness and aversion to worldly duties due to a partial and imperfect view of Truth and creating in him an enthusiasm for the performance of his royal duties with his mind and heart fixed on Truth. As the *upakrama* (introduction) in both the cases is similar, so the *upasamhāra* (conclusion) also is similar. Both Arjuna and Sri Rama, after attentively listening to the discourses, confess that their previous state of *vairāgya* was due to ignorance about the Supreme Truth, that their problems are now most satisfactorily solved and that they are fully convinced of the possibility of perfect harmony between Jnana and Karma and of the necessity of such harmonization between them in actual life. Arjuna takes up his Gāndiva (the celebrated bow of that name) and engages himself in the all-out battle of Kurukshetra. Sri Rama follows the heroic Vishvāmitra to destroy the Rakshasas.

Thus the object of these two great authoritative treatises appears to be the same, viz. the union of Jnana and Karma. Neither of them supports the ascetic view of Jnana or the ritualistic view of Karma. Both maintain that Karma should principally consist in the faithful discharge of the worldly duties—domestic, social, national, and humanitarian duties—suited to one's capacity, temperament, hereditary obligations, status in society and that all such duties should be performed from the spiritual point of view, with the mind and heart fixed upon the Absolute Reality—the Supreme Truth of the Self and the cosmic order. Both maintain that Jnana essentially consists in the realization of the Supreme Truth, which should illumine the whole being of a man, which should spiritualize his entire nature, which should always make him feel the spiritual unity of himself and all beings of the universe, which should reveal to his consciousness the illusoriness or unsubstantiality of all differences in the world of his sense-experience and the pure Spirit—pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss—as the true Self and substratum of all. It is with such Jnana within that Karma has to be performed in the world and worldly life has to be properly sustained and its purpose fulfilled. This union of Jnana and Karma is called by the name of true Yoga in both. The *Gita* says that such Yoga was known to and practised by the Raja-rishis of old, such as Manu, Ikshvāku, etc. In the *Yoga-Vasiṣṭha* also these Raja-rishis are off and on cited as authorities in the exposition of this Yoga. The Gurus quoted in the *Yoga-Vasiṣṭha* are more prominently of the type of Raja-rishis than of the type of ascetics.

Yoga-Vasiṣṭha starts with Vairāgya Prakaraṇa. Sri Rama, even while hardly in his teens, having returned from a pleasure tour in some important places of pilgrimage, is suddenly overcome by a spirit of despondency. Deep reflection upon the vanity of all human achievements, the worthlessness of all things which are looked upon as worthy of pursuit by common men of the world, the unsubstantiality of human life itself, depresses his heart and mind and causes an aversion to the world. His reflections are described in detail in a large number of chapters. Various problems with regard to various aspects of human life are presented most poetically as well as logically. He demands answers to his questions from the Rishis and Munis who are present in the royal court. All are most deeply impressed by the way in which the young prince puts forward the most fundamental problems of human life. Vasishtha, who is universally respected as the living embodiment of Jnana, is requested by Vishvamitra and other sages to solve Rama's problems and to bring him back to the normal state.

While admiring the young prince's extraordinary wisdom and insight, his depth of feeling and acuteness of understanding, the sages present there are convinced that this sort of *viveka* and *vairāgya* is based on the want of a comprehensive outlook on the life and the world and should, therefore, be regarded as a temporary *moha* on his part—

a state of bewilderment due to the absence of the realization of complete Truth. They are sure that as soon as he gets the knowledge of complete Truth, his despondency and his aversion to the duties of his life will automatically vanish. At the request of the great sages, Vasishtha, who is chosen as the fittest person to impart this knowledge to him, begins his discourse.

(To be continued)

A SAINT AND A SINNER

By Swami Gambhirananda

It was sometime at the end of 1880. Sri Ramakrishna's fame had spread all over educated Calcutta, thanks to the eloquence and powerful pens of Keshab Chandra Sen and his Brahmo followers. In their wake came earnest devotees of the Master like Ramachandra Dutta and Manomohan Mitra, to whom Surendra Nath Mitra, a neighbour, confided that he had lost all peace of mind and pleasure in life, so much so that he felt like committing suicide. He was a man of about thirty years of age, with a strong and handsome body and a bright complexion. Outwardly he was rather rude and blunt; but inwardly he was soft and generous. In matters of faith he was indifferent rather than atheistic. Surendra imbibed the spirit of the age, which demanded of him a logical mind depending on its own resources for worldly welfare as also for dissolving psychological conflicts. He was well placed in life, earning a decent income of Rs. 300 or 400 per month as the head clerk in a British firm. But he fell a prey to some vices of his environment including drinking. At the time we are writing of, neither Ram nor Manomohan could diagnose the cause of his agony; nevertheless, they offered to take him to the Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar with them. At this the sinner said, 'It's all very good that you respect him; why should you take me there? I shall be a misfit there —like a crane among swans.[1] I have seen enough of that. If he makes any irrelevant remark, I shall give his ear a good boxing!'

Despite such irreyerence and unwillingness Surendra one day went to the Saint of Dakshineswar (Sri Ramakrishna) with his two neighbours. Arriving at the Saint's room, he sat unceremoniously without any exchange of courtesy. The Saint was seated among his devotees, talking of God and God realization. There was a sweetness and a ring of sincerity in his voice that attracted the sinner and kept him spellbound. His manly spirit had not so far acknowledged any other guide except his own resourcefulness, though unfortunately that independence had brought him to the brink of a cataclysm. And what strange things was this Saint talking? 'It is no doubt necessary', said he, 'to undergo spiritual discipline. But there are two kinds of aspirants. The nature of the one kind is like that of the young monkey and the nature of the other kind is like that of the kitten. The young monkey with great exertion, somehow clings to its mother. Likewise, there are some aspirants who think that in order to realize God they must repeat His name a certain number of times, meditate on Him for a certain period, and practise a certain amount of austerity. An aspirant of this kind makes his own efforts to catch hold of God. But the kitten, of itself, cannot cling to its mother. It lies on the ground and cries "mew, mew". It leaves

[1] Surendra was punning on the word 'Hamsa', which means either a swan or the soul; and Paramahamsa means a Sannyasin of high order or sarcastically, 'a great swan'.

everything to its mother. The mother cat puts it sometimes on a bed, sometimes on the roof behind a pile of wood. She carries the kitten in her mouth hither and thither. The kitten does not know how to cling to the mother. Likewise, there are some aspirants who cannot practise spiritual discipline by calculating about Japa or the period of meditation. All that they do is to cry to God. God hears their cry and cannot keep Himself away'. The Saint also added that those children who cling to the father, while walking over a steep narrow pathway, run the risk of falling down, but the children who are taken care of by the father himself have no such fear. And he concluded by asking, 'Why do people behave like the young monkey and not the kitten?'

It struck Surendra that though the Saint was apparently speaking spontaneously without personal reference and without any question having been asked, in a mystical way he addressed him and him alone. That lesson became immediately engraved on Surendra's heart. He came to conquer, but returned defeated. At the time of departure the sinner prostrated before the Saint and henceforth it became a part of his routine to visit Dakshineswar regularly. Besides he would now proudly declare, 'Mine is not an ordinary Guru. I went to box his ears, but it is he who boxed mine'. Moreover, he believed that through the parable of the kitten the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) had hinted that he had accepted all responsibility for him.

Those who are acquainted with the life of the Bengali dramatist Girish Chandra Ghosh, another libertine who came to scoff but remained to pray, will find an affinity with that of Surendra. The latter, too, was aware of this parallelism. So, one day, when the Master glanced affectionately at Surendra and pointing to Girish said, 'You talk of having lived a wild life, but here is one. . . .'. The Master had not finished when Surendra added, 'Yes, sir, he is my elder brother in that respect'.[2] Those, again, who are steeped in the Vaishnava literature of Bengal would find a still further similarity between these two sinners and Jagāi and Mādhāi, two ruffians of Nadia, one of whom, becoming infuriated at the singing of Hari's name in chorus by the followers of Sri Chaitanya, struck Nityānanda with a potsherd. Nothing daunted, the saint, with a bleeding head, stepped forward and embraced the assailant saying, 'Though you beat me with a potsherd, should the flow of my love stop?' Love won back both those sinners of Nadia to the path of virtue, and so it did again the lost souls of Calcutta. Surendra and the other devotees at Dakshineswar, in those early days, were conscious of this winning power of the grace of the Master; and yet they wondered why Surendra did not change overnight. So, one day (January 1882), Kedar pleaded with the Master, 'Sir, if you have graciously drawn these souls to you, why do you punish them any more? Be benevolent for a time so that they may be saved for ever'. The Saint replied, 'What can I do? What power have I? If the Mother wills, She can do so'. And with total indifference he moved away and sat quietly under the Bakula tree. This was too much for Surendra. He burst into tears and said that it were better if he had not come there; for formerly he committed sins out of the free promptings of his heart with a clear conscience; but now he was doing the same thing under the guise of a devotee—he was now not only a sinner but a hypocrite too. The tears moved the Saint, and he blessed him saying, 'May Mother grant happiness to you all'. These words bore fruit. The later life of Surendra was wonderful and for this change the overflowing love of Sri Ramakrishna was not a little responsible. Surendra, too, co-operated heartily. Busy as he was in his office, he had hardly any time to think of God, and yet the Saint captured his heart so irresistibly that his little intervals were all full of him. He would somehow dash through his day's work and run to Dakshineswar even on week days. One day he felt the pull so much that working against time

[2] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.*

he dragged himself out of office in time to reach Dakshineswar before dusk. The Saint was just then going out to Calcutta, and what wonder!—when asked about his destination he replied that he was starting for Surendra's house! Overjoyed, Surendra took him in his carriage and brought him to his own home.

We have, however, to remember that though Sri Ramakrishna loved Surendra, he never relaxed his strong controlling grasp. It was some time in the summer of 1881. Sri Ramakrishna was hearing with rapt attention the music in Surendra's house when the latter stepped forward with a costly and beautiful garland of flowers to be placed on the Master's neck. The Saint, in disgust, snatched it from Surendra and threw it aside. Surendra's pride was wounded. So he went to the verandah and, in an offended and bitter tone, told the other devotees, with tears dropping down his cheeks, 'A village Brahmin from the western side of the Ganges that he is, what does he know of such garlands! What a lot I had to pay for it! So, in anger, I ordered all the remaining garlands to be given to others. But now I realize, it is my fault—God cares little for money. I am proud—why should He accept my worship? To me life is now a meaningless thing—it may as well end'. In the meantime the scene in the hall inside had changed—Sri Ramakrishna was dancing with the rejected garland in one of his hands and the other hand swinging gracefully with the ecstatic movements of his delicate body. When the dance was over, he said to Surendra with great affection, 'Won't you treat me to something?' and at the latter's invitation went inside to partake of some dainty dishes. Strange are the ways of saints and sinners!

The Master was fully conscious of the spiritual stature and needs of his disciple and though he chastised Surendra at times, he never allowed his spirits to droop through sheer despair—he led Surendra slowly but surely through a path of cautious progress. One day, at Dakshineswar, he told Surendra, 'Come here every now and then. Nangtā (meaning his naked Guru) used to say that a brass pot must be polished every day: otherwise it gets stained. One should live constantly in the company of holy men. The renunciation of "woman and gold" is for Sannyasins—it is not for you. Now and then you should go into solitude and call on God with a yearning heart. Your renunciation should be mental. Unless a devotee is of the heroic type, he cannot pay attention to both God and the world. . . . Why do I say all this to you? You work in a merchant's office. . . . You tell lies at the office. Then why do I eat the food you offer me? Because you give your money in charity; you give away more than you earn. The seed of the melon is bigger than the fruit—as the saying goes.'[3] Surendra asked why he cannot meditate. The Master knew at once that the disciple was aiming too high, considering his spiritual strength. But instead of giving him a rude shock by pointing out the fact, the Saint wanted to know if Surendra now and then remembered God. Surendra replied, 'I repeat the Divine Mother's name now and then. Lying in bed, I repeat Her name and fall asleep'. 'That's enough' said the Master encouragingly, 'You remember Her, don't you?'

The reader has got a glimpse of the intimate relationship between the Master and his strange disciple. This was not the result of a single meeting—but it was finally established through a process of long communion to a brief account of which we now turn. Surendra was addicted to wine, and that a little inordinately. This militated against the moral sense of Ramachandra Dutta, brought up in orthodox Vaishnava tradition as he was. He argued with Surendra that unless this immoral habit was given up, the public would scandalize the Master himself. Surendra retorted, 'Though you are so worried over this trifle, Sri Ramakrishna never showed any dislike, though he must be fully aware of the fact. If it is really so bad, would not the Master chastise me? And as for giving it up,

[3] *Ibid.*

I am prepared to try my utmost, even at the cost of my life, if only the Master should command'. So the two friends went to Dakshineswar for a decision. The Saint, as was his wont in such circumstances, began talking spontaneously about drinking, and addressing Surendra said, 'Look here! Whatever you take, you should first offer to Mother; and take care that you do not become tipsy—that your head does not reel and your legs do not falter. The more you think of Her the less will be your addiction to drinking. She is the source of all bliss. If you can realize Her, you will attain to spontaneous hilarity'. And to give a visual demonstration of that state, the Saint fell into an ecstatic mood and sang with great emotion:

> Behold my Mother playing with Shiva, lost in ecstasy of joy;
> Drunk with a draught of celestial wine, She reels and yet She does not fall . . .[4]

The Master went on, 'First there will be the elation of drink, and then will follow the bliss of communion'. The Master did not rebuke Surendra, nor did he prescribe a mere negative code—but he rather invited him to positive effort by giving his habit a new direction for attaining a higher goal. 'Thenceforward Surendra acted accordingly. At evening he freed himself from all preoccupation and after offering a little wine to Mother Kāli would quaff it; but instead of intoxication he would get an inspiration for prayer and meditation. At that time tears would trickle down his cheeks, from his mouth would off and on issue the words, "Mother, Mother", and now and then he would lose himself in deep meditation—a sight that would move the worst atheist! At such moments he avoided all talks of worldly things'.[5]

A striking change had now come over Surendra's mind and he went to Dakshineswar every Sunday; but he could not entirely eradicate his former habit. So, out of self-reproach, he avoided going there one Sunday. His friends reported to the Saint that he had again lapsed into the company of his former associates. At this the Saint said, 'Well, he has still some hankering for enjoyment—let him satisfy it for a few days; and then he will have none—he will become pure'. The next Sunday, when Surendra came, but out of shame kept at a distance, the Master said, with a smile, 'Hallo, why do you keep aloof like a thief? Come nearer'. When Surendra did so, the Master fell into a trance and said, 'Well, when people visit certain places, why do they not take Mother with them? If the Mother is in their company, they are saved from many evil deeds!' Light flashed on Surendra's heart. All his efforts to get rid of his disease had so far proved abortive; but in Sri Ramakrishna's words he now discovered the remedy—he learnt the process by following which he would be cured.[6]

A shrewd man of the world that Surendra was, it was not for nothing that he surrendered himself completely to the Master. We know that he was at first a non-believer and a rationalist. By Sri Ramakrishna's touch he now became a believer and a devotee. But the belief had yet to go deeper into his heart. Mother Kali attracted him and Sri Ramakrishna too occupied his thoughts; he was now intellectually convinced that there was some sort of identity between Mother Kali and Sri Ramakrishna, but full realization was yet to come. One day, as he sat before Mother Kali, in his shrine, within closed doors, the thought occurred to him, 'If Sri Ramakrishna appears in my shrine, then only I shall be convinced of his divinity'. And, lo! There stood before him none other than the Master! Surendra had no longer any doubt. We get a public declaration of this conviction from Surendra himself at Cossipore (13th April 1886). Sri Ramakrishna was then preparing for the final departure, and the anxious disciples came to him oftener than usual. Surendra reached there that day at eight at

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Sri Sri Ramakrishna-charita* in Bengali by Gurudas Burman, p. 191. The book was published in 1909.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 191-194.

night, straight from his office, with some oranges and a pair of garlands, and said with emotion, 'I have come after finishing all my duties in the office, because I thought, "What is the good of standing on two boats at the same time?" So I finished my duties first and then came here. Today is the first day of the Bengali year, and it is also Tuesday. I did not go to Kalighat (to worship Kali); I thought it would be enough if I saw him who is Kali Herself and who has rightly understood Her'. He also told the devotees that although he could not come on the previous day, holy as it was, being the last day of the Bengali year, he had decorated the Master's picture with flowers. The Master heard all this and told 'M', 'Ah, what devotion!'[7]

(*To be continued*)

[7] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.*

RAMAKRISHNA MONASTERY IN AMERICA

DEDICATION OF STATUE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Sister Amiya

It was more than fifty years ago, in 1893, that Swami Vivekananda first came to the United States of America and presented himself as a delegate at the World's Parliament of Religions, which was being held at Chicago.

That he should arrive as an unknown and uninvited representative of Hinduism, or Vedanta, with neither the required credentials nor the backing of an organized church or religious body, meant nothing to him. He had a message to give to the world—the message of Freedom, and it was characteristic of him that he chose to deliver it from a country which had fought for and attained its own.

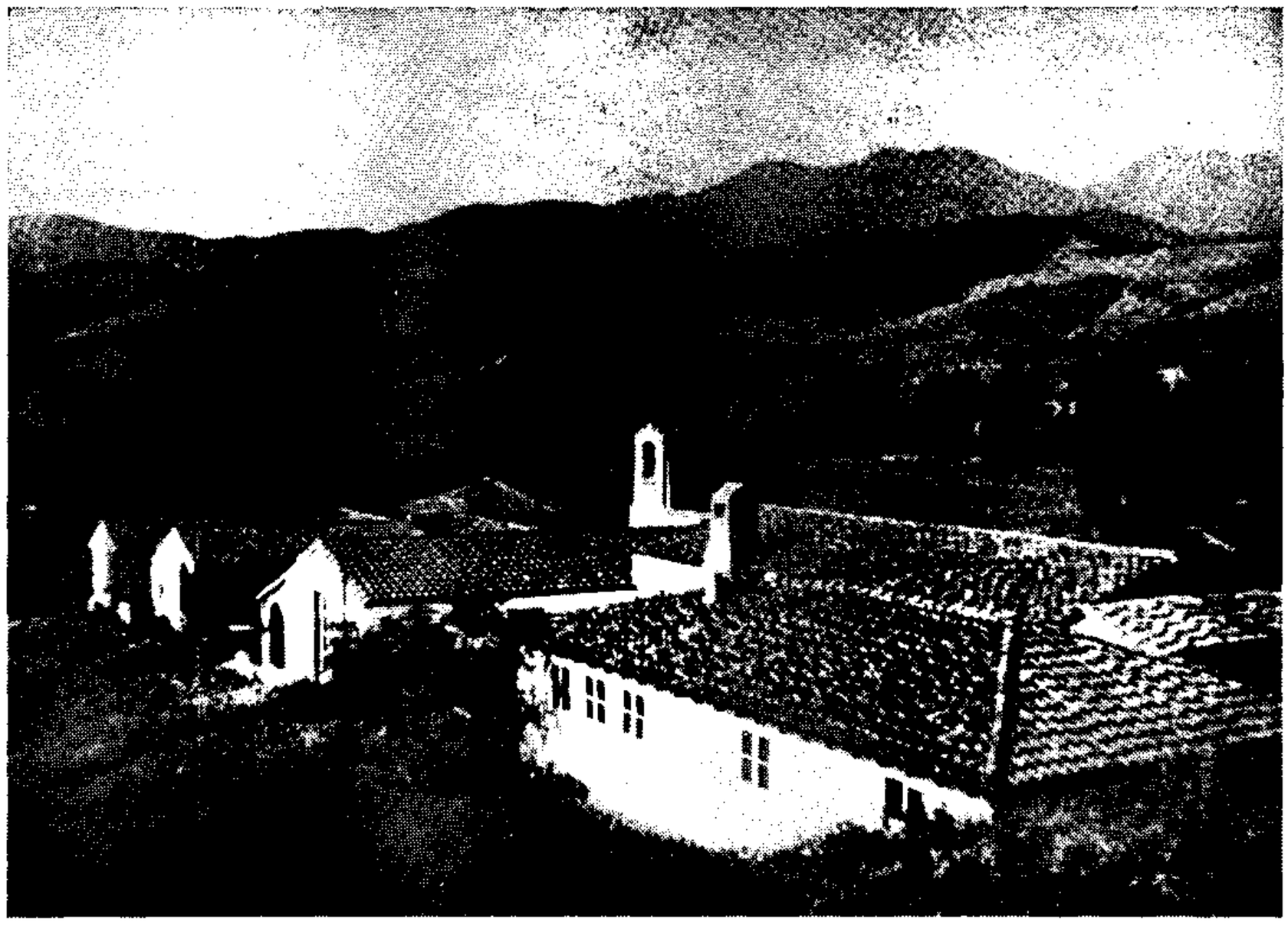
No obstacle on earth could stop him, and nothing could withstand the strength and force of his tremendous personality. Swami Vivekananda was his own authority; he was the truth he came to give, and, by his first public utterance, he brought the warm and responsive American audience to its feet—and to his own.

Intermittently through the seven years that followed, Swamiji travelled all over the country, teaching and disseminating the principles of Vedanta, and preparing the way for those who were to come after him. At the end of 1900 he returned to his own country for the last time, and two years later, on the Fourth of July 1902, he entered Mahāsamādhi.

'Never the Spirit was born, dieth it never'. Nor does that mighty Spirit sleep. Immanent in Swamiji's every printed word and in his every familiar portrait, there is an unmistakable vibration of life and vitality which neither time nor death can destroy.

It was not without hesitation that I undertook to write an outline of the history of the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco Canyon, California, in general and an account of Swamiji's statue dedication ceremony in particular. For one person to present an overall picture of such an impressive occasion is quite impossible. Every participator has his own individual experience and corresponding reaction, and each one feels the spirit of an event in proportion to his own understanding and inner response. Therefore, it is possible for me to try to portray the happenings of that memorable day only as I myself experienced them.

The early history of the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco—the first of its kind in America—is a pertinent and an interesting one. It is a story in which Gerald Heard, the inter-



RAMAKRISHNA MONASTERY, TRABUCO

nationally known writer and lecturer, played an immensely important role.

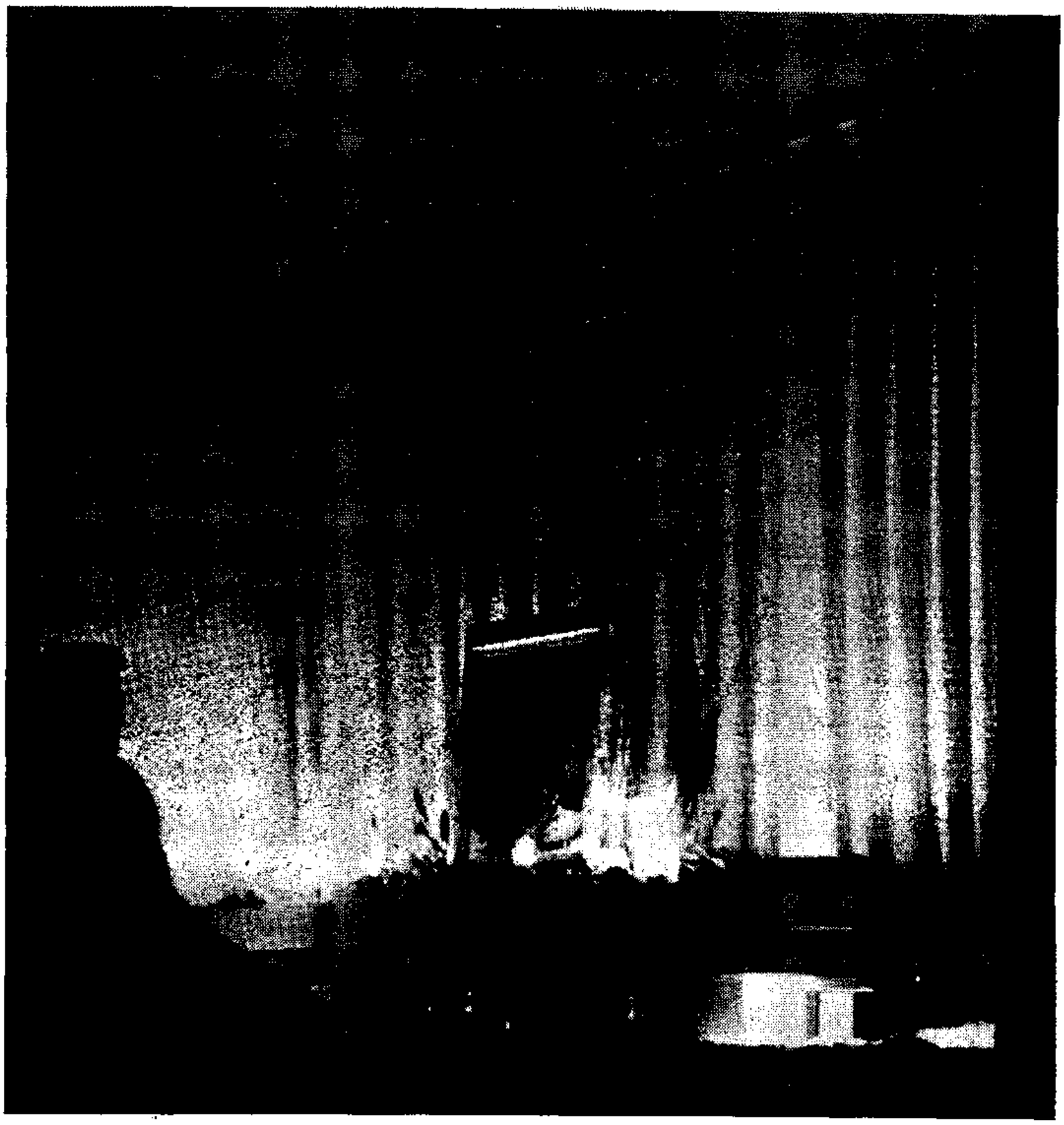
It was about the time of his first meeting with Swami Prabhavananda, in 1939, that Mr. Heard, and a few interested friends, purchased approximately three hundred acres of land in the rolling hills of Trabuco Canyon. Situated as it is about sixty miles to the south of Los Angeles and a little over twenty miles inland from the Pacific coast, the location was, in every way, idyllically suited to its purpose—the establishment of a college for the study and dissemination of religion and psychology. A board of trustees was elected to manage the business affairs of the trust property, and Mr. Heard became the recognized spiritual head. From many parts of the world men and women came to study under his tutelage, and for almost ten years the college served its appointed purpose.

In the meantime, the Vedanta Society, which Swami Prabhavananda had started in Hollywood more than twenty years ago, was steadily expanding. In addition to the gift of property given to the Society in 1945, which was dedicated as the Sāradā Convent at Santa Barbara, in 1947, the Society had earlier bought a small lot and cottage adjoining the Hollywood property. The cottage was converted into a temporary monastery and used to accommodate the several young men who had joined the Society with the hope of becoming monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order. But, as time passed and their number increased, the need of a larger and more permanent monastery became imperative.

From its earliest beginnings it had been Mr. Heard's cherished hope that, one day, Swami Prabhavananda would take charge of the Trabuco establishment. A reflection of this hope may be seen in the unusual plan of the red-tiled, white-brick buildings. The enormous kitchen, the large living quarters, and the well-stocked library of religious and classical books; the smaller, cell-like bedrooms opening on to the long, cloistered corridors and set a little apart from the whole, and the large meditation hall,—all bear many of the distinctive features and requirements of a modern Western monastery.

Absorbed in his own activities, it was not until the spring of 1949 that Mr. Heard learned of Swami Prabhavananda's pressing need of a monastery, and approached him with his most generous offer of the entire establishment at Trabuco. Because of his keen interest in the Vedanta work, Mr. Heard persuaded the trustees to make a deed of gift of the Trabuco property to the Vedanta Society, with the understanding that it be used as a monastery.

The business transactions moved rapidly, so that, in September of the same year, the former Trabuco College property and all its furnishings were transferred to the Vedanta Society of Southern California, and dedicated to its present use as the Ramakrishna Monastery.



SHRINE OF THE MONASTERY

The nucleus of the first recognized monastery of the Ramakrishna Order in this vast country of mass production, would seem small indeed by comparison, were quantity alone its criterion. Throughout the ages, many have been called to the monastic way of life, but few have been chosen. The reason for this consistent minority is not far to seek. No man can serve two masters; he who would choose the life of the Spirit must renounce the life of the flesh.

It was on the 4th of July 1951 that the statue of Swami Vivekananda was dedicated at the monastery at Trabuco. Being a national holiday, it was possible for most of the members and friends of the Society to be present.

One of the major improvements which the inmates have recently made at the monastery is the installation of a large shrine, designed and made by one of them. Beautiful in its stark simplicity, with its single portrait of Sri Ramakrishna, this important addition has transformed the former meditation hall into a shrine-room of unusual charm.

When the morning worship was over, hymns were sung in Bengali by the Sisters of the convent. The Brahmachārins then sang Swamiji's own hymn to Shiva. Other songs followed, sung in unison by the whole group, two of them being from a group of songs written and set to music of his own composition by one of the Brahmacharins.

When the service in the shrine-room was ended, the Swamis Prabhavananda, Pavitrananda, and Aseshananda led the way to the inner courtyard, where, facing the entrance, and protected from a direct frontal approach by a newly constructed lotus pool, Swamiji's statue dominated the scene.

When I first saw the statue of Swamiji I was not greatly impressed. Something was lacking. Perfectly proportioned, and faithfully fashioned, it was technically and artistically flawless. The renowned sculptress, Malvina

STATUE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

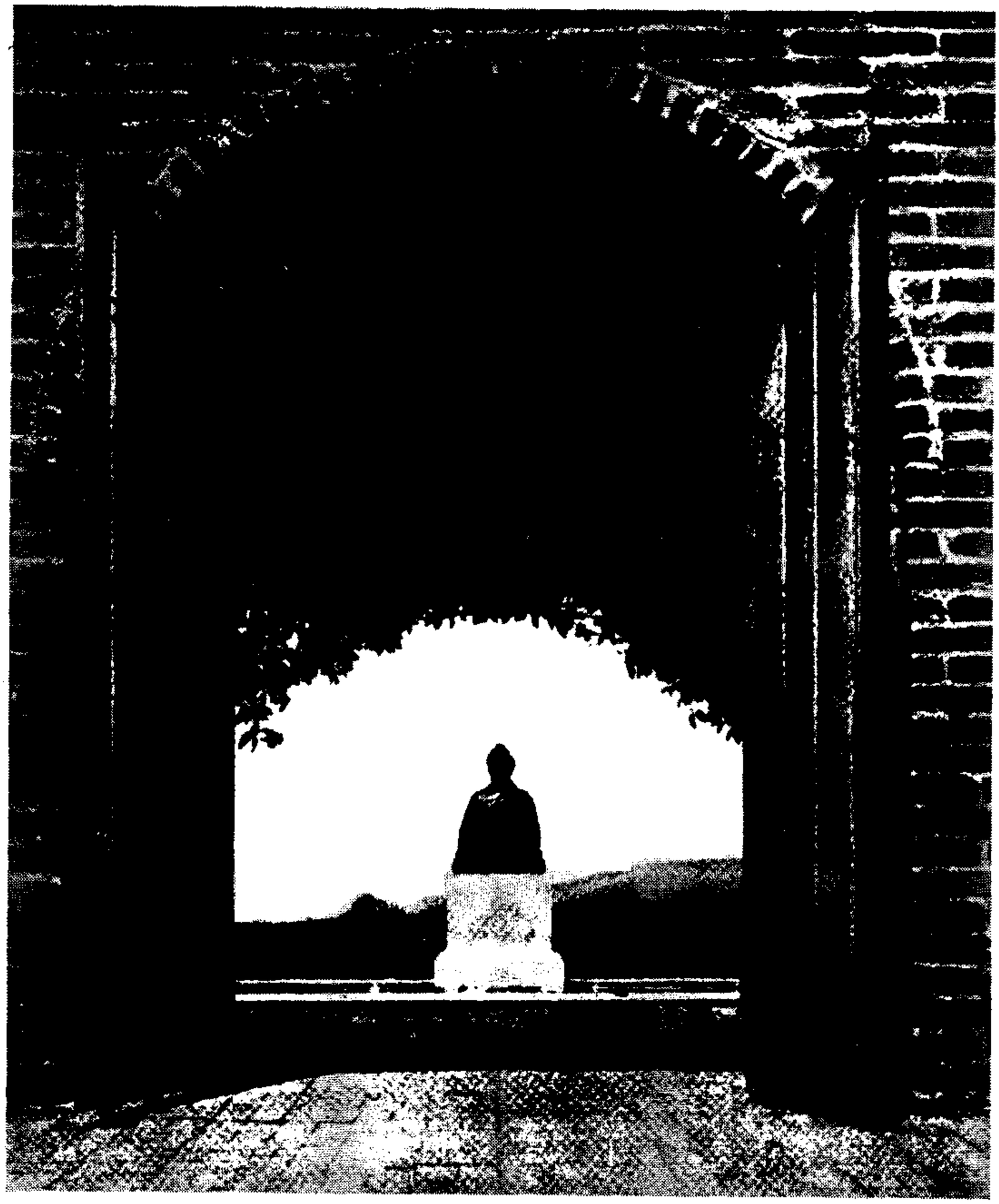
Hoffman, had given it everything that a true artist could give, and yet, because it lacked that intangible *something*, that sense of *alive-ness*, which permeates Swamiji's written word and printed likeness, it appeared lifeless and inert. But only for a while.

On the very morning of the day of his Mahasamadhi, Swamiji, while in an exalted spiritual mood, was heard saying to himself, 'If there were another Vivekananda, he would have understood what Vivekananda has done'. This revelation has never been denied, nor is it likely ever to be challenged. Yet, during that solemn moment of dedication, when Swami Pavitrananda hung a garland of many-coloured flowers around Swamiji's statue, one could not but feel that the humility and the reverence of those who were there to pay him homage, more than compensated for any possible lack of knowledge they might have of Swamiji's true greatness.

I stared at the image before me. It seemed impossible to believe that Swamiji could not hear that mighty paean of praise—the *Song to Swamiji*—which sounded forth the majesty, and the power, and the glory of his soul! A hush had fallen upon the listeners, and I wondered if any of them felt as I did at that moment. I could not know, nor can I now adequately express what I myself then felt. But this I do know: As I looked at the statue and listened to that perfect symphony of swelling sound, I sensed, rather than saw, an unmistakable mobility in the chiselled features, while a softness, almost as of flesh, seemed to replace the rigidity of the sculptured bronze. And in that moment I truly felt that Swamiji had come, not only to accept the homage of his devotees but also to vivify, and so make complete, the work of the artist. A smile seemed to play about his mouth, while his eyes, though remaining half-closed, gave an impression of veiled light—and life. And the hands, though still, and folded one within the other, seemed to have relaxed into an attitnde of indrawn, humble acceptance.

I use the word humble deliberately. Only the truly great can be truly humble, and Swamiji, because of the very magnitude and nobility of his nature, would surely have been the first among men to accept adoration with a humility proportionate to his greatness.

A Hindu luncheon, prepared and served by the monks, followed the ceremony. A short



ENTRANCE TO THE MONASTERY

programme of violin music filled the interval between the luncheon and the speeches which followed.

Among the many distinguished speakers were Mr. Brown, President of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, and John van Druten.

One of the remaining few who had personally known Swami Vivekananda during his stay in California; Mr. Brown was able to recount many interesting stories and anecdotes of those early days of Swamiji's work in America. Time had not dimmed his memories of the past, nor was the significance of the present 'holy occassion' lost upon him.

As a playwright and dramatist, Mr. van Druten was able to recognize and present Swamiji as he actually was—one of the most outstanding and dramatic figures ever to appear on the world's vast stage.

Mr. van Druten said:

'Swami Vivekananda was a very special person, particularly so for all of us in America. He was our own especial messenger, our own personal link—and designed as just that —with the eternal religion of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna has always been, I think, a little remote to a great many of us. I think that quite a number of us have felt that if we had ever met Sri Ramakrishna, we would have found difficulties in establishing relations with him. There would have been not only the language difficulty, which can be covered by translation, but a greater and less surmountable problem in establishing a real contact of thought, an integral pattern between ourselves and him, through which his message could have been brought into our Western lives so that we could understand each other. The pattern of our living, of our worlds, were too far apart.

'Sri Ramakrishna was an unlearned man, to whom the intellect was a lesser and not-wholly-to-be-trusted function. He had never travelled. The significances of Western life were unknown to him. He was a man so deeply immersed in God, so close to the true Godhead, that he was aware always of himself as its identification, and the concerns, the

troubles, and the pleasures of our lives here could have meant almost nothing to him. As, indeed, in the end, they can mean nothing to God.

'But there came from him our own interpreter, the human messenger designed for us. This was Swami Vivekananda, with his amazing gift for the English language, and his great understanding of the needs of the people of this country. If we look at his own background, his own upbringing, we can see why he should have had them. He was a young man, literate and studious: far more studious, I would imagine, than most of us present here today, and in far more subjects. To him, as a young man, the intellect came first. He judged everything by it. He judged his religion by it, and he felt unsatisfied. It was all reported, all second-hand. He knew that the only teacher for him was a teacher who had seen God. That was his first question to Sri Ramakrishna: "Have you seen God?" And Ramakrishna answered: "But of course I have. I have seen God more visibly, more tangibly, than I see you now. . . . But who wants to see God? . . ."

'Vivekananda knew that this was the only teacher for him. But that was not enough, for long. He needed more. He needed the experience for himself, so that he could know that it was true—true for him—and not a form of insanity, as it had grown to seem. It shocked him intellectually . . . that any man should be able to say of himself: "I am my creator. I am on the same rank as my creator. Everything is God. This cup is God, this jug is God, I am God". That is either blasphemy, or it is complete nonsense, or both. "The man who says that—and if I believe him—has hypnotized me".

'And then, through the grace of Ramakrishna, it happened. He knew it. He saw it. The jug was God, the street-gratings were God; he was God. The next step was obvious. If you have seen something, known something, if you are quite, quite sure of something, and of something truly extraordinary, what is there to do but to talk about it?

'From then on, from the death of Ramakrishna, that was the message of Vivekananda, carried burningly for a brief life. It was so especially in this country, where he knew, through his own experience, so much that no other teacher could have given to the people of America. He knew them, instinctively, as brothers and sisters. His opening remark at the Parliament of Religions was "Sisters and Brothers of America". I do not know why that should have seemed so ringing a remark that it aroused applause for almost two minutes; but it did. The establishment of that complete brotherhood happened in those words.

'From that moment, he knew his audience, and they knew him. He knew the intellectual approach that had been his own, and he knew, too, that that was the best approach to the Western mind. It was the Advaita approach, the approach of Jnana Yoga. He knew the conflict that he must solve for them in the theories of the personal and impersonal God. Perhaps one of his most important sayings is that God who is completely impersonal, when seen through the eyes of the sense, becomes personal. He made that clear to many who listened to him.

'Was Vivekananda a monk? Not in the sense in which we picture a monk nowadays. He was not the pious, gentle, wandering, and remote monk. But he was a monk, all the same. Annie Bésant said of him: "Perhaps he is a monk, but he is a warrior monk". That, I think, is the phrase we should remember when we think of Vivekananda. He was never frightened, and never timid. He upset his audiences right and left in this country. He attacked them for not being Christian. "If you want to live, go back to being Christians; you are not a Christian country", he told an audience in Detroit, and he drove two-thirds of the audience out of the hall. But the other third knew exactly what he meant, that he was not denouncing Christianity, but that he was denouncing the narrow, perverted, self-seeking forms of Christianity that the average American employed so righteously and without sight or vision. . . .'

And so, for many, the day of Swamiji's festival was over.

Before leaving the monastery I returned to the courtyard to take my leave of Swamiji. By this time the surface of the pool was an almost solid mass of floating colour. Fanned by opposing breezes, the flower offerings had drifted to the centre and were swirling around the base of the statue. Swamiji had accepted the offerings of his devotees.

And there, in that perfect setting, I left him. No longer an inert composition of lifeless bronze, the figure of Swamiji rests in an attitude of quiet calm and infinite patience, while his brooding spirit hovers over all. Facing the entrance, he watches and waits, silently offering to all who come the promise of ultimate peace and the blessed assurance of eternal Freedom.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

As the *Prabuddha Bharata* enters the fifty-seventh year of its career, we offer our cordial greetings and good wishes to our readers, friends, and all others, in every part of the world, whose valued sympathy and co-operation have helped us to carry on our humble work of serving the cause of Truth, Peace, and Brotherhood. . . .

Sri Sāradāmani Devi—The Holy Mother, the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna,—whose photograph appears on the Frontispiece in this issue,—was born on the 22nd December, 1853 at Jayarambati in the district of Bankura in West Bengal. With her pristine purity, overflowing affection, and profound spirituality, she was not only the perfect embodiment of womanhood at its best but also a spiritual guide of the highest order to whom innumerable aspirants owed their inner illumination and unfoldment. Her Hundredth Birthday comes off in the latter part of December this year; her Birth Centenary will be observed all over the world during the period between December 1953 and December 1954. . . .

This issue opens with a short poem—*The Divine Awakener*,—an offering of heart-felt devotion, by Starson Gosse. . . .

The well-known poem *'Kāli the Mother'* by Swami Vivekananda, the original of which is reproduced in facsimile, was written during the days of the Swami's pilgrimage to Kshir Bhavani in Kashmir, when he was in a high spiritual state. In this connection, Sister Nivedita writes: 'His brain was teeming with thoughts, he said one day, and his fingers would not rest till they were written down. It was that same evening that we came back . . . and found waiting for us . . . his manuscript lines on "Kali the Mother". Writing in a fever of inspiration, he had fallen on the floor, when he had finished, . . . exhausted with his own intensity'. . . .

The Way to Spiritual Stability by Swami Turiyananda is culled and translated from the Swami's inspiring and instructive Letters in Bengali. . . .

There is no doubt in discerning minds that a new world order is seen in the offing. Virile, awakened, and independent *India* has a great part to play in ushering in the *New World Order*. In this noble task, the leaders and the people have to exert themselves unsparingly, keeping their eyes on the eternal values and ideals for which our ancient land stands. . . .

Mr. Gerald Heard, internationally known writer and lecturer, describes his approach to Vedanta, under the title—*What Vedanta means to Me*. . . .

The leaders of every country are striving to the utmost to avert war and ensure peace. But the international situation presents a sombre prospect. *Who are the Peacemakers?* This momentous question is posed by Swami Tejasananda, who also sets forth the correct answer in this thought-provoking article. . . .

'If death is the end of life, why should life or labour be?'—asks the poet. Almost every religion speaks of 'life after death' and Hinduism boldly proclaims that the goal of life is the attainment of immortality. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, writes on the rare and lofty theme—*Death and Deathlessness*.

The challenge that religion has had to face from its leading modern adversaries is boldly taken up and their charges are convincingly refuted by Dr. S. C. Chatterji, M.A., Ph.D., of the Calcutta University, in his stimulating contribution—*Can We Discard Religion?* . . .

Sri. C. T. K. Chari, M.A., writing with his scholarly and forceful pen, attempts to unfold the profound dialectical unity of all the

great mystical religions of the world through his distinctly original epistemological and ontological approach to the various issues relating to mysticism. Herein are presented the most apposite quotations from the great mystics of the East and the West—their observations, reflections, and meditations—all grouped round Sri Ramakrishna's teaching concerning God: *'Thy Name is Silence'*. The learned writer rightly holds and gives unmistakable indication of the view that Sri Ramakrishna is far greater than what the scholastic interpretation of any one religion, system, or 'ism' would make him and that he has transcended the dichotomy of so-called 'East' and 'West'. The article will be concluded in our next. . . .

The Wanderer, an occasional contributor to the *Prabuddha Bharata,* left the shores of India in February last year and reached America, travelling *via* England. In this illustrated article, written in his remarkably lucid and fascinating style, he narrates the many interesting experiences of his travel *From the Old World to the New*. . . .

In *Science and Modern Education,* Prof. P. S. Naidu, M.A., of the Allahabad University, makes a critical estimate of the ideas and ideals of science teaching in modern secondary schools. With his long experience and vast scholarship in the methods of educational psychology, he has discussed the results of the impact of science and secularism on the plastic and fertile minds of young pupils, and has argued, with perfectly justifiable emphasis, that the non-aggressive and humble attitude, indicated by the *method* of science should be pressed into service to counteract the impulses of aggression and dominance generated by the mere *content* of science. . . .

Swami Lokeswarananda gives a soul-entrancing account of the life and teachings of *Saint Namadeva,* one of the greatest mystics and poet-saints of Maharashtra. We are glad to inform our readers that the Swami will be contributing, in the following months, further articles dealing with some of the other great saints of Maharashtra. . . .

Māyā or superimposition of adjuncts on Reality is what is commonly understood by *The Great Illusion*. But writing in brief, with this as title, Sri Manu Subedar focusses attention on an important theme which has a deep significance for social and national well-being. . . .

The art and science of correct living according to spiritual, moral, and physical principles is termed *Orthobiosis*—which is unequivocally explained by Swami Vimalananda. . . .

Writing with massive erudition and admirable clarity of expression, Srimat Anirvan, an old and valued contributor to the *Prabuddha Bharata,* makes a highly thought-provoking study of the philosophical and psychological implications of *The Spiritual Quest*. . . .

Swami Yatiswarananda shows the safest and best method that may be employed for *The Control of the Sub-conscious Mind* by emphasizing the need for systematic spiritual disciplines, which alone can put an end to all mental troubles—conscious and sub-conscious, and bestow on man everlasting peace and bliss. The article will be concluded in the next issue. . . .

In the *Yoga-Vāsishtha* we have one of the highest peaks of Hindu spiritual genius. The *Gita* stands supreme for all time as a world scripture. Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjea, M.A., makes a comparative study of these two great philosophical treatises and shows that they both arrive at the same practical conclusion, viz., the ideal of perfect harmony between the life of contemplation and that of action. The article will be concluded in our next. . . .

A Saint and A Sinner, by Swami Gambhirananda, is a biographical account, depicting the remarkable life of Surendra Nath Mitra, a beloved disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. The 'Saint' is no other than Sri Ramakrishna, whose divine touch transformed the entire life of Surendra, the 'Sinner'. The concluding portion of the article will appear in the next issue. . . .

The teachings of Vedanta have attracted and influenced men and women, both young

and old, from every level of Western society. Attached to the Vedanta Society of Hollywood and situated about sixty miles south of it at Trabuco Canyon, the *Ramakrishna Monastery*—the first of its kind *in America*—was dedicated on the 7th September, 1949. On the 4th of July, 1951 was held a grand function of unusual significance at the Monastery—the dedication of the bronze portrait-statue of Swami Vivekananda. With all the verve and sublimity characteristic of her charming style, Sister Amiya gives a most impressive eye-witness account of the dedication ceremony, prefaced with a short description of the Monastery. Sister Amiya is an initiated Brahmachārini (nun) of the Ramakrishna Order, residing at the Sarada Convent at Santa Barbara which is also attached to and is situated some miles north of the Vedanta Society of Hollywood. The article is illustrated.

ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

In the death of Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, on the 5th December last at Calcutta, not only India but the world has lost a master artist of outstanding genius and exceptional ability. The loss is irreparable ; it has removed the celebrated pioneer and pre-eminent leader from the field of modern Indian art. Lovers of art will specially mourn the passing of Dr. Tagore who not only initiated and led a new movement in Indian art but also exercised a powerful influence on the cultural development of modern India. The absence of the living touch and inspiration of his creative genius will be keenly felt in the realm of painting and sculpture, as also in that of Bengali literature wherein his contribution was a most distinguished one. Clearly he ranks among the makers of modern India and his magnificent efforts in the cause of her cultural renaissance has added to the prestige and stature of the nation in the eyes of the world. To the world of art, both Eastern and Western, he stands out as the bold and unique revealer and the able and learned expounder of the soul and inner spirit of Indian aesthetic expression. To his numerous pupils and followers he was an inspirer and guide of unrivalled excellence, who opened their eyes to the rich and inexhaustible treasures of Indian art, without at the same time restricting their freedom or shutting out new rays of light from without. As an exponent of Indian art he stands apart by himself, distinctly original in many ways, and occupies a place of especial importance among his peers and equals in the hall of the great Immortals of history.

Abanindranath Tagore will long be remembered as the reawakener and reinterpreter of the art consciousness of his motherland. In originating a new school of national art, truly expressive of the ineffable and immortal spiritual genius of India, he courageously faced not a little ridicule ande unhelpful criticism. But his genius and his independent efforts to revive the truly Indian-traditions were greatly appreciated and encouraged by E. B. Havell and Sister Nivedita. Dr. Tagore met Nivedita more than once. He has paid glowing tributes to her and has expressed his great admiration and regard for her in his reminiscences. Nivedita, who was actively interested in the revival of Oriental art, highly praised Abanindranath's water-colours and did much to enable others to appreciate them by writing herself the finest appreciations of the artist's and his disciples' works. Referring to a profoundly symbolic work of Dr. Tagore, viz. 'Bhārata-Mātā', Nivedita wrote, 'It is the first great masterpiece in a new style. I would reprint it, if I could, by tens of thousands and scatter it broadcast over the land. Over and over again, as one looks into its qualities one is struck by the purity and delicacy of the personality portrayed'. Sri Ramananda Chatterji, the founder-editor of the *Modern Review*, records from personal knowledge and experience that Nivedita wrote out the finest of all appreciations of Abanindranath's works she ever did in praise of the artist's masterpiece—'The Passing of Shah Jehan'. Writing his reminiscences of Nivedita, Abanindranath Tagore says, 'Nivedita's presence had that

effect—ethereal, calm, and serene. And yet she emanated power. None more so. One felt it in her company and her talk refreshed your soul. She is indeed indescribable. I have not seen her second yet'.

The great, in some respects the greatest, Indian artist of this generation has passed from the world of mortals. But he lives for ever in his immortal creations of beauty and colour and in the ideas and ideals of artistic expression he exemplified. His devotion to art was a veritable adoration of the Divine and his creative self-expression sought to manifest the innate spiritual urge through truth, beauty, and goodness. His was a life of perfect simplicity, unbounded love, and unsophisticated magnanimity. He was not only a master artist but a master mind who 'has earned for India the recognition of her contributory share in all that humanity has realized for itself'. His inner vision could not have failed to foresee the great future that awaits the palingenesis he strove to set in motion. India is once more awake, and is growing very much alive to the excellence and abundance of indigenous genius. As such there is bound to be much wider appreciation of the life and work of Abanindranath Tagore, and his patriotic fervour and national consciousness, which found expression even in his special field, will always be a source of perennial inspiration to all lovers of art.

THE MODERN ILLS OF OLD INDIA

'Give a dog a bad name, and then hang him.' This is an old trick of the game of politics, and reporter and exdiplomat William Bullitt is an experienced hand at it. Now the dog to be hanged is Modern India, because India is not modern enough to understand and appreciate the disinterested and noble intentions of the U.S.A., the one mighty power that can save India from the impending doom of being engulfed in the rising sea of Communism in Asia. But under Nehru's perverse leadership India is shutting her eyes to the truth as Bullitt sees it. Indo-China, Siam, Burma, Tibet—these countries are threatened by Communist domination, and India is militarily weak and 'does not produce even a jeep'. 'Under these circumstances it might be logical for India to enter into staff conversations with the British and ourselves and to attempt to make mutual defence arrangements. But at this point an irrational fear enters the picture and destroys logic.'—Thus writes diplomat Bullitt in an article, 'The Old Ills of Modern India' in *Life* of October 1, 1951. Mr. Bullitt psycho-analyses our fear complex thus: Nehru loved and feared his father, the strong Pandit Motilal Nehru, who once gave boy Nehru a tremendous thrashing. This father-fear complex Nehru transferred to the British whom he fought. The British left India. Then, to quote Mr. Bullitt, 'The old fear and hatred of British power has been transferred in large measure to the power of the U.S. We are suspected of wanting to dominate all Asia, including India. Our superiority in weapons of war does not give Indians a warm feeling of security but the shivers. When we dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, the Indians imagined that some day it would be dropped on them. We are not trusted to make good use of our power. We are the terrible father in India's national neurosis. The fear and envy of our power and material prosperity is translated by upper class Indians into a defence contempt for our "vulgarity" and our inability to rise to the heights of Indian "spirituality"!

'This is no joke. It is impossible to convince Indians that we are simply not interested in exploiting India. . . .'

Mr. Bullitt is worried that India, once the keystone of the great arch of British power that extended from South Africa to Singapore, is under the illusion that Communist Russia will not attack her, and that 'Chinese Communists and Indian Socialism—the tiger and the lamb—will lie down together as friends in an Asiatic meadow of tranquillity'.

This sleep-destroying worry makes him ask, 'What then should we do about India?' and he goes on to suggest that there are sane forces in India which should be encouraged

to work to save India. 'The Sikhs, Rajputs, Mahrattas and Nepalese Gurkhas are among the finest fighting men in the world. There are men in Indian politics and administration who are conspicuous for common sense. They work manfully to make India a modern democracy. The problems of India are not insoluble. . . . Some financial aid from us would help'. The implications of these suggestions are obvious.

But Bullitt's brow-beating goes on in a new vein, a pious vein: 'If we meet misunderstanding with friendship, we shall strengthen those Indians who recognize that —whatever our faults—we are not predatory imperialists, and who sincerely desire to cooperate with us. And at least we shall help some suffering fellow-humans whose efforts to survive and to achieve a better life move the heart.' We say amen, to Bullitt's pious intentions.

Soon, however, these pious intentions give way to apocalyptical warnings. He says: 'If the government of India could shed its illusions now, it might yet save the independence of India and help to save the independence of all the peoples of the whole vast area by co-operation with them, the British, the French and ourselves in arrangement for mutual defence.

'We have been paying with our blood in Korea for our government's failure to foresee what would happen if we should allow China to fall into Communist hands. The people of India will pay not only with their blood but also with their freedom if their government cannot foresee the consequence of its present policies. In world affairs charm is no substitute for foresight. The epitaphs of nations can often be written in the words: Too late.'

And in order to support his none too covert suggestions to rally India on the side of the anti-Communist block, Mr. Bullitt has blackened the pages of *Life* with all the dirt he could gather from the political, economic, social and religious life in India. The object is obviously twofold: To make out a case for foreign benevolent political and missionary intervention in guiding India from her benighted position to the land of Paradise that Mr. Bullitt envisages for us under his guidance, and to undermine India's unity and morale by dwelling upon her black spots. The same old arguments trotted out by the British for their domination of India are all there: the fabulously rich maharajas and the naked poor, the black goddess with a string of severed heads around her neck, sacred cows, sacred monkeys, 90 per cent illiteracy, unimaginable poverty and famine, 330,000,003 Hindu gods (the number ought to be one greater, for Bullitt has forgotten to mention Christ, whom also some Hindus worship as a god), the numerous languages and dialects, and the castes and sub-castes and outcastes, and 40 million Moslems, whom Bullitt delights in exciting against the Hindus.

But in spite of all Bullitt's propaganda bullets, Indians will not cease to regard America as the land of liberty. Truly did the Swami Vivekananda say of America: 'Hail, Columbia, motherland of liberty! It has been given to thee who never dipped her hand in her neighbour's blood, who never found out that the shortest way of becoming rich was by robbing one's neighbours, it has been given to thee to march at the vanguard of civilization with the flag of harmony.' Bullitt also believes in this destiny of the U. S. A., but he is working against himself by the kind of propaganda bullets which he has been using in this article. It is not by a contemptuous ignorance of the ways of other peoples, or by malicious twistings and interpretations of their customs and beliefs that understanding and harmony are achieved. The *tu quoque* argument is an easy one, but as it does not promote goodwill and harmony, we refrain from it. But to people who are likely to take at their face value the grotesque propaganda of Mr. Bullitt, we would offer a few lines in correction of his misrepresentations.

The monkey's life is sacred, but not the monkey. The genius of India has always been to preserve and not to destroy. The

monkey, even though sub-human, has been preserved from extermination because of this idea. The various backward races in India have not been exterminated, but were allowed to live and develop in their own way. Otherwise India would not be the ethnological museum that it is for anthropologists.

The same principle underlies the apparently bewildering variety of social divisions into castes and the innumerable 'idols' of God that are worshipped throughout the land. It is this same principle of human love and sympathy that makes India accommodate Mohammedanism and its older sister Christianity. To quote the inimitable words of Swami Vivekananda: 'The object of the peoples of Europe is to exterminate all, in order to live themselves. The aim of the Aryans is to raise all up to their own level, nay, even to a higher level than themselves. The means of European civilization is the sword; of the Aryans, the division into different Varnas. The system of division into different Varnas is the stepping stone to civilization, making one rise higher and higher in proportion to one's learning and culture. In Europe, it is everywhere victory to the strong and death to the weak. In the land of Bharata, every social rule is for the protection of the weak.'

Bullitt's cheap gibes at the worship of Kali, the Divine Mother, and the Shivalinga are all in line with his intention to decry India in the eyes of the world. His Christian training has taught him only the Fatherhood of God and the conception of the Motherhood of God seems to him bizarre. But as Sri Ramakrishna said, Kali is the pure Brahman of the Upanishads, the same as the Father in Heaven of the Christians, the same God that is conceived in different forms by followers of different religions. The masses of India do not worship idols as such but representations of God, to Whom they pray. Is the Cross a mere idol of wood or metal for the Christian who knows what it stands for? And yet how many among the masses of Christians hold these very idols as objects of reverence! Again the origin and significance of the Shivalinga is anything but what ignorant critics understand of them. Swami Vivekananda has exposed the hollowness of such ridiculous explanations about the Shivalinga put forward by Mr. Gustav Oppert, a German scholar, at the Paris Congress of the History of Religions in 1900. To quote the Swami: 'The worship of the Shivalinga originated from the famous hymn in the Atharva Veda in praise of the Yupa Stambha, the sacrificial post. In that hymn a description is found of the beginningless and endless Stambha or Skambha, and it is shown that the said Skambha is put in place of the eternal Brahman. As, afterwards the Yajna (sacrificial) fire, its smoke, and ashes and flames, the Soma plant, and the ox that used to carry on its back the wood for the Vedic sacrifices—gave place to the conceptions of the brightness of Shiva's body, his tawny matted hair, his blue throat, and the riding of the bull of Shiva and so on: Just so, the Yupa Skambha gave place in time to the Shivalinga, and was deified to the highest Devahood of Sri Sankara. In the Atharva Veda Samhita the sacrificial cakes are also extolled along with the attributes of Brahman.

'In the Linga Purana, the same hymn is expanded in the shape of stories, meant to establish the glory of the great Stambha and the superiority of Mahadeva.

'The explanation of the Shivalinga as a phallic emblem was brought forward by the most thoughtless, and was forthcoming in India in her most degraded times, those of the downfall of Buddhism.'[1]

It is the height of malevolent preversity to connect the worship of the Shivalinga with the question of overpopulation in India as Mr. Bullitt does when he writes: 'In desperation advocates of birth control have now started a movement for the sterilization of the male! (*A pure concoction from Mr. Bullitt's fevered brain*). That proposal is not likely to go far. A majority of both Moslems and Hindus oppose birth control of any kind.

[1] Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. IV, p. 358 ff.

Indeed, the most widespread object of worship among the Hindus is the male organ of generation: the "Lingam", the fetish of the god Shiva whose shrines are to be found in almost every town and village. What than is the Government of India doing to solve the problem of increasing the food supply faster than the population increases? It spends the little it has to spend on inadequate irrigation schemes. But at the same time the President of the Republic of India goes to Somnath and, in a splendidly reconstructed Siva Temple, dedicates for worship a black stone "Lingam" eight and a half feet long. He did that on May 11, 1951. It was no secret ceremony. Nearly 100,000 persons were present. And the newspapers used frontpage headlines to report: President Prasad installs Somnath Idol.'

Mr. Bullitt's article is replete with such perverted propaganda. We in India are not unaware of the grave problems facing us in modern times. Illiteracy, poverty, and industrial backwardness, and military weakness are there. But these are the legacies of the slavery under the British rule. Nor does there seem to be any great chance that America or Great Britain, Russia, or China, or any other power is likely to disinterestedly help us on the road to strength and prosperity. There are dangers all around us, and of these the bullying propaganda of Mr. Bullitt is not the least of the modern ills that this old land has to face.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

LIFE IN ANCIENT INDIA. By Adolf Kaegi. (Translated from the original German by R. Arrowsmith). *Published by Susil Gupta (India) Ltd., 35, Central Avenue, Calcutta. Pages 120.*

What strikes an intelligent reader of the book under review is that the translator seems to have made too much of his duty to be true and faithful to the author. Surely, in rendering the author's writing in a different language, it is the translator's work to represent it fully and faithfully. But that should not mean that the translator's writing should be cramped and jerky. It should rather appear as his own,—both expressive and easy-flowing. Another important qualification of a translator is that he should be possessed of a good background of the subject in which he undertakes a translation. In translating a book like the above, that qualification is all the more important, because there may be several points which may require a fuller elucidation and a clearer presentation than the author has given.

The author, a German, has started his work with enthusiasm and even with an appreciative outlook, though that outlook, quite naturally, gets somewhat misty at times. Naturally, because, to a Westerner having developed a different outlook on, particularly, the subtler things of perception, several things and doings in the East might well appear strange. Referring to the custom of *suttee*, the genesis of which has not been well understood by European critics, he observes: 'Such features might easily modify our general verdict regarding the stage of morality and culture of the Vedic Aryans; but we must not forget that people in a condition of Nature are not sentimental as today peasants are not; and that the death of a relative, or the thought of their own, leaves them indifferent'. Here, besides the common European bias which he has shown, he has also displayed an inability to well appreciate the feelings and sentimentalism which inspired the Vedic hymns. Does the Vedic literature really show that the people in that age were not sentimentally developed? And where does it show that they were indifferent to the death of a relative? Did not Shiva, forgetting himself, forgetting everything, carry the body of Sati all over the world?

One refreshing thing about the book is, however, the earnestness of the author to study and understand a hoary living culture, the background of which has yet hardly been found and even the vital links of which to the world context are

mostly missing. Through the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* he has diligently sought to get the picture of the men and things at the time, and the results of his study he has classified under interesting heads. But, perhaps, one, reading the book without reference to complementary or explanatory literature, will get away with an incomplete idea of the Vedic period. It will be worse if the idea formed be distorted and prejudiced, as it can be, when reading the strong bias which the author has shown against the *Brāhmaṇas*. Whatever be the merits of the *Brahmaṇas*, to start studying them with the notion that they are 'products of priestly knowledge and perverted imagination' is to do that 'grand division of Vedic literature', as he himself calls it, great injustice.

As regards the interpretation of the Vedic literature, which is the most important thing in its study, the author has quoted European scholars to the effect that 'through the confusion with which it seeks to comprehend from its own religious standpoint, so many centuries later, the ancient conditions and conceptions completely foreign to it, the Indian interpretation comes to be false throughout its whole spirit; while we, through our knowledge drawn from analogous conditions, of the life, conceptions, and needs of ancient peoples, and of popular poetry, are better equipped for an understanding of the whole', though he adds, 'but no one disputes that we have not yet by far reached the foundation' of Vedic exegesis.

There is point in that; but at the same time the disadvantages of an altogether different foreign outlook in an understanding study of an ancient religious literature, inspired by deep feelings, must be recognized too. There is an important difference between the critical and analytical study and the understanding of an ancient and a foreign literature. It is the right understanding which should precede the analysis for a correct and true comprehension of the background, the implications, the values and significances of an age, that is deeply buried in the past. It is in this comprehensive understanding that those who have still traditional links with the past have an advantage over the stranger analysts. But it is most unfortunate and regrettable that many educated Indians show and take little interest in the glorious ancient culture of their own, a culture which has drawn and draws even now the admiring interest of foreign intellectuals. And when and where the former turn to the subject, some of them often show a worse understanding than the latter, because they approach with a stronger prejudice than even the foreigners. It is a pity that many of our universities and other educational institutions are taking little interest in this respect and are producing no works of true merit on ancient Indian culture and history. The earnestness which the present author shows throughout in picturing the state of things in the Vedic age should give incentive to Indian scholars who should, however, have an open mind, uninfluenced by foreign writers. The general supposition of the latter that the Ṛg-Vedic Age was somewhere about 1500 B.C., and that Indian civilization and culture had its dawn then has discouraged exploration of the Age beyond that date and has left the true picture of Indian civilization and culture obscure, unconnected, and incomplete at several places. It is here that interested students of Indian culture have a wide and inspiring field of work.

J. M. GANGULI

MAHATMA (LIFE OF M. K. GANDHI) (VOL. I). BY D. G. TENDULKAR. *Distributors: Publications Department, The Times of India Press, Fort, Bombay 1. Pages 438. Price Rs. 25.*

Since the publication of his Autobiography years ago, many biographical accounts on Mahatma Gandhi, both big and small, by various writers, have been published from time to time; but none that promises to be so very authentic and exhaustive as the present massive biographical work, in eight volumes, undertaken by Sri D. G. Tendulkar and his colleagues. The book under review is the first volume of the series, covering the first fifty-one years of Gandhiji's illustrious life—from his birth (1869) up to the end of the year 1920.

The volume opens with a superbly written historical survey, affording a conspectus of the march of events within the Indian sub-continent, commencing from the Battle of Plassey (1757) and ending with the atrocious massacre at Jallianwala Bagh (Amritsar) (1919) and the Khilafat agitation and the death of Tilak (1920). It serves as a helpful synoptic introduction to the chapters on Gandhiji's life that are included in this volume. Here are illuminating chapters on the memorable early years of Gandhiji, on his student days in London, on his progress from a barrister in South Africa to his position as the great author and initiator of the technique of Satyagraha, on his close epistolary acquaintance with that kindred soul of Yasnaya Polyana—Tolstoy, on the epic struggle in South Africa, on his active entry into the field of Indian politics, on the soul-stirring events that are associated with such historic names as Champaran and Jallianwalla Bagh, and on the gradual emergence of Gandhiji as an outstanding personality and a powerful force in Indian politics. Written with stupendous erudition and in the author's forceful and crystal-clear style, the contents of these chapters that tell the story of Gandhiji's experiments with

truth have been worked out with great labour and much effort.

Gandhiji's name is a household word in India, and the story of his life and work is more or less widely known all the world over. As such, the need for and the value of the present biography is all the greater as it helps to serve as a thoroughly sifted and well documented standard record, indispensable to the historian and the research scholar as well as to the ardent and intelligent reader. Rightly has Jawaharlal Nehru said, in his Foreword to the volume under review, 'I consider this book to be of great value as a record not only of the life of a man supreme in his generation, but also of a period of India's history which has intrinsic importance of its own'.

The author says in his Introduction, 'The present work is a simple narration of the events through which we have lived. It is a history of the last fifty years or so, with Gandhiji in the foreground. To make the work authentic and detailed, the author has not only devoted years of sincere labour but has consulted and discussed the smallest details with Gandhiji himself almost up to the last few days before he passed away. Gandhiji too had evinced keen interest in the publication of this work.'

In completing the eight volumes of the present biographical work, the author has done well by exercising his originality and independence in dealing with the subject-matter and in arranging and interpreting the text and the structure of events. While making references to contemporary personalities, institutions, and events in the social, religious and other fields of national life, he has displayed a sound sense of fair discrimination and impartial judgment. This is an important factor which many a biographer fails to keep in view.

The volume is profusely illustrated with rare photographs and numerous letters are reproduced in facsimile. To make one's journey through its pages is like a fascinating and thrilling exploration. The author and the publishers have laid the English-reading public under a deep debt of gratitude by the production of this volume. We gladly look forward to the early publication of the succeeding volumes.

PRE-ASHOKAN BRAHMI. By A. B. Walawalker. *Published by Muni Bros., 13, Burrows Lane, Bombay 2. Pages 44. Price Rs. 2-8.*

Sri A. B. Walawalker had submitted a Paper to the Fifteenth Oriental Conference held at Bombay in 1949 on the origin of the Brāhmi script. This has now been brought out in book form. The author's research into and close analysis of the Ashokan Brahmi and his study of the various forms of scripts prevalent in different parts of India (which were supposed to be different forms of Brahmi) led him to the conclusion that there was an original phonographic script from which the Ashokan Brahmi as well as other allied forms of scripts in India were derived. The alphabetical arrangement in the pre-Pāṇinian 'Māheshvari Sutras', quoted and made famous by Panini in his *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, which is different from the Paninian 'Varṇamālā' order gave the author the clue that this different latter order must have been intended to group together letters constituted in similar style in order to facilitate the learning of the alphabet. Sri Walawalker has reconstructed the alphabet of the 'Maheshvari' Lipi from epigraphic evidences and shown that it was strictly phonetic, systematic, and was constructed scientifically out of basic 'crescent' strokes joined in different 'geometrical patterns'. He holds the view that it is the parent of the Brahmi as well as of many of the other Indian and non-Indian scripts, and that they may also yield a clue to decipher other yet undeciphered scripts. He has thus set aside the disputed theory of many a Western scholar that the Brahmi was of foreign origin, probably Phœnician, and that India had no writing before the time of Ashoka and that even the word for 'writing' was borrowed. Whatever the justification for these views, many recent finds of Pre-Ashokan writings have definitely tilted the scales in favour of the indigenous origin of the Brahmi and other Indian alphabets, and even a strong case is made out for the theory that some of the scripts of Western Asia were themselves derived from the Indian alphabet. Sri L. S. Wakanker, who has written a learned Introduction to the book under review and has given, in an Appendix, numerous references to 'writing' in Indian literature, from the *Ṛg-Veda* downwards, has shown in an article in the *United Asia* (Vol. III, No. 4) that the Nebetean script, which is considered to be the parent of the modern Arabic and cognate scripts, was borrowed and adapted from the Brahmi. This view is also held by some Muslim scholars like Dr. Mahdi-Hassan. The recent finds in different parts of South India, dating back to 3000 B.C., bear writings similar to the Brahmi and strengthen the view that the Brahmi is of Indian origin.

The author's main contribution here is the reconstruction of the Maheshvari alphabet. But it still needs to be tested and corroborated by other definite evidences. The presentation of the subject, in greater detail, with references to original sources where necessary, will be welcomed by scholars interested in the subject.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ANCIENT HINDUS. By Dr. Debendra Chandra Das Gupta. *Published by the University of Calcutta, Senate House, Calcutta. Pages 252. Price Rs. 8.*

There is a queer notion that Ancient Hindus were ignorant of science, and were strangers to the scientific outlook on life. Since the publication of Dr. Brajendranath Seal's *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus,* this false notion has lost ground. And, in the field of psychology, our ancients had wonderful insight into the workings of the human mind. In fact, they went beyond the mind to the true Self and soul of man. Recent publications in Alamkāra literature, such as Dr. Sankaran's *Rasa and Dhvani* and Dr. De's *Sanskrit Poetics,* and articles and papers on aesthetics in the Nātya and Shilpa Shāstras, and above all Swami Akhilananda's *Hindu Psychology,* have served to bring to light the psychological lore hidden in Aucient Hindu literature. And now comes Dr. D. C. Das Gupta with his valuable source book in Ancient Hindu Educational Psychology.

In the present crisis in Indian education, there is a tendency to throw overboard everything Indian, as being 'ancient, authoritarian, and reactionary', —in fact, to throw the baby out with the bath-water —and to seek for light in the false horizons of the 'West' and the 'North'. That way lies disaster. We have to build on the firm foundations laid by our seers and prophets. And Dr. Das Gupta has rendered valuable service to the cause of Indian education by drawing attention to what is of abiding value in Ancient Hindu Psychology. But Dr. Das Gupta's book is more a 'source book' of literary sources where psychological principles may be found. It serves as a guide to the spot where excavations will ultimately bring up priceless treasures. It does not tell us what the treasures are. The book is not on Educational Psychology, but on the sources for discovering Educational Psychology.

Again, Ancient Hindu Educational Psychology steadily pressed on to the great goal of Self-realization. The teacher and the taught together laboured for the full and final development of the Self. This supremely important aim of education has not been given the prominence it deserves, in the book under review. Even so, it is a very valuable book and should be read by the students and teachers of training colleges, by research workers in education, and, above all, by those who talk glibly about revolutionizing Indian education.

P. S. Naidu

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI JAGADANANDAJI

We are sorry to announce the passing away of Srimat Swami Jagadanandaji Maharaj on 4th December 1951 in Brindavan at the age of 72. He had come to Brindavan in November 1951 for change and rest, but he had a sudden attack of coronary thrombosis to which he succumbed.

The Swami joined the Order in April 1916 at the Belur Math and had the blessed privilege of being initiated by the Holy Mother. In 1920 he was initiated into Sannyasa by Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj. He was of an ascetic and contemplative temperament from the very beginning. He had a firm faith in the Advaitic ideal of Shankara and had a great mastery of Shankara's classical commentaries on the Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutras etc. His translations into English of Shankara's *Upadeśasāhasri, Vākyavritti,* and *Atmajñānopadeśavidhi* have been published in book form.

Though imbued with the Advaitic ideal, the Swami was at the same time a great devotee. He used to say that the followers of Sri Ramakrishna are not merely Jnanis, but Vijnanis, combining the highest ideals of Jnana and Bhakti.

Though the Swami did not engage himself in active work in any centre, yet his spiritual life was a source of inspiration to one and all. He spent most of his time in various centres of the Ramakrishna Mission, taking classes on the Shastras for the benefit of the younger members of the Order, and in exhorting them to live up to the lofty ideals set before them by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. His high spiritual qualities made many consider him a Jivanmukta.

May his soul rest for ever in the regions of Eternal Blessedness!

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SHISHUMANGAL PRATISHTHAN, CALCUTTA

Report for 1950

This institution, situated at 99, Lansdowne Road, Calcutta-26, is a Maternity Hospital and Child Welfare Centre. The following is an abstract of its commendable work during 1950:

Antenatal Care: The most important activity of the Shishumangal Pratishthan for the last nineteen years has been the rendering of antenatal care to thousands of expectant mothers on the principle, 'prevention of disease is better than its cure'. The outdoor antenatal clinic of the institution was kept open from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. daily except on Fridays. Serious antenatal cases were admitted to the indoor hospital for treatment and necessary care. The outdoor clinic treated 6,096 new cases and 8,505 old cases during the year. In the indoor section 437 new cases were admitted, and the total of beds daily occupied was 4,219.

Hospital Confinement: There were 100 beds in the hospital of which 38 were in the General Wards (Free), 38 in the Paying Wards, and 24 in the Cabins. Poor and deserving cases were admitted to the hospital and treated with care, free of charge. The total number of 'delivery' cases was 3,919 and the total of beds daily occupied by mothers was 26,164 and that by babies was 21,105. The percentage of free patients admitted was 54.5.

Treatment of Gynaecological Cases: In the outdoor sectlon 2,012 new cases and 4,444 old cases were treated. In the indoor, the number of new cases admitted was 267 and the total of beds daily occupied was 2,225.

Postnatal Care and Follow-up of Children: Clinics were held on Tuesdays every week from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., by an experienced Paediatrician, when the infants were weighed and examined, and the mothers were instructed about proper feeding, rest, etc. of their babies. The total number of 'visits' to the clinics was 1,531 ('first visits' 824).

Laboratory: 16,307 pathological examinations of blood, urine, sputum, etc. were conducted by the laboratory during the year.

Training of Midwives and Dhātris: Five Senior and nine Junior midwives and four *Dhātris* passed in the respective examinations during the year.

New Additions and Needs: New Wards were opened in the second and third floors on the extended hospital, in December 1950, thus bringing the total number of beds to 150, of which 48 were free. Free beds may be endowed at Rs. 5,000 per bed. The sacred memory of near and dear ones may be perpetuated by donating for the cost of construction of any of the following items: (1) A Cabin—Rs. 4,000; (2) A Labour Room or an Operation Theatre—Rs. 8,000; (3) A Ward of 6 beds—Rs. 10,000; (4) A Ward of 12 beds—Rs. 20,000; (5) A Hospital Lift—Rs. 25,000. Donations and endowments will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary of the institution.

RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA,
SHYAMALA TAL

REPORT FOR 1950

Nestled in the interior of the Himalayas, in sylvan surroundings, about eleven miles from Tanakpur, the Sevashrama has been doing useful service for the last thirty-six years. The Sevashrama, with its 12 beds, has been a very useful source of medical relief to the hill-people over a range of thirty miles. The hospital being located near the trade-route between Tibet and the plains, many traders and travellers falling ill in the jungles *en route* and at Tanakpur come here for treatment. Sometimes the present accommodation for 12 indoor patients proves very inadequate and arrangements have to be made for extra beds on the floor causing much inconvenience to the patients. A distinctive feature of the Sevashrama is the treatment given to domestic animals in its Veterinary Department.

The total number of cases treated in the indoor department was 137 and in the outdoor 7,303 of which 5,392 were new cases. Of the 5,529 patients treated, 3,774 belonged to Almora, 915 to Nainital, 383 to Garhwal, 137 to Nepal, and 320 to other places. About 40 different kinds of diseases were treated and 68 minor operations were performed.

In the Veterinary Department, 11 animals were treated in the indoor section, and 1,195 in the outdoor section of which 1,080 were new cases.

Needs: It is imperative that at least four more beds for indoor patients and an up to date Operation Theatre are added to the hospital. Besides this the Sevashrama needs:

Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the hospital	...	...	Rs. 1,00,000
Building Fund	...	...	,, 30,000
Equipment and Appliances Fund	...	...	,, 25,000
Endowment for 4 additional beds	...	...	,, 12,000

The Veterinary Department also needs a Permanent Fund, for its proper upkeep, to the tune of Rs. 50,000.

Beds may be endowed in memory of near and dear ones. The cost of endowing a bed is Rs. 3,000.

All contributions will be received and acknowledged by the President, Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Shyamala Tal, P.O. Sukhidhang, Dt. Almora, U.P.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The Birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls on 19th January, 1952.

THE HOLY MOTHER