

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LVII

APRIL 1952

No. 4



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE DIVINE MESSENGER

BY STARSON GOSSE

How easily couldst thou pick up a strain
From the effulgent light of the Inner Main;
And givest it endearingly to the Universe
Like a Poet who gives a lovely verse!

How softly linkest thou the Centre with shore,
Different radius finds its golden lore;
All attempts stream differently to the Main
Till are tuned up in the Harmonious strain!

Divine Minstrel of the sublime ditty,
At thine touch, Beauty sings of Reality.
Elevated Realm opens its golden gate,
The worldly matters in His Being sublimate.

Thy music brings the message of Higher Bliss,
Plucking golden tinges from yonder Synthesis;
In that Harmony thine strain profound
Becomes One with the Tune and the sound.

HUMAN EFFORT AND DIVINE WILL

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

What the Lord wills is fulfilled ; it is invariably so. He is all good and does everything for good alone. We do not realize this by reason of our selfishness. Otherwise there is no other motive whatever in His action ; it is always inspired by good motives alone.

'I am His'—if this feeling can be made unwavering, life becomes successful indeed. After that, whatever may be the state in which He may keep one, nothing will matter. After this awareness comes it will not matter wherever one may be. Then the world will not be able to harm one much. There is nothing more to do than to pass the remaining days of life by humbly submitting to Him and remaining satisfied as He chooses to keep. He is the all in all here and hereafter. Fix the mind on Him and look towards Him alone.

That life which is spent in ease, but which does not make Him the aim, cannot be called a good life. He who looks to Him even though he works hard is really blessed.

*Santoṣam paramāsthāya sukhārthī sam-
yato bhavet,
Santoṣah sukhamūlam hi dukkhamūlam
viparyayah.*

'Seekers after happiness should cultivate perfect contentment and be restrained. For, contentment is the root of happiness and its contrary is the root of misery'.

Actions cannot be judged by seeing their results here ; there is no peace in that. Peace can be attained by gaining conviction in the words of the Lord—that He is the ocean of mercy and the saviour of the world. 'Yāthātathyato'rthān vyadadhāt śāśvatībhyah samābhyah'¹—'He (the Brahman) has duly allotted to the eternal World-Creators their respective duties'.

*Bhoktāram yajñatapasām sarvaloka-
maheśvaram,
Suhṛdam sarvabhūtānām jñātvā mām
śantimṛcchati.*²

'Knowing me to be the enjoyer of *yajña* and *tapasyā*, the Great Lord of all the worlds, and the friend of all beings, one finds peace'.

Peace can be had only in the knowledge that He is the benefactor of all beings and is preserving all justly.

What the Lord wills will happen. Everything came by His will; if it all goes, it will go also by His will. There is no use thinking in any other manner than this. 'Let Thy will be done'—firmly thinking thus we have been able to banish all worries. There is no other way to be free from worries. Divine peace fills the heart as the attitude that everything is happening according to His will becomes predominant. In fact everything is under His will. It all happens as He wills—whether we realize it or not. This alone is the invariable truth. Peace will reign in the heart if this can be realized through His grace. If not, then either loss or gain, either joy or sorrow will continue to agitate the mind. One can be really happy if one can actually depend on Him. But it is by no means possible to attain that state without His grace. There is no doubt that His grace can be had if one can make Him the only refuge and stay. He listens to one's prayer if it is done sincerely from the heart. If one can dedicate one's all—wife, children, and wealth, and one's own self even—at His feet, life becomes blessed. Complete self-surrender to the Lord is the final good and ultimate goal of human life.

¹ *Īśa Upaniṣad*, 8.

² *Gita*, V. 29.

*Yeṣām tvantagatam pāpam janānām
 puṇyakarmanām,
 Te dvandvamohanirmuktā bhajante
 mām dṛḍhavrataḥ.³*

'Those virtuous persons whose demerit has been exhausted worship me with firm resolve, being free from all dualities and delusion'.

Disease, sorrow, etc. are inevitable in this embodied existence; but he, who, in spite of all these, can contemplate God with firm resolve, being free from dualities and delusion, is alone the one whose demerits have

³ *Gita*, VII. 28.

been exhausted, that is to say, he will never more be subject to dualities and delusion. This is what the Lord is indicating in the above verse.

It is necessary to hold on to Him, looking to Him alone. If it is so, He Himself will get things done. He is all good—this faith brings peace and happiness. To try to understand the ways of the world with the help of ordinary reason creates only confusion. That is why the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) used to counsel to know God first and then the world. Hold on to the Lord and you will be heir to all good.

IMPORTANCE OF LIVING

BY THE EDITOR

'Live for an ideal, and that one ideal alone. Let it be so great, so strong, that there may be nothing else left in the mind; no place for anything, no time for anything else'.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

Life on our planet, as it is commonly known and understood, ever brings into bold relief the mystery of death, and more so, the great riddle of the importance of living itself. Death as the end of life has always remained an unwelcome terror to everyone except perhaps the utter cynic, while life is very dear to all. Man, though he knows not how exactly he happened to come and live on earth, loves life immensely and seeks its fulfilment in freedom and happiness. The deepest yearnings of the human heart can find their consummation only in a good, true, and beautiful life lived in peace and contentment. Hence the poet sang, 'Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal'. And the great statesman of old, Maecenas, is said to have prayed: 'Make me a cripple in hand, foot, and back; make me a hunch-back and toothless; while life is in me, I am well. Keep

me alive even on the cross'. Life, successfully lived, holds forth immense and varied possibilities for the development of man. It has been rightly said that it is harder to live a consistent life than die a brave death. Life is full of encouragement and opportunity to those who are daring enough to attempt what they never thought possible. A reverence for life and human personality can spring only from an abiding faith in the importance that attaches to the non-material values that constitute the highest ideal of human perfection. Everyone who believes that he has something to give to others and thereby much more to achieve for himself in the way of mutual benefit and all-round progress succeeds in reaping a rich harvest out of the vast and varied opportunities that life offers.

There is nothing peculiarly novel in the suggestion that the history of the origin and

nature of man is not unambiguous. Amidst the maze of theories propounded by theologians, metaphysicians, scientists, and psychologists, one finds it not a little difficult to arrive at a reasonably established conclusion. According to popular definition, to be alive is to eat, drink, beget, and be merry, to gather unto oneself and enjoy all the pleasures of life *ad libitum*. To those who subscribe to this mundane and hedonistic idea of progress, the most important thing in life is not the spiritual development of man but the expansion of man's needs and comforts and the discovery of ever-widening means for obtaining them in full measure. They lay emphasis on the materialistic conception of life and seek to establish an earthly paradise through social development of communities on the basis of science and technique. The ostensible ground for making society the ultimate end by sacrificing the individual before this civic idol, is the passionate concern for the lot of the common man and the urge to make the world a far better place to live in. There are not a few everywhere present who sincerely hope that there will come a time when this world will become perfect and life will be full of happiness only, to the exclusion of all misery and suffering in any form. And because death is inevitable, they conceive of a heaven to which the departed souls will migrate in order to enjoy a hundredfold more intensely the very pleasures they indulged in on earth. Not unoften men seriously doubt whether life has any other higher purpose than the gratification of the senses and the accumulation of wealth and power. At best they think the goal of human existence is betterment of living conditions for all, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour, through social, economic, and political methods.

There can scarcely be a direct answer to the question: What is the most important thing in life? If happiness and progress are the most important things in life, the question immediately arises: What makes people happy and what is the criterion of progress? The answer to this, again, would be that each

individual or group would have to find out and decide upon it for himself or itself. This can lead us nowhere. Man constantly runs after pleasure, undeterred by repeated failures in his attempt to obtain it. His desires have grown immeasurable and become insatiable too. This struggle for more and better life is not the simple striving for mere survival as in the case of a lowly animal. The dynamic and creative urge that expresses itself in and through man's being is not the involuntary reaction of a muscle or nerve to external stimuli. For man is not a passive tool in the hands of or a machine under the control of physical forces. Man is a spiritual being and the importance of living lies in interpreting the world in the light of his highest nature and in conquering the material aspects of life so as to subordinate them to the rule of the Spirit. The innate urge for eternal freedom and bliss finds a limited scope for manifestation in the heroic strivings and struggles of life. The importance of this divine purpose and activity in human life cannot be minimized without undermining the perennial source of what constitutes real progress and prosperity.

The doings of men who could not divest themselves of selfishness, ignorance, and intolerance have tarnished the pages of history. Much that accounts for world peace and social and political stability depends largely on the motivating force behind men's activities. By studying man's physical make-up, as the Behaviourists do, it has not been possible to convince men of the importance of living. A dull, drab, mechanistic view of life and mind does not suffice in affording inspiration and initiative for progress and purposive activity. Man is not born simply to live an animal life. Unlike the animal that is guided by its lower instincts and urges, man possesses higher instincts, power of discrimination, and the will consciously to seek order, unity, and freedom by overcoming chaos, diversity, and limitation. Man, though under the sway of the turbulent senses, is so constituted that he cannot remain satisfied for

long with the satisfaction of his physical needs alone. The demands of the soul, of the inner man, for fuller expansion become more and more insistent and urgent as the appetites and desires of the body and mind are appeased. The pursuit of the spiritual ideal becomes an inevitable necessity to one who has, through self-control and self-discipline, risen above the bonds and delights of the flesh. 'He who loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in the world shall keep it unto life eternal'. To every person who is serious about the purpose and goal of life, the importance lies not in simply living but in the *how* of living. To those who are strong and opulent, it does not take long to understand that to remain healthy and wealthy and to enjoy physical pleasures is not the be-all and end-all of life. Except to the incorrigible libertine, the conviction that man must return from mammon to the Spirit will not be long in coming.

It needs no world teacher or prophet to declare that the joy of living springs from perfect unselfishness, renunciation, contentment, love, and service. Everyone who has experienced it knows this fact well, and any one who has not can test it for himself. When life is cleansed of all dross of corruption with the help of positive righteous ideals—ideals not passively professed but actively practised—, man attains to a state of undiminished non-material life-affirmation, established in which he is in a position to meet and overcome aggressive evil with aggressive good. But on the other hand, by clinging to the lower ideals and values that cater to transient sense-bound vanities, man suffers not a little from tensions and distresses which deprive him of the key to inner poise and peace. Life without balance, without harmony between ideals and environments, cannot but disintegrate, even as a cone put on its vertex topples over in a moment. When one has subdued, nay, eliminated, his lower, finite self in order to establish the glory and power of the Supreme Self, one becomes master of oneself and enjoys life at its best. To such a one

belongs eternal peace and bliss and to none else.

Everything that lies in time and space is bound to pass away. The so-called pleasure which a person believes himself to have derived from his strivings turns out, on closer analysis, to be pain in another form. To believe in the millennium and strive to make the whole world perfect so that there will be no more disease, suffering, wickedness, or even death is far from what any wise man, with a sense of reality, would do. It is no doubt a great and good motive power to make society or the community our ideal and work unceasingly for the advancement of the same. But in practice it is patent even to one with the minimum intelligence that a perfect society or community is impracticable of achievement. For, where there is good, there is evil too, the two coexisting everywhere at all times. Life itself is a continuous struggle between man and everything outside of him. Life is nowhere a simple, smooth-sailing affair, nor can it be wholly good or perfect. When the struggle that so prominently characterizes life ceases, life as it is commonly understood also ends. When this life of struggles and strivings ends, there dawns ideal happiness which man discovers was within him all the time, though he was unaware of it. He also understands that he was foolishly pursuing the objects of sense-pleasure, year after year, and that true happiness and peace are derived from within, not from without, from eternal and entire self-abnegation. Hence have the scriptures and the seers of every land proclaimed in indisputable words that the supreme objective of human life is to realize the true and essential nature of all existence, including that of man.

Man is active by his very nature. All activity presupposes some need, some irresistible want. Whenever man wants happiness he exerts himself in order to achieve it. It is not unusual for a person, with worldly ambitions, to strive to seek wealth, power, and fame. This self-regarding tendency, accu-

mulating everything from everywhere for the comfort and enjoyment of oneself is often denoted by the expression '*pravṛtti-mārga*'. The majority of persons belong to this class and they lay stress on the importance of individual and group interests and the subjection of the former to the latter where necessary. When they are told that man's essential nature is the absolute Spirit and that the world of matter cannot be the ultimate goal of life, they are naturally reluctant to concede that the undifferentiated state of the Spirit is a higher and more enduring state than the differentiated state which is represented by the world. Some go even so far as to think that the absolute Impersonal Spirit is dull and insensate, bereft of any life or activity. The inordinate clinging to life and the body, seen manifested in every living being, and the certainty of death universally perceptible indicate that life does not really depend on matter and that though it somehow became closely linked up with matter, it could never be identical with or be the product of matter. But the cloud of superficialities of day to day life, sponsored by a sensate civilization, hides the sun of true knowledge whereby the unenlightened remain oblivious of the deeper layers of existence. They cling to the body, the mind, and the senses ever more tenaciously and fondly hope they will live for ever. To the question, 'What is the (great) wonder (in the world)?', Yudhishtira, the saintly hero of the *Mahābhārata*, replied centuries ago, saying, 'Every day, (and day after day), beings (animals and human beings) are (passing out of life and) going to the abode of Death; but those living desire eternal life. What can be more wonderful than this?'

The spiritual ideal of life alone can satisfactorily explain the mystery of death. It also lays the surest emphasis on the true importance of living, viz. that life lived at its highest and best ('*nivṛtti-mārgā*') leads to the manifestation of the perfection and divinity already in man. Without spiritual idealism it is well nigh impossible to effect a successful transmutation of men's minds and hearts.

The scientists of today fully endorse the view that life is not all that it appears to be on the surface and that the universe shows ample evidence of a designing and controlling power that has something in common with our own inner springs of thought. Writes Dr. Haldane: 'The conclusion forced upon me in the course of a life devoted to natural science is that the universe as it is assumed to be in physical science is only an idealized world, while the real universe is the spiritual universe in which spiritual values count for everything'. Ambition for outer achievements and worldly success are but natural. But these should be tempered and regulated by the yearning for the inner life. In a life devoted to self-improvement, importance has to be laid on contemplation and inner vision, while the desire for action and achievement should also find its suitable place. It need not be doubted whether spiritual culture and material achievements are contradictory. Definitely they are not, provided the method and organization of the material achievement sought after are not along the lines of the exploitation of man but along the lines of his progressive development.

Whatever the theoretical strength in the argument, 'From each according to his powers, to each according to his needs', it is idle to expect that all people will have equal share of wealth and enjoyment in life. Any artificial attempt at equalizing by violently breaking down disparity is bound to create further complications of a different variety. For, those who have greater power and ability will steal a march over those who have less. But the Vedantic view of life, which demands of us the assiduous cultivation of love, charity, mutual respect, and good neighbourliness has no need for such artificial or violent methods. Herein comes the fundamental difference between the path of religion and that of its opposite. The former insists on mutual reconciliation, healthy reconstruction, amelioration through silent but steady effort. The latter incites class war and seeks remedy through revolution and violent de-

struction of the existing order, and by frittering away valuable energy in conducting activities prompted by hatred and ill will. The spiritual inadequacy of present-day secular ideologies is denuding life of its most essential part, viz. the importance of living. The soul and dynamic principle of civilization lies embedded in the invisible forces of the Spirit of man. To set store by the static, non-essential parts of civilization, being lured by the bread-and-butter outlook on life, is a negation of life's most treasured verities. The development of human dignity and personality through spiritual awareness and intuitive realization of the divinity that fills and animates all life is the ideal. To achieve this man needs proper equipment and practical training in the school of day to day life. Political, economic, and even ethical systems must be subordinated to that supreme spiritual goal. Mere ethics alone—secular, humanistic, or in any other guise, will not suffice, as it constitutes no ultimate end in itself.

Therefore, man should live with this end in view. He has to recognize and reiterate first things first, and encompass within the broad sweep of his informed imagination and enlightened consciousness all life values—material, intellectual, aesthetic, and moral—, and blend them into a harmonious symphony in order to subserve the spiritual ideal which should doubtless form the *leit-motiv* of his life. The social, political, and economic systems should be built so as to facilitate the spiritual growth of man. It need hardly be restated that these secular systems at their best help or at their worst hinder the progress of man's all-round development not excluding his spiritual personality. Hence the importance of these systems so as to create for the individual the best possible environment congenial to the full manifestation of the Godhead in and through life itself. The Vedantic conception of life unmistakably calls upon man not to live for himself but to live for others, to expend his resources as a noble sacrifice in the unselfish service of others. It

cuts at the root of all forms of privilege associated with one's caste, creed, race, or profession. The true spirit of religion engenders a solid faith in the innate goodness and greatness of man, irrespective of his external physical or intellectual adjuncts. By understanding and realizing the true importance of living, a person rises spontaneously to newer and wider levels of consciousness and achieves progression in depth as well as in extension. In his love for the afflicted and the downtrodden and in his solicitude for the amelioration of their deplorable condition such a person will be second to none.

Man's place in the universe is none too enviable. He is ever tempted to live exclusively for himself and to shift the importance from god-centredness to self-centredness. Moreover he finds that the imperious claims of the flesh have to be met with to a large extent before he can transcend their limitations. He is constantly in a state of doubt whether to face life as an affair of the moment, even as the lower animals do, or to face it as an eternal and sacred trust vested in him for judicious management. All the same, man has to discover his spiritual link with the entire human family and come to possess that spiritual world view indispensable for a harmonious and effective life. This is the secret of world unity, peace, and progress. However, let there be no mistaking about it whenever we refer to worldly achievements as assuming primary importance in life and consequently leading to moral and spiritual atrophy, it could not even remotely be understood or interpreted as advocacy of total asceticism or world negation. It would be wrong for any right-thinking person to urge complete renunciation of worldly pursuits in general, knowing as everyone does that Vedanta does not teach that the world is unreal or false. It says that the supreme ideal is indispensable not only for the spiritual growth of man but also for his material advancement on right lines.

The test of all true religion is what we

make of our life here and now; and the test of life, well and truly lived, is what we can do to express religion in practice, by creating greater harmony and understanding among men and nations. The lover of God has to extend his horizon of divine communion and include every being that performs lives, moves, and has its being in God. Such a man does not and should not become a cross-grained recluse or a world-weary cynic. He lives freely a normal life and apparently enjoys everything that helps him and others onward

in the path of perfection. Yet, from the higher spiritual level where he ever strives to remain, he does not live a worldly life, nor does he enjoy worldly pleasures. He enjoys the highest freedom from worldly enjoyment, while outwardly living the life of an ordinary man. To him the importance of living lies not in this life of the senses but in something more than that, in the Life Eternal beyond. And this struggle towards the great ideal, towards supreme perfection, is the most important component of what we call Life.

THE POWER OF SILENCE

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

(Continued from the March issue)

Real spirituality is judged from a man's understanding, from his wisdom, from his self-control, from the inward peace he feels in the midst of his difficulties. That is the real test. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Go forward. Go deep into the forest. Do not stop with one or two experiences'. One may see some light or feel some awakening or hear some sound. Such things happen for many reasons. But one should not stop there. A poor wood-cutter met a holy man who told him to go deeper into the forest and he would find sandalwood trees. So the wood-cutter went into the forest. And after he had brought home the sandalwood he thought, 'Tomorrow let me go still deeper into the forest'. The next day he came upon a silver mine. That night he thought, 'The holy man did not tell me to stop there'. So the following day he went still deeper into the forest and came upon a gold mine; and in that manner he went deeper and deeper and at last found a diamond mine and became immeasurably wealthy.

The deeper the spiritual experience is, the

quieter the mind becomes. It is said in the Upanishad that a father sent his son to the teacher's house to learn the Truth. According to the custom in ancient India, the boy went and spent five years with the teacher and then returned home very proud of his learning. The father asked him, 'My son, have you learnt the Truth?' 'Yes, I have learnt the Truth', the boy said and then proceeded to give an eloquent talk on the nature of Brahman. The father said, 'No, you have not learnt the Truth. Go back and spend another five years'. After another five years, when he again returned home the boy was humble; his eyes were fixed on the ground. When he approached his father, the father said, 'My boy, no need is there for you to say anything this time. Yes, you have known the Truth'.

Great powers are released in silence. These are the three manifestations of power released by silence: the destructive, the creative, and the healing. The destructive power is manifested by the tiger. Before it springs upon its victim it stands poised in absolute quiet.

Or a cat before it pounces on a mouse sits perfectly still. There is silence before a storm; there is silence in the heart of a tornado. There is silence in the hearts of robbers and murderers before they act; before executing their diabolical plans they are silent, and in that silence they acquire the intensity they need to commit their acts.

Then there is creative silence. We all know that when we sow a seed it germinates in the earth in silence. After the seed is sown, if you dig around that place the seed does not grow. We see the growth of an oak from a tiny acorn and we know of the growth of the pearl in the oyster. These take place in silence. The artist creates in silence. All creative work is preceded by silence. In the life of Michelangelo we see that before he would execute one of his masterpieces, he would not see any one for days. He would go into solitude and there in silence he would conceive the idea, and then like a madman he would rush into the studio and seize his tools and start to chisel the marble.

No saint has ever been created in a marketplace, though he may give his message there. Christ spent eighteen years leading a life of contemplation before he delivered the Sermon on the Mount. And even during his ministration he would go away from human contact into solitude and pray to his Father in Heaven, and in that silence he would recharge his battery, as it were. Buddha was away, living in silence, for a number of years before he started his work.

A spiritual seeker should cultivate a positive distaste for the company of men during the years of his spiritual practice. In every church there is the word 'silence', explicit or implied, and if the congregation is quiet before the service it creates the mood to understand what is later said from the pulpit; and afterwards, if the congregation remains quiet, it can assimilate the teachings that have been given.

Now we come to the healing power of silence. The healing power of silence is great. Both for physical sickness and for

soul sickness silence is a great medicine. In hospitals and in sick-rooms a notice for silence is given. Noise irritates the nerves and retards convalescence. The recuperating power is within man himself. If that power were destroyed all the medicines of the world could not heal a man. Silence soothes the nerves and helps to heal the man. If this is true of a physical malady it is all the more true of sickness of the mind, and today doctors tell us that many of our physical maladies are directly related to the sickness of the mind. It is no secret that thousands of people commit suicide every year, and among the names printed are those of many prominent people such as politicians, statesmen, actors, and writers.

It is very important for statesmen and politicians to practise silence. One really is depressed to see how things are being done in the United Nations meetings. The wounds of the nations are very deep. The most vital problems of human civilization are discussed there—and what happens? The great nations compete with one another in indulging in anger, and the delegates simply walk out of the meetings. That is not the way to bind up the wounds of humanity. Before each session there should be some time devoted to prayer and silence, to contemplate the solidarity of mankind.* If they would commune long enough in silence, it would be revealed to them that men everywhere are good, that men everywhere want peace, and that there is more similarity between man and man, irrespective of race and creed, than is possible for the politicians to believe. They act as they do because they have no inwardness of mind.

The mind of man is really sick, and that sickness manifests itself through three things: discontent, worry, and neurosis.

A man possesses plenty; there is no particular reason for his being discontented. Still he is not contented. It is an inner disturbance. It has nothing to do with the outside world. Once a doctor was visiting a farmer friend of his and as he passed the

wheat fields he remarked how healthy the wheat was. He said to the farmer, 'you have wonderful wheat this year'. The farmer answered that probably within the next few months it would be damaged by the wind; because the wind usually came and damaged it. But a few months later, when the doctor again came and met the farmer, he said, 'I see you have a wonderful crop of wheat. The wind did it no harm'. And the farmer said, 'Yes, the wind did not come this year, but though the wheat was very good, when you get a good crop, you take something out of the soil. The fields become impoverished'.

Everyone knows what worry is. Most of the things we worry about never happen. It often has nothing to do with ourselves even. Perhaps a man is sitting on his porch till ten o'clock at night, worrying because a neighbour's grown-up daughter had not yet come home. It is said in Sanskrit that between worry and the funeral pyre, worry is the more injurious, because the funeral fire consumes a dead man, but worry consumes a living man.

We worry about things that are absolutely beyond our control. We are worrying about the third world war and about the hydrogen bomb. Instead of worrying, we should keep our heads cool and do what we can to prevent these things from happening. How does a war take place? There is always a scapegoat. When you come to the bottom of it, war is the outcome of man's greed and lust for power. A man like the Kaiser or Hitler would not have behind him a large following of men for the fulfilment of his greed and lust if they themselves were not of the same mind. Nations consist of individuals; and if individuals control their greed and lust there will be no war. It is not worry, it is madness that creates war. In a tennis tournament the best player does not run all over the court. He stands in one place and uses the serene stroke. When the ball comes he watches intently, and as if he had all eternity before him, he deftly gives the effective stroke. The man who runs all over the court, chasing after the ball, does

not succeed in placing the ball in the right place.

Neurosis is wasting man's mental and physical powers. A per specialist to another without avail. The real trouble is that his complaint is not properly diagnosed. There is nothing definite about the trouble. Neurosis is found more among people possessed of plenty, among the idle rich, than among others. The sure cure for this is constructive work. If one really wants happiness one must render unselfish service to others. Happiness comes from unselfish service to others, and peace comes from the contemplation of God.

What is the cause of soul-sickness? Sri Ramakrishna put his finger on the spot and expressed the cause in those two succinct words: lust and greed. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that three things are the doorway to hell: passion, anger, and greed. We are suffering from a disease and have all the objects around us to make it worse. The two worst things for a typhoid patient are water and pickles. In India these are always taken out of a typhoid patient's room. But we are surrounded by pickles and jars of water too. We are surrounded by all the things that stimulate our greed and lust. If one looks at the newspapers, the shop windows, and the radio, and analyses the content of ninety per cent of what one sees and hears, one will find that it comes under the heading of food and sex. That is why the soul of humanity is sick today.

Man is breaking down under the strain of all this noise. Someone said that the twentieth century may be aptly called the 'Age of Noise'. The development of technology is directly responsible. Then add radio and television. Things have come to such a pass that very often when a man goes into a restaurant, before he orders food he starts the music playing in a music-box. On a college campus students are seen trying to solve mathematical problems with a radio going on. In church one finds soft music for better contemplation. They are just destroying man's

nervous system. The nervous system is very delicate. All our fine ideas express themselves through it, and if one has good ideas but not the proper conduit through which to express those ideas, a neurosis develops.

What is the cure for neurosis? The cure lies in changing one's philosophy of life. We must give a new interpretation to life, not the mechanistic interpretation that man now accepts. Man has a spiritual origin; he is sustained by spiritual force and in the end he attains to a spiritual existence. We must have faith in the intangible world. Man is something much greater than he appears to be on the surface. The world is much vaster than what we see through our sense-organs, and we are very intimately related to this vast world. If a man does not extend his horizon beyond the sense-perceived world he creates a fever within himself. No one denies the use of legitimate pleasures, but these pleasures must lead to some sort of spiritual discipline. So the goal of human experience, the end of life, the goal of birth on this earth is the realization of man's highest potentiality, and that is his inner divinity. And this divine potentiality of man manifests itself through his purified sense-organs, mind, and nervous system.

Everybody has heard of the amber beads that are made in Damascus. Native craftsmen take one bead at a time and give it two or three rubs and then put it down for a little while. Then they take it up again and give it two or three more rubs. Friction creates heat. If the native goes on rubbing the bead without allowing it to cool, it cracks under the friction. Man's nature is more delicate than the amber bead. Sri Ramakrishna says that once a week or once a month one should go into solitude. But mere silence will not help. When we are in solitude we should contemplate the eternal verities of life. We should try to commune with God. We should try to think of the insubstantiality of worldly objects. In that way an inwardness of mind will be created in us and gradually there will be revealed to us a much greater world than the world we see through our five senses.

We need the healing power of silence, not the destructive silence. We need the silence in which the mother kisses the sleeping child at night, the silence which hastens the growth of the oak tree from the acorn. We need the silence in which the holy man blesses the world.

(Concluded)

THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY DR. E. A. PIRES

Every philosopher is also an educationist of sorts, for there can be no philosophy of life that does not carry with it consequential implications for education. Swami Vivekananda was primarily a religious teacher, but as religion, life, and education are inextricably united, he has left behind a wealth of observations on educational problems which constitute a coherent philosophy of education; and

it is my purpose in this paper to consider some of the salient features of this philosophy, specially those aspects of it that have real value for us in these critical days of discord and strife.

First of all, let us consider Vivekananda's views about the aims of education. 'The aim of all education, of all training,' he says, 'should be man-making'. 'It is man-making

religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want'. 'We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet'. A mere accumulation of information, he asserts, is not the end of education; for such information may remain unassimilated and may run riot in the mind, wreaking great havoc on the individual personality and through it on society. What is required is 'life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas'. 'A nation may conquer the waves, control the elements, develop the utilitarian aspects of life seemingly to the utmost limits, and yet not realize that in the individual the highest type of civilization is found in him who has learned to conquer the self'. Not inert ideas, therefore, but ideas that provide the dynamics for the battle of life are what education should impart. True education means not the taking of some university degree but the training of the will whereby its current and expression are brought under control and made fruitful. An education that brings no good either to the individual or to the country at large is a negative education, and an 'education based on negation is worse than death'. We need an education that quickens, that vivifies, that kindles the urge of spirituality inherent in every mind.

How, then, is such an education to be provided? Swami Vivekananda has emphasized the fact that all education is ultimately self-education, that self-help is nowhere more significant than in education. 'No one was ever really taught by another. Each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things'. 'You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. The plant develops its own nature. The child also teaches itself. But you can help it to go forward in its own way'. The work of the teacher is to stimulate, to inspire, to guide. The child's personality has

to be respected. His individuality—but not his eccentricity—must be afforded scope and opportunity for proper development; for liberty—which is not to be confused with licence—is the first condition of such development. In every child there are innate tendencies which require adequate scope for satisfaction; but due to undue domination exercised by parents and teachers, children do not get free scope for wholesome growth. Parents and teachers should beware of any undue violence to the child's personality. They should instead give children positive ideas which they can and will make their own, each according to his or her own needs and powers. The function of the teacher is to serve as a guide. 'You can only serve', says Vivekananda to the teacher. 'Serve the children of the Lord if you have the privilege. Do it only as worship'.

According to Vivekananda there is only one method by which to attain knowledge, to achieve success in a task, and to build up character; and that is the method of concentration. 'The very essence of education', he says, 'is concentration of mind'; and the greater the concentration, the greater is the knowledge acquired and the greater is the efficiency of the task performed. High achievements in the various fields of human endeavour including the attainment of sanctity are the result of concentration. The science as well as the power of Yoga, for example, is the fruit of concentration on the internal world, on the unseen realms in the self. But the ability to concentrate is not acquired in a hurry: it comes only through the practice of meditation, through the constant training of the mind to control the undesired impulses and the disturbing thoughts that tend to rush in when we try to concentrate on an idea or on a job. We become what we think. 'Thoughts', says Vivekananda, 'live; they travel far'. Hence the significance of concentration on Truth, on Beauty, and on Goodness for the attainment of a spiritual character and for the acquisition

of 'the tremendous energy and gigantic will power' generated by spirituality.

Swami Vivekananda also emphasizes the psychological fact that we become what we do. Habit, he says, is not second nature, as we are wont to say, but it is first nature—nay, it is the whole nature of man. 'Everything that we are is the result of habit'. This may appear a very depressing doctrine, but it is not. On the contrary, it is a consoling idea, inasmuch as we can both unmake and make habits. The remedy for bad habits is counter habits. Bad habits can all be controlled by good habits. 'Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character'. But as the breaking of habits or the reformation of character is always more difficult than the making of habits or the formation of character, we should concentrate on the building up of good habits of thought, feeling, and action ; for, as Vivekananda says, 'when a man has done so much good work and thought so many good thoughts, there is an irresistible tendency in him to do good. Even if he wishes to do evil, his mind as the sum total of his tendencies will not allow him to do so'. The implication of this for education is that children should be accustomed from the earliest years to think, feel, and act aright ; for evil tendencies acquired in the plastic years tend to shackle our minds and to encompas our impulses to good. 'We are like silk-worms. We make the thread out of our own substance and spin the cocoon, and in course of time are imprisoned inside'.

Character education, therefore, cannot begin too early. But character education, if it is to be effective, must be based on religion which is 'the innermost core of education'. The greatest and the foremost human relationship is the relationship of man with God, the relationship of the creature with his Creator ; and religion is the full and proper realization of this relationship, the perfect union of the human soul with its Maker. Mere doctrines or dogmas do not constitute religion. No scriptures can make us religious, unless we attempt not only to know God but also to love

and serve Him. As Vivekananda says: 'Temples and churches, books and forms are simply the kindergarten of religion to make the spiritual child strong enough to take the higher steps'—the steps of love and service. In the attainment of these highest objectives the examples of the saints are always a help and an inspiration ; and religious education should inculcate a veneration of 'those great-souled ones who have realized the eternal truths'. It should emphasize their strength of faith, their fearlessness of moral courage, and their intensity of love which enabled them to attain such great heights of spirituality. The inspiration of noble souls is a *sine qua non* of religious development for it moves the heart to emulation of their deeds. And what is religion if it is not 'being and becoming' like the ones who have realized God?—if it is not the awakening of the Spirit within us, consequent upon pure and heroic action'?

This brings us to Vivekananda's conception of the teacher-pupil relationship and his ideal of a teacher, for, according to him, 'without the personal example of the teacher, there would be no education'. The child must have before him a living example of the highest teaching. The true teacher is one who 'knows the spirit of the scriptures', and not one who deals overmuch or only in words, thus losing the spirit. Secondly, the teacher must be pure. Purity of heart and soul is a necessary condition of acquiring truth for one's self or for imparting it to others. Sympathy is another quality that every teacher should possess, for 'without real sympathy we can never teach well'. That teacher is a true teacher who possesses the power to 'convert himself' into his pupils and to think and feel with them ; who can fathom and understand their minds so as to be able, if necessary, to come down to their level. And finally, the teacher must be free from all ulterior or selfish motives. He must be motivated only by love—by love of his pupils and love of mankind at large ; for 'the only medium through which spiritual force can be transmitted is love'. On the part of the pupil, there must

be an implicit faith in the teacher. There must be the same relationship as between an ancestor and his descendant. The pupil must feel truly humble before his teacher, and in his heart there must be a reverential respect for him ; but such veneration need not lead to a blind obedience to or an unthinking love of the teacher. It must be a rational reverence for superior wisdom and purity.

Swami Vivekananda was deeply interested in the problem of the education of Indian women. He believed that respect for women constituted one of the hall-marks of the greatness of a nation; that, as Manu has said, 'where women are respected, there the gods delight, and where they are not, there all work and efforts come to naught'. Such respect, however, can only be engendered by an educated womanhood, by women who have learnt 'to solve their own problems in their own way'; and therefore it is necessary to heed the injunction of Manu that 'daughters should be educated with as much care and attention as the sons'. The education of women should centre round religion and should aim primarily at the development of character, with particular emphasis on the ideal of chastity which is the special heritage of Indian womanhood and which should be intensified above everything else. 'The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sita', the model of purity, patience, and suffering. Vivekananda strongly advocated a training in renunciation for some Indian women so that they may be able to take up the vow of virginity and devote themselves to the spread of female education and to social work. This is a suggestion that is pregnant with immense possibilities and that requires to be very seriously considered by religious leaders in the country. 'It is only in the homes of educated and pious mothers that great men are born'; and it will be the special work of Brahmachārinīs to preach character and piety and to spread education among the women of India. If the women of India are educated and raised, if their natural virtues are

strengthened and developed, their children will, by their noble lives and heroic deeds, glorify the motherland ; and 'then will culture, knowledge, power, and devotion awaken in the country'.

This should not be understood to mean that Swami Vivekananda saw no need for educating directly the male population of the country. On the contrary, he was a staunch supporter of the earliest possible education of the masses. 'The chief cause of India's ruin', he admitted, 'has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land among a handful of men'. The masses must be educated to develop their lost individuality ; and this, he believed, could be done by bringing the great spiritual truths within the reach of the people. The people were hungry for knowledge, for wholesome, positive ideas, for culture, with the aid of which they could work out their own salvation. Such knowledge and such culture could be effectively given to them only through the vernaculars. It would have to be carried to them to their villages. If the poor villager and his children cannot come to education, education must go to them. Vivekananda believed that the co-operation of the thousands of self-sacrificing Sannyasins, who went about the country from village to village teaching religion, could be fruitfully sought as teachers of secular knowledge as well. In addition to these, he believed that there was need for millions of 'feeling', 'willing', and 'steadfast' workers to volunteer for this urgent and great service. He does not seem to have thought of conscripting teachers, though conscription under certain emergency conditions and in a certain national frame of mind may prove, if and when it is tried, to be quite a successful experiment. Vivekananda, however, appealed to his educated countrymen to pray for inspiration to 'take up this great task. 'Let us pray, "Lead, kindly Light", he said, 'and a Beam will come through the dark, and a Hand will be stretched forth to lead us'.

SAINT EKANATHA

BY SWAMI LOKESWARANANDA

Of the saints who followed after Jñāneswara and Nāmadeva to uphold the traditions which they together with other Nātha saints had built up, the most important was Ekanātha, born, probably, in 1533 at Paithāṇa. Both his father, Suryanārāyana, and his mother, Rukminibāi, having passed away when he was a mere infant, he was brought up by his grandparents, who naturally bestowed on him the care and affection which the child would have enjoyed had his parents been living. But, as if conscious of the loss he had sustained, Ekanatha became increasingly grave and aloof with the growing years, taking no interest whatsoever in games and other childlike occupations. Instead he found more joy in reading stories about saints and contemplating the beauty and the astonishing purity of their characters. A favourite place where he would often retire to occupy himself with the thoughts of the saints was a Shiva temple situated outside Paithana.

It is said that when he was barely twelve he heard a voice telling him to proceed to a village called Devagāon where he would meet a saint, Janārdanapant, who would initiate him into the spiritual life. Accordingly, he went to Devagaon and met the said saint, who, after satisfying himself that he fulfilled the conditions of a disciple, agreed to accept him as one. Soon after this and under instructions from his teacher, Ekanatha retired to a lonely place near by where he spent six years in intense and uninterrupted meditation, realizing in the end his spiritual aims. It was at this time that his teacher introduced him to Jñaneswara's two books, *Jñāneśwari* and *Amṛtānubhava*, the two books which exercised a profound influence on his character in the years to come.

Shortly after this Ekanatha's teacher asked him to undertake a tour of the holy places,

adding that when he had completed this, he was to return home and settle down to the normal life of a householder after marriage. It was probably the teacher's intention that Ekanatha should be an ideal householder rather than an ideal monk, for it was in the former role that he was likely to serve the community better than in the latter. However that may be, in strict obedience to his teacher's instructions, Ekanatha returned home after the tour and marrying a girl called Girijābāi began the life of a householder.

As a householder he lived a life which soon began to attract wide-spread notice and rouse conflicting comments in the neighbourhood. While some thought very highly of him, paying him the respect due only to the best and noblest among saints, others thought he was a fool or a cheat. Some came to him expecting to see him perform miracles; others came with the hope that they would find in him a scholar of the first grade. As he did not answer to their expectations, they went away disappointed, abusing him roundly for befooling them. But among his visitors were some who were discerning enough to recognize that under the surface of what appeared commonplace and ordinary in his character there were traits which unmistakably pointed to his greatness. What was most striking about him was that he would treat everybody with utmost courtesy and consideration, irrespective of any treatment that he himself might receive from others. Numerous stories are current illustrating this side of his character. His own son might defy him and insult him, because he thought he was more learned than his father, but Ekanatha would overlook it good-humouredly, never failing to give him the father's love and goodwill. A Mussulman might spit at him just to show how much contempt he felt for him, but un-

ruffled, Ekanatha would acknowledge it as if he had just been offered a kiss of honour. Similarly, thieves might break into his house at dead of night to lift whatever they could lay their hands on, but he would receive them and treat them as if they were guests of honour.

What Ekanatha's life specially demonstrates is that it is possible to live the highest truths of religion even within the framework of a poor householder's life. Toiling and struggling for bare subsistence like everybody else of the common folk among whom he lived and moved, he yet practised those noble principles which many may talk of but are far from realizing. It was in Ekanatha's daily routine that one might find proof of the feasibility of combining happily what is regarded as the mundane and the spiritual. While he went about his daily duties just as well as everybody else, he yet found time to perform his usual devotions, though it was of course his attitude towards life which underlined his greatness rather than anything he did or did not do during the day. He would leave his bed long before dawn when he would sit down to meditate. Afterwards he would go to the river to take a bath and coming back home would spend some time reading the *Gita* and the *Bhāgavata*. Since then till meal-time he would occupy himself with family duties. At meal-time it was his practice to have some guests to share with him whatever modest fare he was able to provide for them. To give an example of what lengths he might go to in order to entertain his guests, reference might be made to the well-known story which records how he used for fuel the only bed he had because all the fuel in the house had been exhausted during a specially long spell of rainy weather, in order to serve cooked food to guests who had demanded it. However, in the afternoon, he would give discourses on the *Jñāneśvarī* or the *Bhāgavata*; in the evening he would meditate again. Afterwards he would sing devotional songs till it was time to go to bed. Thus between work and worship he divided

all his time. Though apparently a devotee and a dualist, Ekanatha was, as far as can be judged from his writings, a strict non-dualist, a Vedantin of Shankara's school. It is remarkable how, without knowing any Sanskrit, and without having many vernacular books to help him in its study, he had mastered the difficult philosophy of Vedanta. The fact deserves special mention that it was through his writings that Vedanta became accessible to the masses. It is probable that he owed his interest in and understanding of Vedanta to his study of the *Jñāneśvarī* and the *Amṛtānubhava*, specially the latter, which was predominantly a treatise on Vedanta, as is well known.

It is said that once Ekanatha was suffering from a throat disease when Jñaneswara, appearing in a dream, told him that he would get well if he removed a root of the *ajāna* tree, which, having got into his tomb at Ālandi, was choking him. As Ekanatha removed the root, he heard a voice purporting to be that of Jñaneswara, dictating to him the text of *Jñāneśvarī*, which had at that time got out of sight. It is, therefore, to Ekanatha that the world owes the only version of the book it knows and has grown to love so much.

Ekanatha himself was a writer of no mean order, having written some Abhangas which mark him out as a poet of the highest merit. But he took no credit for this, for he said it was Jñaneswara who was the real author, while he was only his agent. It was, however, surprising to him that Jñaneswara should have chosen such a 'fool' as he to be his agent.

His respect for his teacher was comparable only to that Jñaneswara had for his. To give an idea how much he loved and adored his teacher he would describe how he would like to worship him. First he would purify his mind completely and then install him on a seat there. By way of incense he would burn his own egoism at his feet, his best emotions would serve as the light to be waved, and all his sense-impressions would be

the food that he would invite him to partake of. He would say that his teacher had done a miracle in that he had kindled in him a light which never knew any diminishing. As a mark of respect for his teacher he coupled his teacher's name with his in each Abhanga that he wrote. Referring to the role that the teacher played in unfolding the latent spiritual qualities in a disciple, he would say that the teacher was indispensable and more important than even God.

Ekanatha thought that he was the most fortunate who could meet a true saint. According to him, it was easy enough to meet persons possessing miraculous powers, such as changing the courses of the planets or walking over water, but to meet a real saint was most difficult. In describing the signs of a saint he said that a saint was a person who was never influenced by the objective conditions of life. He might be struck by an enemy, but he would not like to retaliate. He might lose his only son, or his very dear wife, or whatever earthly possessions he might have, but he would remain cheerful. Equally indifferent to adversity and prosperity, he would never lose control over his mind, never give way to joy or to sorrow.

He did not believe in leaving home and going to the forest in search of God. Ridiculing the idea that God might be found in the forest, he would ask if the forest was not also the home of pigs. He stressed the need of overcoming the attraction for woman and gold, which was the greatest impediment in the path of realizing God. He made no special distinction between Sanskrit and the popular vernacular languages, for, he expressed the view that if God had created Sanskrit, was it Satan who had created the vernaculars? If one prayed to God sincerely

God would be pleased, and it did not matter in what language one prayed.

He would say that devotion made the devotee bigger than even God. In one place he described the devotee as the father of God. To indicate the relations between God and the devotee he would say that while God was impersonal, the devotee was personal; while God was the ocean, the devotee was the waves; while God was gold, the devotee was the ornament made of it; while God was the flower, the devotee was the scent of the flower.

Like Namadeva he laid much stress on the name of God. He would say that while everything else in the world was perishable, the name of God was not. Similarly he would advise everybody to practise meditation. He would say that by intense meditation one could become united with the object of his meditation. To give an example he would refer to the insect which, when under the power of the bee, became itself transformed into a bee as a result of its dread for the bee. If this was possible for an insect, it might be possible for a man also. He would say that the aim of life was God realization and if a man did not bend all his energy to the fulfilment of this aim, he had only lived in vain.

Ekanatha lived a fairly long life, passing away in 1599, at the age of sixty-six. All his life he followed his routine which has already been described, and preached God in the clearest and most convincing way. He lived a life which in itself was the best argument that could be advanced for religion, and it is, therefore, no wonder that, despite all the limitations to which he was subject either by choice or by necessity, he had become one of the most potent forces in popularizing the fundamental principles of religion in medieval India.

ROLE OF INDIANS IN ANCIENT BURMESE HISTORY

BY DR. DHIRENDRA NATH ROY

(Continued from the March issue)

As early as about the time of the *Mahābhārata* there were in Northern India two royal families, one ruling over the regions called Panchāla and Kosala and the other over Koliya. The king of Koliya had a beautiful daughter whom the king of Panchala offered to marry. But the proposal was disdainfully rejected by the former. So a war ensued which finally resulted in the defeat of the Sākya king of Koliya and the virtual loss of his kingdom. Upon this a certain prince named Abhi Raja of the defeated royal family took with him a small army and proceeded a long way eastward till he passed the kingdom of Manipur and reached a new hilly region. There at Tagaung, not far from modern Bhamo, he found himself well received by the local people and settled down to rule over them. The Burmese Chronicle depicts this kingdom of Abhi Raja as the first Burmese kingdom. Evidently it shows that the earliest Burmese royal family traced its descent from the Sākya dynasty of India. Those who consider themselves as real Burmans also trace their descent from the Indian Sākya clan. It is said that this Tagaung kingdom was established about 900 B.C. or 300 years before the time of the Lord Buddha. A recent Burman historian¹ gives a list of thirty-three kings of the line of Abhi Raja, who ruled at Tagaung for about three hundred years. King Beinaka, the last of the royal line, was overthrown and expelled by the Tarok and Tarit Chinese from Gandalarit or modern Yunnan. About the time of the Buddha there was a fresh stream of immigrants from India under another Sākya prince named Daja Raja. This prince arrived after having got the news

¹ U Po Kya in his *A Brief Modern History of Burma* (in Burmese).

of the overthrow of the Abhi Raja dynasty. He succeeded in re-establishing the lost Hindu kingdom at Tagaung and ruled over it assuming the title of Thado Zambudwipa Daja Raja. He was succeeded by as many as sixteen or seventeen kings of his clan, all bearing the same title Thado of the founder king, ruling altogether for about one hundred years. The last of this royal line was Thado Maharaja. It was the same Yunnanese or Shans, as they were later called, who invaded this kingdom again and this time it meant the end of Tagaung.

Thus the first Burmese kingdom of Tagaung founded and ruled over by the lineage of the North Indian Sākya Vamsha flourished for four hundred years starting from 900 B.C. This kingdom was really not a petty state. It extended from Tagaung on the great river Irrawaddy at its far northern course to as far down as Kyaukpadaung in Arakan. It is said that when Abhi Raja died, his elder son went out to conquer other territories. He marched to the Chindwin Valley and having brought this region under his sway invested his son with the power to rule at Kalé. Thereupon he proceeded further, crossed over Kyaukpadaung and there established himself as the first ruler of Arakan. A great kingdom lasting for four hundred years surely had its glorious achievements. But little has been done so far to bring them to light except a few scraps here and there to give us some faint glimpses of the glory that was Tagaung.

The end of Tagaung, however, was not the end of the ruling Sākya line in Burma. A new kingdom arose soon after at Prome, or more accurately at Thiri Kettara, just a few miles from modern Prome. It was founded

by a descendant of king Thado Maharaja, the last king of Tagaung.

There is a long story about how the twin sons of the expelled king Thado Maharaja were born in the forest where he and his queen had taken refuge to save themselves from the hands of the invading Shans, and how these two young brothers having been sufficiently grown up drifted down the Irrawaddy on a simple bamboo raft till they reached Prome near the mouth of the river. The sea had not receded yet from Prome which was, therefore, still a seaport. There they met their maternal uncle Khepaduta, who had left Tagaung before its fall and come there to lead a hermit life. Through Khepaduta the princes became known to the people who received them well. It so happened that at this time the Burmese people here were very much harassed by the powerful raiders from Arakan. They chose the elder prince Mahathambwa to be their chief and lead them to fight the raiders. The prince accepted the offer and succeeded in defeating and driving away the latter. Thereupon the people were glad to own him as their king with Prome as his capital. But unfortunately he died in course of a few years. As his son Dutta Paung was then very young, his twin brother Sulathambwa became king.

When Dutta Paung succeeded his uncle he removed the royal court to a few miles off eastward and built there the splendid city of Thiri Kettara. The name Thiri Kettara sounds very familiar to all Indians, reminding them of the ancient holy city of Sri Kshetra in the Indian province of Orissa. The famous Chinese pilgrims of old, Hiuen-Tsang and I-Tsing mentioned about this Burmese city in their travel records saying that 'southward from this and close to the sea coast, there is a country called Shi-li Cha-to-lo'. Perhaps the people of this area in those olden days were not Burmans but Indians who were immigrants from the coastal region of Orissa. These immigrants surely loved to give their new colony in Burma the name of their favourite holy place to feel at home here as in their old homeland, just

as one can see in America the strange duplication of the names of European countries and cities, such as New England, New Hampshire, Cambridge, Oxford, Birmingham, Montpellier, and so on. The new popular king Dutta Paung, to please his people, must have chosen to call his capital city Sri Kshetra or in its Pali form Thiri Kettara. According to the Burmese Chronicle this new kingdom was founded in 483 B.C. It was also known as Yathemyo or hermit city in memory of the royal hermit Khepaduta. The Chronicle says that twenty-seven kings ruled over this kingdom for about 578 years. In this line of kings one may find such Indian names as Vikrama and Verman rulers. But they all held the title of Dutta Paung in place of Maharaja perhaps in memory of the founder king. Among them king Thu-mon-dri (Sumantri) was very important in view of the fact that the ancient Burmese era began with him. Fourteen years after the death of this famous king the splendid city of Thiri Kettara was sacked by Arakanese and the Talaings.

The Burmese Chronicle speaks highly of this city. Its gorgeous buildings including three royal palaces were surrounded by a massive wall with several large and small gates. It extended about ten miles in every direction. It is said that there are still 'remains of formidable walls built of massive bricks a foot and a half long, half this in width, and three inches thick, and the traces of embankments and pagodas, walled enclosures, and burial grounds'. Archaeological excavations in the ruined city have unearthed very interesting relics of the famous pagoda *Bawbawgyi*. These included a number of terracotta plaques revealing the influence of Shaivism. 'Further, there is a fairy-tale of a war between Peikthano in the Magwe district and Dutta Paung of Hsare Kettara. The princess of Peikthano had a magic drum, and the Prome king had three eyes. Peikthano is the Burmese transliteration of Vishnu, and Shiva had three eyes. The conclusion is that the hostilities symbolize the struggle

between Shaivism and Vishnuism'. (Sir J. G. Scott: *Burma*, p. 30). From all these accounts it seems clear that not only the rulers of this kingdom were followers of the old Brahmanic faith, but even the people themselves were for the most part of its history predominantly Hindus,—predominantly, I should like to say, because there are also some findings from these excavations which give evidences of the existence, at least in the later stages of this kingdom, of some form of Buddhism. This is understandable because the kingdom came to an end in the first century of the Christian era and Buddhism had already been old enough by two or three centuries in some parts of Burma to have later extended itself in this part as well.

The last of the twenty-seven kings of this kingdom was Thu-pyinya Naga-sena (Supunya Nagasena). When Prome fell his nephew Thamok-darit, accompanied by a good number of loyal people with their families, fled northward. They stopped at several places and in course of twelve or thirteen years finally reached You-hlot-kyun, seven miles east of the Irrawaddy-Chindwin confluence. There they established their own new villages. As originally they called themselves *Pyus* these villages at first took the group name of Pyu-gan and later Pagan. Soon a new kingdom arose here in about 107 A.D. It was a central place in Burma, with abundant facilities for the caravan parties from Nanchao or Yunnan and India to meet here for trade purposes. Traders from distant countries, particularly Indians who came to Pagan frequently through Manipur, exchanged their variety of goods and invariably introduced their own variety of culture to the friendly people of the land. Pagan thus steadily grew up into an important trade as well as cultural centre of Burma.

It was to the credit of Thamok-darit that this new kingdom of Pagan arose with himself as its founder king. The rapid way it began to grow in importance showed that he was an able ruler. He had no son, but he had a beautiful daughter named Thiri Sanda

Devi (Sri Sandhya Devi). He looked for an accomplished young man whom he could choose as his son-in-law and heir to the throne. Soon he came to know of one such youth by the name Pyu-Saw-Hti, who happened to belong to his own royal family and was noted for his bravery. Sandhya Devi was given in marriage to this young prince. Having been thus heir to the throne of King Thamok-darit, the new son-in-law soon succeeded him under the assumed name of Pyu-Min-Hti. He, in his turn, was succeeded by a number of kings, all belonging to the same Pyu family. During the reign of this Pyu dynasty the kingdom of Pagan was open for a free flow of Indian culture. The coronation of the kings was held in gorgeous Indian style, under the direction of Indian priests and pundits. Even the dates for coronation were settled in consultation with Indian astrologers. Numerous temples, pagodas, and palaces were built on Indian models. In a word, Indian influences were received in great profusion in all the important affairs of the State.

Thus the earliest three successive kingdoms of Tagaung, Prome or Thiri Kettara, and Pagan, which were called the first Burmese kingdoms, had for their rulers Indians, pure in early periods and later perhaps some composite formations. The people were Burmans or, as in Prome, mixture of Burmans and Indians. The first Burmese kingdom at Tagaung was for the most part, if not wholly, a Hindu kingdom. The great Lord Buddha was not yet born. When subsequently Buddhism arose, following the great Enlightenment, this kingdom was slowly decaying, and in course of a century it finally came to an end. But fresh streams of Indian immigrants and their culture continued to come in as before. It is quite conceivable that the new rising cult of Buddhism, which had just begun to spread in India, was also pouring in along with the old faith. But when Tagaung fell neither the dominant Brahmanic culture nor the new faith could prosper there in the total absence of royal

patronage. In Prome the situation was at first characterized similarly by the predominance of the Brahmanic culture with the new faith showing increasing vigour to raise its head. Inevitably there was a good deal of conflict between the two systems of religious belief, old and new, and in the process of conflict there was some intermingling of one with the other. Meanwhile, in India, the rapidly growing power of Buddhism had its reverberating influences over Burma. Steadily Buddhism began to assert its supremacy over Brahmanism. The kings of Prome, in its later stages, were slowly being won over to Buddhism, and the last few of them were professedly Buddhists. King Thu-mon-dri (Sumantri), for instance, was undoubtedly a Buddhist and his royal court was predominantly represented by the followers of Lord Buddha. Since then it was Buddhism under the direct patronage of the ruling chief and his family which began to prevail in the kingdom, while its old rival decayed and ultimately disappeared. So when Pagan arose under Thamok-darit, a nephew of the last king of Prome, it obviously arose as a Buddhist kingdom. Brahmanism got no more chance to raise its head. To whatever extent it might have spread in ancient Burma it had ultimately to yield its place to the mighty onrush of the youthful culture which grew around the new religion of Buddhism. The Burmans by nature found the new democratic ideal of Buddhistic life more agreeable to them than the caste-ridden ideal of the older faith. Buddhism had really come to stay in Burma.

But what type of Buddhism was it that came to prevail over this early Burmese kingdom? Was it the Theravada type which is more popularly known as Hinayana Buddhism, or was it the Mahayana? Of course, the earliest arrival was free from any sectarian tradition, the pure essentials of Buddhism. But when after the second Buddhist Council held at Vaisali, there was a split among the leaders of the new faith resulting in the rise of two Buddhist schools, the Hinayana and

the Mahayana, Buddhism in the Burmese kingdom had to take the name of the one or the other. Tradition reveals that it took the distinct form of Mahayana Buddhism, being upheld by those Buddhist preachers who came from the northern region of India. This is the liberal form of Buddhism as distinguished from the orthodox Hinayana form, allowing within its spiritual ambit some ideas and practices of Brahmanism and other cults. Its scriptures were written in Sanskrit or Devanagari character. It found favour in the early history of Burma because it could make some compromises with the old naive faith of the people. It not only did not oppose the people professing some aspects of their old animistic belief along with Buddhism but even opened the door to some other exotic religious cults like Tantrism which had long flourished in the eastern part of India, more especially in Bengal and Assam. This Tantrism was, as one writer has recently and quite aptly described it, 'a debased ritualistic and magical arcanum similar to the witchcraft of Medieval Europe. The Tantric practices in vogue at that time consisted of divination, necromancy, various kinds of enchantment, and the cultivation of supernatural powers, following very closely lines familiar to students of European witchcraft. It was through them that the Shakti (female consort) became prevalent. Whereas Buddha had taught a discipline of celibacy for monks and a strict moral code for laymen, the Shakti cult encouraged its priests to have wives and consorts, and the rituals in which they jointly took part were based upon erotic mysticism'.² This sort of Tantrism came into Burma and sought popularity by associating itself with the local Nāga or dragon worship, led by a class of Burmese priests called *aris*. The priests had their own peculiar morals, which, though somewhat grotesque if not revolting to the high puritanic conception of life, seemed to appeal to the popular sentiment in conso-

² Francis Story: 'The Decay and Disappearance of Buddhism', *Mahābodhi*, Volume 57, June 1949.

nance with the simple manners and customs of the time. Animism is the earliest form of all religious evolution. It is the first manifestation of the mystical nature in man. In Burma this animism assumed the name of Naga worship and then developed widely into a worship of spirit or *nat*, as a sort of presiding deity of practically every natural phenomenon that had some striking inspirational value. Inevitably it also included the worship of the surviving spirits of dead ancestors. The Tantric cult of India came to give this animistic faith a more systematized and rational outlook. It made the people's belief more vitalized and wide-spread so much so that for a long time the two in their combined form became far more dominant in the life of the people than Buddhism with all its transcendental ideas and ideal. The Mahayana Buddhism became very much mixed up with this popular faith and thus paved the way to its Tibetan offshoots like Lamaism and Shamanism to come in and flourish in all forms of magic, divination, and necromancy.

The whole kingdom of Pagan was full of all this religious hodge-podge and it thrived well for many centuries, often under ardent royal patronage. It reached its culmination in the early part of the tenth century when Popa Saw-Yahan was on the throne. Indian teachers and preachers of all sorts of religious ideas poured into Burma and sought adherents to their respective schools of thought and belief. They all were held in reverence and hence their influence over the people grew apace. But this made the general cultural situation of the period as degradingly chaotic as it could be, the people being thrown into a maze of beliefs and practices that were quite loose and incoherent. Buddhism became almost a thinly overlaid religion. Time came when Burma badly needed a strong and sagacious ruler who could see the unfortunate conditions of the people and finally undertake to bring about a healthy reform. The need was fulfilled when in 1044 Anawratha became the king of Pagan. What this king actually did to reform his people we shall see later.

But we have been speaking so far about the land inhabited by a race of people who were at first known as *Pyus* and whose descendants later called themselves Burmans. Living in the rugged part of Upper Burma, they grew up into a virile and dominant power, both politically and culturally, to gradually assume the central role over the entire land. Burmese history centres round the people who originally inhabited Upper Burma and then gradually through various adventures including wars established their power over others.

This, however, does not mean the racial groups in other parts of the country were making no history of their own. Indeed some of these groups had developed much to their credit distinct cultural patterns which had preceded and enriched the central cultural history of Burma.

To a little west across the long range of mountains called the Arakan Yomas there is another type of people whose ancestors had built up a history of which they claim to be justly proud. These people were racially and culturally even more near to the Indians than the Burmans proper. They were the Arakanese who, on account of their comparatively easier communication with the mainland of India, both by sea and on land than with Burma proper, had naturally built up a distinct history showing closer political and cultural affinity with the people of India up to the end of the eighteenth century. The present Arakanese maintain that their antiquity is much superior to the Burmese. Indeed they seem to think that it is nearly as old as the history of India. Their history tells us of a list of two hundred and twenty-seven kings who ruled over Arakan between 2666 B.C. and 1782 A.D. when the land was finally annexed to Burma. The kings were mostly of Indian origin. The Brahmanic tradition in Arakan is indicated by the word Chandra which was associated with the name of every Arakanese king, especially from 783 to 957 A.D. It is said that the medallions which those kings used to wear had Devanagari

characters on them, as also the well-known trident of the Hindu god Shiva. Owing to easier communication Buddhism might have reached Arakan earlier. The famous Mahamuni image of Lord Buddha was made by the Arakanese sometime in the middle of the second century of the Christian era when Sandathuriya (Chandra-Surya) was the ruling chief of Arakan. Unlike most other huge images of Buddha worshipped in the numerous large and small pagodas that stand in their resplendent glory of long ages, this Mahamuni wears a face which remarkably reveals in its feature almost a perfect resemblance with the Indian. It was indeed the supreme pride of the Arakanese, and not a few Burmese kings had looked at it with covetous eyes and anxiously sought to seize an opportunity to remove it away to their own capital city. The tall rugged Yoma range stood in their way. But what had appeared to be simply impossible to other Burmese kings was finally made possible by king Bodawpaya who succeeded in transporting this grand masterpiece of Arakanese craftsmanship to his capital city of Mandalay.

Although there is no authentic history of ancient Arakan available to us, the conception of the Brahmanic culture flourishing extensively in this region long before the arrival of Buddhism can by no means be set aside as a mere conjecture. The old traditions and customs, the orthodox religious

observances and the caste practices of most of the present-day Arakanese in Arakan as well as in other parts of Burma will bear unmistakable testimony to this fact. I myself have seen extensive colonies of these people in Mandalay and in other nearby towns, all proudly wearing the sacred thread, regularly painting their foreheads and arms with *candan* or some other pastes showing their caste-mark, and uttering every morning some sacred *mantras* to propitiate some Hindu god or goddess. I have seen them pompously celebrating every year all the religious festivals of the Hindus. They would not eat any food cooked by people other than their own, although they are willing to do any menial job in other people's house. But by pointing to this fact I do not mean that Brahmanism still reigns supreme in Arakan. Buddhism is also a popular faith there. And certainly there was a period in ancient Arakan when Brahmanism and Buddhism had their trial of strength through hard struggles. It was on account of these struggles that later Islam succeeded in having a foothold to spread itself among the people. Islam is perhaps now a vigorous and growing faith in Arakan. But even this Islam is more characteristically Indian than otherwise, receiving most of its inspiration from neighbouring Bengal rather than from its original home of Arabia. Moslem Arakan is only an extension of Moslem Bengal.

(To be continued)

'If there is a want of spirituality in one part of the world, and at the same time that spirituality exists elsewhere, whether we consciously struggle for it or not, that spirituality will find its way to the part where it is needed, and balance the inequality. In the history of the human race, not once or twice, but again and again, it has been the destiny of India in the past to supply spirituality to the world.'

—Swami Vivekananda

THE EAST AND THE WEST

BY L. E. WILLIAMS

More than half a century ago Swami Vivekananda wrote, 'The Voice of Asia has been the voice of religion. The Voice of Europe is the voice of politics'. Thus did this wise mind long ago see with extraordinary clarity into what is perhaps the most fundamental cleavage between the two great sections of the world arbitrarily called 'The East' and 'The West'.

The truth of that judgment has been amply substantiated by the historical developments of modern times. The West has shown a progressively increasing concern for the political arrangements of life. Much of what passes for Western culture has been the product of creative minds whose terms of reference have been political-social-economic. The literature, drama, and art of the twentieth century have been largely the expression of socio-political ideas which have been dominant throughout the past fifty years; and as the complexities of Western politics have increased, the expressions of Western culture have become more vague and undefined. Painting has often degenerated into mere impressionistic blurbs, and writing into esoteric babblings or the abnormal analyses of the modern mind made neurotic by the rapidly moving and uncertain events of the political milieu in which it lived and moved and had its being.

As the emphasis upon politics (and the word is here used in the broad sense which Vivekananda intended) grew in the West, the Western mind withdrew more and more from the centre of wisdom where the solution of life's most fundamental problems is to be found. It has become increasingly clear that the vocabulary of politics is one of material power. Contemporary commentators continually resort to such expressions as 'power politics', 'balance of power', 'struggle', 'competition', 'force', 'armaments race', 'air

power', and the whole gamut of military words. As a result of that emphasis, the greatness that is most honoured today is that of physical might. That nation is the greatest which possesses the largest stockpile of atomic weapons, the most battle-ships, the largest air force, the most men under arms.

When the common vocabulary of a people is one of militarism, war becomes inevitable; for, a people's vocabulary is indicative of the force which controls the mind and will of that people. It is psychologically sound to say that the dominant idea of a mind will seek to prove itself by some outward expression of its essential nature. Therefore, the mind dominated by thoughts of power will sooner or later accept war as the fullest and most satisfying expression of itself. This, it seems, is what has happened in the West; and the reason why most attempts to settle international tensions have failed is simply that the dominant vocabulary of the West makes it impossible to think in terms of anything other than physical force.

This mental attitude has been growing so uninterruptedly in the West that wars have been increasing in frequency and intensity. Moreover, it is interesting to note that whatever struggles have appeared in the East in modern times have been cast in the same mould and follow the same general pattern as those of the West. This way of life and thought has brought the whole world to the brink of self-destruction.

Now to call attention to a significant thing in Swami Vivekananda's statement: While the second sentence is in the present tense, the first sentence is in the past tense—'The Voice of Asia *has been* the voice of religion'. No one can deny the fact that Asia has been the seed-bed of all the great religions of the world; and the outstanding names among the

religious prophets—Buddha, Confucius, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Nanak—are those of members of Asiatic nations and races. It would appear that in Asia throughout the ages there has been a congenial atmosphere for the exercise and development of the Spirit.

However one may try to explain this extraordinary fact, it is so; and in a recognition of it lies the suggestion for the meeting of East and West, and the bringing into being of a 'One World' frame of mind. There is a growing consciousness on the part of many people in the West that a new way of life must be found if the world is to be saved from annihilation. If that is true, where will one look for that way? Can it be expected to develop out of the same consciousness that has produced the present state of affairs in the world generally? It hardly seems possible that such can be the case. Is it not more likely to arise out of the union of the spiritual consciousness of the East with the practicality of the West?

When the West has learned to bring its practical nature under the guiding influence of the East's spiritual genius, there will be hope for world understanding and co-operation. When the West can truly appreciate not only Ernest Hemingway but also Rabindranath Tagore, when it can understand both Einstein and Aurobindo, there will have been born that gnostic consciousness of which Sri Aurobindo spoke which will make impossible 'war with its spirit of antagonism and enmity, its brutality, destruction, and ignorant violence, political strife with its perpetual conflict, frequent oppression, dishonesties, turpitudes, selfish interests, its ignorance, ineptitude, and muddle. The arts and crafts would exist, not for any inferior mental or vital amusement, entertainment or leisure, and relieving excitement or pleasure, but as expressions and means of the truth of the Spirit and the beauty and delight of existence'.¹

It has long been the habit to think in terms of East *or* West. It has been taken for granted by most people that the cultures of the orient and the occident are two separate

and incompatible entities. The thought patterns of the East were held to be so completely different from those of the West as to be unintelligible, at least to the empirical mind of the West. The ways of life, the common approach to both business and leisure, were considered strange, bizarre, and, because they were different, inferior. But there is a growing consciousness in the West that the empirical mind, while producing an amazing material civilization, has somehow failed to create a peaceful and wholly satisfying world. It is a world of fear and uncertainty, of increasing tension and threat. The nerves of the world are at the ragged edge; and the people cry for peace, but there is no peace. We seem to live in a world that is all questions, the answers to which always elude us. On the whole, it is not a comfortable world; and the West is more and more aware of it, but does not seem to know what to do about it.

The time has come when the dichotomy of East *or* West must give way to the amalgam of East *and* West. There is undoubtedly much in the West that could benefit the East—for one thing, better methods for the production and distribution of the essentials of life, but there is probably more in the East that would help the West. If the West can help the material side of life, if it can give the technical knowledge and skill needed to raise the standard of living for people everywhere, the East can strengthen man's spiritual nature. And this is the greater need; for the break-down of world morality is a symptom of the desiccation of the Spirit. Man's peace is not to be found in the abundance of things which he possesses, but in an inner serenity. His mind must develop a 'modus operandi' which goes beyond the excellence of engineering into the far reaches of Reality and which understands that Life is more important than mere existence. To this end the wisdom of the East can make an inestimable contribution. The exigencies of the present demand a true meeting of East *and* West, out of which will emerge that 'One World' about which men of goodwill everywhere dream.

¹ Sri Aurobindo: *The Life Divine*, p. 944.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

BY KUMUD BANDHU SEN

It was a memorable day in my life when for the first time I had the privilege of coming in contact with the Holy Mother (Saradamani Devi) in Calcutta. I was then a schoolboy preparing for the Entrance examination. It was about the middle of 1895.

I would frequently go to Swami Yogananda who then resided at Balaram Bose's house at 57, Ramkanta Bose's Street, Baghbazar, in the northern part of Calcutta. He occupied the room where Sri Ramakrishna used to take rest whenever he came there from Dakshineswar to meet his disciples and devotees. This room had been converted as the bedroom of Swami Yogananda, who used to sit in the hall adjoining it and give spiritual talks to the devotees and admirers of Sri Ramakrishna that came to visit him there. This hall was sometimes occupied by the Sannyasins of the Math which was then situated at Alambazar. The hall was also used as a parlour by Ramakrishna Bose, the son of Balaram Bose. It is needless to mention that the whole family of Ramakrishna Bose was devoted to Sri Ramakrishna and his Sannyasin disciples. Sri Ramakrishna used to mention Balaram Bose as one of his *rasad-dārs* (suppliers of his needs). His piety, devotion, and love, his munificence and his sincere eagerness for serving the Master and his beloved disciples, his pure, noble, and ideal character are well known to the readers of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Līlāprasanga*. Out of reverence for Balaram Bose, people called the house as 'Balaram Mandir', sanctified by Sri Ramakrishna and also by his spiritual consort—the Holy Mother, by Swami Vivekananda and his Gurubhais and their disciples and devotees. The hall, together with the said room, is now used as a sanctuary—the room as a temple of Sri Ramakrishna and the hall as a place for

holding religious discourses, devotional songs, and *kīrtan*.

It was from Swami Yogananda that I first came to know that the Holy Mother had come to Calcutta and was residing at the house of one Sarat Sarkar, a young devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. The house was situated in a narrow lane just to the west of Balaram Mandir.

Next day, in the morning, after taking a dip in the Ganges, I went there, with some flowers—mainly red lotuses—and sweets. At the entrance of the house was standing Sarat Sarkar, who led me to a big room on the upper storey and told me to wait as the Holy Mother was then performing Puja. He then sent one of his relations to inform the Holy Mother about my having come for her *darśan*. Within a quarter of an hour I was asked by Golap Mā to come and meet the Holy Mother. Golap Ma had been standing at the threshold of a room situated to the north of and adjoining that where I had been waiting.

With a throbbing heart, filled with emotion, I slowly advanced towards the room, after handing over the sweets to Golap Ma (whom I did not know till then but came to know her afterwards from Sarat Sarkar). I saw the Holy Mother standing by the side of Golap Ma. A white sheet of cloth covered her entire body, but her feet were uncovered. I reverently placed all the flowers at her feet, and made obeisance, with deep veneration. Absolute silence prevailed all round and I was quite a stranger to both of them. In silence the Holy Mother placed her hand on my head as a blessing. It was a divine touch of affection and benediction which enthralled me. I felt in her presence a thrill, an elevating influence, the depth of which, as a boy, I could not fathom then; but nevertheless I was conscious of a sense of sublimity which

that solemn atmosphere had instilled into me. There was no talk between us and she put no questions about me. In a few minutes when Mother had gone away, Golap Ma offered me some fruits and sweets as *prasād*. I went downstairs, with great exultation, and met Swami Trigunatitananda, who was then entering the house. He smilingly told me, 'Oh, I see that you are a very clever boy! In my absence you quietly came and saw the Holy Mother'.

It will not be inconsistent to mention here that Swami Trigunatitananda used to stay at that house then in order to look after the Holy Mother and attend to the comforts of the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna that came there for her *darśan*. Swami Yogananda too took special care to look after the comforts of the Mother. I considered myself fortunate that I first saw the Mother through the kindness of Swami Yogananda.

Since then I used to go to see the Mother almost every day. After taking my bath in the Ganges, I would go with flowers to Sarat Sarkar's house for Mother's *darśan*. The Holy Mother stayed there for about a month and then went to Jayrambati. Though my name only had been mentioned to her, she never enquired who or what I was. Whenever I went to her she was gracious enough to appear before me, with Golap Ma or some other woman attendant, and to allow me to offer flowers at her feet. There would be no talk, no searching enquiry as to who I was or whence I came. I used to offer flowers at her feet, like a worshipper would before his divine image. Yes, an Image—not made of clay, stone, or bronze, but a living, ideal, human being. Undisturbed silence would prevail during my visits, but this silence was not dumb or mute. It was far more communicative than spoken words. This silence was sublime, solemn, purifying, and penetrating. It glistened with grace and a sweet tenderness springing from the perennial flow of the living kindness of the divine Mother. Even as a boy I felt this silence was neither a natural shyness before a stranger or a mere

formality of social convention, but a sacred silent communication which touched the innermost recess of one's heart and stirred up a feeling of hope and security. In my boyish sentiment I imagined that as the secrets of God are hidden, even so the unbounded grace and affection of the Holy Mother were hidden under the cover of her person. Her great and powerful presence cleansed the thoughts of my heart and inspired me with elevating ideas and lofty ideals. During these silent interviews with the Mother I cannot recollect even a single day when I was not blessed with a new inspiration of hope and peace and I always felt inwardly that I came to one who was more than my parents.

Swami Trigunatitananda often took me to task for going frequently to the Swamis at Balamandir and Alambazar Math and thereby neglecting my studies. He reproachfully told me, 'Well, boy, you must read your school text-books attentively. Do you think that realization of God is an easy matter? One who cannot concentrate his mind on his studies can never do so in prayer and meditation. It is far more difficult than the passing of examinations. First acquire knowledge through books and lead a pure and clean life which will help you in meditation and prayer'. I remained silent and listened to his advice with reverence. As I used to go there almost every day for meeting the Holy Mother, Swami Trigunatitananda was very kind and gave me a Stotra on Holy Mother composed by him in Sanskrit after the manner of the *Caṇḍī*. He advised me to recite it every day early in the morning. It was a fairly big Stotra, but unfortunately it was lost by a neighbour of mine who took it from me.

Manindra Krishna Gupta, a lay disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and a good friend and next-door neighbour of mine, was the grand-nephew of the illustrious poet of Bengal, Iswara Chandra Gupta, who was also a great literary genius. Iswara Chandra edited a Bengali daily, and Manindra continued to edit and manage the paper. When Swami Vivekananda returned from the West in 1897,

Manindra was in extreme financial stringency. Swamiji heard all about it from his Gurubhais. One day he called him and helped him privately with a sum of one thousand rupees as a gift. The Swamis of the Math and other devotees used to come to Manindra's house occasionally. They all looked upon him as one of their Gurubhais and called him Khokā or Mani. In the course of conversation, the Holy Mother once told me, 'Manindra was a mere boy when he came to Thākur (meaning Sri Ramakrishna). During his illness Manindra and another boy of the same age were fanning him on *Dol-yātrā* (*Holi*) day. Many others were playing outside with coloured water as is usual on that occasion. Thakur insisted on their going and joining the merry festival. But they did not move and continued to fan him. At this, Thakur, with tears in his eyes, exclaimed, "Ah, my Rāmlālā is serving me through these boys. They are my Rāmlālā".'

One day, in our presence, Swami Trigunatitananda read out to Mother a letter from Swami Vivekananda. It was addressed to his Gurubhais in the Math and Swamiji enquired therein how the expenses of the Mother were being met. He had asked them all to read the letter and also to have it read before the Holy Mother, Golap Ma, and Yogin Ma, and had appealed to his Gurubhais to preach the message of Sri Ramakrishna and devote their lives for doing good to others, even at the cost of sacrificing everything for that ideal. All were silent and felt inspired with the high ideal of Sri Ramakrishna as put by Swamiji. After a few minutes Golap Ma, addressing Swami Trigunatitananda, said, 'Well, Sārādā (that was his pre-monastic name), Mother says, "Naren is an instrument of Thakur who makes him write these words for inspiring his children and devotees for doing his work, for doing good to all in the world. What Naren writes is true and must take effect hereafter".' All present were delighted to hear these words of the Mother, giving vent as it were to their own feelings which were surging within their hearts, but could not be expressed

in words. That day was a blessed day indeed!

A thrilling sensation passed through my veins in that solemn atmosphere. We all returned home with a unique fulness in our hearts and unbounded reverence and admiration for Swamiji, bearing in our minds the pertinent remarks of the Holy Mother. Referring to this stay of the Mother in the house of Sarat Sarkar, his friends and others would say, 'Sarat, you have performed Durga Puja for about a month where people do it for three days only. Whereas they worship a clay image, you have worshipped a living image of the Divine Mother'.

It was November 1895, during which month the Holy Mother performed the Jagaddhātri Puja, as she used to do every year. Though I could not go to Jayrambati (where Mother was staying at the time) for the occasion, owing to special circumstances, other friends who went there came back and related to me graphic descriptions of the place and its charming surroundings. Mother was so kind and affectionate that she looked after them as her own children and they all were comfortable and happy. In one voice they told me that they never experienced such motherly care and affection even in their own homes.

A middle-aged gentleman who came back with the above party from Jayrambati and stayed with Manindra for two or three days, had a keen desire for obtaining the blessings of a Guru who could help him in the path of spiritual practice for reaching the desired goal. He could not attend to his normal duties as usual, and always felt eager how he could proceed onward in spiritual life. One night he saw in a dream a brilliantly radiant figure whom he could at once recognize as Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna pointed to him a woman with equal brilliance and commanded him to go to Jayrambati. The gentleman at once started alone for the place. He reached Jayrambati and saw the Holy Mother. He was received by the Mother with great warmth of affection and kindness. On

the day of the Jagaddhatri Puja he was initiated by Mother. He told me that he was surprised when he saw the Mother—exactly the same as he had seen in his dream. In this connection Manindra also remarked that

he had heard Sri Ramakrishna say, during his illness, 'My work has been half done and she (meaning his spiritual consort, the Holy Mother) will do the rest for the good of humanity'.

(To be continued)

GOD IN A GODLESS WORLD

BY ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

Nations and peoples are today trying to build up their States on a-moral and atheistic foundations. It has become the fashion in 'civilized' societies of the present day to brand theists as reactionaries and scientific materialists as progressives. Opportunism and hedonism unveil their heads in the diplomatic and political conclaves. The most shameless, outspoken, criminal imbecilities are being planned and perpetrated even by Governments before the peoples of the world and yet the thoughtful and the righteous few feel impotent to raise their little finger against them. Plato had said that if the wise and judicious retire from Government and politics, the unwise and unjudicious will govern and manipulate them and the people. But things cannot be allowed to run their course and let peoples and nations die in the strife.

The youth of the country cannot be left to the mercy of a materialistic typhoon, nor can the country move forward without having a sure hold on ethical values, on humanity, justice, and righteousness. The source of all these imponderable spiritual values is the God of saints, heroes, prophets, philosophers, and thinkers. Does God exist? What is God? Has the idea and acceptance of God any practical bearing on our everyday life? Is God a figment of the weaklings just to deceive themselves and others, just to exploit the masses, or is God a living reality, Reality of all realities (*satyasya satyam*), the alpha and omega of the universe, the source of

invincible energy and unending creativity, the raft of salvation and the source of eternal happiness for the *homo sapiens*? These and allied questions were asked and answered in every century and in every generation by all thoughtful and conscientious minds everywhere. The question and answer should be raised and given from time to time, for, on such questions and answers depends the life of man more truly than on food and water.

Thought is power; knowledge is power. Ideas have legs and feet. The most powerful men of history, from the ancient days of Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome, India, and China, were those who have had their character based on the idea of God—not a God of dogmas and definitions, but a God of realization and experience—, having their minds and hearts rooted in the Infinite Reality, in Consciousness Pure.

Our life and behaviour, our achievements and failures, are nothing but the outward expressions of our inner convictions and realizations. The mind is diaphanous and blank. It is receptive to any light thrown upon it, as the sensitive film in a photographic camera. That is the reason why society and the State must take practical steps to the end that the young citizens may have such lofty ideas and ideals by which they can grow to their fullest personality, unfold their latent powers, and be useful servants of their country and of humanity. A man is what his mind makes of him. A healthy mind compels the body to

adjust to its healthy state. Body and mind are interlinked; but body is but a tool of the mind, as mind is but a tool of the superior forces of the spiritual world. As the body must be subservient to the mind to maintain harmony and poise of the individual, so both the mind and the heart should maintain harmony with God so that man may be what Nature intends him to be, viz. to lead a life worthy of human beings, to live up to the high principles and ideals of the greatest representative men of humanity, and to serve the cause of the poor, the persecuted, and the lost.

Pythagoras, Plato, Zeno, Seneca, Cicero, Pericles, Herodotus, Moses, Paul, Solomon, Yājñavalkya, Manu, Mencius, Confucius, Shankara, Ramanuja, Milton, Dante, Tulasi-das, Galileo, Bacon, Newton, and a thousand other great names we recall from the history of nations were all master minds become strong, powerful, and useful through their firm hold on God and Reality. The term, 'God' stands not only for the Supreme Reality or the Universal Self or Oversoul viewed as objective reality, the eternal 'Thou' of human hearts, but also for the higher values of life, the suprasensuous experiences and realizations. It is in this sense Socrates uttered the following prayer: 'O beloved Pan, and all ye other gods of this place, grant me to become beautiful in the inner man, and that whatever outward things I have may be at peace with those within. May I deem the wise man rich, and may I have such a portion of gold as none but a prudent man can either bear or employ'.

The ideas of justice, prudence, wisdom, equity, chastity, modesty, sincerity, truthfulness, and as many other virtues that adorn the life of an individual in social living return with redoubled force the moment the godless person turns godly and the prodigal son returns to the lap of 'Our Father who art in heaven' and the Mother of the universe. There is no ground for moral virtues save in a living faith in a living God. Immanuel Kant, who could not reach God through the

'*Critique of Pure Reason*', had to enter the sanctuary of God through the '*Critique of Practical Reason*'. In the whole history of mankind we do not see one instance of a human being who has risen superior to animal instincts and reached perfection in humanity save through faith in God or ethical and spiritual values in life. The God of official high priests and dogmatic theologians is the God who sits somewhere up in the heavens, with a weighing balance to judge who is orthodox and who is a heretic and condemn the latter into eternal hell-fires. But the God of living hearts is the God of undying values, the God who lives in and suffers through the poor and the downtrodden,—the *daridra-nārāyaṇa*,—the God of the sinner and the saint, the evolved and the evolving, the substance and the shadow of the visible and invisible universes.

What God Himself is it is difficult indeed to know, much more difficult to express and understand. But the fact that there is some suprasensible Reality creating, preserving, and dissolving the universe, something that is the source of all that really exists in the form of goodness, truth, and beauty, in other words, the Prime Mover of all, could be perceived very clearly by any purified, unsophisticated, and healthy mind. We all exist, so God exists. Universe, the shadow, exists; so God, the Substance, exists. The whole world is in a state of flux and movement; so the Unmoved Mover of all exists. Good and better forms of goodness exist; so Goodness itself exists. Mineral matter and inorganic substances act along the prescribed laws and so the wise Law Giver and Moving Intelligence presides over the entire world. Injustice triumphs and justice is persecuted; so the scenes of this world cannot be the be-all and end-all of everything. There must be a righteous Judge who watches and ordains everything according to righteousness which men often fail to secure in this world. The watch-maker sets the wheels and machinery in order and the watch functions correctly. A similar though much bigger machinery is the universe,

whose intelligent guide and maker must also exist.

Perhaps such arguments which the advocates of God's existence bring forward are for the common man, for the average intelligence. But better than proofs and arguments we see the existence of God and His working established in the lives and experiences of great minds. Books and proofs are theories ; but experience is direct evidence. The lives of saints like Francis of Assisi, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi, Swedenborg, Tukaram, Kabir, Nanak, Mohammed, and Jesus are the supreme patterns of history. These and women like Judith, Susanna, Mirabai, and Joan of Arc—who have mounted the pinnacles of divine wisdom—reached and realized God, touched and spoke with God, and have stood out as the eternal challenge of spirit over matter. Their lives are the best commentary on and document for God, and as long as man remains man, their challenge remains perennial.

What then about the other side of the medal? The challenge of the Epicureans and Chārvākas, of Karl Marx and the modern materialists, atheists, and nihilists? Marx and Lenin were theists in so far as they advocated the cause of the exploited and downtrodden millions everywhere. Had they not been humanists, humanitarians, and champions of social and economic justice on behalf of the victims of exploitation, their gospel and message would have withered away at the first tropic heat-wave. The prophets of modern socialism found it more vital to insist upon the economic side of life, on the exploitation of labour by capital, than to write treatises on theology and metaphysics to bring a better socio-economic order in society. As man is his mind, mind is his thought, thought is his God, *logos* or *cit*, it follows that for men like Marx and Lenin, and prior to them to prophets of socialistic ethics, their God was socio-economic justice, which itself is the evident proof that they were not purely hedonists and materialists as some of their professed but thoughtless followers would think. As Swami

Vivekananda rightly says, religion is not for empty bellies.

Even if the God of theology and the priests go, the God of justice and righteousness, the God of the poor, exploited, benighted, and dwarfed humanity cannot afford to go. God is Truth and Justice. Godlessness is untruth and injustice. To fight against injustice and untruth is itself the best apology and defence of God and godliness. God is the living Presence that works and struggles in and through His servants, His tools, for the liberation of enslaved humanity. Speaking of His divine mission, Jesus says: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach the deliverance to the captives, and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised ; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord'.

What has been the real cause of modern soulless atheism and atheistic materialism is not Marx or Engels, but the same old lust and greed of unredeemed man for sensual pleasures and enjoyments even to the extent of denying the Spirit. Says St. Augustine: 'Two kinds of love built up two cities. The love of God created the celestial city to the contempt of self, and the love of self created the terrestrial city to the contempt of God'. This eternal conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, the Real and the apparent, the forces of Light and the forces of darkness continue to this day. The more intense the materialistic atheism, under the pressure of a soulless mechanistic civilization, the brighter shines the realm of God and godliness, in so far as men have to assert their godliness and holiness in the teeth of greater opposition than even during the centuries of martyrdom. The greater the trial of gold in the fire the better the chance of its being purified. So God and godliness shine better in a society given to worldliness. Night reveals the joy of day better, and war reveals the glory of peace better. Says the *Koran*: 'I was as a gem concealed ; me my burning ray revealed'.

In India, the land of the Vedas and the Upanishads, of *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, God is not only a reality, ingrained in our very blood, but also the very soul and essence of our civilization. The Upanishads and Vedānta are the 'Himalayas of the soul', not merely books or doctrines. India will cease to be India when she has discarded the God of the Upanishads and Vedānta. On this Vedāntic basis India has all the bright prospects and opportunities for her full regeneration—social reforms, economic justice, and politico-military progress. God is the corner-stone of the edifice of Indian civilization.

On the other hand, the struggle against gross materialistic hedonism should not mean encouragement of and support to any sort of priestcraft or narrow communalism which may divide men and nations against one another in the name of God and religion. It is against such priestcraft that Buddha protested, by remaining silent about God; and the modern protest against religion is not directed against godliness, justice, and spiritual values.

Today God realization is not anything apart from righteousness, ethical progress, and spiritual values. To defend the defenceless, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, and to emancipate the socially and economically enslaved millions is as much religion in practice as to perform rituals and worship and pray in temples, churches, and mosques. It is this God-in-Man that lives and reigns supreme amidst the changing conditions of the world. God is the inner urge to grow from within, to reach the highest spiritual perfection and freedom. God is godliness in act, sincerity, purity, honesty, courage, devotion, strength, and wisdom. It is the denial of

these imponderable spiritual values and ethical principles in human life that really constitutes the denial of God and godliness. It is against such godlessness that the champions of humanity and social justice are called upon to wage the new crusade. Knowledge, self-culture, wisdom, purity, studiousness, valour, and courage are all the manifestations of godliness. It is through such godliness that man conquers the antispiritual and antisocial forces that lie within him and without, and reigns victorious in history, transcending time and space. The best in the cultural traditions of all civilizations are thus vindicated, preserved, and enhanced.

In a world given to the orgy of violence and imbecility, God returns in the form of harmony, integration, inner poise, moral power, and creative urge for the emancipation of the dumb millions everywhere. Godliness and ungodliness may be transcended in the Absolute. But in the tug of war of the dual opposites and the dialectic of history, God and godliness is the positive side, the source of all strength, fearlessness, inner purity, indomitable will-power, and unsullied character. Man may lose his humanity, the gods their divinity; stars may fall off from their orbits and the forces of Nature may go astray from the pre-ordained path, but God and godliness will remain and will triumph as long as there is one single thinking brain and feeling heart, for, God is the Ideal Man to whom men and nations look up ever. There is no other path that can ensure peace and happiness, integration and equipoise, progress and prosperity for individuals and nations. There could be no better way—*na anyāḥ pañthā vidyate ayanāya*.

'The Lord, O Arjuna, dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing all beings, by His Maya, to revolve, (as if) mounted on a machine.'

—*Bhagavad Gita*

IDEOLOGICAL PERVERSIONS AND WORLD UNITY

By S. N. RAO

Conflict in the modern world is not wholly ideological. Ideology, though undoubtedly a force in shaping the conduct and character of nations, does not by itself constitute the immediate or the final cause of conflict in the modern world. Behind all ideology, there is man, the 'great unknown'. Nature has been conquered on many fronts but not on the human front. Notwithstanding all our advance in the science of human psychology, we are yet to know what the soul of mankind is and where it lies.

Science and technology, in the evolution of time and in the process of history, have brought all countries and peoples nearer and nearer, so that today they have become almost next-door neighbours. No nation or country, whatever may be their system of thought, ethics, and religion, can any longer remain isolated and self-contained, each in its own shell. Clash and collision, however inevitable in that process, cannot now offer any solution to the present-day problems of humanity. The world has reached a stage in the evolution of humanity, a stage which humanity never experienced before. It is a new condition, a new status in which the problems facing humanity cannot be considered in isolation. They can be solved only by taking the whole world as one single unit. We need a new philosophy of life, a philosophy which must shape itself to suit this new condition of next-door neighbourliness.

The universe is one but its content is multiple; it is a synthesis of multiples. The unity of mankind is never lost but is unseen and unnoticed in the rich diversity of its content. Life is one, but is lived in a bewildering variety of ways. While there is unity in that diversity, we see only conflict, and we lack wisdom to see the necessary harmony inherent in the multiplicity of exist-

ence. Many is a necessary complement to the One, and neither can have any significance without the other. Differences only add richness and beauty to the real content of life which is ever the same inherently. Just as the richness and beauty of the clay-stuff used by the artist lies in its variety of manifestation in unlimited models of shape and colour, even so the richness and beauty of 'life-stuff' consists in its variety of manifestation. The value and appreciation of the content of life can only be seen and recognized in its variety of manifestation in form, colour, and quality. Any arbitrary reduction of physical or mental diversity into unity, of variety into oneness, will only result in drab uniformity and dull monotony, in regimentation, in restraint of individual liberty, and a denial of individual rights. What is needed is not regimentation and ironing out of differences in human life and human existence, but reconciling and harmonizing of all human relationships. What the world needs is a philosophy of tolerance, a philosophy which would harmonize and finally integrate all human diversities on the basis of the underlying unity hidden deep in the soul of man.

Human emotions play a much greater part in human conduct than what is generally recognized. In any country or nation, the level of culture and civilization is the level where human emotions have their sway, however high may be the developments in science, technology, and other branches of learning. Culprits of culture are a much greater menace to humanity than culprits of ignorance; the latter are much easier redeemed. There is always a certain loss of equilibrium and balance when emotions have their play in human individuals, however high-placed they may be in the councils of nations. Suspicion, fear, greed, discontent, sense of humiliation,

and a desire for revenge, all these latently or patently govern the temper and shape the conduct of individuals as well as of nations. It is this emotional content in man, not his ideological content alone, that is mainly responsible for all that is disruptive and chaotic in this world. Often the ideological dice is heavily loaded with the emotional content. World's sickness is thus neither solely political nor solely economic; it is a moral and spiritual sickness, resulting from the misuse and abuse of the emotional content in man. What the modern world needs is a philosophy of life which would elevate and sublimate human emotions and take away all the vestiges of the brute still lurking in the heart of humanity. Man is not civilized because he comes to know a few secrets hidden in the atom. He is civilized because he comes to know more and more of all that is humane and divine that lies hidden in his soul. Prophets and saints have contributed more towards this consummation of human evolution than any organized religion or codified ethics which every country or nation has possessed in some form or other. What the world needs is an honest and increasing application of the truths revealed in the lives of prophets and saints.

Ideology is a thought-form of the means and method of human betterment, and it should be carefully distinguished from 'idols' or patterns or modes of manifestation in actual practice. The evil that any ideology does lies not so much in the ideology as in its perversions. It is the perversions that bring any ideology into disaffection, disrepute, and decay. Perversions in capitalism, perversions in socialism, perversions in communism, and perversions even in democracy, these are the evils of our civilization. Miscarried capitalism, miscarried socialism, and miscarried democracy, these are the great misfortunes of humanity. They are the resultants of misuse and abuse of the emotional content in man. They arise when greed, monopoly, exploita-

tion, and power-politics enter into any ideology and dominate it. Capitalism, socialism, or communism are not ideals, but only methods and means in the evolution of human economy. Capitalism becomes an evil when simple profit motive is replaced by dishonest profiteering, when free competition and free enterprise are replaced by monopoly grab, unholy exploitation, and brute imperialism. Socialism becomes a menace when it degenerates into an indiscriminate State-monopoly, killing all individual enterprise and individual liberty. Communism becomes atrociously wicked when its doctrines are associated with ruthless purge of all opposition, sabotage, and indiscriminate expropriation of all private rights. Democracy becomes a farce and a tyranny when it degenerates into a steam-roller majority and power-politics. Whether one is a capitalist, a socialist, or a democrat, he himself is responsible for all the perversions in his ideology. Power-politics is only another name for political vandalism, and is present more or less in every country whether it is a democratic State, a socialist State, or a communist State.

In this age of 'one world' order just emerging, the concepts of national freedom and sovereignty have lost their old charm and significance in the philosophy of politics. This new order demands a new spirit, a spirit of interdependence, and of international co-operation. Man has many facets to his life on this planet—religious, social, political, and economic—all being equally important. World unity, if it is to endure, must be achieved at all these levels of human life and activity. All are interconnected and interrelated. Religious unity is possible when there is religious equality; social unity is possible when there is social equality; political unity is possible when there is political equality; economic unity is possible when there is economic equality. World unity demands that we must create conditions and provide opportunities for this equality to prevail in all the facets of human life and human existence.

THE POWER OF THOUGHTS AND DEEDS

BY SANAT KUMAR ROY CHAUDHURY

In this short essay we shall discuss the question whether our thoughts and deeds as such are capable of producing currents and forces which may influence others, the lives of men or the future of countries. That our speech creates forces or waves which can be caught and made to reproduce it is proved by the radio. Do other actions of human beings generate any forces or waves? Can they be caught and made to reproduce the acts which had generated them? Have they any force or influence? This is our theme.

Postulating the indestructibility of matter, and the fact that energy is never lost but exists in an altered shape, we can say that as all our acts are instances in which we use up energy they must produce some other kind of energy or force, and theoretically it should not be impossible to collect these forces or waves and make them reproduce our actions as it is in the case of the radio.

We have spoken of our acts. Physiological research establishes that our thoughts can be equated in terms of expenditure of energy and on the hypothesis above given it should be possible to catch the currents or waves generated by our thoughts. With the progress and advance of science it is not difficult to foresee a day when the possibilities hinted at above will be converted into realities. What a disturbance and revolution would such an invention bring into our world! No person and no nation will then be able to have any secrets from each other; everything will be revealed by instruments. Secrets like that of the atom bomb or the super hydrogen bomb, the levying of new armies or fighting forces, procuring armaments, etc. will then be open books to all provided with the necessary recording and reproducing instruments. The plans and even the secret thoughts of leaders of opposite groups and factions or political blocks will be

known to each other, and make war impossible. Even in the field of social life the thoughts and plans of antisocial men, thieves, murderers, and the like being known beforehand will be of no use to them. The world then will be a much better place to live in as there will be no wars and no crimes.

We were speaking of mechanical contrivances above. There is, however, good reason to think that we have within ourselves subtle instruments or senses whereby we can divine the thoughts of others and know what is happening beyond our view. We may instance the cases of thought reading, telepathy, clairvoyance, etc. as proving their existence. In India Yogis possess this power and the Yoga Shastra assures the acquisition of such powers if one faithfully follows its precepts. In fact the powers are there latent in all men. In some they function automatically, in others some training and endeavour is necessary before you get them to function.

The mind of man can be said to be an internal sense-organ without whose help none of the bodily physical sensory organs are able to function. According to Hindu Shastras there are five Jnānendriyas or organs of perception, (the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, and the skin), and five Karmendriyas or organs of action, (the hands, the feet, the mouth, the anus, and the organ of generation). The eleventh organ is the mind, and without its help the others cannot function.

Mind is said to be composed of the Sātvika or sublimated essence of the five gross elements—earth, water, fire, air, and Ākāsha or space. Thus composed, the mind would be an ideal instrument to catch all kinds of currents or subtle disturbances in space and to understand their significance. Even without the help of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, or skin, the mind can see, hear, smell, taste, and feel when pro-

perly trained. Things which are beyond the physical, gross sensory organs would be within the reach of man's mind, properly trained to receive and catch all currents or waves of energy. If thoughts and actions produce currents or waves in space, there is no reason why a subtle instrument like the mind of man cannot be able to catch and interpret them. We need not invoke the 'supernatural'. The phenomenon is a psychic and scientific possibility. The powers developed by Yoga are not 'miraculous' powers, but only the natural result of training and use of the mind of whose functions and powers we have at present a very limited and partial knowledge only.

Energy or force which is not in equilibrium must end by doing some work. Our Hindu theory of creation is that when there was disturbance of equilibrium in the primordial Force (*kṣobha*) the three Gunas or 'moving forces' separated and led to creation, and creation will end in dissolution (*laya*) when equilibrium is re-established. It is the unbalance or difference in forces which has led to action in the shape of creation. When the difference will be bridged and balance restored, there will be no more any force to do work and there will necessarily be an end of all action. Modern science has grasped the Truth to this extent that it says that the sun, which is the fountain of all activity for the earth, is radiating heat but ultimately a time will come when there will be no more to give because all the world will be of the same temperature. That will be the end of the world as we know it.

The progress or decay of human races and of men may be explained by the fact that the currents and waves produced by their thoughts and actions reacted on the minds of themselves and their successors and either helped or hindered them. No child, no race ever begins from the beginning. Man is equipped with the achievements of his forefathers, though this is not always patent to us. Thoughts and actions of previous generations are either a help or a hindrance as appears from the case of skilled artisans or vice-addicts.

Doubts, however, assail us when we find that thoughts and actions are having no influence whatever, e.g. in the case of evil acts of conquerors or victors in war or of oppressors who plunder, molest, and torture weak and unarmed people. The thoughts and prayers of the oppressed for their own deliverance and for the punishment or destruction of the oppressors seem to have very little effect. Possibly we should have to judge taking a long-term view, for it would be contrary to all laws that force currents have no effect. Past history of the world favours the view that oppressors do not have it all their own way for all time and their evil acts recoil on them. The collective and concentrated ill will of the oppressed masses and the forces released by their evil acts will undoubtedly shape a scourge for the destruction of the oppressors sometime or other, though it is little comfort to the oppressed unless they can see the nemesis overtaking their tormentors.

'According to Karma Yoga, the action one has done cannot be destroyed, until it has borne its fruit; no power in nature can stop it from yielding its results. If I do an evil action, I must suffer for it; there is no power in this universe to stop or stay it. Similarly, if I do a good action, there is no power in the universe which can stop its bearing good results. The cause must have its effect; nothing can prevent or restrain this.'

—Swami Vivekananda

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In his lucid and impressive language, Dr. E. A. Pires, Vice-Principal, Central Institute of Education, Delhi, makes a brief but thought-provoking study of *The Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda*. . . .

Writing under the familiar theme *The East and the West*, Prof. L. E. Williams, M.A., B.D., a distinguished educationist, most appropriately reiterates the need for and the importance of a true and lasting world understanding that will enable nations and individuals to transcend artificial barriers,—geographical, political, or racial,—and to unite in a common endeavour for peace and progress. . . .

Sri Sārādāmani Devi or the Holy Mother, the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna, needs no introduction to our readers. Her spiritual ministration inspired, strengthened, and transformed the inner life of every man, woman, and child who came into contact with her. Sri Kumud Bandhu Sen, who had the rare privilege of intimate association with the Holy Mother and many of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, records, for the benefit of interested readers, his valuable *Reminiscences of the Holy Mother*. . . .

In *God in a Godless World*, the learned writer examines some of the arguments that are usually pressed into service by apologists of modern secularism against the need for or existence of God, and refutes them with clear and convincing logic. . . .

Sri S. N. Rao, Bar-at-Law, a new contributor, impressively analyses the world situation with special reference to the *Ideological Perversions* of the modern age, and offers a sound basis for *World Unity*. . . .

Sri Sanat Kumar Roy Chaudhury, M.A., B.L., a former Mayor of Calcutta, writes lucidly, though briefly, on *The Power of Thoughts and Deeds*.

RELIGION AND HUMAN WELFARE

'The state of religion in the contemporary world' formed the subject of an illuminating talk by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, given by him at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, some months ago. In a brief but lucid survey, he unveiled, before a crowded gathering, the true spirit and purpose of religion and observed that unless men transformed their outlook on life and took firm hold of the fundamentals of religion, religion could not be expected to solve the problems facing the world today. Dr. Radhakrishnan said:

'Just as national rivalries had divided the world into sixty-one nations, religious rivalries were sterilizing our efforts to unify man. If we properly understood the fundamentals of religion, as adumbrated in our own philosophy, we would see that true religion was a stabilizing factor, giving us tranquillity in our hearts, enabling us to meet the challenges of the world, lifting us from doubt and despair to certitude and hope—producing the spiritualized man who found himself at home in the world of nature, with others, and himself. To him, the world ceases to be a prison'.

What men all the world over want today is a unifying faith and religion can and does offer the basis for such a faith, provided religion is understood and practised in the only way it ought to be done. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, we want a faith in the fundamentals, 'a religion which does not divide man from man but is interested in promoting human welfare, which teaches man to attain perfection through the pursuit of goodness and the discipline of one's will'.

Adverting to the present declining faith in the spirit of religion, he analysed the reasons for the contemporary unsettlement in religious beliefs and answered the oft-repeated criticism that religion is not scientific.

'It was largely due to the forces of science and humanism—the belief that if religion was wedded to a dogmatic doctrine, it became opposed to the spirit of science, and the fact that religion had

been misconstrued and misinterpreted in a way which did violence to the spirit of humanism.

'Our religion, which followed the same empiric way, was utterly scientific. Nature everywhere craved for adjustment. If its spirit was properly understood, it could face not only the challenges of modern science but modern humanists'.

How can religion regain its pristine place in the life of individuals and nations? Through a positive approach and sincere practice. 'We must be loyal not to ideas about God but to God,' Dr. Radhakrishnan emphasized, 'we must raise religion from the intellectual level to the spiritual level'. But it must be borne in mind that 'outward allegiance and inward disloyalty' would prove disastrous before long. 'If we are dishonest in our faith in religion, the only answer would be atheism'. For, 'it is the tragedy and glory of man that he has the power to rise or fall'. And he warned saying, 'If religion continues in its present form it will fail. It should either transform itself or will fail'.

'The object of religion', Dr. Radhakrishnan

said, 'should be to bring people together, make them love each other, and raise standards of life'. His eloquent and convincing statements made it abundantly clear to everyone, including those who still doubted if religion was 'life and world negating', that man could no more discard religion than he could discard his burning faith in his own destiny and divinity:

'What distinguished man from the rest of creation was the endowment of intellect, the power of reason, which enabled him to think, will, and adjust himself—to aim at harmony and the fulfilment of one's own self. There was an element in man which exceeded the objective—the capacity for self-transcendency. "Man is made in the image of God"; man in essence was a vehicle of the Divine. It was, therefore, imperative that man should not lose faith in the eternal even when he was facing the challenges of the world. When we act in this world, we must act as if we are citizens of two worlds,—the temporal world and the world eternal where man could find fulfilment. It was that spirit and understanding which made the truly integrated man—the man who had realized his destiny and overcome the world'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MAHATMA (LIFE OF M. K. GANDHI) (VOL. II). BY D. G. TENDULKAR. *Distributors: Publications Department, The Times of India Press, Fort, Bombay-1. Pages 532. Price Rs. 25.*

We heartily welcome this superb Second Volume of the contemplated eight-volume monumental biographical work on Mahatma Gandhi, ably undertaken by the learned author. The First Volume of the series was published some months ago and was duly reviewed in these columns in our issue for January 1952. In the First Volume, the biographer covered the first fifty-one years of Gandhiji's illustrious life, from his birth up to the end of the year 1920, depicting the formative period of the Indian national movement and Gandhiji's emergence in the field of the country's politics. Continuing the narration of this remarkable life-story of one of the greatest men the world has seen, the volume under review deals with an eventful period of about a decade (1920-1929), opening with 'the new epoch or what is called the Gandhian era' and ending with

the passing of the memorable resolution on 'complete independence' at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress. Recounting in his lucid and fascinating style, Sri Tendulkar, who deserves unstinted praise for his laudable effort and ability, presents within the pages of this volume such stirring occurrences in the life of Gandhiji as the first great launching of the Satyagraha movement, the powerful exchanges between the two master minds of the time—Gandhi and Tagore, the memorable and historic trial of Gandhiji at Ahmedabad, the epic fast of 1924 which Gandhiji called the 'penance for Hindu-Muslim unity', the 39th session of the Congress at Belgaum with Gandhiji as its president, the years of silent but steady activity dominated by the dynamic personality of Gandhiji, the infusion of the new impulse of 'Purna Swaraj' into the youth of the nation, and the march of events on the political scene leading up to the declaration of 'complete independence' as the ultimate goal by the national organization under the presidentship of Sri Jawaharlal Nehru and

the inspiration of Gandhiji. There are vivid descriptions of Gandhiji's experiments with truth, of the great influence he exerted on men, women, and children of every walk of life, of his valuable views on the scriptures, social reform, and cultural and religious revival. Gandhiji's travels across the length and breadth of the country and his visits to Ceylon and Burma are portrayed with a wealth of factual details, interspersed with illuminating quotations from his numerous speeches and writings. The circumstances in which Gandhiji took to the loin-cloth and the life of utter simplicity in order to identify himself completely with the masses (*daridranārāyaṇa*) of the motherland, and the glorious personal life of discipline and self-control which he led and inspired others with at the Sabarmati Ashrama form some of the very interesting and instructive chapters in this volume.

Illustrations and documents in facsimile, some of them of rare variety, abound in this second volume too. In this and in every other respect this volume fully maintains the high standard of production and get-up, already initiated by the first volume. The rich contents of the first volume and their high quality had made it clear that the learned author is no ordinary, formal biographer. The present volume further confirms it, and amply bears out the hopes raised by the earlier one regarding the author's special qualification and natural gift for presenting the life of such a unique personality as Mahatma Gandhi in a realistic and objectively interesting manner. Apart from its primarily biographical importance, the publication has a documentary value of no less importance, containing as it does much material for the guidance of every national worker and also for the future historian and the politician. A helpful Glossary and an exhaustive Index add to the usefulness of the volume.

The publishers hope to bring out the subsequent volumes at an interval of about ten weeks each. There is no doubt that the English-reading public all over the world will eagerly look forward to them.

THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY. BY F. MAX MÜLLER. Published by Susil Gupta (India), Ltd., 52/9, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta 12. Pages 114. Price Rs. 1-8.

The book consists of the three well-known lectures on Vedanta philosophy delivered by Prof. Max Müller at the Royal Institution in March 1894. The student of Vedanta hardly needs any introduction to Prof. Max Müller who was one of those few pioneer research workers in Indology, and who, for the first time in the West, unearthed the hidden treasures of Indian civilization and made known

the unique culture of the ancient Indian people all over the world. Indians are particularly indebted to him for his impartial and faithful interpretation of Indian thought to the modern Western mind. Not unoften it is seen that Western scholars look at India with a biased mind and foist incorrect meanings on our ancient Sanskrit texts so as to serve their own interests and purposes. Such attempts are mostly directed at showing the supposed inferiority and comparative recency of everything Indian. But Prof. Max Müller was singularly free from any such disposition, for he was not only a sincere well-wisher of India but had strong faith and was himself firmly grounded in Indian philosophy and religion. Paying a warm tribute to the Professor, Swami Vivekananda, who had met him in England, says: 'Max Müller is a Vedantist of Vedantists. He has indeed caught the real soul of the melody of the Vedanta'. He was also a great Sanskrit scholar. As such Prof. Max Müller's knowledge and interpretation of the Vedanta philosophy is sound and can be amply relied upon without hesitation.

In these lectures, Prof. Max Müller presents the lofty Upanishadic philosophy before a highly accomplished gathering. The first lecture is an attempt to trace the origin of Vedanta. The second one systematically deals with the nature of the world, soul, God, Vidyā, Avidyā, etc. The third lecture is a comparative study, giving the similarities and differences between Indian and European philosophy. The author follows mostly Shankara's views in interpreting the Vedanta. He has given lucid and convincing answers to certain charges commonly levelled against Indian philosophy in general and Vedanta in particular. For instance, it is sometimes held that Vedanta is deficient in its being able to supply a solid foundation for morality. Prof. Max Müller meets the objection by saying that Vedanta 'aims at establishing its ethics on the most solid philosophical and religious foundations'. The cultivation of certain rigorous spiritual disciplines (*sādhana-catustaya*) is essential before the study and practice of Vedanta is permitted to be undertaken. Towards the end of the third lecture, Prof. Max Müller has raised a controversial issue, viz., that an individual can and does suffer for the misdeeds of others. He says that some Vedantic teachers (not mentioned) appear to hold this view. Whatever the available evidence to show that such a view has been expressed implicitly or explicitly by any Vedantic teacher, it is well known that such 'collectivism' is foreign to Indian philosophy.

G. P. BHATT

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BANARAS

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Banaras, celebrated its Golden Jubilee from the 6th to the 9th March 1952. The celebrations, which were attended by very large gatherings on all the four days, were a grand success.

An exhibition on health and hygiene, held through the courtesy of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, drew large crowds on all the days. Scenes depicting important events in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and pictorial representations showing the growth and expansion of the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission were exhibited by means of beautiful art drawings and models. On the two sides of the dais were placed artistically decorated portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

The celebrations commenced on the 6th March with a procession led by Swami Vishuddhananda Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The Swami formally inaugurated the celebrations with an illuminating speech, bearing on Sevā-dharma. Other Swamis also spoke, elucidating the ideal of service to suffering humanity. In the afternoon, His Highness Sri Vibhuti Narayan Singh Bahadur, Maharaja of Banaras, presided over a meeting at the commencement of which the Secretary of the Home of Service read out a brief report of the activities of the Home for the past half a century. After the presentation of the Secretary's report, speeches were delivered on the ideals of renunciation and service. After the presidential speech, the Maharaja inaugurated the exhibitions. A film show on health and education and also music ended the day's function.

On the 7th March, Sri Krishna Prasad, Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, Government of India, presided over the meeting held in the evening. Illuminating speeches were delivered by Sri Rohit Mehta, General Secretary, Theosophical Society, Pandit Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Head of the Hindi Department, Banaras Hindu University, and Sri Haridas Bhattacharya, Professor, College of Indology, Banaras Hindu University. The President made an excellent speech drawing a sharp distinction between social service as such and the service rendered by the Ramakrishna Mission which was virtually a form of worship. This unique type of service, according to him, resulted in the spiritual uplift of the giver and the physical and mental well-being of the recipient.

On the 8th March, Dr. K. C. K. E. Rajah, Director of Health Services, Government of India, inaugurated the X-Ray Department of the Home in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering. The Government kindly gave a donation of Rs. 600/- and the proprietors of M. Bhattacharya & Co. of Calcutta gave a generous donation of Rs. 20,000 towards the construction of the X-Ray buildings. Dr. Rajah presided for some time over the day's meeting. As he had to leave Banaras that very evening, Swami Vishuddhananda Maharaj conducted the proceedings of the meeting after his departure. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Head of the Department of Indology, Banaras Hindu University, Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, Professor, Allahabad University, Miss Kartar Kaur Painthal, Headmistress, Central Hindu Girls' School, Banaras and others spoke on India and world peace, service before self, and allied subjects. After the meeting, there was a lantern-lecture on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The day's function ended with music by eminent artistes.

On the 9th March, the last day of the celebrations, Pandit H. N. Kunzru, President, Servants of India Society, was the Chairman of the meeting. Dr. K. K. Bhattacharya, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Allahabad University, Prof. Arabinda Bose, Banaras Hindu University, and Swami Gambhirananda, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, made eloquent speeches on the ideal of service as preached by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, nationalism and Swami Vivekananda, and allied subjects. The Chairman said that the Ramakrishna Mission differed from other institutions in this respect that it was the only organization which while following a unique ideal of service has at the same time produced a band of absolutely selfless workers who have dedicated their lives and everything to the service of suffering humanity. A large number of prizes consisting of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, medals, etc. was distributed to the winners of the essay, recitation, and speech competitions which had been held earlier as part of the Jubilee Celebrations, students, both boys and girls, of the local institutions participating therein. Physical feats were demonstrated by a well-known athlete.

The following four publications were made available to the public as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations: (i) A Golden Jubilee Souvenir; (ii) A Golden Jubilee Memorial Booklet (in English); (iii) A Golden Jubilee Memorial Booklet (in Hindi); (iv) 'Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of Karma Yoga'.