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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

SITA LOST

BY ELISE AYLEN

Like the lost Sitā
My most desolate soul
Weeps alone in the place of its exile.
Alas for Rāvana!
Alas for the golden deer!
Alas for Sitā!
Who knows not
That beyond the barrier of the seas
Her dear Lord,
The Divine One,
Gathers his holy forces
To fight for her sake
Against the strong power of evil.
Not long may they be separate,
Not long may he endure her loss,
But even now
He strives toward her
In battle and turmoil,
Never wearying till he find her,
His own, his lost one.
Alas for weeping Sita!

That she draws her dear Lord
To endure so many sorrows,
And all for her.
Alas for the golden deer
That drew her from him!
Now powerless she sits weeping,
Nor all her strong sorrow
Shall avail her
But he alone,
Her dear Lord,
Shall save her,
In power and tenderness
Never forsaking,
Never wearying of his long task
Till the lost one is found
And sinks again to rest
Upon his bosom,
In peace for ever.
Alas for Ravana!
He who waits with cunning
To snare the seeking soul

Alas for the golden deer!
 That shone with brightness,
 Its swift feet glimmering through the woodland.
 Alas for my soul in its exile!
 But the Lord,
 The Divine One,
 He will not leave me desolate,
 Alone in my sorrow,
 But through the world's darkness
 He seeks me out,
 Never wearying,

In the power of his love and compassion.
 Behold my Lord, my Redeemer,
 He comes to claim me,
 To seek his own
 That was lost.
 Weep no more, O my soul,
 But greatly rejoice;
 Forsake thy mourning
 And rejoice for ever,
 For behold
 Thy Redeemer cometh.

THE PATH OF DEVOTION

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Constant remembrance of God will keep the mind pure. Well, is it any wonder? That 'our wishes are also God's' cannot be clearly felt while one is in the state of ignorance. God is *satya-saṅkalpa* and whatever He wills comes out true, but the wishes of men often turn out to be false. For this reason one cannot say that the wishes of men and the will of God are the same. The truth of everything is felt spontaneously if the intellect is purified by the grace of the Lord.

The supreme benefit of holy company is that it turns the mind from evil ways to the path that leads to the Highest Good. He indeed is a real Sādhu in whose company God-consciousness is awakened. This is an excellent way of making out who is a good Sādhu. Hence Tulasidas says, 'Associate with holy men, it cures others' diseases. But there will be always trouble from the company of the evil'.

Whatever the Lord wills is fulfilled. There is no doubt that whatever the Lord, who is All Good, does is good—whether we are able to understand it or not. Of course there will be boundless joy if only this is understood. When the Sāttvika intelligence dawns, it never allows bad feelings to enter the heart. Good or bad—whatever may happen, the Sāttvika

intelligence sees nothing but good. Such an attitude develops only due to the extraordinary mercy of God, and if it be perfectly mastered all misery vanishes. Wonderful is the grace of the Lord!

The more one talks about and thinks of God and finds joy in this the better. In this world the only Reality is He—the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) has repeatedly given this counsel. A (Bengali) poet has said, 'The happiness we imagine or the suffering we apprehend are never so much when they become actual. But the human mind is always restless in anticipation'. This is only too true. We make ourselves restless by worrying over things unnecessarily; otherwise everything becomes endurable.

The Master used to say that like the water which flows under a bridge, entering on one side and going out of the other, those whose money is spent in a good cause never become bound; though they constantly handle money, they live like the liberated souls. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) also used to say that impurities can't touch those whose money is spent on humanitarian work just as the air inside a room can't get polluted if the door is kept open.

In whatever condition He may choose to keep one, that is the best. If He allows the mind to remain steady in the contemplation of His lotus feet, then, whatever the state one may be in, nothing matters. We have heard the Master say, even in the midst of severe illness, 'Let the suffering and the body take care of themselves, but O mind, be you (always) happy'. If the mind be happy, that is to say, be in God, what does it matter if the body suffers from pain and misery—what can they do? It is the suffering of the mind which is terrible and unbearable. If the Lord graciously keeps that mind attached to His lotus feet, no suffering whatever can appear to be so.

Surdas has said, 'Selling milk and meeting the Lord—both will be done on the same way'. The Gopis used to go out of their houses on the pretext of selling milk in order to join the company of Krishna. So both the purposes were accomplished on the same road. What a beautiful idea! Doing everything for His sake. He before everything, the rest afterwards. There is no other in-

stance of unswerving devotion to Him like that of the Gopis. The more the mind becomes purified, the more this attitude is understood. If there be His grace, there will be no want of anything else.

The thing is, one should devote oneself entirely to Him, whether it be at home or in the forest. Retiring to the forest (renunciation) has no meaning if He is not found. And if you devote your mind to Him, never mind where you stay, there is no fear. He must be found—He alone is to be remembered while rising, sitting, eating, or lying down. Everything will be set right by His grace.

One who is devoted to Him has no cause for fear or anxiety. This is what the Lord says to Arjuna in the *Gita*: 'O son of Kunti, know well and assure all that one who is devoted to Me never perishes'. Pure devotion is rare even among the gods! Can that pure devotion which holds the Lord be easily found? Ramprasad has said, 'Devotion is the root of all; liberation is her handmaid'. In fact, nothing remains to be had when love for the Lord awakens.

THE PERENNIAL SOURCE OF STRENGTH INVINCIBLE

BY THE EDITOR

*Attā hi attano nātho ko hi nātho paro siyā?
Attanā hi sudantena nātham labhati dullabham.*

'Self is the Lord of self; what higher Lord could there be? When a man subdues well his self, he will have obtained that Lord that is difficult to obtain'.

—*Dhammapada*, 160

Strength and power,—physical, moral, and spiritual—, have ever fascinated man from the beginning of time. Human sentiment has always admired and honoured persons cast in the heroic mould. Men have never failed to be hero-worshippers in the compelling presence of those who manifest even a small part of

that strength which is considered superhuman and which sheds rare lustre upon the whole of mankind. The pages of history reveal shining examples of men, who, in their early years seemed no better than the ordinary, but later developed and exhibited invincible prowess. They were such whom no fears could terrify,

no obstacles could deter, and who astounded the world by their unparalleled strength of body and mind. Not a few of them waded through blood to the goal of their desires, inflicting untold suffering on thousands in the wake of the fulfilment of their own evil designs. To those who measure strength by purely physical standards there could be no better means of assuring themselves of their invincibility than by the extent of dominance they can wield or the amount of violence they can spread. Such grossly bestial strength could be admired and appreciated only by those who are themselves slaves to their unrestrained passions and who, in their turn, wish to enslave others and keep them down by the whip.

Apart from these men of great though violent deeds, history records the doings of the spiritual teachers and the social and moral leaders of humanity who doubtless belong to a far higher order of perfection and who have manifested that 'strength invincible' which outshines the valour of the greatest conqueror the world has seen. Without relying on the mere physical strength of muscles or power of armaments, the spiritual heroes in every land exerted immense influence on and held unlimited suzerainty over millions not confined to one country or nationality. They strove for and successfully brought about the much-needed unity among men of various races and creeds not through militant subjugation but through transmutation of their hearts and minds. Their spiritual empire transcended all geographical and national boundaries and embraced the whole of mankind. They have repeatedly urged in their teachings that the perennial source of all strength is the Spirit or Self of man and that this strength is peerless and invincible. They have called upon men not to set store by the superficial strength that is dependent entirely on matter but to invoke and rely on the inner strength of the Spirit (*ātma-bala*) born out of the vision of the Supreme Reality. Shankaracharya says that he who, renouncing all activities, worships in the sacred and stainless shrine of the Ātman,

which is independent of time, place, and distance, which is omnipresent and the bestower of eternal strength, becomes omnipotent and immortal.

It is a great fact of life that strength is indispensable. The joys and beauties of life are obtained by the strong. The weak are more dead than alive. 'Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once'. Strength ennobles man and affords zest and felicity to life. Weakness and fear lead to constant misery and moral and spiritual degradation. No true spiritual giant ever taught the religion of fear. On the other hand, the great scriptures of the world, especially of the Hindus, have always insisted on the need for irresistible moral courage and spiritual strength in the individual's adventurous journey through his vicissitudinous life. 'Strength is goodness, weakness is sin', says Swami Vivekananda, 'If there is one word that you find coming out like a bomb from the Upanishads, bursting like a bomb-shell upon masses of ignorance, it is the word "fearlessness"'. And the only religion that ought to be taught is the religion of fearlessness'. Thus the Upanishads, which contain the Knowledge of the Self—the one source of everything that exists in the universe, proclaim the message of strength and bliss that know no diminution, a message that is as much needed today as it was when first proclaimed. One of the Upanishads clearly states that the Ātman cannot be attained by one who is devoid of strength. Further, we read in the Upanishads: 'That Brahman is a great terror, like a poised thunderbolt. Those who know It become immortal. From terror of Brahman, fire burns; from terror of It, the sun shines; from terror of It, Indra and Vāyu, and Death, the fifth, run'. Thus the Upanishadic thinkers realized that the whole universe vibrates with life, strength, and power because it is a projection of Brahman which is the perennial source of all these.

One of man's chief answers to the challenge of Nature is his resolute striving after perfection by conquest of the limitations

that Nature endlessly confronts man with. Not a day passes without some fresh act of aggression on the part of progressive man in his determined war on Nature and its inexorable laws. The ravages of Nature's relentless processes are a constant reminder to man that he has to develop enough strength and power to be able to withstand them and to reach greater heights in spite of them. Even the crawling worm seems to be conscious of the evolutionary dictum that it has to struggle ceaselessly in life in order to be fit to survive. None today would for a moment think of meekly submitting to the threat of physical force without doing one's utmost to counter the threat by retaliatory action. Nations and individuals are feverishly active in increasing the stock and striking power of their armaments, with the professed intention of gathering sufficient military might that may deter the prospective aggressor. The appeal to physical force has given a fillip to acts of violence in every conceivable form. Absolute reliance on the strength of death-dealing weapons and mechanized armies, has encouraged the folly of increased acquiescence in the inhumanity of man. The haunting fear of ultimate doom, which scientists more than theologians have given rise to, is driving men to reckless pursuits. Might has become the main factor that determines the rights of man everywhere. Could anybody deny that the earth is mad with the intoxication of egotistic power and the thirst of self-seeking that knows no end?

If strength is equated with the aggressive instinct and the will to power, there could possibly be no reasonable solution to the stupid but serious crisis that civilization faces today. While the efforts of right-thinking leaders for the solidification of mankind and the dismantlement of meaningless barriers that divide man from man have been rather slow in bearing fruit, many a designing and selfish seeker of temporal power has not been slow in taking advantage of the appalling human situation all round. Over and above the spiritual bankruptcy that is patent to

every lover of humanity, the lack of control and direction over the tameless passions and prejudices has further aggravated the malady that has afflicted the soul of man. Men have succumbed to the temptation of placing their trust in ephemeral secular and materialistic values. As a human being, rather, a human representation of the Divine, man has lost the awareness of his higher nature rooted in spirituality. Consequently the debasing lure of insolent strength entices man notwithstanding the fact that he is not unaware of the conflicts and tensions which such strength engenders and which are consistently gnawing at the heart.

The doctrine of the sword has blinded many a fanatic and dictator. There is no gainsaying the fact that the need for a certain minimum of physical force may be imperative and not unjust on particular occasions and in specific cases. But to use physical force for gaining selfish ends or to carry it recklessly to extremes is egregious folly. Violence is the law of the brute, which knows no other norm but that of physical might. More often than not even man is seen to behave like an animal, if not worse. Employing more or less external means, natural and mechanical, man seeks to gain mastery over Nature and over his fellow men. In most cases he seeks such power in order to attain some ulterior objective, not always commendable. The *Bhagavad Gita* describes how men of demoniac, unregenerate nature, possessed of egotism, power, and pride and filled with the intoxication of lust and wealth, indulge in wicked deeds. Their self-glorification, which is no less reprehensible, is after this wise: 'This I have gained today, and that longing I will fulfil. This wealth is mine, and that also shall be mine in future. That enemy have I slain, and others too I will slay. I am the Lord of all; I enjoy; I am prosperous, mighty, and happy. I am rich; I am of high birth. Who else is equal to me? . . . I will rejoice'.

But sooner or later they are disillusioned and disappointed, and finally destroyed by the reactionary forces they themselves have

served to generate and set in motion. Persons with whom sensual pleasures are the sole ultimate good and to whom power under whatever name and by whatever means is the aim of life could hardly be expected to bring to mankind that supreme peace, love, and brotherhood which the great religions unmistakably promise to man. The progress and well-being of humanity would never be safe in the hands of these chartered libertines who gamble with innocent lives in the name of national solidarity and strength and who think nothing of bringing death and destruction to unnumbered millions to satisfy their selfish ends. The world suffers more from weakness, fear, and selfishness than from their opposites. All power, unless chastened by ideals and norms that have their spiritual content intact, is likely to corrupt and make man the next-door neighbour to brutes. Without self-control, which is the core of all religious discipline, there can be no real strength. Everything dependent on an external source for strength is fraught with fear—with constant fear that another external and hostile source of superior strength may overpower it. Renunciation (*vairāgya*), true and complete, alone assures man of strength invincible, born of absolute fearlessness (*abhaya*) under all circumstances. The Upanishads declare: 'He who sees *this* (the Self) does not see death or illness or pain. He who sees *this* sees everything and obtains everything everywhere'. 'He who knows the bliss of that Brahman, from whence all speech, with the mind, turns away, unable to reach It, *fears nothing*'. The Knowledge of the Self liberates man from desire, fear, and all weakness.

What the world wants are character and the adamant strength based on such character. The world is in need of dauntless heroes who are free from any trace of selfishness and whose life is completely dedicated to the welfare of the whole of humanity. Selfless love and sincere fellow-feeling are sources of great strength. They give the individual infinite courage and confidence in dealing with the problems of the community

and make every word of his tell like a thunderbolt. The religious history of man bears ample testimony to the fact that one who renounces the lower, limited self gains universal power and irresistible strength by unfolding and manifesting the vital spiritual forces that form the bed-rock of human personality. Self-restraint is a manifestation of greater power than all outgoing action. It is seen that when a carriage drawn by horses rushes down a hill unrestrained, the great speed and momentum gathered by it may well-nigh bring disaster to the occupants. But if the horses are restrained and held in proper check, that is certainly a greater and more commendable manifestation of power beneficial to all concerned. All outgoing energy, unregulated and improperly let loose, is of no consequence either to those who possessed it or to those whom it was meant to benefit. Instead, such thoughtless frittering away of power can produce disastrous effects on society.

The source of all strength lies within man, in the Atman. Every soul is divine and is heir to the Strength of all strength. What strength can be greater than to realize that man is non-different from the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute which is the core of all forms of strength one comes across in the world. The power of even the greatest warrior is liable to decline and disappear, and the fear of enemies does not leave him, however strong he may be. On the other hand, the strength born of Self-realization is undiminished and unassailable. It is said that once Alexander the Great came across an Indian monk and having been impressed by the monk's profound wisdom, asked him to go with him to his country. 'No', said the monk, non-chalantly. The Emperor said, 'I will give you money, position, and wealth. I am the Emperor of the world'. 'No', replied the monk, 'I do not care for those things'. Annoyed at this, the Emperor threatened the monk, saying, 'If you do not go I will kill you'. The monk smiled serenely and said, 'That is the most foolish thing you

ever said, Emperor. You cannot kill me. Me the sun cannot dry, fire cannot burn, sword cannot kill, for I am the birthless, the deathless, the ever living, omnipotent and omnipresent Spirit'. Such is the daring of spiritual conviction; such is the strength of a man who has realized God.

Often is it claimed that if the materialistic conception of strength and the mundane idea of progress are not accepted as such, secular ambition and activity are thwarted. This is very far indeed from the actual truth. Those who honestly believe that the conflicts of power in modern culture are inevitable and so act according to this belief can never help politics turning into power-politics and strength degenerating into brute force. The humanist affirmation of the joys and beauties of life, while ensuring for man pleasures and articles of comfort, does not guarantee the mental peace and poise that is indispensable to healthy living, nor does it provide against the none too uncommon retrogression of man. The dignity of man requires obedience to the higher call of the Divine inherent in him and this perforce demands allegiance to the strength of the Spirit. This strength, backed by the inward spiritual force needed to realize it, makes its possessor immortal and earns for him the loyalty and admiration of countless human beings who do not fear him in the least, but greatly love and respect him. The influence exerted on their numerous votaries by Krishna, Buddha, and Christ is deeper and more extensive, though less dazzling to moderners, than that exerted on their small number of followers by Alexander and Caesar. The spiritual power of the former has left indelible impressions on the lives of millions who still adore them as God incarnate. The temporal and transient power of the latter captivated but for a time the gaze of only the men of their age, and even their great personalities have vanished from popular memory and lie buried under the debris of history.

As man advances more and more in his understanding of Nature, the general tendency of the age is to discover the one original source

of energy out of which have come forth all the various forms and degrees of energy known to man. Man's gradual advance from the periphery to the central core of existence cannot but be marked by experiences that apparently reveal differing facets of the one Self. Invincible strength can be had only by discovering its perennial source which is one's own true Self, one's eternal state of Consciousness. All weakness and fear arise from the erroneous identification of the Self with the mere body and the senses. By repeatedly thinking oneself finite and limited, one becomes confirmed in the view that everyone is separate from the rest and that physical force which can control the workings of the body is the greatest strength man should acquire. Ignorance of one's own divinity and omnipotence is the root cause of man's utter helplessness and his dependence on the flimsy security that wealth and armaments afford him.

Gautama Buddha, one of the greatest teachers of the world, who always emphasized the supreme consequence of self-reliance and spiritual strength, unambiguously proclaimed, 'Wherefore, Ananda, do ye abide islands unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves: taking refuge in none other: islanded by the Norm, taking refuge in the Norm, seeking refuge in none other'. Describing the glories of His divine manifestations in the *Gita*, Krishna concludes: 'There is no end of My divine manifestations. . . . Whatever glorious or beautiful or mighty being exists anywhere, know that it has sprung from but a spark of My splendour. . . . With a single fragment of Myself I stand supporting the whole universe'. It is this unity of the Godhead that pervades all relative existence. The person who seeks to enter this storehouse of infinite power is the great hero (*dhīra*), and once having entered it he finds that he has gained that Strength by which everything else is controlled and actuated.

Restraint and discipline have always been the norm of human conduct. Man was never

expected to exhibit the ferocious strength and courage of a tiger, though often enough men have shown themselves capable of facing the most painful suffering and even death with perfect equanimity. Through the veritable eternities of time and in every land individuals and also groups have possessed remarkable courage of conviction and have boldly sacrificed the lower values for the higher ones. In order to make life on this revolving earth worth while, man has to constantly discriminate and renounce the lower manifestations of power for the attainment of the higher manifestations, and later renounce these also for attaining the highest transcendental Power. Spiritual values, which include and transcend moral and material values, stand at the apex of the pyramid of human aspirations. The mainspring of the strength of every race lies in its spirituality, and the race begins to

decline in vitality the day that spirituality wanes and secularism and materialism gain ground.

The great central truth in every religion is to evolve a God out of man. As Swami Vivekananda has said, 'What the world wants today is twenty men and women who can dare to stand in the street yonder and say that they possess nothing but God. Who will go? Why should one fear? If this is true what else could matter? *If it is not true what do our lives matter?*' Spiritual strength born out of Self-knowledge, is the one thing that can destroy all weakness and fear *for ever*. So, that strength which tends to make us spiritually sound and whole is the highest; next to it comes moral strength and after that comes intellectual strength; and then comes physical strength, which, as we all know is the least dependable.

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

Swami Vivekananda belongs to the class of great seers of Truth. His intellect was great, but greater still was his heart. He once told his disciples at the Belur Math that if a conflict were to arise between the intellect and the heart they should reject the intellect and follow the heart. Many a Mahatma has appeared in this land, and some of them understood that to meditate on the soul in the caves of the Himalayas was the correct path to follow. Swami Vivekananda's mind also was influenced by this tradition and there arose a conflict in him early in his career; his intellect advocating the traditional absorption in Self-realization and his heart bleeding for the miseries of the people around him. In the end he came to the conclusion that leaving the solitude he would enter into the soul of every being and worship his God by serving them.

And what attracts the poor and lowly to him is this compassionate heart which ever bled for them and exhausted itself in their incessant service in thirty-nine brief years. It was in the anguish of that heart that he cried out, in his memorable message at Madras, in 1897:

'Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it made you almost mad?'

It was this measureless feeling for the spiritual and material poverty and misery of his

fellow men, particularly of his fellow countrymen, that drove him round the world like a tornado of moral energy and gave him no rest till the end. His life's campaigns in the East and the West, including the founding of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, were in response to this feeling. His life was all purity and love; his coming to and going from this world was quick, sudden. But in the short period of thirty-nine years he accomplished so much by way of stirring up and infusing new life and new hope into the people that in the history of our great country we do not find a second to stand equal to him in this except perhaps the great Shankaracharya.

Today we are building a new India, in our own way. It is now that we need Swamiji's power and presence. Of course Swamiji is not physically with us; but his words are there; his teachings are there. They are before us. In our country there is ignorance; there is poverty. Swamiji gave us a *mantra* in keeping with the cultural and spiritual heritage of our nation. He cut a new path, a new *dharma*, a religion of tolerance, universal brotherhood, and equality of mankind. We have experienced various revolutions in our country; but we have always preserved the soul of our culture in the midst of those cataclysmic changes. We cannot go forward, we cannot be a progressive nation by forsaking that soul of our civilization and culture. It may be that a gifted few can walk in the right path all alone, but for the rest it is necessary that they draw their inspiration from our ancient culture. Swamiji tried to do this. There were many weakening influences in our country during Swamiji's time. He wanted these to be removed and replaced by the national dynamic culture. His message was therefore to make ourselves nurtured and nourished by this culture which would lead the nation to power and strength.

We want to build the nation. How shall we do it is the problem. It is my conviction that we cannot progress unless and until there comes about a Dharmic regeneration in our country; we need the ministrations of a

dharma which accepts every other *dharma*, and this Vivekananda gave us in the great Vedanta. No doubt, Vedanta is not new to our country. But we had no means to find access to it; we could not make use of it; we could not practise it. We need the love and practicality of Buddha and the philosophy of Vedanta. In one of his Madras lectures, Swamiji said that he would give a message which would be useful not only to his own nation but also to the nations outside. To make his teachings effective and to make them spread among the people, just as Buddha started his organization of monks, so also Swamiji brought into existence the great Ramakrishna Mission. It is a matter of pride, it is a matter of joy, that his aims and objects are being realized and his vision is being fulfilled through the work of the centres of the Mission through all of which the Vedanta reaches to the people in various forms to help the poor, to educate the ignorant, and to lift up the depressed.

The greatest problem in our country is its divergent sects, its divergent castes and creeds. Can we compose these differences? Can we go forward and gather strength? Vivekananda strongly criticized caste distinctions. He said this was the cause for much of our social weakness. Social unity was broken long ago, causing a tragedy of a thousand years! Swamiji spoke scathingly about the prevailing conceptions of religion—of religion entering the kitchen and the cooking-pots, of the religion of 'don't-touchism'. He declared unequivocally that so long as we are caught in this '*dharma*', we shall remain far from the *real dharma* which preaches human unity. People should unite; but there is everything to keep us disunited. A Brahmin is engaged in Brahnavidyā. And if his son takes to business or any other activity, he is still reckoned as a Brahmin just because he is born of a Brahmin.

If we want to progress, we should understand the truth of *dharma* and follow it up. Quality should be the criterion of greatness or Brahminhood and not mere birth.

The aim of our *dharma* is that even a *mleccha* can be led up to the highest. Based on this fundamental idea of Vedanta, Swamiji discouraged the 'kitchen religion' and proclaimed that there is no difference between man and man. The difference seen is only in manifestation and not in the potential divinity. All could be brought up to the highest, all could become the greatest. Our weakness, our ignorance, can be driven away with this tonic. Can we build a society, a civilization on this great ideal of Vedanta? I believe that we shall succeed if we try earnestly. If this ideal is broadcast in our country, Which Hindu will refuse to accept it? Which foreigner will fail to respond to this call to his own innate divinity? We should realize that our differences, cultural, social, and political, resulting from this caste and other distinctions, can be composed only by this Vedantic teaching of Swami Vivekananda. By the same teaching we can solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. The question of poverty can be dealt with on the same footing. When our dream is to build a happy society, there should not be a few rich and many poor. Swamiji sought a solution for this economic inequality also fifty years ago. In one of his epistles he writes: 'I am a socialist'. The unity and equality he found in Brahmiavidya he wanted to establish in the field of national economy and in the field of society. Today the Rajas, Zamindars, and the rich look down upon the labouring class. This is the opposite of what Swamiji taught. He said, 'They are one with you. The same divinity shines through them and you'. What unity of existence he saw in Advaita Vedanta, what equality he experienced in the human personality, the same he wanted to bring into the fields of economics and society too. He

saw the hungry and the naked about him; and he felt that until they were fed and clothed no *dharma* could be preached to them; without the welfare of the masses no *dharma* could be firmly established. So today our hearts bow to Swamiji. I am a student of Swamiji. I am not worthy to talk about him. But this is what I see in him, what I learn from him. He went beyond and wanted to take us also beyond. He sees our weakness not with the eye of contempt, but with that of compassion, with a passion to serve, with a feeling of agony at our fallen condition. In that same epistle he writes about his advocacy of socialism not as a perfect foolproof system but that 'half a loaf is better than none'.

I consider Swami Vivekananda a leader in every respect,—in religion, culture, economics, sociology—, all of which ought to be established on the bed-rock of Vedanta, our ancient rational philosophy. If we fail to remember this and to build our nation on the foundations of our historic legacy, then India will not remain India. We shall, through the help of the Ramakrishna Mission and by our own efforts, inspired by the Message of the great Swamiji, have to try earnestly to realize a fuller and a richer life for ourselves individually and for the vast mass of our countrymen. Our progress does not stop with our own realization, but must flow into a struggle to bring the fullness of freedom to others. All of us should understand this aspect of Swami Vivekananda's teachings, and should not exclude from the purview of religion the consideration and solution of the pressing problems of our village, of our country, and of our brothers and sisters. A solution for these can be successfully achieved if we live and act up to the Message of Swami Vivekananda.

'It is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teaching on the great Vedantic truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the Soul of the Universe.'

—Swami Vivekananda

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA

BY DR. RADHA GOVINDA BASAK

We are indeed passing, all over the world, through most troublous and fearful times when our very culture and civilization seem to be at stake. A most devastating world war has only formally been over just seven years ago. Its all-devouring nature has, as it were, engulfed all the moral force that was prevalent on earth before its commencement. We are facing a moral crisis and eagerly expecting a new stream of moral force to flow not only in our social life but also in our political and spiritual. The leaders of thought in the modern world are anxious to see the end of the play of passion, anger, hatred, violence, malice, hostility, distrust, and suspicion which divide the nations in different countries, and they pray for the reappearance of peace, love, friendship, and service among human societies. We often feel shuddered to hear of the 'cold' war that is in progress and live in utter fear lest a major conflict in the shape of a more horrible third 'hot' war should break out for the annihilation of the human race. Only the observance of right and good, and suppression of wrong and evil, can help us in achieving a peaceful and tranquil life in society and for this we need cultivate amity, friendship, compassion, love, devotion, service to fellow men, and such other higher human sentiments and qualities, which have been so eloquently spoken of in Buddhism.

Gautama Buddha was Universal Love and Perfect Wisdom personified. His was a dynamic personality. His reason in analysing all human venture in search for the ultimate Truth and his skill of wisdom in understanding the workings of human mind were unique. A discussion, though short, of the life and teachings of such a great person—a veritable *avatara* or a prophet, as we say—may bring about a sense of solace to

our distressed mind. I have intentionally avoided raising here the complicated questions of Buddhist philosophy, for, I feel that whatever truths the great teachers preached in a simple way before the people of their own times for the uplift of their moral and spiritual life and for the achievement of their ultimate salvation, were often interpreted, after their demise, by their immediate disciples and their later line of successors, by reading into them many a philosophical trend of thoughts and they thus brought about complexities of thought which kept away from human vision the general and simple teachings which are quite potent in themselves to create tranquillity and peace, and to make it easy for humanity to taste the happiness of emancipation or *nirvāṇa*.

The invocation of the Buddha as is found in the *Lalita Vistara* written in the *gāthā* language, in the famous verse, runs as follows:

*Cināture jivaloke kleśavyādhiprapīḍite,
Vaidyarāt tvam samutpannah sarva-
vyādhipramocakah.*

'(O Buddha!) the human world has long been sick and it has suffered from the disease of passions and torments,—but you have appeared (on earth) as the supreme physician to heal all these diseases'.

We intend here to discuss the mode of treatment which this great physician—the son of Shuddhodana and Māyādevi, Gautama Buddha, born about 2514-15 years ago in the Lumbini village of Kapilavastu in the noble and kingly Shākyan country—successfully adopted to cure the ills of the people of his times and make them free from the various shackles of their earthly life. The Brahminic Upanishads held the view that only those persons who are fortunately guided by great teachers can know the truth or the ultimate

Reality (*ācāryavān puruṣo veda*); and the Buddha was one such teacher, who, with his searching mental eye, discovered a system of spiritual training, and preached the same for people's knowledge and for the good and welfare of humanity at large.

A brief reference to Buddha's contemporaneous religious sects in India will not be out of place here as it may help us to understand the particular spiritual atmosphere in which the Buddha found himself enveloped. Generally speaking, the chief religious and philosophical system that prevailed in pre-Buddhistic age was that of the Upanishads. In that system emphasis was laid more on knowledge (*jñāna*) than on works (*karma*). In Buddha's time also the influence of priesthood and Vedic ritualistic institutions (*karma-kānda*) did not fully cease to work on the people's mind, though the first impact on them by the Upanishads commenced to be felt somewhat earlier. This impact, however, began to be asserted on the people's mind when the Buddha preached his first sermon (*dharmacakra pravartana*) at Sarnath after his attainment of perfect knowledge (*sambodhi*) at his thirty-fifth year. But in this hostility against the Brahmanic cult of ritualistic Karma, the Ājivaka, the Jaina, and the Lokāyata schools of Buddha's time also joined their hands to some extent. The founder of the Ājivaka sect, which believed in the doctrine of *niyati* (predestination or fate)—according to which all phenomena, physical or mental, are unalterably fixed and which cherished no faith in *puruṣakāra* (human efforts or exertions) was Goshāla Mankhaliputra. The founder of the Jaina sect which accepted harmlessness or abstinence from giving pain to others in thought, word, or deed, as its chief tenet, was the great ascetic Mahāvira, the Nirgranthanāthaputra. The third chief leader of philosophical thought of Buddha's time was Keshakambalin, a materialist and unbeliever in soul or God, and probably inclined to the tenets of the Lokayatas who had not even a scanty leaning towards the Vedic lores and indulged in the common view 'Eat, drink, and be merry'.

There were three other prominent names of religious leaders of Buddha's time. A Brahmin preacher of the name of Sanjaya was the teacher of the two most famous and devoted disciples of Buddha, viz. Sāriputra and Maudgalāyana, before their ordination to Buddhism. This Sanjaya was rather a sceptic and he cherished doubt in the solution of the philosophical problems, e.g. whether the world is permanent or impermanent, whether there is continuity of life or self after a man's death, whether the world has its beginning or it is beginningless, etc. He was ever against supporting the arguments (assumed as false by him) in the so-called decision regarding these enigmatic problems. The name of the second Brahminic leader was Purna-Kāshyapa and this name Purna was justified because of his claim to all-knowingness. He conquered the feeling of shame and so always remained nude. The third teacher's name was Kakuda-Kātyāyana. This contemporary of Buddha believed that the origination, preservation, and dissolution of the universe depended on the four (not the usual five) elements—earth, water, fire, and air, and on the other three things, viz. pleasure, pain, and the individual self, i.e. altogether on these seven principles. To Gautama Buddha, all the various sectarian tenets and doctrines referred to above, appeared quite unsatisfactory and also unappealing to his own mind.

Here a brief reference may be made to some of the special features in the life's events of the Buddha and the doctrines of the *saddharma* (Buddhism) as propounded, preached, and taught by him. It should be remembered that to be a believer in this Dharma of Buddha one need not be a Brahmin, or a high or a rich person alone. In the matter of religious observances and performances there can be no distinction between a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin, high or low, rich or poor. Two *gāthās* of the *Dhammapada* (Brāhmaṇa-varga, II-12) bear recital in this connection:

*Na jaṭāṇi na gottena na jaccā hoti
brāhmaṇo,*

*Yamhi saccañca dhammo ca so suci so ca
brāhmaṇo.*

*Kim te jaṭāhi dummedha kim te ajina-
sātiyā ?*

*Abbhantaram te gahaṇām bāhīram pari-
majjasi.*

'A man cannot be a Brahmin by his platted hair, by his family, or by his birth (alone). He is (regarded as) pure and he is a Brahmin, in whom reside truth and righteousness. O fool! of what use is thy platted hair and what does thy garment of a black antelope's skin avail? Thy interior (mind) is an abyss (of impurities), but thou cleanse thy exterior (outer form) only'.

However, after the birth of Gautama, the Rishis headed by Asita and other Brahminic astrologers prophesied to his father Shuddhodana that his newly-born son may in future become a supreme sovereign or a Buddha (i.e. the Enlightened One) and in the latter event he may have to renounce the world and become homeless (*anagārikā*). As the boy was growing into age, his father's determination to guard against this last eventuality (of his son's renunciation by becoming a mendicant or monk, a *śramaṇa*) began to grow also. So he arranged to keep the son attached to worldly pleasures and strove his utmost to ward off all sights from his son's eyes, that might cause mental disgust and despondency, rather self-disparagement. The father gave his son in marriage with an exquisitely beautiful royal princess, Yashodharā by name, at the commencement of his youth and Gautama begot a son who was named Rāhula.

Renunciation came to Gautama in the same manner as it does to all supermen and Avatāras (incarnations). When, in his twenty-ninth year, the young Gautama could not bear the poignant pain arising from the three kinds of human miseries—those which come from the self (*ādhyātmika*), those from the gods (*ādhidāivika*), and those from the elements (*ādhibhautika*), he renounced the world in search of that agency or way by which human sufferings can be put an end to

and for the attainment of eternal bliss. He thought that it was not possible for any one to lead a completely pure or holy life by residing at home. He, therefore, made his determination stronger to adopt the life of a mendicant by leaving his home and thus pave the way to extirpate all worldly miseries by resorting to meditation and contemplation, easy to be attained in lonely forest-life. Father Shuddhodana, on hearing of his son's resolve, felt thunder-struck, and he hurried to send a request to Gautama through his ministers to defer renunciation at least during his (father's) lifetime. There came the son's reply that he would accede to this request of his father and postpone his renunciation if he (the father) could stand surety for four things. These four things have been mentioned in a famous *gāthā*-verse in the *Mahāvastu-Avadāna* which reads thus:

*Yauvane vartamānasmim jarā me mā
khu āgame,*

*Ārogye vartamānasmim vyādhi me mā
khu āgame.*

*Jivite vartamānasmim maraṇam me mā
khu āgame,*

*Sampattisu ramiyāsu vipatti me mā khn
āgame.*

i.e. Gautama wanted assurance from his father that no decrepitude or old age will attack him, but perpetual youth will prevail instead; that no disease will befall him, but permanent good health will remain; that no death will occur to him, but this life will continuously proceed; and that no adversity will disturb him, but pleasure-giving prosperity will flow on. His father's natural reply was that no man was immune from the assaults of decrepitude, disease, death, and adversity in life. So stiffer became Gautama's final resolve to strive for the attainment of that object (*nirvāna*) which is permanent, blissful, and holy. The father, on the other hand, surrounded him with all sorts of worldly pleasures such as dancing and music performed by beautiful damsels brought into the palace. But the son began to find fault with these scenes which appeared loathsome to his mind.

Meanwhile the three visions of an old man, a sick man, and a dead man touched his heart very sorrowfully, but the fourth vision of a serene and tranquil-minded holy ascetic (*śramaṇa*) clad in his yellow garment, impressed him with the idea that it was such a person alone who could rise superior to all the ills of the world and become worthy of attainment of the highest beatitude. He thought, moreover, that the three fires of attachment, hatred, and delusion must have to be extinguished before one could realize and enjoy the bliss of emancipation or *nirvāṇa*. He, therefore, resolved to forsake his home on the very *Puṣyā-nakṣatra* day on which his father wanted him to be anointed as the crown prince. When his father brought to Gautama the happy news of the birth of a son to his wife, Yashodhara, he exclaimed saying, 'Rahula is born—the chain of bondage is strengthened'. Before renunciation, he at first thought of having a last sight and touch of his newly-born son, but having entered the sleeping-chamber of his wife, he stopped doing so, lest his wife should awake and create impediment in the way of his resolve to leave the world, and so he silently left his paternal home. That man can never give up his resolve to follow the path of resignation (*nivṛtti*) once his mind is seriously bent on shunning the course of worldly activities (*pravṛtti*). On finding Gautama renouncing the world, Māra (the Tempter or the Evil One), who is the embodiment of all hankering and cravings, attained a sad plight and his realm became gloomy, as it were.

After having left home at the age of twenty-nine, Gautama (the *Bodhisattva*) wandered in many a place and performed the severest kinds of penances—without food or sleep, and in the trying hot and cold seasons of the year, with rains and thunder overhead—and in the course of these austerities his body reached the stage of extreme emaciation; but having passed such a hard life for six years, he could not realize the desired state of enlightenment which he was seeking so ardently. He then felt that self-mortification was not the way to

achieve the perfect state of Knowledge; and he, therefore, re-entered his former mode of life as a mendicant. In this predicament he proceeded to the bank of the Nairanjanā river under the pipal tree at (present-day) Bodh-Gaya, thenceforth called the Bodhi-druma,—the tree of enlightenment, and took his seat there, firmly declaring that 'he should not leave it before he succeeded in attaining perfect knowledge, although his skin, bones, and flesh wasted away and his body dried up'. He remained absolutely steadfast and immovable in that position, never being daunted by the onslaught of Mara, the Tempter, and his army of workers who tried their level best to deflect the Bodhisattva from his purpose. But Mara was vanquished and victory was won by Gautama (who is, therefore, called *Māra-vijayi*, the defeater of the Tempter). Gautama became *sambuddha* (perfectly enlightened) during a night-time. It is said in Pāli works that in the first watch of that particular night he obtained the knowledge of his own previous existences; in the second, of all the present states of beings; in the third, of the chain of causes and effects; and at the dawn of day, he came to know of all things, i.e. he became omniscient.

The Buddhists of India believe that after having attained *sambodhi*, the Bodhisattva gave forth a joyful utterance (*udāna*), which finds its place in the *Jarā-varga* of the *Dhammapada* (*gāthās* 8-9) in the following words:

Anekajātisamsāram sandhāvissam anibbisaṃ,

Gahakāraṃ gavesanto dukkhā jāti-punappunam.

Gahakāraṃ! ditṭho'si puna geham na kāhasi,

Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā gahakūṭam visaṅkhatam,

Visaṅkhāragatam cittaṃ taṇhānam khaya-majjhagā.

'Looking for the builder of this tabernacle (i.e. this my body, the prison-house of the senses) I should have to traverse a cycle of many births, but without (probably) succeed-

ing to find him (out);—but painful it is to go through births again and again. But now, O you maker of the tabernacle! you have been found out (by me) and you will not (be able to) build this tabernacle again. All your rafters are broken and your ridge-pole is sundered. (My) mind being free from predispositions (i.e. approaching the Eternal, *nirvāṇa*) has attained the extinction of all desires'.

Metaphorically speaking, we may, therefore, regard this destruction of all cravings and desires as victory over the Tempter. It is Desire which leads to the building of the body, binding it to the wheel of existences. Once desires are dead in us, we become free from future births. It is after his victory over Mara or the Tempter that Gautama assumed for himself the favourite name of Tathāgata, which is interpreted in one way, by the Buddhists, as the person who has attained *tathā* or the real cause of our existences.

The Buddhists, like the followers of the other Indian Brahminic systems of philosophy, believed in the doctrine of pain (*duḥkhavāda*). They had also firm faith in the doctrine of works (*karmavāda*) according to which humanity bears the consequences of good or evil acts in life and shapes future existences. They also had firm belief in the doctrine of rebirths (*janmāntaravāda*). The Ego, or the *puḍgala* as the Buddhists call it, i.e. the individual being, is always subject to feeling pleasure and pain in accordance with the good or evil deeds done by him. But it is indeed very difficult to be above the antithetical pair of virtue and vice. Human beings always strive for attaining to the state of happiness and tranquillity by being released from the hard fetters of birth, age, disease, and death. They seek for the path of deliverance from the hands of *samsāra*, revolution or cycle of repeated existences. Different systems of philosophy came into being in the course of the teachers' attempt to discover and determine the ways by which the cause of pain in the world can be ascertained and extinguished

and men can succeed in ending their rebirths. Complete and everlasting extinction of sufferings and miseries of the world is the aim of all Indian philosophers. The Brahmavādins (or the Vedantists) acknowledge the existence of only one entity (the Brahman) and they own that the knowledge of that absolute Soul or Self leads to *mukti* or release from the bondage of births and rebirths. The materialist philosophers, the Lokayatikas, once referred to above, believed that the universe is *akāraṇa-sambhūta*, i.e. never born of any super-cause. The followers of the Pātañjala system again regard everything as being ordained by God, the highest cause. But Gautama Buddha seems to have considered such views of the different schools of philosophical thought as extremely unhelpful in bringing about liberation, rather they lead to greater distress and bondage. The Buddhists really believe that if the egos or individual beings can achieve cessation of all miseries, they will be able to attain tranquillity and eventually the immortal state of *nirvāṇa* by extinguishing themselves like fire or a lamp. Their earthly existence becomes extinct and attains the state of *śūnya* (absolute non-existence). So they think that there is, in a way, no individual, no universe, and no cause of them both. But we also find in Buddhist canons this *nirvāṇa* being called as *a-kata* (*akṛta*)—'the uncreated', and *a-mata* (*amṛta*)—'the immortal', i.e. it is neither created, nor does it ever die. Hence it may be presumed that it is a *siddha-vastu* or eternally existing thing, and hence it may be equated with the Brahminic idea of the Brahman.

Let us now form an idea of what was the nature of the chain of causes and effects (technically called the *pratītya-samutpāda*, i.e. the law of happening by way of a cause, or, the law of origination of a thing or phenomenon depending on another as its cause)—which the Bodhisattva revolved within his mind during the third watch of the night on which he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Gaya. The basic principle in

this law of *Paṭicca-samuppāda* (*pratītya-samutpāda*) is laid down in the following formulary, viz.:

Imasmim sati, idam hoti; imassuppādā idam uppajjati;

Imasmim asati, idam na hoti; imassa nirodhā idam nisajjati.

'This having been, that comes to be; from the appearance of this, that arises. This having not been, that does not come into existence; from the cessation of this, that ceases to be'.

Through his eye of knowledge Gautama, during his enlightenment, observed that the twelve *nidāna(s)*, (*hetu(s)*, *samudaya(s)*, or *paṇḍāya(s)* as they are also called by the Buddhists) are the following, and they are arranged, as it were, to form as links in a chain of dependent origination. He grasped the idea that (I) *dukkha*, human pain or sorrow (i.e. due to decay, death, etc.) is causally determined by *jāti* (birth); (2) *jāti* by *bhava* (action, good or bad); (3) *bhava* by *upādāna* (clinging to existence); (4) *upādāna* by *trṣṇā* (desire or craving for worldly objects); (5) *trṣṇā* by *vedanā* (feeling or sensation of pleasure and pain); (6) *vedanā* by *sparsā* (touch or contact); (7) *sparsā* by *ṣaḍāyatana* (the six organs of sense); (8) *ṣaḍāyatana* by *nāma-rūpa* (name and form, i.e. individual being; according to some, mind and body); (9) *nāma-rūpa* by *viññāna* (consciousness); (10) *viññāna* by *samskāra* (conformations left from actions in former births), and (11) *samskāra* by (12) *avidyā* (ignorance).

By the cessation of the preceding one amongst these *nidāna(s)* the following one ceases to be. Hence ignorance becomes responsible ultimately for all human sorrows.

In this connection we should refer to the four noble truths—*ārya-satya(s)*—which the Bodhisattva realized during his enlightenment, viz. (1) the existence of pain as an entity, (2) the origin of pain, (3) the cessation of pain, and (4) the eightfold path (*aṣṭāṅgika-mārga*) that leads to the cessation of pain. The Buddha described this eightfold path as the *majjhima-paṭipadā* (*madhyama-pratīpadā*), the

middle course, which, according to him, creates true insight and intelligence and which leads to tranquillity of mind (*upaśama*), intuitive knowledge or supernatural faculty (*abhijñā*), supreme wisdom (*sambodha*) and eternal happiness (*nirvāṇa*). When the Buddha delivered his first sermon (*dharmacakra-pravartana*, i.e. setting in motion the wheel of the Law, as they say) at the Deer-Park (*mṛgadāva*) at Isipatana (Sarnath, near Banaras) before the five rebelling comrades of his, he exhorted them to shun the two extremes in life's conduct, viz. (1) the pursuit of worldly and sensual pleasures on the one hand, and (2) the practice of useless and worthless austerities or self-mortification on the other, and adopt the eightfold middle path which he himself discovered. We should all do well to remember these eight principles, viz. (1) *sammā-diṭṭhi* (*samyag-dṛṣṭi*), i.e. right view or belief; (2) *sammā-saṅkappa* (*samyak-saṅkalpa*), right resolve or aspiration; (3) *sammā-vācā* (*samyag-vācā*), right speech; (4) *sammā-kammanta* (*samyak-karmānta*) right work or action; (5) *sammā-ājīva* (*samyag-ājīva*), right living or profession; (6) *sammā-vāyāma* (*samyag-vyāyāma*), right endeavour; (7) *sammā sati* (*samyak-smṛti*), right thought or recollection; and (8) *sammā-samādhi* (*samyak-samādhi*), right meditation or self-concentration. In that famous discourse at Sarnath, the Buddha further explained clearly the nature of pain, its origin, and its cessation. The first noble truth, pain, is thus defined by him: birth is a pain, decay is a pain, disease is a pain, and death is a pain. It is a pain to be associated with an unpleasant object and it is again a pain to be alienated from a pleasant object. It is also a pain to fail to get a thing that a person wants to possess. In short, it is a pain to cling to the five elements, *pañcopādāna-skandha(s)*, of which a man's body-cum-spirit state of being consists, viz. *rūpa* (corporeal form), *vedanā* (sensations), *saiññā* (perceptions), *samskāra* (conformations or predispositions), and *viññāna* (consciousness). The second noble truth is the origination of pain, and it is thus defined: *Taṇhā*

(desire or thirst or craving for worldly objects, i.e. *kāmanā*) which is mostly the cause of pain, leads to new births; and being accompanied by pleasure and lust, it sometimes finds its delight here and there. This desire may be of three kinds: *kāma-trṣṇā* (the thirst for pleasure), *bhava-trṣṇā* (the thirst for being or existence), and *vibhava-trṣṇā* (the thirst for prosperity and power). The third noble truth, the cessation of pain, is thus defined: Desire is to be eliminated or destroyed completely so as to leave no trace of it; it is to be abandoned and done away with; and one should seek

deliverance from it, and it should not be given any quarter at any moment in the mind. The fourth noble truth, the eightfold path, has just been dealt with above. Acceptance and true following of this path will surely lead to the release of all men from the twelvefold fetters of cause and effect (called *pratītya-samutpāda* or the chain of causation, as it is also called), save them from the ills of life, viz. birth, decay, disease, death, and rebirth, and bring about their ultimate emancipation (*nirvāna*).

(To be continued)

RELIGION OF MAN

BY JAGDISH SAHAI

Modern man is so self-conceited that he considers it sheer waste of time to pause and think what he is, what this universe (of which he is just a part) is, and what relation he has with the Creator of this universe? These are all fundamental questions. So long as man refuses to think accurately over these things he cannot build a safe, strong, and sure edifice for his thoughts that can give him a clear perception of the goal towards which he must move. Because of this lack of understanding over the fundamentals of life itself, man has created more problems for himself than he has solved. Never was there such longing for world peace as today. In spite of the achievements in the scientific and other fields of human knowledge, man has failed to preserve his own dignity and integrity. Man's 'inhumanity' towards man still makes countless thousands miserable. It must be brought home to man that he is essentially a spiritual being and that a society based on a materialistic conception of the universe is, like an inverted cone, in unstable equilibrium. Spiritual values alone give meaning and purpose to human life.

Man's life should be viewed as a whole. It is wrong to divide it into different compartments such as religious, social, political, and economic, as if each compartment is independent of the other. It is often said that religion is a personal matter between man and his Maker. And it is also said that a secular State has nothing to do with religion. Both these views are fallacious. Religion is not purely a 'private' affair. One is just on the path of religion when one begins to act in an impersonal way. Religion is and always shall be a vital fact in man's life. A secular State will not be a truly welfare State if its energies are not directed towards the raising of the spiritual solidarity and the moral tone of the people it governs. The destiny of nations has ever centred round the character of individual men and women. Demoralization and degradation of character have preceded disintegration of every civilization. A student of history knows that all the wealth and power of Western civilization did not save degenerate Rome. Character is the essence of Religion.

ESSENTIAL UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS

What is man's religion? In answer to this question we find numerous faiths and philosophies prevalent in the different communities of mankind. Just as Nature everywhere is one, but there is diversity in it, even so Humanity throughout the world is one, although every man differs from the others both in thought and conduct. In spite of this obvious diversity, we find that it is a common but powerful desire of man to conform to a particular mode of behaviour in the world. Incarnations, saints, prophets, seers, and sages have appeared in different parts of the world from time to time in order to teach men how to behave in harmony with the underlying spirit of the cosmos. These great souls, on the basis of personal experience, expounded the essential ideals and values in life and taught how they can be achieved. Their spiritual thoughts and teachings form the subject-matter of the scriptures and philosophies of the different faiths. In addition to their moral and spiritual teachings, almost all the religious teachers and reformers of the world gave out a plan and a system of their own on which human society would best be organized. It was thus that every faith helped to establish customs and conventions, with rites and rituals, amongst the communities of mankind and gave birth to a particular type of civilization and culture which naturally differed from the others.

Although everyone, after studying the scriptures of the various faiths, can find out for oneself the essential unity underlying them all, the differences in their respective customs and conventions also become equally patent and obvious. For this reason, we often find that the followers of one faith harbour feelings of hatred towards those of other faiths. Every man considers his own religion to be not only right but superior to those of others. If a man, leaving aside the differences due to customs and conventions, were to try to grasp and live up to those spiritual truths that are essential to him for reaching

the ultimate goal which is common to all humanity, he is bound to love and extend full tolerance towards the followers of other faiths. Every religion, no matter of whatever label, can take man to this common goal. Therefore, all those who fight in the name of religion, do not, in fact, understand what religion is. They stultify themselves by becoming victims of their own selfish, sectarian, and bigoted thoughts and actions. Man should ever remember that he is a member of the human family first and foremost and thereafter a follower of this or that religion. Religion is the way of life that leads man to his ultimate goal. Since there is uniformity in the spiritual teachings of all religions, it is up to man to act in accordance with them in his life. Human life is replete with experiences—both good and bad—which go to make up man's fund of knowledge. Religion too is a matter of experience, resulting in the consciousness of the Highest Truth in which all that exists finds its ultimate refuge.

THREE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

If one probes into the ultimate Truth one will find that the essential teachings of all religions are the same, though they have been expressed in different words. This Truth is the true Religion of Man. Its foundations have been laid on the following three fundamental principles:

(1) Be good and do good—this will make for Character.

(2) Develop non-attachment and unselfishness—this will make for Personality. An integral personality has to be built up on the sound foundation of self-sacrifice.

(3) To acquire Supreme Knowledge is man's highest privilege; in fact, it is his ultimate goal. This will give him Freedom; it will make him one with the all-informing universal Spirit, also called 'God'.

To acquire such knowledge is to develop that consciousness in man which alone can give him a complete answer to the whys and

wherefores of life on earth, viz. why a man takes birth and what is his ultimate goal? This will also solve for man the mystery of God and creation.

The above principles can be briefly amplified as under:

'To work you have a right but not to the fruit thereof', because you have no control over the latter. Man is free to act; he can act as he likes, but the fruit of his actions is not in his hands or within his power. Actions of one individual react on the actions of other individuals and *vice versa*. The inevitable effect of action and reaction is always there and willy-nilly we are mutually affected by it. Man's actions do not cease to be effective till they have borne fruit. No power of Nature can stop an action from bearing its fruit. There are some actions which bear fruit instantaneously. If the hand is put into the fire it will get burnt. There are other actions which bear fruit after a period of time has elapsed. When a man takes physical exercise its fruit will result after some time. Even so it is possible that we may not get the fruit of many of our actions in our present life and have to reap them in our next life. Just as the wind, on its onward march from one place to another, takes with it the resultant of both sweet and bad odours through which it has passed, in the same manner a man's ego, at the time of death, leaves the physical body, taking with it the final outcome of his thoughts, actions, experiences, and will, acquired during the life that has just ended, and enters another body and starts on a new chapter of life's journey with the former life's character-load as the starting-point.

THE WAY TO RIGHT ACTION

Man and his action are inseparable. Man must work in order to live. But how? A man should work without any selfish motive. He should be as selfless in his conduct as possible. This will help him in developing non-attachment. Selfless work is that which a man does without any motive of selfish and

personal profit. All actions which go to gratify the 'I-ness' or the finite individuality of man are doubtless selfish. When man is deluded by the selfish thoughts of 'I' and 'mine', he becomes a slave to lust, anger, and greed which impel him to commit the meanest of actions. The thought of depriving others of all wealth and power and bringing them under his possession will dominate his whole life. But selfless service connotes impersonal action. In doing such impersonal action man sees his own good in the good of others. By working in this spirit he identifies himself with all other beings of the universe and does not consider the reality of their existence apart from himself. On the other hand, he feels that like all other beings he too is a part and parcel of the universe as a whole. Therefore, whatever action contributes to the good of the whole becomes a right action for him. Every action of his is done for the good of the whole and not for his personal individual self.

WHO IS THE DOER OF ACTION?

Man being the essential part of Nature, works according to the nature within him. The soul of man, embodied in a human form, apparently limited by the initial character-load and the chain of individual experiences ordained by the Law of Karma (or the law of Cosmic Moral Order which affirms 'as man sows so he reaps'), strives to realize, during the course of several lives, the real state of its oneness with the Pure Soul. Man's nature no doubt influences his body and mind in accordance with the character-load with which he starts on his life's journey. But his mind is endowed with such wonderful powers of discrimination and dispassion that through his own strong will he can subdue his lower nature and refuse to allow the mind to become its slave. Man is divine and is not confined to his body and mind alone. He partakes of the Infinite. Religion embraces the whole of life which it consecrates and realizes as a revelation of the divinity in man. It is the

form and substance of the highest type of life of which man is capable.

DUTY AND SERVICE

It is through action that man reveals his true self. All action is duty, for it must be performed. But one ought not to do any work under a sense of compulsion. All work should be done with the conviction that it will do good to the whole of humanity. Let duties be sweetened with all-embracing love. One should be earnest in whatever one does and should not give any place to self-interest. Man should work for work's sake. This will make him unselfish. An action which is done under a sense of compulsion is devoid of free will, and a certain sense of pain results from its performance. Whatever duties a man is privileged to perform by virtue of his position in the scheme of life he should render them intelligently and diligently. Duties performed in a spirit of devotional love and service give man a wonderful experience of bliss which keeps him always cheerful. Performance of action in this manner is the most effective means of rendering real service to mankind.

SELF-ABNEGATION IN SERVICE.

Gradually an individual should widen his circle of service till he serves humanity. He should not expect any return for his service, for, service of fellow beings is service of one's own self. This is true sacrifice. A person should ever enhance the limits of his service according to capacity. First comes the service of one's parents and those who are nearest to oneself; then of one's family and friends; then of fellow citizens and the community and the country, and ultimately of all mankind irrespective of any divisions. In rendering service, a person should always be particular to see that he is not doing it for the sake of mere name and fame or in expectation of any return. 'Do good and forget it with its performance'. This principle will make selfless service possible. When man begins to see his own good in the good of

others, performance of selfless service becomes the prime duty of everyone. In the very act of serving others man forgets his little self. This is true self-sacrifice.

WHAT IS SELF?

Mistaking the body for the Self lies at the root of all misery from which humanity has so far been suffering. This is responsible for creating insatiable desires in man, which breed dissensions, distrust, enmity, and all the evils and troubles that man is heir to in both his individual and corporate capacities. As fire cannot be quenched by pouring oil over it, which will make it burn all the more fiercely, the sensuous desires of the flesh only increase all the more by being gratified through self-indulgence. This is not the path of happiness. It brings only pain and misery. Happiness, bliss, and peace are attainable through spiritual realization, sublimation of desires, and the annihilation of that delusion which presents the gross body as the Self. He who can merge his conditioned and limited self into the all-pervading universal Self is truly happy in this world. Such a man alone can be the friend of all, the servant of all. None can set a limit to one's love for humanity except one's own pet sympathies and narrow predispositions. The highest catholicity and the utmost capacity for selfless service can exist side by side in the same individual. A society also can be constructed on such lines, for society is but an aggregate of individuals.

A man's interest can never be confined to the body alone. His Self, in fact, comprehends the whole universe as one with himself, because there is no meaning in considering man's existence apart from the cosmos as a whole. When he detaches his individual self from bodily attachments, he will comprehend the 'whole'. To comprehend the 'whole' is to love one and all without distinction. In other words, it is to realize oneself in the 'whole' and the 'whole' in oneself. Truly, the word 'I' connotes not the individual little self but the omnipresent Soul or Self. The Self or Soul is one and the same in every

being; so the 'I' cannot be more than one. Hence the individual soul is not apart from the real Self.

THE IDEAL OF TRUE LOVE

To realize this Self one must love all. Selfless love, with infinite sympathy, will overcome all objective and physical limitations. For, love is the unifying force which binds not only man to man but also man to the universe and to his Maker. The love of a nurse-maid towards another's child she is in charge of is of the unattached and unselfish kind. She feeds the child, loves it, plays with it, and is all kind towards it as if it is her own child. But, on being dismissed from service, she leaves the child, gives up all attachment to it, and is ever willing to take service elsewhere and nurse another child. Similarly should one in the world behave in respect of all the things which one considers one's own and feels called upon to love and serve. Even as the nurse-maid looks after another's child in a spirit of non-attachment, keeps it safe and sound under her custody as a trust, and serves it with all the love she is capable of bestowing on it, so also should men learn to live and act with a deep sense of detachment, selfless love, and generous service and to view everything in our possession as a worthy trust from the Divinity, which we call God, remembering, at the same time, that He can deprive us of anything when He so chooses and that we should not then feel pain or misery at the thought of loss or separation.

PLEASURE AND PAIN AND THEIR CAUSE

Attachment brings transient waves of pleasure and pain. When our relation with other things is characterized by physical and sensuous attachment, and we, for some reason or the other, fail to obtain those things, we feel pain. If we obtain them, we feel pleasure. But such pleasure or pain lasts for a short while only. It is not and cannot be permanent. For, all the material things of the universe with which we get attached are, by their very nature, perishable. Therefore, the

pleasure or pain that we derive by our attachment to the material objects of this universe fades away within a short time. However, from this transient experience of pleasure and pain man learns the great truth of life which leads him towards real knowledge. In all living beings, and especially in man, there exists an intense desire for permanent pleasure or happiness. And a time comes in the life of every man when he begins to realize the unreality and transitoriness of pleasure and pain. Then he understands that by attachment to material things he can never get permanent happiness, and that if he seeks spiritual union (*yoga*) with that immortal Life-Force called God, who is the changeless One in this ever changing world of many, he can attain to that state of permanent happiness for which his whole being is constantly yearning. This state of permanent happiness or Bliss Absolute (*Brahmānanda*) is the same as living in tune with the Infinite.

IN SALVATION LIES BLISS

Unselfish work leads to purity of heart (*citta-suddhi*) and this in turn to spiritual freedom through elimination of the individual ego. This is salvation or Self-realization or God-realization. In salvation lies the highest freedom and bliss; on attaining it, the individual's ego dissolves completely and he becomes a free soul (*jīvan-mukta*) who has achieved the one thing which is permanent and imperishable. When a man becomes unattached and unselfish, his actions do not forge fresh shackles of Karmic bondage. Such performance of action and devotion to God leads the individual to the blissful state of salvation which is beyond words.

UNIVERSAL GOODNESS CONSTITUTES THE RELIGION OF MAN

To acquire this blissful state one has to act, act incessantly and lovingly. Every action needs to be tested on the touchstone of universal goodness and moral worth. Any action which is right in accordance with truth and justice contributes to the awakening in

man of universal goodness. Universal goodness is in itself elevating, and whatever elevates and ennobles is man's religion. Elevation in every aspect of life forms the basis of the whole science and art of religion—elevation from ignorance to full knowledge, from the confined ego-state to the free state of the Soul. It is the process of man's going back (*Nivṛtti*) by conscious and determined effort, to the original source from which he has sprung. This one process is named variously by diff-

erent seers and men of God in different parts of the world.

'Man should fight man'—is not what Religion teaches;

Man to be man must ever be humane;
Sense of humanity—the Brotherhood of Man,
And Homage to Almighty—the Parenthood of God,

Are what any Religion worth the name aims at.
Therefore, it behoves not man to decry

Religion;
Realization by man of the True Self—the
Great Truth—is its only goal.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA

BY SWAMI ANANYANANDA

Gautama Buddha, the Blessed One, has come down to us through these shining centuries as *karuṇā* or Compassion personified. These centuries have not dimmed that beacon-light, the 'Light of Asia' as he has rightly been called. As his personality even so his teachings have diffused peace and blessedness wherever they have spread. Buddha is shining as ever in the hearts of millions all the world over as well as in his immortal message of 'a pure and perfect life'. It is this dominant note of *compassion* in the life of Buddha that the great poet Jayadeva has stressed in his famous *Daśavatāra-Stotra*, pointing out thereby the fact that this particular aspect forms the special feature of the Buddha-Avatara. The poet, recalling the well-known incident at Rajagriha where Buddha was prepared to offer his own life in order to save the life of a lamb, sings: 'Out of compassion thy heart melted away at the animal-sacrifice'.

It was this essential aspect of Buddha's teachings that was responsible for their wide diffusion and influence in different lands. 'In compassion for the world', says the Blessed One, exhorting the Bhikkus, 'go ye, O Bhikkus, and wander forth for the good of the many, for the welfare of the many, for

the good, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim, O Bhikkus, the Doctrine glorious; preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure' (*Mahāvagga, Vinaya-piṭaka*). If today Buddhism found warm reception in the hearts of millions and claimed as adherents more than a third of humanity, it was due to an indestructible element of faith in the final Good that Buddha's message brought unto mankind. Buddha himself had immense faith in the ultimate goodness and greatness of man. One of his great utterances runs: 'Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as your lamp'. In these words is contained an un-failing hope and inspiration for humanity for all time. They are the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom.

Another aspect of the teachings of Buddha, no less important, is his constant declaration that the Buddhahood is not the exclusive monopoly of a chosen few only but that the same is attainable by one and all irrespective of caste, creed, or race. Men and women are equally entitled to attain Buddhahood. Buddha is not merely a person; it is the state of supreme enlightenment to which every sim-

cere aspirant is an heir. Buddha was never tired of repeating that he himself was an ordinary man like any other mortal and that *all* could attain to the Bodhisattva state and become Buddhas like himself. This was the dynamic message of a man to Man. He did not claim any speciality for himself in this regard. Like all seekers after truth, he too underwent every kind of hardship and privation, and overcame all the obstacles that confronted him on his way. Ultimately, after Knowledge dawned on him, he came back to the world at large, out of compassion to suffering humanity, with his message of peace and happiness, in order to share with others what he had obtained. Naturally, therefore, his message had an irresistible appeal and spread far and wide in the world. When Buddhism went abroad on its mission, it did so characteristically in the Indian way, showering peace before it and trailing benediction behind it. Buddhism did not conduct any crusade for carrying its message forward. It had no need to march cohorts and legions, with fire and sword in hand, in the cause of missionary zeal. Buddha was India's Spirit personified and his message was India's message of peace, love, gentleness, and happiness.

Although Buddha rose to the greatest spiritual heights, which are clearly beyond the reach of many a mortal, he yet came down from those heights to meet the ordinary people and to help them rise to those very heights. In doing so he carefully avoided all mystical disquisitions about abstruse philosophical problems. His was a realistic approach to help man grow morally and spiritually. With a view to making himself intelligible to the illiterate masses, he adopted the simple language of the common people, without taking recourse to Sanskrit. It was the sight of suffering, disease, decay, and death that made young Prince Siddhartha give up a kingdom and seek homelessness in order to find a way out. Siddhartha was destined to become the Buddha, the saviour of the poor, the miserable, and the downtrodden. His all-encompassing love and compassion to beings

and his intense passion to lift them out of their untold suffering would not let him remain attached to the throne. He set out to find the lasting solution, and after intense search and struggle he discovered it. Then he returned 'to live with beggars and the poor and the downcast', and to show the great path to them as well.

The result of his discovery was not any kind of intricately woven philosophy. He enunciated simple doctrines in the simplest language and that in a direct and appealing manner. He is one of the few world teachers who did not introduce anything fundamentally new in their teachings. He taught the age-old Upanishadic teachings clothed in the common *patois* which even the most illiterate could understand. He gave expression to the One Truth, and the difference, if any, was in the stress laid and not in the content of his message. What he discovered as the result of an intense search after Truth he enumerated thus: There is suffering in this world and the cause of all suffering is desire which man possesses for all kinds of enjoyment. Removal of desire will bring man real joy and eternal peace, and there is a way that leads to this cessation of desire. For achieving this end Buddha prescribed what he termed the Eightfold Noble Path, viz. Right Understanding, Right Mindedness, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Attentiveness, and Right Concentration.

Thus Buddhism came to be known more as an ethical than a philosophical religion. Rather, as we have it today, it is ethical in religion and idealistic in philosophy, so much so that a great thinker has called it 'Ethical Idealism' aiming at moral perfection. The most potent influence of Buddha's teachings has been on the moral and social aspects of life. Buddha did not lay much stress on metaphysical speculations. He even kept silent on many a purely philosophical problem. His very silence was mistaken and misinterpreted by later-day followers. In fact the pure ethical religion of Buddha suffered at the hands of shrewd intellectualism and

astute scholasticism. The result was the emergence of an elaborate and intricate dialectical philosophy—a thing which Buddha himself did not countenance in his lifetime. What Buddha disliked, his own followers, in their zeal, seem to have brought into existence by weaving legends and superstitions and fostering the affluent growth of vast metaphysical literature in the name of Buddha and his teachings.

In his sermons Buddha used simple and straight language. In the very first sermon that he preached he exhorted his disciples to steer clear of the Scylla of extreme self-indulgence and the Charybdis of extreme self-mortification. In support of this teaching he would cite his own example and show that that way did not lead him to Enlightenment. Then he would teach about the Four Noble Truths, viz. suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the method of attaining it through the Eightfold Path. 'Even as the water of the great ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt, so has the doctrine and discipline only one taste, the taste of *nibbāna* (*nirvāṇa*)—the cessation of suffering'. Greed, hatred, and delusion—these three constitute the fundamental evils from which issue forth all the vices. To be free from these is the goal, to attain which the means is the Eightfold Path as enumerated above.

As an effective corollary to these teachings of Buddha, we have their deep social applications for the upliftment and progress of society. 'Do good and be good', he said, 'and go forth for the good of the many and for the welfare of the many'. This short but pregnant statement contains the inspiration needed for man to work and to prosper. And this is practical religion. The monastic order, the Sangha, that flourished for centuries after Buddha, with its innumerable monks and nuns ever engaged in working for the good and welfare of the community, in strict obedience to the dictum of the Blessed One, bears eloquent testimony to the practical aspect of the message of Buddha. And what was his own life but a continuous stream of intense

activity? He lived up to the ripe age of eighty and till the last moment of his life his one concern was to be helpful to his fellow men. He was a true Karma-Yogi in the real sense of the term. Buddha combined in himself the pure Upanishadic spirit of Jnana and the true ideal of Karma Yoga of the *Gita*. Swami Vivekananda has laid special stress on this aspect of Buddha's life, viz. synthesis of immense spirituality and intense activity. Speaking of Buddha he says: 'Let me tell you . . . about one man who actually carried this teaching of Karma Yoga into practice. That man is Buddha. He is the one man who ever carried this into perfect practice. All the prophets of the world, except Buddha, had external motives to move them to unselfish action. . . . But Buddha is the only prophet who said, "I do not care to know your various theories about God. Do good and be good and this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is"'. He is the ideal Karma-Yogi the greatest man ever born, beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested'.

The message of Buddha was not confined to a certain clime and a certain time only. It has a universal appeal for all time and for all people. It is now, more than ever before, when the world is groaning under the tyranny of dry intellectualism and scientific materialism, that humanity would wish the compassionate heart of Buddha came on earth and reigned supreme in the lives of men and nations. The world today is in urgent need of such a combination of head and heart. Instead, the world has had to suffer from either lack of or lop-sided growth of man. Stress has been laid either more on the development of the heart than on the development of the head or *vice versa*. The evils of such one-sided emphasis are too well known to need enumeration. History has revealed them to us. From an undue stress on the faculties of the head have issued forth forces of tyranny and exploitation, and from an

undue stress on the faculties of the heart have resulted shameful subjection to such tyranny and exploitation and the loss of manly vigour—individual and national.

If we are to take lessons from history,—and take we must—, we have to drink deep and well at this mighty spring of Buddha's life and message. Watered by his life-giving tenets and nourished by his life's inspiration,

the vast and fertile field of this world will bring forth a rich harvest of men and women of the highest character. Then and then alone can mankind follow in the footsteps of the Blessed Bodhisattva and translate into practice his immortal teaching that 'hatred is not conquered by hatred, but only by love; that evil is not overcome by evil, but only by returning good for evil'.

HIGHER IMMEDIACY

BY P. S. SASTRI

By Immediacy I mean that experience which is known as '*nirvikalpa*' in Advaita Vedanta. It is an experience which is direct and unmediated. In every experience we have a subject and an object. The object is always a felt object, an object that comes against the felt background. The feeling and the object are experienced as an immediate felt unity. There is no consciousness of any distinction at that moment. The moment feeling is united with an object we get at the content of feeling which not only transcends itself but also makes itself universal. That is, feeling becomes 'universal, communicable, expansive'.¹

Everything passes through feeling, and the whole world appears to us only in experience. Everything is experienced in feeling and depends on feeling to the extent of its being experienced. There is an object which is felt and it is as such distinct from feeling. Feeling is immediately experienced. How can we relate immediate experience to the object which transcends it? A relation can only be between two terms which must be objects. And if feeling were to be a term in the relation, to that extent it transcends immediacy

and fails to be a felt totality. In every experience we have feeling which is not an object; and all that we apprehend is a unity which does not reveal itself as relational. The elements or parts of this unity might turn out to be interrelated; and the relational content is a part of the felt background. As such Prakāshātman states, '*Caitanyenāsamsyṣṭasya pratiḍhāsa eva na syāt*'.²

An object that is not felt is no object at all. What is felt is a unity of feeling and the object; and we can try to find out the relation of these two. But 'every distinction and relation still rests on an immediate background of which we are aware, and every distinction and relation (so far as experienced) is also felt, and felt in a sense to belong to an immediate totality'.³ The feeling is a non-relational whole because the analysis of feeling can never reveal anything lying beyond the experience proper. But within the experience we have a diversity. This diversity does not constitute divisions within the experience but only distinctions. The feeling that constitutes the background and basis of all experience can be resolved into the object felt, the living

² *Vivaraṇa*.

³ F. H. Bradley: *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 178.

¹ B. Bosanquet: *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 39.

emotion that one feels, and the individual that feels. As Bradley puts it, 'In my general feeling at any moment there is more than the objects before me, and no perception of objects will exhaust the sense of a living emotion'.⁴ In the language of Whitehead, the feeling is prehension, the object is the datum, and the living emotion is the subjective form. The object or the datum is that which is felt, while the living emotion is not the object before the experiencing subject. This living emotion determines the process of integration by 'clothing each concrete exhibition of the subject-object situation'.⁵ Prakashatman was almost the first to propound this view: '*Samvedanasya bhedāvabhāsa śūnyatvād-anubhavādadhīna siddhikasya ca viṣayavad-anātmatvād-ekah sthāyyātmaivānubhavah*'.⁶

Feeling reveals no differences since its nature is to unify. However much we may abstract it from the self, it does not completely become an object. There is always an element of feeling which is the subject. In the language of Bradley, 'At every moment my stage of experience, whatever else it is, is a whole of which I am immediately aware. It is an experienced non-relational unity of many in one'.⁷

Feeling, then, turns out to be an aspect of consciousness, the aspect that welds the many into a whole. And experience itself is not a relation of a subject to something outside of or external to the subject. It is the inclusive whole and therefore offers the interrelation of the many in one. The one is the Self or Consciousness which experiences; and it unifies the objects by virtue of the fact that it assimilates them all to itself. It accompanies all objects, being immanent in them and coextensive with them. Hence it is said, '*Premāspadatayā, kūṭasthatayā, sāksitayā, viṣayendriyādyanuvṛtta caitanya rūpatayā,*

cānubhūyamāno'mśa ātmā. Tasmād idam anidam ātmako'ham pratyayah'.⁸

Consciousness as feeling has always a tendency to appear as both the *this* and the *I*. When the content of feeling becomes objective, it undergoes an important transformation. Feeling is not a blank intensity. It has a content and is always expressed. It is not prior to this content since we feel *something* and never feel the feeling alone. This content gives feeling a new meaning every time. And because it has a meaning, the artist is able to objectify it in art. That which is devoid of a content is devoid of detail, organization, and expression. As Nettleship observes, 'If you go to art to get your own feeling reproduced, you find it useless and flat, just because mere feeling cannot find expression, and your feeling must be at any rate potentially endowed with form before you can be emotionally receptive of real form'.⁹ The form is the objectivity of the feeling as such. This objectivity means clearly that the individual consciousness and the object are not two distinguishable entities. In the words of Prakashatman, '*Samvid-abhedo'parokṣa prakāsamānatā nāma*'.¹⁰ Immediacy means the awareness of the object as non-different from the subject. This non-difference does not do away with the parts but only with their differences. For, '*Samvid-avabhāsādadhīnatvād-ārtha sattā niścayasya*'.¹¹ The object exists only so far as it is dependent upon consciousness. But the reality and existence of consciousness does not depend upon that of the object, for the existence of the object is itself to be proven.¹² The object is *known* to exist, and this is the apprehension by a mind. It is an immediate apprehension which involves the unity of

⁸ *Vivaraṇa-Prameya-Saṅgraha.*

⁹ *Remains, I. 61.*

¹⁰ *Vivaraṇa.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² '*Na hyārtha sattā niścayādadhīnah samvit sattā niścayah, artha sattā niścayasyāpi niścayāntarādhīnatva prasangāt*' (*Ibid.*). See *Vivaraṇa-Prameya-Saṅgraha*: '*Samvinnīścayah svata eva, tad-adhīnā cārtha sattā*'.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁵ A. N. Whitehead: *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 298.

⁶ *Vivaraṇa.*

⁷ *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 175.

consciousness and the objects; and it is a unity in which the objects cease to have an independent status apart from consciousness. For, the objects owe their reality and existence to the feeling self, and the feeling self feels because of the objects. Thus starting as an undifferentiated whole, feeling has a tendency to become a coherent whole.

Any experience, however, is immediate and valuable in the highest sense if it satisfies the individual and if the individual feels himself affirmed therein. Here, that which is felt about an object is taken as the content or significance of the object itself. This content or significance is made explicit in the moment of experience. And we judge the object with reference to the content of the experience which is immediate. Feeling, therefore, becomes truly objective by assimilating the objects to itself. Thus when we hear Dawes Hicks saying that feeling is 'a way in which the conscious subject participates in the objects which he apprehends'¹³ we should accept it with great reserve.

The object in the immediate experience is that which satisfies us. It can satisfy only when it does not involve any reference outside of itself. Such an object is an all-inclusive reality. But the actual object of perception is incomplete and as such it fails to satisfy us. This is remedied when the actual object undergoes a transformation which is in part due to the external world with which it is closely bound. The external world of the other objects constituting the not-self is not actually present before us in cognition. But the objects enter into the cognitive state through the perceptual field which sums them up. As Whitehead observes, 'The distribution of the subjective form (=living emotion) among the separate prehensions (=feelings) refers primarily to the conformal origins of the subjective form derived from the various components of the total objective datum'.¹⁴ That is,

¹³ *Immediate Experience* (Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume 9, p. 187).

¹⁴ *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 327.

the actual object appears as a unity and yet it is internally differentiated. The internal differentiations are not cognized as differentiations, since what is felt is always a unity or a whole which is organized by the activity of thought as such. The object of perception includes within itself a reference to other objects external to itself and those elements that are distinguished within it. In all immediate experience, thought or consciousness intuits the being of the object and thus assimilates it to itself. It is in reality '*san-mātra viṣayam*'. As such the reference of the object to something outside itself is not excluded from the felt content. But what is apprehended is the fact that this reference is not essential to its nature, for the object is seen to develop itself from within itself; and the content, though not distinguished, is actually felt as being there.¹⁵

Such an apprehension is almost the culmination of thought. A great sorrow has the power to affect the personality of the common man so deeply as to make him utter something great which no one can forget or ignore. That is, the great feeling does not behave in an irrational way. It embodies and reveals the deepest logic. Strength of feeling and unconsciousness of effort in expressing it function in close collaboration with the intellect of man. And feeling as expressed is always enriched by perceptions and ideas. Consequently, to speak of the immediate experience as only the beginning of knowledge and experience is to speak something unintelligible.

The immediate experience is a positive whole of consciousness.¹⁶ It is real. It is neither subjective nor objective. The real is that which is felt. The real world is a unity of feeling and the felt. It is not subjective since it does not involve the self of the individual alone. It is not objective since it does not exclude the experiencing self. It is the

¹⁵ Cf. *Sloka-Vārttikā* (4. 113): '*Na viśeṣo na sāmānyam tadānīm anubhūyate Tayor-ādhāra bhūtā tu vyaktir-evāvaśiṣyate*'. See also 4. 112, 118.

¹⁶ Cf. *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*: '*Pratyakṣa pramā tu atra caitanyam-eva*'.

meeting point of the self and the not-self in an undifferentiated whole. That is, it is the experience of Reality and Reality should, therefore, be non-relational. The Reality that is felt is something that is comprehended in, and yet transcends, feeling. And what in reality we experience is only the unity fostered by feeling; and what we seek for is a unity that unites the two aspects of Reality. Such a unity is immediately given to us in the aesthetic experience.

Anything that is felt is real, and to be real it must fall within sentience. This sentience is the same as the awareness of the self. That is, all experience involves some object or other. It is an object that is experienced and all our knowledge arises from the object which is the 'this' in the judgment. Everything in the world that is experienced has to become an object, and the object is the one source of our experience. The 'this' or the object means that it stands for what it means. It exists and has a content appropriate to its reality. This content is revealed as a coherent whole in experience and it is a whole which affirms something of reality. And yet the object is only fragmentary since each object has its own unique and specific features. Each implies and involves a reference to or relation with other objects. This relation integrates all the particulars into one system of reality. That is, this relation involves the inner being of the objects. As such no object can stand by itself, and no one can exclude or reject others. This is the principle governing the self-transcendence of all finite entities. This self-transcendence is no other than the reference of the content of experience to a Reality which includes that very experience itself. It is a reference that does not fall outside of Reality. Therefore does Padmapāda say: '*Asmat pratyayatvam abhimato'ham-kārah. Sa cedam anidam rūpa vastu-garbhaḥ, sarva loka sāksīkah*'.¹⁷ The 'I' in the immediate apprehension is not the exclusive individual, nor is the feeling a private feeling. The

'I' is the felt background, presentational continuum, foundational consciousness. It embodies the unity of the object (*idam*) and the not-object (*anidam*), and it is, therefore, the foundation of all experience and knowledge. It is non-relational and non-sensuous.¹⁸

There can, then, be an experience that does not require the sensuous character. In such an experience we find the intuitive operation of thought, for feeling as an aspect of thought alone has a meaning and an existence. And all concrete thought has a tendency to become immediate or to reveal itself immediately. In this immediacy we do not have a system of the many; for, the perceptual character of a cognition lies not in its sensuous origin but in the realization of non-difference between the apprehending self and the apprehended not-self, where the not-self is an aspect of the Real, a phase of Self-consciousness.

We do not have at any moment pure feeling. We are never purely aesthetic, or purely moral, or purely intellectual, at any time. We have always a unity in experience, a unity where no diversity can be found. This diversity is absorbed and unified in perfection. The unity of feeling gives a certain solidarity to the self with itself and with the others. There is a unity of the self with something beyond, and this unity constitutes the unity and character of the self. In this reference to the beyond, the self endeavours to realize that perfection or completeness which is rooted in its nature. And the perfection is not realized until and unless the experiencing self feels itself identical with its objects. In terms of this identity of the self and the not-self is all apprehension to be defined.¹⁹ Defining perception in terms of thought, Dharmarājādhvarindra observes: '*Pramāṇa caitanyasya viśayāvachchinna caitanyābheda iti*'.²⁰ The unity of the subject and the object which is the

¹⁸ *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*: '*Nirvikalpakam tu sam-sargānavagāhi jñānam*'.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*: '*Pramāṇy sattātirikta sattākatva sūnyatve sati योग्यत्वम् विषयस्या प्रत्यक्षम्*'.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Pancapādika*.

central feature of all immediate experience is in reality an identity, since both the subject and the object are comprehended as the two elements of Consciousness.

If this doctrine of Immediacy can be applied to the aesthetic experience, it can stand against all other possible objections. For, the sensuous element in the aesthetic sphere has been taken by the critics to determine the nature of this experience as one of mediacy. In the aesthetic experience, the poet is concerned with the perceptual field, and we with the work of art. The experience that one has here is not directed towards creating something that does not exist, for the duty of the artist is only to make explicit that which is the life or meaning of the given whole. In this he acts only as the medium of revelation. And if beauty is something that is produced by the association or interrelation of a variety of factors, how can we explain natural beauty? Natural beauty is something inherent in the objects themselves. Such an inherent or immanent principle manifests itself in experience as truth, goodness, and beauty. That is, the beautiful is not a process but an existent state. In this state we come across the relational and sensuous aspects which are in fact provided by the media of the fine arts. In poetry, for instance, we have the sounds as sensuous elements; and in the experience of the aesthetic state we have the relational whole comprising the emotions and the like. And whenever we experience the aesthetic state, we do so through the mediation of these sensuous and relational factors. Consequently, the aesthetic experience refuses to be called immediate.

To this ostensible objection, however, Jagannātha gives the reply thus: 'Sā (rasa carvanā) śabda-vyāpāra-bhāvvyatvāc-chābdī, Aparokṣa . sukhāmbanātvāc-cāparokṣātmikā; tat-tvam vākya-ja buddhi-vaṭ'.²¹ From the standpoint of the creative artist, the aesthetic experience involves the existence of an embodied object, whatever its nature may be.

²¹ *Rasa-Gangādhara*.

But for the reader or the spectator, it involves the presence or the existence of the medium through which the content or thought is revealed. In the case of poetry the medium consists of words; and it is in and through words that we have the aesthetic experience which is direct and immediate at the same time. The example given is the experience that arises from the sentence, 'That Thou Art'.

A sentence like 'That Thou Art' gives us perceptual knowledge; and it is an example of immediate apprehension. Perception cannot be defined only in terms of the sensibility. The object of perception must be capable (*yogya*) of being perceived²²; and since this principle of '*yogyatva*' is comprehensive enough to include the sensibility in itself, perception is always to be spoken of as in terms of the former.²³ Moreover, the nature of perception lies in the realization of a state of non-difference between the subject and the object. Now, in the sentence 'That Thou Art', the 'Thou', the experiencing subject, is the object of perception and the judgment effects non-difference between the 'Thou' and the 'That'.²⁴

But how can a verbal perception be immediate? A sentence is always relational since the meaning of a sentence is mediated by the related group of meanings of words. Hence it may be urged that the poetic experience is not immediate.

To this we reply that the relation of the meanings of words in a sentence is not the criterion for arriving at the meaning of a sentence. If we are to rely only on the meanings of the words and their interrelations, a sentence like 'bring the *saindhava*', spoken of by one while dining, might refer to a horse, since '*saindhava*' means both a horse and salt. That is, the intention of the speaker and the context of the utterance should not be

²² *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*.

²³ *Ibid.*: '*Nahi indriya-janyatvam pratyakṣatve tantram, dūṣitatvat*'.

²⁴ *Ibid.*: '*Evam "tat tvam asi" ityādi vākya-janya jñānasyapi tatra pramātureva viśayatayā tad-ubhayābhedasya sattvāt*'.

ignored. Hence it is not the relational continuum that mediates the meaning of a sentence. On the contrary, it is the 'tātparyā' or the total import. This 'tātparyā' enables us to apprehend the sentence immediately and directly. Such an immediate apprehension is spoken of as 'akhaṇḍārtha' which is defined by Chitsukha thus: 'Samsargāsangi samyag dhī hetutā yā girām iyam uktākhaṇḍārthatā yad vā tat prātipadikārthatā'.²⁵ The 'akhaṇḍārtha' or the import of a judgment is unmediated, non-relational, direct, and immediate. Such is the immediacy of the apprehension in the aesthetic world also. Thus Vishvanātha observes: 'Sattvodrekād-akhaṇḍa sva prakāśānanda cinmayah'.²⁶ It is an immediate apprehension characterized by a harmonious expansion of the self, by a realization of Self-consciousness, and by a transcendental unity of the self and the not-self. Hence it is spoken of as 'akhaṇḍa' or non-relational, and 'nirvikalpa' or immediate. It is due to this feature

²⁵ *Tattva-Pradīpikā*.

²⁶ *Sāhitya-Darpaṇa*.

that the reader or the spectator realizes non-difference with the poet and his characters: 'Pramātā tad-abhedena svātmānam pratīpadyate'.²⁷

This is the principle of 'sādhāraṇīkaraṇa' which, as Bhatta Nāyaka has taught us, is realized in and through imagination (*bhāvanā*). This 'sādhāraṇīkaraṇa' is the negative capability which makes the experience non-relational. One does not feel that the behaviour of the actor is his own, nor does he take it to be the actor's or the character's. We do not differentiate and analyse the elements but enter into the poetic world and live it.²⁸ In so doing we transcend the distinctions of subject and object, and we arrive at the identity of the two in terms of the foundational consciousness which is Reality or Brahman. And we as the various 'modes' of this Reality apprehend that Reality in every experience immediately.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ See *Abhinava Bhārati*, I. 280.

ROLE OF INDIANS IN ANCIENT BURMESE HISTORY

BY DR. DHIRENDRA NATH ROY

(Continued from the April issue)

Down in the south from Pegu to the tail-end of Tenasserim is another important region of this country representing a distinct cultural history of its own. The people of this region are different from the Burmans. They are known as Mons or Talaings. They were Indian in their racial origin, having come on land-route from the north-east of India and later by sea-route from Telangana, an ancient coastal region where now stands the historic Andhra-deshā, between Orissa and Madras. They claim to be the earliest immigrants in Burma. The culture which developed with

the first settlement of these Talaings was naturally Indian. The earliest chief centre of this culture was in the historic coastal city of Thaton. Tradition tells us that it was founded about the middle of the sixth century B.C. In its initial stage Thaton represented a civil settlement composed mainly of Indian traders. But traders as they were they were not absolutely inexperienced in the art of fighting, at least fighting for self-defence. It was a sheer necessity that made them cultivate this art in the foreign land. One can imagine that they were not looked upon with much favour

by the original inhabitants to whom they naturally appeared as a lot of strange intruders. Resistance inevitably came from them during the early encounters, but before the superior organization, valour, and skill of the immigrants they finally had to yield or withdraw. To the immigrant Indians they were Rākshasas as to the Burmese chroniclers they were known as Nāgas or Bilus. Slowly the Talaings established a kingdom around Thaton. The rich natural resources of the land enabled them to develop it into a prosperous kingdom, so much so that it truly acquired the name of Suvāna-bhūmi or the golden land. The kingdom rapidly expanded far to the north to include the vast region surrounding another rising city called Pegu. It thus soon became a powerful rival to its almost contemporary northern kingdom of Prome or Thirikettara. The increasing power thus acquired inspired the Talaings to launch frequent incursions upon the northern kingdom which, unfortunately, had also to face similar troubles from the Arakanese in its western border. Having been cruelly harassed by the raiding forces from two sides, it could not succeed for long in maintaining its defence and the result was, as we have already seen, that it ultimately disintegrated and collapsed. The Talaings, however, claimed that it was they who caused the collapse of Prome.

It has been admitted by historians that the Talaings who had built up an extensive kingdom in Lower Burma,¹ were comparatively far more civilized than those who were then living in Upper Burma. It is said that the civilization which they had brought with them from India into their new settlement and then had rapidly developed by their enterprising efforts was unequalled in the whole land now called Burma. Along with their diverse articles of trade they brought all their ideas, traditions, manners, and customs, indeed all their social and religious institutions, to make their new homeland a fair replica of their

¹ This includes both Thaton and Pegu, though the latter was established after about a thousand years of Thaton.

motherland. As in Upper Burma here too Brahmanism came first to be succeeded by Buddhism. The two certainly had their periods of conflict till the two became intermingled in the lives of the people, with Buddhism ultimately prevailing over Brahmanism. The new protestant religion flourished here in far more orthodox form than in Upper Burma. The reason was that it was the followers of the Southern School Buddhism who came to settle here together with the earlier immigrants. Later there also came some powerful preachers to propagate the new faith unalloyed by any religious accretions from extraneous sources. Unlike in Upper Burma where Tibetan Shamanism and the Tantrism of Eastern India flowed in and got profusely mixed up with what is known as the Northern or Mahāyāna Buddhism which in its turn had drawn much from the old Sanskrit culture, there were in Lower Burma no old or outlandish religious cults to change the original purity of the kind of Buddhism that came there.

Exactly when this Buddhism first came to the golden land it is difficult to say. Perhaps it came sometime in the third century B.C., or more precisely during the reign of Emperor Asoka. Some early Buddhist writers of the Southern School tell us that at this time a great convocation known as the Third Buddhist Council of leading Buddhists was held at Pataliputra at the instance of the great Emperor. It was decided in the Council that qualified Theras or Buddhist elders should be sent abroad to preach and establish the religion of Lord Buddha. Tissa Moggaliputta, President of the Council, selected a good number of them to be deputed to the different parts of the world. The well-known Theras Sona and Uttara were assigned the task of spreading the doctrine in Suvāna-bhūmi. If this was a fact one can have no doubt that the work of such eminent missionaries must have had its unfailing inspiration for the people at large to accept the new faith in its pure form. There are some people, however, who have got their reasons, not without some

force in them, to question the truth of this Buddhist convention.²

But the Burmese Chronicles hold it as true, and the people of Burma have no doubt about it. Unfortunately the few fragments of Talaing Chronicle still available tell us not much about it with any appreciable force of conviction. If there was anything written convincingly on this matter it might have been destroyed by the Burmese conqueror Alaungpaya when he invaded and practically annihilated the Talaing kingdom. But even assuming that there was no such Buddhist Council convened by Emperor Asoka, it hardly repudiates the time-honoured belief among all Burmans that Sona and Uttara did actually come to this colonist kingdom and propagate the new faith with phenomenal success. There was another fact that might have occasioned a good influx of Buddhist missionaries from India to this golden peninsula. During the third and second centuries B.C., after the fall of the Maurya Empire, Buddhism in Central and Eastern India was subjected to severe persecution under the Brahmanic dynasty of the Sungas. Pushyamiitra, founder of this dynasty, resorted to every violent means to eradicate Buddhism. As a result, the oppressed Buddhists had to fly *en masse* southward from the far-extended empire of the Sungas. Many of them, including devout Buddhist monks, must have crossed the Bay of Bengal and reached the nearest outside settlement of their own nationals in Lower Burma. The old settlers with their Brahmanic tradition might not have welcomed the new faith of the new arrivals, but the national sentiments for co-nationals in a foreign land had its own strength to prevail, at least during their first meeting period, with a fair amount of social toleration. The long period which followed called for an adjustment of the religious differences through a series of hectic misunderstanding and conflict. The new faith, of course, had its stronger

vitality to justify itself against the old ; but the old thing also maintains its surviving value, if not through its intrinsic qualities, at least through the deep sentiment born of long adherence. So the struggle between Brahmanism and Buddhism went on even here for a long time. The result was that though Buddhism eventually got the upper hand, it had to make some compromises with Brahmanism to get its final establishment secure.

The greatest impetus for Buddhism, however, came when at the end of the fourth century or rather at the beginning of the fifth century one of its greatest apostles named Buddhaghosha arrived here with a wealth of sacred literature including a complete set of the Tripitakas and their commentaries. The Talaings received this Buddhist divine with utmost enthusiasm, affectionately claiming him as their fellow countryman. After his arrival Buddhism of the Southern School, of which he was the best exponent, began to flourish triumphantly over the entire Talaing kingdom and slowly reach even further beyond its northern border.

The civilization which flourished in this kingdom was undoubtedly superior to any that was then extant in Upper Burma. Professor D. G. E. Hall writes in his recent book on *Europe and Burma* that 'compared with the Mons (Talaings), the Burmese were uncivilized barbarians when they entered the country'. Its well-developed agriculture, art and craft, language and literature, purer religion in the form of Theravāda Buddhism, its golden shrines and large monasteries, and most other things spoke eloquently of the creative, co-operative, and assimilative genius of the Talaings. They were and still are rightly proud of their ancient cultural achievements. Their military prowess was for long the terror of the northerners. Time was when perhaps they could subjugate all northerners and extend their ruling power over the entire land of Burma. But they were satisfied with their own area of the golden land which gave them everything they needed, while the dry arid land and the extreme climate of the north

² See Dr. R. C. Majumdar's article on 'Buddhist Councils', published in *Buddhistic Studies* by Dr. B. C. Law, Thacker, Spink & Co., Ltd. (1931).

hardly inspired them for any further colonial adventures. They lived and worked in close social relationship with the native inhabitants who slowly became united with them in one great society. They sought to harness all the energy of a new life in a new settlement for building up their new kingdom and new civilization to their heart's choice. Cities arose and grew up larger and larger, at first Thaton, then Pegu, and many others here and there. Both Thaton and Pegu were large seaports so long as the sea had not receded from these places. Foreigners from far-off lands came there by sea to exchange their trade-goods with Lower Burma. Indeed to the outer world, as Harvey rightly points out, Burma meant Lower Burma. It was thus an envy of not a few Burmese kings who used to cast upon it a greedy eye to some day acquire it or destroy it. This they actually started with King Anawratha invading and seizing whatever he could from there, and several other kings following him, till came the time in the eighteenth century for King Alaungpaya to destroy all the vestiges of the glorious Talaing kingdom. From the sixth century B. C. to the eighteenth century A.D. it was too long a time for this civilization, as it would be for any civilization, to avoid some ups and downs. That the Talaings could preserve their civilization through the grim exigencies of all this time is in itself a sufficient evidence of their remarkable wisdom and resourcefulness. But pure Buddhism as prevailed among them, with its clear and unequivocal emphasis upon the softer virtues of life, might have profoundly worked upon them long enough to cause their traditional urges for heroic resistance against any aggression, however strong and violent, to become weaker and weaker till they became too weak to resist. So the kingdom ultimately met its sad destiny at the hands of the virile northerners. But its golden gifts to the whole of Burma are the undying facts which continue to adorn the proud history of the Talaings in Lower Burma.

Having thus traversed the vast field of Burma's remote past, so profoundly rich in

culture, we are now in a position to admit that the whole perspective appears to be aglow with Indian contributions. Nay, we are fairly certain that the cultural background of the Burmese people is in almost all respects Indian. The British historians are very certain about it. Mr. D. G. E. Hall, who had long served as Professor of History in the University of Rangoon and is now a professor in the School of Oriental Studies under the London University, is convinced that the Burmese got their civilization from the Mons. The Mons had received most of their culture including the Buddhist religion from India. Here is again what Mr. G. E. Harvey, who is widely regarded as an authority on Burmese history and whose book on Burmese history is still used as a standard text-book throughout Burma, says:

'The Burmese are a Mongolian race, yet none of their traditions hark back to China or to Mongolian things: all hark back to India. The early part of their chronicles reads as if they were descended from Buddha's clansmen and lived in Upper India. Even their folklore is largely Hindu; the fairy-tale book Princess Thudhammansari (Sudhā-Manjari) contains clear references to caste; the legends of Princess Beda, of Alaungdaw Kathapa, of the Shwesettan and Shwedagon pagodas, are all copied from Indian originals. As in the rest of Indo-China, most of their towns have two names, one vernacular and the other classical Indian. Just as the Latin church made it fashionable for every city in medieval Europe to have a Roman name whether the Romans had been there or not, so the Hindu expansion caused a fashion for Sanskrit and Pali place-names in Burma. A few of such names are due to actual immigration from the original namesake; thus Ussa, the old name for Pegu, is the same word as Orissa, and Pegu was colonized from Orissa. The surviving traditions of the Burmese are Indian because their own Mongolian traditions died out. The only classes among them who could read and write and thus keep traditions alive, were their ruling Indian class, the Hindu colonists'.³

What Mr. Harvey says briefly in a small paragraph I have already shown in greater particulars. Yet a lot more can be stated to further amplify his points or add some more to these. But it is hardly necessary here, for

³ *Outline of Burmese History* (1947), p. 5.

we have still much to say about it in the Burmese history that followed.

But we must not omit here one important fact underlying the Indian background of Burmese culture. Whether in Upper Burma or in Arakan or in Lower Burma, the Burmese people, though Mongolian by race, were enlightened and broad-minded enough to appreciate the Indians whose political and cultural leadership they willingly accepted for the rapid progress of their country. There was nothing in this Indian leadership that was derogatory or degrading to the native inhabitants. For, the Indians in those times came to Burma to make it their permanent homeland and themselves the fellow countrymen of its people. As a result the Burmese people, who were vastly superior in number to the Indian immigrants, slowly absorbed the latter, while the superior culture of the latter absorbed the simple culture of the former. Racially the Indians became Burmanized and culturally the Burmans became Indianized. It was indeed a physical victory for one and a spiritual victory for the other,—a case of victory for both.

It gives little satisfaction to cover such a long period of a country's cultural history in a manner I have just attempted. For over nineteen centuries kingdom after kingdom arose here and there, chiefly through the genius of the Indian immigrants, prospered long amidst congenial atmosphere, and finally decayed through internal exhaustion and external aggression. From the vast ocean of Indian culture wave after wave came successively to overflow each kingdom and bathe its united people, hitherto scattered in tribal groups, each in its complacent isolation, to enthuse them for a newer and greater realization of corporate life. A rich land without a name, unknown to the outside world, and ignorant of its potentiality, began for the first time to be conscious of itself. When the land became known as Burma to the outside world, it had already gone a long way to make its own history and develop its own distinct civilization.

Yet this long period of Burma's cultural development, period beginning at least from 900 B. C. to 1000 A.D., practically approximating two millenniums, has been affably described by many writers of history, mostly foreigners, as legendary or prehistoric. Their main point is that the facts supplied by the Burmese Chronicle, the only authoritative record of Burma's past, are so bafflingly interwoven with 'fantastic fables' that a true historian can hardly accept them as of any historical value. And even these are all about the royal court-life which represents practically nothing about the actual conditions of the people. While there is admittedly some force in their point of view, it hardly supports their outright assumption of such a vast period, so replete with facts about the ruling dynasties and their organized kingdoms, as prehistoric or legendary. It is one thing to see a period without any scientifically recorded history and quite another thing to dismiss it altogether as prehistoric. Tagaung, Prome, and pre-Anawrathan Pagan certainly made history, although perhaps none had thought about writing it. Arakan and Talaing Burma had also their glorious histories now lying buried in the faint memory of the rich cultural superstructures that once majestically stood over their emblazoned capital cities. If we can have histories of such dead and buried civilization as in ancient Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Chaldea, even as of the ancient Aztecs and the Incas, why should Burma's ancient civilization, which seemed to have developed fairly in a continuous process under powerful ruling dynasties of the same or partially mixed racial stock, be considered or virtually dismissed as non-historical? Beneath many places of Burma's land and rocky surface and the changing river valleys there may lie vast treasures of ancient civilization like those discovered in the Nile valley, in some mountains of Eastern Persia, and at Ur. For archaeological exploration Burma still remains a virgin field. Who can say that there were no Mohenjo-Daros and Harappas also in this eastern extension of

ancient India? The great river Irrawaddy may be as glorious as the Indus. And then the facile verdict on Burmese Chronicle! Those British historians who reject its ancient record of facts as 'fantasies like those of the Arabian Nights' do not seem to remember how Europe's early history was written at first. Was it any less fantastic and legendary? The high dignitaries of the Christian Church, who were the sole repositories of knowledge for more than a thousand years in Europe, wrote it. They corrupted history by reducing it to a branch of theology. Miracles and lies were their fond obsession with which they applied themselves to this work. Buckle, in his classical production *History of Civilization in England*, has given us enough 'facts' of these early European historians,—facts which will stagger even the fantastic imagination of a child. Nevertheless Europe has got its reliable history of those ancient times. The post-Renaissance historians, who had freed themselves from the cobwebs of medieval theology, sifted facts from fantasies, colligated them with a truly scientific spirit and finally achieved it. Could not the history of ancient Burma be similarly achieved? When are we going to have a similar Renaissance in Burma and India?

The kingdom of Tagaung arose and lasted four hundred years. When Tagaung fell Prome was built by the descendants of the last Tagaung king and continued gloriously for about six hundred years. Again a descendant of the last king of Prome left the fallen kingdom to build a new one at Pagan, which continued for about nine hundred years till the time of king Anawratha with whom, we are told, began the real history of Burma. Can anybody believe that the three kingdoms, which arose one after another in fairly continuous succession and covered the long period of nineteen hundred years, did not make any history? Should we remain content by consigning it to prehistoric obscurity and naively talk of Anawratha's eleventh century as marking the beginning of Burmese history? That is both sad and ridiculous. No Burmans

believe it, no true student of culture and civilization can accept it. The Burmese Chronicle gives a good mass of facts of this period to form a fair basis of history. What remains to be done and must be done to have a well-written history is to re-explore thoroughly all possible sources of information regarding this vast period—those that are above the land surface and those that are still beneath it, make a scientific colligation of all rescued materials in relation to those that have already been known, and then present the whole thing in an orderly sequence with a rational interpretation of its historical authenticity. Until this is done, no Burman proud of his country's past and no Indian proud of his cultural heritage should rest at ease.

Nay, I should like to go further. One should not think that Burmese history began with the rise of the kingdom of Tagaung in 900 B.C. What about the period previous to this kingdom? The indigenous people who formed the major population of this kingdom certainly had some modicum of culture, primitive or advanced, to appreciate the value of life in a greater society which the kingdom represented. Besides, Tagaung, though it was a fairly large kingdom in those ancient days, comprised only a small area of the entire land. How about the other areas? Tagaung was for the most part a rugged high land with none too favourable conditions for the growth of a civilization. On the other hand, the extensive fertile lands in the lower valleys of the various rivers which afforded more favourable natural conditions must have had their group-settlers. Burma beside Tagaung did not mean at that time all jungles and no men. The statement I have quoted at the beginning from H. G. Wells' *Outline of History* rules it out. There certainly were other group-settlers elsewhere in the land, living in their established society and having their own peculiar ways of life. They certainly had their own manners and customs, their ideas and tradition, which might still be existing in many unrecognized, almost forgotten stories and fables of old. The present Burmans can hardly afford, as no civilized

people can afford, to neglect or forget altogether such basic conditions of their cultural history which reveal unmistakable clues to their racial traits and peculiarities. The soul of the people had its birth in them. That birth-story is as indispensable for Burma's cultural history as its later chronological events. What a distinguished Japanese scholar said in comment about the people of the Philippines who think that their cultural history began with the coming of the Spaniards should apply equally to Burma. In course of a series of lectures delivered in the University of the Philippines, at Manila, in 1939, he said:

'Since I have come over to the Philippines, people have told me that the Philippines was under the domination of the Spaniards for four hundred years, and previous to that time according to some Filipinos, they had not very much in the way of culture. But I differ in that respect from these Filipino scholars. At present there may not be much culture found among these Filipinos out in this country, but if you get hold of some indications of their primitive civilization and analyse them in the light of modern science, comparing the times

and conditions and try to find out what is contained in the civilization of old time, I am sure you can find something very important. Nor would I believe that in the mythological ages of Japan we could have found anything worthy if we admitted those very ages were like fables and not trustworthy. But instead of doing that we have analysed them; and the more you study, and the more you go in, the more treasure you will find. There are some indications of truth which we have taken up. And by observing, by comparing, by studying them, then making researches to every discovery we find in that very code of life in Japan civilization worth preserving today. . . . Because the old civilization does not come up to the present standard, it does not mean that the Filipino civilization does not exist. Because there were no airplanes in those days, you cannot say that the old civilization was nothing. . . . In point of love and respect, in point of happiness, in point of humanity, in point of human relationship that type of primitive civilization might have been far better than what we have now. In my opinion we are not happier and more civilized in our mentality than the people of those days'.⁴

(Concluded)

Dr. Yoshitara Negishi, Litt.D.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The soul hungers for and seeks union with God. Does not God, in His infinite love and mercy, descend and come forward to meet the soul? In *Sita Lost*, the writer suggests an original meaning to the epic story of Rama going in search of Sita. The allegorical interpretation of the *Rāmāyana* is not unknown in India and some treatises such as the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyana* deal with the relation between the individual soul and the supreme Self while narrating the story. . . .

The Message of Swami Vivekananda is the report of the illuminating address delivered by Sri Jayaprakash Narayan, the eminent national leader and a master mind of our generation, when he presided over the Swami

Vivekananda birthday anniversary celebrations held at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on the 17th February, 1952. It is translated from the original Hindi. . . .

Dr. Radha Govinda Basak, M.A., Ph.D., leading Indologist and former Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Presidency College, Calcutta, makes a distinctly thought-provoking study of *The Life and Teachings of Buddha*. Dr. Basak has earned a considerable name as an erudite scholar in Ancient Indian History, with an intimate knowledge of the original sources both in Sanskrit and Pali. The article will be concluded in our next. . . .

Sri Jagdish Sahai, M.A., a new and welcome contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*,

reinterprets the supreme value of religion not only to the individual but also to society in a manner helpful to the solution of the problems of modern man. Religion, in its purest form, cleansed of all non-essential accretions, becomes the *Religion of Man*—the greatest saving factor of civilizations. . . .

Intuitive knowledge of Reality is direct, immediate, and non-relational. *Higher Immediacy*—in other words, *aparokṣānubhūti*—is the unmediated and intimate realization of the Absolute Truth, when the self is conscious of itself not through the intervention of anything forming the not-self. Prof. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., of the University of Saugor, writing with massive erudition, investigates the structure of this branch of Vedānta epistemology, relating his conclusions to the well-known authorities on the subject.

THE CONCEPT OF MAN

The need for a better and fuller knowledge of man has become imperative today. The mighty events in world history since the turn of the century have focussed attention on the importance of the individual in relation to society and the State. But there has been a noticeable proclivity towards justifying the urgency of the economic, political, and commercial aspects of life, isolating, at the same time, the moral and spiritual ends and values that in fact give direction to human activities. The sciences of inorganic and inert matter have progressed more rapidly than the science of life itself. The impact of science on society has its great advantages as well as disadvantages. It appears as though man is perplexed by the enormity of his own inventions and creations and finds himself a stranger in the world he has sought to improve. The anomalies of human movement have, therefore, awakened sensitive and progressive minds everywhere to an awareness of the true concept of man.

The East, more especially India, has always put emphasis on the spiritual and divine nature of man's inner being, while the

West is intent on pursuing life's objectives with a materialistic and mechanistic conception of man. Though 'unity in variety' is the plan of creation, any undue stress on divergent concepts such as the 'purely Eastern' or the 'exclusively Western' cannot go far in establishing the kind of world understanding and peace we all so anxiously want to establish. The time has come for a harmonious synthesis of all that is best and noblest, whether it is of the East or of the West. Humanity's attention has to be turned from everything that divides man from man. The disrespect shown to human personality merely on racial, national, or religious grounds can never be condemned too strongly. It is all the more deplorable when such atrocious racial or religious discrimination is practised by those who consider themselves civilized and progressive.

In the course of his Address to the inaugural session of the U.N.E.S.C.O. symposium on 'The Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in the East and West', held at New Delhi some months back, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad analysed, with remarkable felicity, the Eastern and Western concepts of man. Referring to the various concepts about man and nature in different countries, he observed:

'There are many points in common between the views of philosophers in the East and the West but there is one distinction in emphasis between India, Greece, and China which strikes us from the very beginning of recorded history. In India, the emphasis of philosophy has, on the whole, been on the inner experience of man. Philosophers here have sought to understand man's inner nature, and in this pursuit have gone beyond the regions of sense, intellect, and even reason and sought to assert the identity of man with a deep hidden Reality. In Greece, the philosopher has been interested mainly in understanding the nature of the world outside. He has sought to determine the place of man in the outer world. His view has therefore been, on the whole, more extrovert than in India. In China, on the other hand, philosophers have not worried about the inner nature of man nor about external Nature but concentrated on the study of man in relation to his fellows. These differences in orientation have exerted a profound influence on

later developments of philosophy in each of these regions. We find, therefore, that there are striking differences in their respective concepts of man'.

Making a healthy comparison between the views held by the scholars of the West and those held by the seers of India and the East, and elaborating the Vedantic concept of man, Maulana Azad said:

'In course of time a materialistic and scientific temper became the pervasive outlook of the West. We find a culmination of this development in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Darwin sought to establish that man is descended from animals while Marx argued that his mentality is largely the resultant of his material environment. Freud in the twentieth century went a step further and taught that not only is man descended from animals, but his mentality retains even today traces of his animal origin.

'As opposed to this conception of man as a progressive animal, we find in the East a completely different concept of man. The East has from the very beginning emphasized man's intrinsic spirituality. The contemplation of the inner reality of man gave rise to the philosophy of Vedanta in India and Sufism in Arabia. This spiritual concept of man has deeply influenced the mentality of man throughout the East and is not unknown even in the West. According to this outlook, we cannot understand the essence of man if we regard him as only a material entity. The real nature of man can be understood only if we conceive of him as an emanation of God. There was in Eastern philosophy a strong pantheistic strain. In different schools of Indian philosophy, all things are regarded as expressions of God's being but even then man belongs to a special category. For he is the highest manifestation of God's being.

'Similarly we find that according to the Sufis, man is a wave of the boundless sea that is God. He is a ray of the sun that is God. Man can regard himself as different from the Eternal Being only so long as his vision is clouded by the evil of ignorance. Once there is enlightenment, all these distinctions dissolve and man recognizes himself as a moment in the being of the Eternal.

'It will be readily agreed that there can be no higher concept of man. God marks the highest limit of human thought. By identifying man with God, the Eastern concept of man elevates him to godhead. Man has therefore no other goal but to re-establish his identity with God. He thus becomes superior to the entire creation'.

Pointing out the beneficent results that would follow from a true synthesis of both

the Eastern and the Western concepts of man and reiterating the need for achieving such a synthesis before long by evolving a suitable course of education, Maulana Azad observed:

'The Eastern conception of man's status, if combined with the Western concept of progress, would open out to man the possibility of infinite advance without the risks implicit in the misuse of science. . . . The Eastern conception of man's status is not only consistent with the progress of Western science, but in fact offers an intelligible explanation of how scientific progress is possible. If man were merely a developed animal, there would be a limit to his advancement. If however, he shares in God's infinity, there can be no limit to the progress he can achieve. Science can then march from triumph to triumph and solve many of the riddles which trouble man even to this day.

'There is a further reason why a synthesis of the Eastern and the Western concepts of man is of the greatest importance to man's future. Science in itself is neutral. Its discoveries can be used equally to heal and to kill. It depends upon the outlook and mentality of the user whether science will be used to create a new heaven on earth or to destroy the world in a common conflagration. If we think of man as only a progressive animal, there is nothing to prevent his using science for furthering interests based on the passions he shares in common with animals. If, however, we think of him as an emanation of God, he can use science only for furthering God's purposes, that is the achievement of peace on earth and goodwill to all men'.

That such a wholesome synthesis of the East and the West was the great desideratum of our age was clearly pointed out by Swami Vivekananda over five decades ago. The Swami had said:

'This world of ours is on the plan of the division of labour. It is vain to say that one man shall possess everything. A nation which is great in the possession of material power thinks that that is all that is to be coveted, that that is all that is meant by progress, that that is all that is meant by civilization. On the other hand, another nation may think that mere material civilization is utterly useless. From the Orient came the voice which once told the world that if a man possesses everything that is under the sun and does not possess spirituality,

what avails it? This is the Oriental type, the other is the Occidental type. Each of these types has its grandeur, each has its glory. The present adjustment will be the harmonizing, the mingling of these two ideals. The Oriental ideal is as necessary for the progress of the human race as is the Occidental, and I think it is more necessary. For a complete civilization the world is waiting,

waiting for the treasures to come out of India, waiting for the marvellous spiritual inheritance of the race'.

There is no doubt that the world is gradually moving in this direction and that the forces of unity and synthesis are slowly but steadily gaining ground notwithstanding the apparent conflicts and turmoil on the surface.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE SERPENT POWER. BY ARTHUR AVALON. Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras), Ltd., Madras 17. Pages 668. Price Rs. 25 or £ 2.

Sir John Woodroffe, eminent jurist and profound scholar, who is the well-known author of many books, especially of the series of valuable publications on Tantra Shāstra under the pseudonym 'Arthur Avalon', needs no introduction to the literate circle. It can safely be affirmed that it was his great and untiring efforts that inaugurated a revival in the modern study of Tāntrika literature which occupies an important place in the religious life of India. His illuminating works make it abundantly clear that the massive literature bearing on this undoubtedly difficult subject is by no means any 'magical or meaningless superstition'—as it has been supposed to be—but an intricate and comprehensive system which has exercised a healthy and powerful influence on the religious and philosophical concepts of a civilized and enlightened people. These writings of Sir John Woodroffe have not only dispelled the mystery and misconceptions that surround the theory and practice of the Tantras but also awakened a genuine regard for and interest in the greatness of this branch of Indian thought. The book under review occupies a high rank among the books of its class and offers to the English-knowing public, in rich and lucid language, an amazing amount of knowledge on an otherwise abstruse subject which is none the less a direct and efficient means for the realization of the Supreme. As is well known, this book was first published nearly thirty-four years ago in England and soon after in India too. The Indian Publishers deserve hearty congratulations from every lover of the subject on their publication of the present (fourth) edition of the book. (The first edition of the book had been adequately reviewed in these columns in our issue for July 1920).

This work is a description and explanation in fuller detail of the 'Serpent Power' (*kuṇḍalī-śakti*) and the Yoga effected through it, a subject occupy-

ing a pre-eminent place in the Tantra Shāstra. The volume contains an elaborate General Introduction, in itself an important work of much erudition. Then come the complete and lucid English translations, with very useful explanatory Notes, both by the author, of two recondite Sanskrit works, the first called *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirūpaṇa* ('Description of and Investigation into the Six Bodily Centres'), by the great Tāntrik Purnānanda, and the second entitled *Pādukā-pañcaka* ('Fivefold Footstool of the Guru'), along with the English translations of the respective Commentaries on the two works by Kālicharana—each verse of the main work being followed by the commentary on it. The former work, containing 56 verses in all and dealing with the process of spiritual realization—*ṣaṭ-cakra-bheda* (piercing of the six Chakras)—as is laid down in the Tantras, forms the sixth chapter of *Śrī-tattva-cintāmaṇi*, an extensive work on Tantrik ritual by Purnananda. The latter work, containing only 8 verses, deals with one of the Chakras (or Lotuses) described in the former. The volume also contains, in the pages following the English part of it, the Sanskrit text (in Devanāgarī) of the above-mentioned two works; with the Commentaries, here translated, and also of *Ṣaṭ-cakra-vivṛti*—a Commentary by Vishwanātha on the *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirūpaṇa*.

In his learned and exhaustive Introduction, covering over 300 pages and comprising seven chapters, the author presents a summary account of the principles upon which rest Yoga in general and Kundalini Yoga in particular, with special reference to the subject-matter of the texts translated. In other words, it contains a lucid description and explanation of the Kundalini Shakti or Supreme Power in the human body by the arousing of which the Yoga is achieved. (*Kuṇḍala* means 'coiled'; *Kuṇḍalini* means the power or Goddess that lies coiled, whose form is that of a coiled and sleeping serpent. Hence the author has called his work *Serpent Power*).

The volume contains eight original coloured

plates of the Chakras and nine half-tone plates, taken from life, showing some positions in Kundalini Yoga. The printing and get-up of the book are very good and it is bound in full cloth and gilt.

ENGLISH-BENGALI

VIDYAMANDIR PATRIKA. *Published by the Principal, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah (West Bengal). Pages 110.*

This sumptuous, illustrated annual number (1951) of the Organ of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira provides a rich and varied literary repast,

in keeping with the glorious traditions of the Institution. It contains a large number of well written articles—most of them in Bengali and a few in English—and also poems in Bengali, contributed by the students and the members of the staff. These writings reveal the admirable intellectual verve of the students and their keen and intelligent interest in current topics—educational, cultural, social, and religious. This attractive production bears testimony to the delightful fact that there are some worthy scholars and artists too among the students, in addition to litterateurs. It is a commendable achievement on the part of the students, and we wish them greater success in their devoted effort in the coming years.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAMANDIRA, BELUR (HOWRAH)

REPORT FOR 1951-52

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur, Howrah, started in July 1941, has, with the closing of the academic year under report, completed eleven years of its useful and glorious career. It is a residential Intermediate College, situated very close to the Belur Math, teaching both arts (including commerce) and science. During the period under review, there were on the whole (including both the senior and junior classes) 251 students; of these, 205 were in the science section and 46 in the arts section. The teaching staff numbered 24, of whom 4 were monastic members of the Order. In addition, the two hostels, accommodating the students, were under the supervision of monastic wardens.

The admirable results of the university examination reveal a commendable performance on the part of the students, who have ably maintained the traditional high standards of the Vidyamandira in this respect. Of the 85 boys sent up for the Intermediate Examination of the Calcutta University, 73 came out successful—62 in the science section and 11 in the arts section, thus scoring over 85 per cent passes. Special mention has to be made of the fact that in the science section two boys secured the third and fourth places in the University, and in the arts section one boy secured the tenth place. Moreover, altogether six boys obtained meritorious scholarships.

The Vidyamandira possesses a well-stocked library and a common room. Tutorial classes are regularly held in all subjects. In addition to academic education, the students are provided with facilities for extra-mural activities—physical, social, literary, and religious—for the harmonious development of their

character and personality. During the year, a small hospital building, attached to the Vidyamandira hostels, has been completed and a whole-time medical officer looks after the health and physical fitness of the students. The Vidyamandira needs funds—to help poor but meritorious students by admitting them as free students; to complete the present incomplete hostel building; and for the construction of another hostel and a gymnasium.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, CALICUT

REPORT FOR 1948 AND 1949

The following is a brief summary of the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Calicut, Malabar, for the years 1948 and 1949:

Religious: The Sevashrama has an attached shrine where daily worship, Bhajana, and Sankirtana are conducted. Religious classes are held every week and *Gita* is taught daily to the inmates of its Students' Home. Public lectures are also organized in the Sevashrama. Birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Buddha, Christ, and other saints and prophets are also observed.

Educational: The Sevashrama conducts a free Elementary School, with a strength of about 200 pupils, and a free Students' Home for boys of poor and backward communities, most of whom are orphans. Its present strength is 34. There are also a Higher Elementary School for the boys of the Students' Home, with 32 students on its rolls at present, and a free Reading Room and Library for the public.

Medical: In 1948 a new building, at a cost of about Rs. 5,000, was constructed for the dispensary. The dispensary treated 62,739 cases in 1948 of which 13,122 were new cases, and 73,887 in 1949 of which 14,986 were new.