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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY LAVINIA R. CLARK

Vivekananda, Swami, now as near
As when you poured the Vedas' holy writ,
The heart of India, in our hearts and knit
Our souls with your high vision, calm and clear:—
Godlike and gracious, you seem standing here
In ochre robe and turbaned head. We sit
In your majestic presence where is lit
The starry fire that swings celestial spheres;
Through India's length and breadth you trod,
A princely mendicant from Orient
To our religious parliament you came
Where hearts swept up to you like flame;
With tolerance, deep love, and logic blent,
You taught that all religions lead to God.

WHEN THE SOUL HUNGERS FOR GOD

'Gentle Uddhava', said Sri Krishna, 'go to Vrindaban and inquire about the well-being of my foster-parents. Give them news of me and remove the misery from the hearts of the maidens grieving because I have seemingly left them. They meditate on me and will attain to me; but meanwhile they have forgotten that there is no separation between them and me, and are going about distracted, yearning for my presence'.

Uddhava followed the instructions of his Lord. Entering the golden chariot that was provided for him, he repaired to Vrindaban, reaching it at dusk when the cows were just returning to the village. The dust raised by their hoofs and the dim light prevented the villagers from seeing Uddhava's arrival. He heard cowherd youths and maidens rhythmically chanting the glories of Sri Krishna. The fragrance of incense, the aftermath of evening worship, floated gently in the air.

Uddhava went straight to the dwelling of Nanda, the cowherd chieftain and Sri Krishna's foster-father, who came forward in great joy to meet his princely guest and to offer the customary salutations and services. When Uddhava had been made quite comfortable, Nanda could no longer repress his eagerness for news of Sri Krishna. He cried, 'O great one, is my dear foster-son well? Is he surrounded by friends and loved ones? Does he remember his foster-parents? Does he remember his friends—the cowherd boys and maidens—to whom he is the All? Will he come again to Vrindaban? Everything we do reminds us so vividly of him that our minds are continually absorbed in him'.

Tears rolled down Nanda's cheeks and those of his wife Yashoda, at the recollection of the beloved Krishna. Uddhava was deeply touched by this evidence of attachment to his Lord. Saluting Nanda and Yashoda, he said: "O worthy souls, your devotion will lead you

to the Highest, since its object is the Preceptor of the universe. Know that Krishna is the cause of all, permeating all existence, guiding everything. High-minded ones, because of your adoration of him you have fulfilled the requirements for breaking the fetters of Karma, attaining to purity of heart, and becoming endowed with true knowledge. Krishna will be near you always. Even now he resides within you, as fire in the heart of wood'.

Nanda, Yashoda and their guest spent the entire night discussing the glory and wonder of Sri Krishna. Uddhava said: 'He is the Lord, utterly impartial in bestowing his love. He is the same to all—good, bad, and indifferent—for all are the same to him. He has neither father, mother, wife nor children. Action does not belong to him, because all his activities are but sport when he incarnates on the earth. Though beyond all qualities, he can assume the qualities of goodness, darkness, or ignorance. Though unborn, he can, with the assumption and use of these qualities, create, preserve, and destroy the universe. Remember this, that the Divine One is not only son to you and Yashoda, but he is also father, mother, friend, master, Soul of your soul—and he is all this to everyone. He is Ishvara; he is the past, the present, and the future; he is all things, great or small; he is whatever is seen or heard; he is the Great Soul, the Lord of all hearts'.

Dawn came and the sun cast lustrous rays upon the milkmaids, accentuating their loveliness and the beauty of their ornaments as they sang songs addressed to Sri Krishna and contemplated on him while performing their morning duties. By the light of the day Uddhava could see clearly how beautifully Vrindaban was set amid forests and fields abounding in delicately coloured, fragrant flowers. Birds lifted their voices, adding sweetness to the air. Soon the folk of Vrindaban saw the golden

chariot at the gate of the village, and the cry arose, 'Whose car is this? Can it be a messenger from our Krishna?'

After his morning meditation, Uddhava approached the milkmaids. When they saw his golden dress and ornaments, his eyes of lotus shape and his glowing countenance, they were reminded of Sri Krishna and asked among themselves, 'Who is he?' and 'Whence has he come?' Then they greeted him with humility and sweetness, speaking shyly and making him welcome. After he had been seated and they had learnt who he was, they said: 'It is only natural that our beloved Krishna should send you to bear greetings to his foster-parents and to inquire for their welfare, because even the great retain a certain interest in their relatives. When Krishna lived here he was interested in us also, but now that he has gone away, what reason is there for thinking that he continues to care for us, that we are still dear to him? The bird leaves the tree which bears no fruit; the deer leaves the burnt forest'.

They would not allow themselves, even for a moment, to hope that Sri Krishna remembered them as well as Nanda and Yashoda, and yet the thought of being forgotten hurt them cruelly, and they wept. But so absorbed did they become in talking about Sri Krishna, that they soon forgot themselves and their pain and before long were weeping for joy as they told Uddhava the wonders of the Holy One's boyhood.

Uddhava, realizing from their speech that these simple maidens had never recognized Sri Krishna as God, but had nevertheless responded with all their hearts to his Divine attraction and were utterly devoted to him, saluted them and said: 'Never forget that you are blessed and worthy to be worshipped by all the world because you have consecrated yourselves to the Lord. Such devotion as yours is acquired only through control of the senses. Those who merely bestow gifts and study the Vedas, find it difficult to attain this. Even when ascetics practise austerities with great earnestness for many years, they achieve

it with difficulty: Yet, in renouncing your human ties and electing to adore the Divine Soul, Sri Krishna, you have won His indescribable good fortune. Listen, O good and gentle maidens, to the words of the Lord. He once spoke them to you himself, but they have recently been imparted to me that I might confide them to you and so remind you of the Lord's secret message to his beloved devotees'.

The milkmaids forgot their shyness and drew closer to Uddhava. With deep conviction of the truth of the words he spoke, he gave them Sri Krishna's message: 'There is no separation between us, for I am the Soul of all. In every element of creation, mobile and immobile—in ether, fire, water, and earth—I am to be found. Likewise I am in the senses, the mind, the intellect, and the vital breath. What if I am removed from your sense perception? Such removal is only for the purpose of causing you to put forth more effort as you meditate on me, so that you will draw closer to me. A woman by her nature is drawn closer to her beloved when he is at a distance. Dear ones, remove all grief from your hearts and take your minds from sense objects. Dwell on me alone, your Lord Sri Krishna. Then you will find me in the heart of your hearts'.

Hearing this message, the milkmaids put aside their grief and offered worship to Uddhava for the treasure of his consolation. That worthy messenger of the Highest found in this way that these village maidens, though unaware of the Divinity of their Lord, had, through the very intensity of their love for him, attained to a high state of spiritual awareness.

Uddhava spent many months in happy association with the villagers of Vrindaban, who were continuously joyous in the recollection of the Lord. At last, having noted their sustained delight, he felt his mission had been fulfilled. So he made special obeisance to the cherished ones whose unflinching devotion to

the Lord Incarnate commanded his reverence, and he then sought Nanda, asking that his chariot be made ready.

The villagers crowded round his golden car, their hands filled with gifts. As spokesman, Nanda said: 'May our minds always dwell with yearning at the lotus feet of Sri

Krishna! May our tongues for ever be engaged in hymning his name, and our bodies in saluting him! Whatever be our condition as the result of our Karma and His will, may our lives be His alone, may our gifts be for Him only and please Him only, and may we gain His blessings!'

THE MEANING OF FREEDOM

BY THE EDITOR

'Freedom in all matters, i.e. advance towards Mukti, is the worthiest gain of man. To advance oneself towards Freedom—physical, mental, and spiritual, and help others to do so, is the supreme prize of man'.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

In a world bewildered by ceaseless preparations for war and impotent plans for peace, everyone is confronted today more than ever with the basic conflicts of life, viz. between man and Nature, between man and man, and between man and himself. No sooner the dust has begun to settle on one battle-field than clouds of dust are raised on the next. Wars fought to end war have been on the increase, obviously disproving the contention that everlasting freedom could be achieved by meeting force by deterrent counter-force and violence by deterrent counter-violence. Notwithstanding the immense benefits conferred by the growth of the arts and the sciences, the general threat to life and property through wars and rumours of wars has shown no signs of abatement. In scrupulous fairness to the political leaders of nations, who repeatedly reiterate the well-worn stereotype of the rights of man and the civil liberties of the individual, it has to be said that not a few of them are earnestly sincere in their effort to create a vastly better world. By helping the removal of mutual distrust among nations, they no doubt seek to prevent an explosion somehow thereby lessening the daily dread of radioactive disintegra-

tion of our cherished civilization. Though these lovers and leaders of mankind in every land speak with dissimilar voices, they all reveal their deep concern for the welfare of the common man and the betterment of his lot. They look forward to and show promise of, each in his own way, the 'golden age' of peace and plenty, when 'nation shall no more lift sword against nation' and there shall be enough and to spare of everything that man needs.

But what of Freedom itself? And where and when are we to expect the birth of the new world order based on justice, equality, and brotherly love in which the free development of each will lead to the free development of all? The goal is one, but the roads are many; consequently the starting points too are many. To most people the meaning of freedom has a pragmatic and utilitarian significance. By freedom they understand some form of self-government and political independence under the benign rule of which they may live happy, comfortable, and unoppressed. Many others look upon freedom as the state of social stability and order wherein the individual is free to exercise his inalienable rights

and privileges, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Not a few hold that freedom should confer on every citizen complete liberty of thought, action, and expression within the bounds of law and order. Nowhere has it ever been conceded that freedom ought to mean unlicensed and unrestrained exercise of right or authority by the individual or the State. For, without the restraining influence of reasonable discipline and just law, civilized and orderly life would yield place to chaos. In fact, national self-government, by which we moderners set great store, is no other than individual self-government, attained through self-restraint and self-rule. As such, the liberty of the individual citizen is a sacred heritage and every government or State that has the welfare of the people at heart has to preserve and protect this heritage of individual freedom, from which alone it derives the sanction of its authority and suzerainty. Hence the demand everywhere for ensuring the greatest possible scope for the development of the individual's personality by affording him equal opportunities with all to pursue any useful course to the best of his powers and abilities.

The meaning of real freedom, however, appears to be less obvious to man than the meaning of its opposites, viz. slavery, tyranny, and exploitation. Man seems to want freedom for himself in order to rob others of their freedom. The story of man from the dawn of civilization has been one of continuous striving for freedom—freedom from want and from fear, freedom from exploitation and oppression. To be more free is the goal of all human effort; freedom, not bondage, is the watchword of every nation, big or small. As early as in 1776, Thomas Paine wrote:

'O! Ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. . . . O! Receive the fugitive and prepare in time an asylum for mankind'.

The clarion call for ending the unjust exploitation of the weak by the strong, of the

poor by the rich, has gone forth from every corner of the earth from the most ancient times. As the centuries rolled by, the call grew louder and more persistent, while, simultaneously, exploitation and oppression also increased. Every road leading to the ideal state of blissful emancipation tended to become blocked—not by obstacles placed by any non-human agency, but by the sheer folly of human minds that had allowed themselves to be saturated with fear, hatred, intolerance, and lust for power. Even a cursory glance at world conditions in recent decades will suffice to impress on one's mind the odious but inescapable conclusion that the lofty meaning of freedom has lost its supremacy and assumed a deplorably narrow and bigoted significance.

The strength and power of a nation or State depend largely on the innate strength and power of the individuals, who more or less determine the shape and organization of their government. The individuals, in return for the rights, privileges, and security that the State offers them, have to fulfil conscientiously their obligations and responsibilities. Freedom is the will to be responsible for oneself; it is judicious exercise of the right to seek work, wealth, and happiness in the manner most appropriate to oneself, without transgressing the law or hindering the freedom of others. Enlightened citizens, who understand the meaning of freedom and utilize their freedom with much circumspection and with benefit to themselves and to others, can alone elect a government which may be said to be the best, as it is called upon to govern the least. A perfect society that can regulate its own affairs and govern itself has the least occasion for an authoritarian or militaristic type of government. Hence is it often said that self-government is better than the best form of good government. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'Government over self is the truest Swaraj, it is synonymous with Moksha or salvation'. According to Vedanta, the true meaning of freedom signifies supreme self-mastery (*svarājya-siddhi*) and self-fulfilment, attainable by everyone who frees himself from

the limitations of the body and mind and remains firmly established in the Infinite and the Imperishable.

None can deny that freedom is the most essential condition of all progress. Where there is no freedom—political, social, and spiritual, there can hardly be full growth and well-being of the human personality. Many a modern State, while granting complete political and economic emancipation to the people, seeks to curtail or deny social and even spiritual freedom. The physical needs of the body—food, shelter, and the largest amount of pleasure possible—have assumed a profoundly meaningful aspect to the majority of men today. The reason is obvious. At no time has the world been wanting in those who glorify the laws of the flesh and find 'freedom in the thousand bonds of delight'. Self-seeking mass orators, with deceptive slogans and insufficient factors of altruism, are surely the least fitted for meeting the demands of the present situation humanity finds itself in. The price one has to pay for achieving real and genuine freedom is much more than a mere revolutionary urge or a life of privation. It calls for infinite patience, simplicity, renunciation, and purity of motive. It may seem strange, but it is true, that the meaning of freedom can be properly understood only in relation to an abiding and deeply felt faith in the Divinity or Reality inherent in man.

Man has travelled a long way from the days of the robber-barons and the galley-slaves. The common labourer or artisan has become the focal point of universal attention. Freedom in the modern world has assumed a significance of unprecedented importance. There is no going back to the ancient conditions of life, however sensible and attractive, when the different peoples of the world remained in complete isolation, in many cases being unaware of even the existence of one another. Signs of great awakening, in support of regaining their national independence, are evident in every country that has been or still is under alien domination. For, no nation can live and thrive on being supplied the bare

necessaries of life alone. Even when a nation possesses wealth and material prosperity to any desired extent, it is seen that the soul of the nation remains unregenerate and the goal of a truly welfare State has not been achieved. Much of the clash and conflict that thwart the expansion of freedom and happiness is due to the unwisdom of regarding 'welfare' in terms of material wealth and military power only. Freedom from the tyranny of fear has eluded man for ages and today the position is no better, if not worse.

The war-weary world is aghast at the insincere ways of some of the vociferous protagonists of peace and freedom, who speak with their tongues in their cheeks, hiding the most lethal secret weapon in one hand and holding out the olive-branch in the other. A hectic race for the increase of armaments is occasionally interspersed with glib talks of freedom and feelers for peace, the implications of which even their ardent sponsors do not seem to be aware. Mutual rivalry and clash of self-interest have given rise to mutually repellent ideological superstructures and spheres of influence. Standing in the midst of mighty world movements, India finds herself in an unenviable position. The raging conflict of norms and ideologies is not unknown or non-existent in India. But, true to her great ideals and lofty aspirations, India has stood firm as the symbol of man's complete freedom from every shackle that binds the individual and contracts his infinite personality. She has preserved and proclaimed not only social, political, economic, and religious freedom, but also cultural and spiritual freedom, and that for everyone throughout the world, irrespective of any distinction based on birth, caste, race, religion, or nationality. Hence, let not her sons and daughters forget that India stands for the most exalted freedom—the Freedom of the soul of man. She has no less emphasized the mundane and more immediate aspect of freedom too, ensuring thereby, to all the people of the land, 'justice—social, economic, and political; liberty—of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship; equality—of status and of

opportunity; and fraternity—assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation’.

It is no more a sign of progress to refuse to look back into the past than it is to refuse to look forward into the future. Every nation, like every individual, cherishes a distinctly characteristic conception of the ideal of freedom. The desire for freedom is universal and everyone puts forth his own blue-print of a new and more desirable world order, invariably buttressed by his stock of death-dealing weapons. But the meaning and conception of freedom that have developed in one land or among one group of people cannot obviously be acceptable or applicable to another. Each country has to adhere to the fundamentals of its own ancient cultural traditions and transform itself through fruitful integration of that which is best in the old as well as the new. In India spiritual ideals and values have ever held sway over secular, social, and all other values. The meaning of freedom cannot, therefore, be divested of its spiritual significance. The urge of the Spirit to break the bonds of the limited, narrow personality and rediscover itself in and through every other being constitutes the essence of human freedom which distinguishes man from the machine.

Where individual freedom is unhampered and the right of each individual to live the life of his choice is fully assured it is imperative that the sanctity of human personality should be realized and accorded due recognition. Freedom, as a Vedantin would view it, is nothing short of ultimate Freedom or Mukti, the transcendence from the world of limited freedom to the state of Infinite and Eternal Freedom. To be free in every respect one has to remain independent of the control of and subservience to anything other than the Self. ‘Man the brute’ has to loosen the bonds that tie him down to the myriads of passions and prejudices, sorrows and sufferings, and attain the blissful state of ‘Man the divine’, who not only enjoys the highest freedom for himself but also helps others to attain the same. Other

forms of freedom—political, social, and economic—are but phases of the fundamental spiritual freedom which forms as it were the thread of unity underlying and upholding them all. These phases of freedom are necessary means in man’s conscious attempt to actualize the latent indomitable urge of the divinity and perfection within him for expression and expansion.

Vedanta provides man with an ideal which ensures for him freedom that is eternal and imperishable and which imparts meaning and zest to life. It preaches the message of the emancipation of and sovereignty over self through a graduated scale of values and a regulated scheme of life, finally leading to the spiritual realization of the Supreme Reality. Hence the insistence on the individual’s strict observance of Dharma by the seers and social law-givers of India. A most outstanding feature of Indian civilization is its conception of Dharma as a measure of man’s freedom at home and in society. Though a word of protean significance, ‘The basic principle of Dharma’, says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, ‘is the realization of the dignity of the human Spirit which is the dwelling-place of the Supreme’. It would be a misuse of freedom for the individual to transgress the injunctions and prohibitions of Dharma. Further, duty determined by one’s natural bent, capacity, and condition of life is one’s Sva-dharma (one’s own mode of being or code of life), which gives one the full freedom to mould one’s destiny in accordance with one’s nature, temperament, and environment. Sva-dharma makes each man great in his own place and promotes individual and social welfare through regulated norms of liberty to pursue the path of spiritual unfoldment and secular well-being. Sva-dharma confers on man the freedom to call forth the best in him by preparing him for the social function for which he is naturally endowed.

That Dharma (equal justice and freedom for all in the eye of the law) is an integral part of and a necessary guiding force in shaping the freedom of individuals and groups

is beautifully depicted in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, where we read:

In the beginning this (the Kshatriya and other castes) was indeed Brahman, one only. Being one, He did not flourish. So He projected the Kshatriya, Yet He did not flourish. So He projected the Vaishya. He did not still flourish. So He projected the Shudra caste. Yet He did not flourish. Then He projected that excellent form—Dharma (righteousness). This Dharma is the controller of the Kshatriya. Therefore there is nothing higher than that. So even a weak man hopes to defeat a stronger man through Dharma.

Thus the Upanishads address themselves to the discovery of Freedom Eternal by providing man with the spiritual pabulum needed to appease his nameless and perennial hunger for Liberation (Moksha). Freedom is the ground and freedom is the goal of all life according to Vedanta, which summons men and women fearlessly to undertake the mighty adventure of the Spirit and boldly to accomplish the transcendence of the limitations of finitude. A truer understanding and a more intense practice of Dharma, in its relation to the meaning of freedom, is the great need for the present-day world. Even when the accredited administrators and custodians of law and order fail to come up to his expectations, the individual citizen, scrupulously following the path of Dharma and aiming at the state of supreme spiritual freedom, acts as a potent, stabilizing force in society, dauntlessly striving for the freedom, security, and happiness of all.

Does not freedom connote the liberty of a people to maintain armies, stockpile arma-

ments, and wage wars in support of any cause dear to them? Perhaps it does, in a very limited sense. The freedom to create and to construct may, at the same time, confer, but never condone, the freedom to subjugate and annihilate. No sane and intelligent man desires the freedom of a wild horse or a roving bull. Nor would the least intellectually gifted person voluntarily submit to tyranny. Without tasting freedom man can never get rid of cowardice and fanatical intolerance.

The meaning of freedom has both a social and a trans-social significance; it has both a national and an international application. If freedom for every living human being has got to be ensured, the prevention of war and the elimination of distrust through a single world government is indispensable. Yet, that is not all. The individuals that compose that world government have got to be men of spiritual vision and moral integrity; or else, unsubdued selfishness and greed are bound to get the better of them and wreck their joint efforts for world understanding. The prevailing gloom in this or that part of the world need not dishearten, much less discourage, the lovers of real freedom and peace. Sri Krishna, who gave to humanity, through the *Gita*, the greatest charter of freedom—unequivocally enunciating the meaning of its secular and spiritual aspects, declares that the faithful discharge of individual duties and obligations (Sva-dharma) paves the way for the realization of the highest universal Dharma, embodying the material, moral, and spiritual freedom of mankind.

“The Lord through His eternal Power created various abodes such as trees, reptiles, and beasts, birds, insects, and fish, but was not satisfied in His heart with these. Then He made the human body which is endowed with the desire to realize Brahman (the Supreme Reality), and He was delighted.

The wise man having after many births obtained this extremely rare human body, which though frail is yet conducive to man's supreme welfare, should quickly strive for Liberation, before the body, which is always subject to death, chances to fall; for sense-enjoyment is obtainable in any body.”

—*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY GORDON W. ALLPORT

Ramakrishna was born over a century ago, but his profound influence, like that of other great and holy personalities, has grown rather than waned. Each of us, I presume, feels indebted to the teaching and example of Sri Ramakrishna, each of us in his own way. I, for my part, think of three lessons that I have learned from him. I am certain that each of us, from our own experience, could add to the list.

The first lesson I shall mention brings to mind the lenten season. We recall how Christ withdrew into silence for forty days to prepare for his life-work. The Christian Church reminds us that we too should grow silent and increase our meditations in order better to meet the problems of life. But few Christians really observe lent. If they do so, it is often in a negative way: by giving up candy or tobacco, and not by true mental discipline.

The West is notoriously noisy. We chatter and jabber nearly all the time. It comes hard for us to close our mouths and fix our minds on our goals and purposes, and attain what Ramakrishna so successfully sought: a God-consciousness. Perhaps the Quakers have learned the lesson; and also those who genuinely practice retreats.

But, for the most part, it is to the East, especially to India, and to holy personalities like Ramakrishna, that we have to look for example and guidance in this matter. The West is almost totally lacking in knowledge of the techniques of silence, of meditation, of concentration, and orison prayer. There is much we can learn from Hinduism about these matters.

Think of the revolution that might occur in the community, industrial, national, and international life of the West if we dared to introduce considered silence. Here is a tense,

strained labour-management meeting; there a quarrelsome board or committee meeting; here a tense and strained international conference. What would happen if we dared introduce at hot and bitter moments a period of silence? The momentary tension would be broken, people could then ask themselves whether they are following their own best insights; they could then survey the 'problem on the whole' and become oriented to their true purposes and goals. Actually no one seems to dare propose so revolutionary, and salutary, a step.

Once, at a student conference, a learned speaker mentioned the logic of silence and meditation. Then he asked the students if they would try a period. Reluctantly they said they would, if it were not too long and if they could have music. So he agreed to the modified arrangement, and music was played while the group sat silently. Afterwards he asked the students to report on their experience. They said: 'It was all right, but it was too long a period of silence'. He had timed the interval and it was just two minutes! Yes, we need to learn how to be silent, and how to use our silence in effective meditation.

Ramakrishna was fond of a song and of a figure of speech that likened human life to oarsmen who embarked on a choppy sea. The oarsmen, representing the senses, all pulled in different directions, while the waves chopped and churned. All this confusion and counter-movement existed because the oarsmen did not pause to find out where the fresh breeze was blowing or where the deeper currents of life were leading. One has to pause, take stock, and go with the guiding movement of life—not against it.

A second lesson for me lies in Ramakrishna's catholicity of mind and sympathy. He is well known for his study and practice of

all the great religions. He entered understandingly into the Christian frame of mind, into the Mohammedan, into the Buddhist. He utilized their techniques of worship and thought their thoughts. By *all* roads he found he could attain inner peace and God-consciousness.

Most of us have trouble enough mastering one religion. We do it only partially and inadequately. Hence we reverence a holy personality who can demonstrate completely to himself what human brotherhood means. There would be no racial or religious prejudice if each of us had, even in a small degree, the capacity to live sympathetically in the way of existence found helpful and uplifting by other groups. If we did so we could not possibly hate them. We could not be ignorant of their essential humanity. And we would have a truer sense that all nations are of one blood and one aspiration. Granted that we cannot equal the great breadth of Ramakrishna's experience, we can try to the best of our individual ability to stretch our minds and enter sympathetically into the way of life of other people—even, if at first they seem strange or misguided to us.

Finally, we can learn that not only do all nations and religions seek the same salvation, the same high goals in their own way, but that each individual does so likewise. I may be

mistaken but I believe that no religion respects the individuality of men in their religious quest more than does the Vedic religion. I have learned from Ramakrishna how many and varied are the aspects of God to which human beings may turn. Our individual needs differ, our comprehensions differ, our values have different aspects. As individuals then we must approach religious truth in varied ways. True devotions are personalized; each devotee has his own most suitable approach. No man can be arrogant enough to claim that his doxy is the only orthodoxy possible.

We learn from the life and example of Ramakrishna the sensitivity that we may develop, if we will, for each other's mode of living. We can, with goodwill, gain new compassion, not only for other races and nations, but for our neighbour who sits next to us. We may not prescribe, we may not dictate, we may not ridicule. Rather we can and should join sympathetically with him in his quest for truth and for the beatific vision.

None of these lessons, of course, are absent from Christianity or from any of the other forms of the great religions of the earth. But true to the essence of Vedanta, one form brings forth one truth more clearly than others. And it is especially these three lessons that seem outstanding to me in the life and example of Sri Ramakrishna.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

That the proper study for man is man himself, one is apt to forget in a world which is over-weighted on the side of matter in its myriad forms. Matter seems to be too much with us, not so much in its obvious grosser modes as in insidious subtler ways. Having discovered the expanding universe, modern man has almost lost his soul. And having set

up wonder-machines to do his bidding, he has become their slave. He sweeps the starry skies with his powerful instruments of perception; he goes round the globe in fast-moving vehicles; he fathoms the depths of the seas, and descends into the bowels of the earth. What used to be regarded in earlier ages as supernatural powers have become normal to

him. He has learnt to split the atom and use it as a demon of destruction; he can now marshal the elements to conduct warfare for him. He has also learnt to extract from nature mysteries that make him live in comfort, live long and live in healthy surroundings. Though the blessings of science and technology are at present available only to a few, theoretically everyone can enjoy them. And, the outer comforts of the average man are probably much greater now than ever before in human history. Yet man is not happy; he is at war with himself. By a sort of escape-mechanism, he tries to run away from himself. Being afraid of his own self, he runs after the external world and there finds his own shadows assuming hideous and awful shapes. Thus he seems to live a nightmarish existence, not knowing that it is so. It is reported that once, when Socrates defined the task of philosophy as an attempt to understand man, a visiting Indian sage remarked, 'How is one to understand human nature without understanding divine nature?' The modern man in his preoccupation with process and change scarcely rises even to the humanistic level as provided by the Socratic definition of the dictum 'Know thyself'.

It is true that the life-sciences that are studied in our schools and colleges attempt to give us an account of man. But that account, unfortunately, is that of an exterior view of man, and not of an interior or intimate view. A strange paradox in our academic world today is that while the objective sciences like physics show signs of a return to metaphysics, the life-sciences like biology and psychology, adopting outmoded mechanistic methods, are breaking away from metaphysics. Man is now presented as nothing more than a network of physical and physiological forces. One science is interested in tracing the descent of man from primitive forms of life. Another dismisses not only soul but also mind and consciousness; and makes of man a stimulus-response mechanism or a bundle of conditioned reflexes. One of the new schools of philosophy preaches that there is no genuine occu-

pation that can be said to belong to philosophy in the scheme of things. The so-called philosophical problems are pseudo-problems; on logical analysis they can be shown to be nonsensical. There is nothing such as soul because empirical science can give no evidence for its existence. Another school of philosophy treats of man existentially as a unique entity. Man is not a creature of natural forces, nor an element in a cosmic Spirit. His nature eludes cold intellectual analysis. He has to be encountered in a crisis, in the experience of dread and anxiety, horror and despair.

Certain political doctrines have made capital out of partial and inadequate views of man. The results of the analytical studies of human nature have been employed to make of man little more than an automaton. It used to be said of Absolute Idealism that, according to its theory, man should be compelled to be free. It is the reverse of this that is true, according to some contemporary political doctrines, viz. that man should be made to imagine himself free to get bound. The one fundamental question before us is whether man should be treated as a mere means or be regarded as an intrinsic end. The answer to this question can only come from that to another, viz. what is man? If man be nothing more than a piece of matter or an epiphenomenon, he is meant to be *used*. It is only if man be essentially Spirit that it is wrong to use him as a mere means. When we say that man is Spirit, it should not be supposed that he is Spirit as opposed to matter, that Spirit is the thesis of which matter is the antithesis. All such dualisms, it should be remembered, are initial and not final. The true view of Spirit is that it is the whole or reality of which matter is a fragment or appearance. The Spirit that is man, again, should not be identified with a segment of mental life such as the intellect, the will, or the emotions. In the words of the Upanishads, the Spirit is *satya*, *jñāna*, *ānanda*, existence-intelligence-bliss. It is in this sense that Spirit is the final value, the ultimate goal.

Puruṣān-na param kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā sā

parāgatih—‘There is nothing higher than Spirit; it is the final limit, the supreme end .

Any system of education, if it is to serve its purpose, must be based on a sound philosophy of man. Man is perfectible because he is educable. Perfection is the end; education is the means. Man can be educated because his is not a mere hand-to-mouth existence; nor is the pocket-view of life his final or ultimate view. For a time he may seem to be satisfied with values that are temporal. But eventually he discovers that nothing short of eternal life can be his goal. The purpose of education, then, should be to enable him to discover his true Self, to remove the obstacles that stand between him and perfection. The function of education should be not merely to *impart* information but to *draw out* what is best in man.

A major flaw in our present education is that it contributes very little to the flowering of an integrated personality. Learning a number of subjects with an eye on passing an examination is almost the whole of education as we know it. Professor Christie, one of the delegates to the UNESCO Symposium on ‘The Concept of Man’ held at New Delhi in December 1951, made the following significant remark which we in India should deeply ponder over. ‘Is it true’, he asked, ‘that Indian universities are at the mercy of examinations even more than our own universities, and do not take as their ideal knowledge for its own sake? I am sure that we in England suffer from the temptation to regard our universities as means to an end, “degree-getting machines”. . . . If the East has copied this side of Western education, I am afraid it has copied the worst’. We in India have magnified the examinations out of all proportions. There should certainly be objective tests for grading pupils and for guiding their progress in education. But there is not much to be said in favour of a system which makes the students stuff their brains with ill-assorted bits of information to be reproduced at the time of examinations and to be forgotten thereafter.

The craze for science courses in our universities is another deplorable feature copied from the West. But even in the West the pursuit of science is not so indiscriminate, unplanned, and profitless as in India. Basic knowledge of general science should certainly be a required subject for all students both at the High School and Collegiate levels. There is no denying the fact that science is one of the greatest achievements of man, and that, in its applied form, it has become a powerful force to reckon with in the modern world. But that does not warrant the overcrowding of the science lecture-halls and laboratories with pupils for the majority of whom in later life it will not make any difference whether they are graduates in science or in arts.

There is also another danger. A purely utilitarian view of education, to which is due in a large measure the present popularity of subjects like science and economics, is not a healthy or desirable view. The object of education is not to produce mere technicians and wage-earners. There is a higher purpose which education should never lose sight of. It is to make man perfect, ‘to show him’, in the words of Sir Richard Livingstone, ‘the spiritual ideals without which neither happiness nor success are genuine or permanent, to produce beings who will know not merely how to split atoms but how to use their power for good’.

While there should be a legitimate place for physical and social sciences in any scheme of education, the classics and the humanities should not be neglected and starved on the plea that there is no demand for them. The basis of education is not simply that of supply and demand. An essential aim of education should be to create in the minds of people the right sort of demand. We rise or perish by our desires. It is by the right type of desire that we can rise. A sound educational policy should be to encourage the study of classics and humanities, for it is through them that one ordinarily gets the vision of greatness and beauty, of truth and goodness.

A wrong approach to the classics, however, may, instead of broadening the mind,

make it narrow and parochial—a danger from which scientific studies are almost free. It is only recently that some States have quarrelled as to where and by whom this or that was first discovered or invented. But generally speaking, science is universal. As regards the classics and subjects like history and geography, a narrow outlook on the part of the teacher or student will defeat the very purpose of education. The attitude of 'my country, right or wrong' ill accords with the spirit of culture. If one has learned to enjoy Kamban or Kālidāsa in the proper way, he will surely find exquisite beauty in the works of Shakespeare and Goethe. A true historian or geographer will not magnify the greatness of his own country at the expense of others. Fortunately, there is widespread recognition today that the function of history is not to stop with recording the succession of kings and their exploits. There are factors of co-operation and concord in the histories of the different peoples which should be stressed and not overlooked. The future historian should approach his subject from a world perspective. Narrow nationalism is an anachronism in our day. If only in studying history we emphasize the common concern of life, the emergence of ideas that have conferred benefits on all alike, the pursuit of values by individuals and groups, etc., we shall be paving the way for the removal of social tensions. Similarly in geography we must cultivate a global outlook. To regard one's own country as the centre of the world is meaningless and mischievous. Every geographical unit has its own excellences and drawbacks. Every country has its own dark and bright spots. The object of education should be to make men conscious of the unity of the world. It is true that every citizen should be proud of his country and its traditions. But at the same time he should realize that he is also a world citizen, that life is fundamentally one, and that there is basic unity in apparent diversity.

The tragedy of our world is that many of

its people, though educated, lack a sense of purpose in life. They seem to ask, 'What is the point of living? What are we here for, and how can it have any purpose?', without expecting an answer either from themselves or from others. This is due to the fact that our educational objectives have been limited and narrow. The fundamental reform in education, then, should go to the roots. As Aristotle said, 'We should not listen to those who tell us that human beings should think like men and mortals think like mortals, but should achieve such immortality as we may, and strain every nerve to live by the highest things in us. They may be small in substance, but in price and power they are far beyond all else'.

If the gaining of immortality, or, in other words, the realization of eternal values, be the end of education, education cannot end with formal schooling. It is, in fact, a gradual and lifelong process. As a Sanskrit verse puts it:

*Ācāryāt pādām ādatte, pādām śiṣyah
sva-medhayā;
Pādām sa brahmacāribhyah, pādām
kāla-kramena tu.*

'From the teacher a part of education the student receives; another part he gets by the exercise of his own intelligence; a third part he gathers from his fellow-pupils; and a fourth in due course of time.' It is now well recognized in educational theory and practice that the education of the child has to start not after he reaches a certain age but very early in his life. The excellence of the residential system is also admitted. The need for refresher courses for adults is increasingly felt in educational circles. What is now required is the planning of universal education on the basis of fundamental principles, as also the will to execute the plan. Especially in our country, education should receive top priority. It is through education of the right sort that our people can regain their greatness and also achieve progress. There is nothing good or great which education cannot give.

VEDANTA PHENOMENOLOGY

BY PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

(Continued from the July issue)

III. THE WAKEFUL AWARENESS AND ITS EXPLANATION FROM A HIGHER AWARENESS

We now proceed to the next higher grade of awareness, the wakeful one. This gives the so-called 'real' world at its objective pole and the wakeful ego at its subjective pole. This awareness is ordinarily taken as the absolute and the world as *the* real one. So the pleasurable and painful objects appear as absolutely so. Yet this is not wholly true even for ordinary minds. There comes an intuition of the worldly objects with their emotional effects as somehow essentially delightful. The world appears as an imaginative creation, as an aesthetic object. This means some transcendental awareness is caught hold of even in the midst of our worldly awareness and it works from behind the scenes just as the latter does with respect to dreams and imagination. A little self-disciplining and philosophical introspection make this higher order awareness more apparent and the wakeful awareness as imaginary. The qualities and the relations, that is, sense-intuitions and the forms that make up the phenomenal world, appear as not necessary or compulsive. An object known implies an awareness of it as existent, but there is also an awareness that the object might not as well exist. Existence implies non-existence, a thing coming out of nothing in a very real sense. Thus it is that nothingness or *śūnyatā* is regarded in Mādhyamika and Zen Buddhism as the source of all things and the basis of spontaneity. 'Everything comes from nothing; seeing from non-seeing, the conscious from the unconscious', says a Zen master. 'All things in the world come from existence and existence comes from non-existence', says Lao-Tsze (*Tao Te Ching*, XL).

'The sages who searched their hearts' thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent' (*R̥g-Veda, Nāsadiya Sūkta*). The relation of logical implication or logical togetherness of things and nothingness is recognized in the Mādhyamika and Zen philosophy, but what is known as *samsāra* is the same as *nirvāna*. 'The soul as birth and death (*samsāra*) comes forth from the Tathāgata's womb. But the immortal (suchness) and the mortal (birth and death) coincide with each other. Though they are not identical they are not a duality. It is called *ālayaviññāna*', writes Ashvaghosha in his *Awakening of Faith*.

Now what is important to note is that it is not nothingness that produces things, but *awareness* of nothingness that does so. This removes the apparent self-contradiction from the statement 'Everything comes from nothing', and gives sense to the interpretation of *śūnyatā* (as made by many modern philosophers, e.g. D. T. Suzuki) as something affirmative and not purely nihilistic. Awareness of nothingness produces awareness of things and the latter implies the former. As shown before, pure naught is a meaningless term; there is but awareness of non-existent things. This awareness means awareness of 'objects in general' or pure object without any space-time determination (that is, without existence, existence being always determinate and particular). This awareness implies possibility of objects and, so, is the condition of (*awareness* of) actual objects. When awareness develops polarity and has one object to contemplate as a subject, there is the beginning of creation. Out of pure objectivity come particular objects. We will elucidate this point subsequently.

All this means that the wakeful awareness of the so-called real world is only a kind of dream-awareness and not absolute. Thus the world with its laws and categories is not anything apart from our awareness and this awareness is but a contingent modification of a higher awareness of non-existence and possibility of the world. This view of the world solves a great many puzzles and paradoxes which the schools of rationalism, realism, empirical or subjective idealism, and some varieties of absolute idealism generate by not recognizing (what Vedanta phenomenology does) awareness with its different grades as the foundational principle of metaphysics.

Thus it solves the riddle of the origin of the world. There cannot be found any material substance as the prime stuff of the world, for the question of the origin of this stuff has to be faced. Awareness of no-thing (and the *idea* of things it involves) being the cause of everything explains at once the origin of things and their infinite variety. It explains because it convinces us at first through our analogical experience in dreams and imagination (where objects appear out of nothing merely through our willing it), and then through our direct experience of the principle. For the principle is within us all the time: 'That Thou art'. It requires only a little withdrawal of the mind from its naive and habitual objective attitude to the inner regions where the implications of the sense-objects reside. Philosophical enquiry, particularly of the phenomenological research type, illustrated by our Yoga and Vedanta disciplines, leads one to grasp the inner principles and explicates what operates implicitly.

The question of the origin of the world cannot be solved by the realists. Matter *out there* as an ultimate given is never a satisfactory solution. It cannot, for instance, explain our knowledge of it and our error. The empirical idealists, like Berkeley and the Vijñānavādins, rightly reject the material substance, but since they reject the external or public world also, they create many problems without solving them satisfactorily. The

external world is self-evidentially given and to reject it in the bald way (without a philosophy of levels of awareness) is very arbitrary and this leads to relativism and scepticism. Vedanta phenomenology recognizes awareness of objects as (perceptually) known and also as unknown and implied by the former awareness and made explicit with a little introspection. Rationalism explains the world from reason, but cannot solve the riddle produced by the dichotomies such as subject-object, substance-qualities, universal-particular, reason-sensation, unless it recognizes levels of awareness. Absolute and dialectical idealism come nearer to our philosophy, but make Being and non-Being or Becoming remote principles behind our experience. That they are already 'in us' waiting to be recognized and made self-aware, has to be perceived and so philosophy is to be a system of serious personal knowledge instead of a speculative theory.

The idea of the world as a sort of dream solves another metaphysical riddle, that connected with the origin of the world in time. If the world is regarded in a realistic and absolutist fashion, it is patent that we are landed in hopeless self-contradictions. If it appeared at a particular time, what was there before its appearance? If it is eternally here it passes one's understanding in the realistic attitude. The answer is that just as in a dream we can never find out the time when the dream started, so we can never find out the beginning of the world in world-time. This time that we experience is created by the higher awareness for which all the events here are in an eternal now. That which creates time out of its free will cannot itself be temporal. The starting of the dream can be known only in the wakeful awareness and the time of starting can be marked in the world-time, for to mark the starting we have to be aware of the state immediately preceding it. The dream-time is within the world-time and the latter within the timeless now of the awareness of non-existence and possibility. There may, however, be many *scales* of world-time

correlated to physical environment and psychological conditions of the person aware of the world, but there are only three *orders* of time, viz. the dream-time, the world-time of wakeful awareness, and the timeless now of the awareness of non-existence and possibility. From this examination of orders of time we find that the beginning of the world cannot itself be timed. Aristotle also held this view and he showed that the starting of change cannot be marked; we note a change when it has already taken place. This means that in terms of our own time, the beginning of the world cannot be known to have occurred and, so, the world may be held as beginningless. But it cannot be said to be endless, for the awareness of the world may be transcended any time, in the sense that its necessity or objectivity may appear as illusory in the light of a new awareness, viz. that of non-existence and possibility. Thus it is that Shankara held *māyā* to be beginningless though not endless. And since *māyā* (the wakeful awareness of the world) exists, yet is not inevitable, but like a dream or an illusory object is capable of being cancelled or sublated, that is, since it exists and so is not wholly unreal, yet is not ultimately real, it is said to be indescribable (*anirvacanīya*). The rather paradoxical statements of Shankara regarding the nature of the world of wakeful awareness may be better understood in the light of levels of awareness as suggested here.

The enigmatic problems of the prime stuff and of the beginning of the world are thus solved by our phenomenological enquiry. The third problem is that of the finitude and infinitude of the world. This may be settled if we recognize that there is no world apart from our awareness of it both as perceived and as not perceived. (I am aware of objects existing though not perceived. This awareness of objects as unperceived is the implication of awareness of objects as perceived. When I perceive an object I am aware of the object as not created by the perceptual activity, but existing independently). The world can be infinitely extended or divisible if

this awareness be infinitely extended in time. Since there is always the possibility of this awareness being transcended, the world cannot be said to be infinite; but as within this awareness we can never come to a limit in extension or division of the world, the world is boundless. Thus the paradoxical statement that the world is boundless though not infinite may be made. It may be understood through its analogy with the dream-situation. In a dream we can never come to a limit while exploring the dream-land or while dividing any dream-object, for we shall be always, without our knowing it, producing some object in dream-awareness. Yet the dream-awareness may be transcended and so the apparent infinity of extension or division may prove illusory. The same holds with regard to the world of wakeful awareness; we can never come to an end of the world or of dividing a body, but we can end all this business of coming to the end. A task in a dream may be endless, but it ends as the dream itself ends.

The fourth and perhaps the most important problem to be faced is that of the form and content of our knowledge of the world. The forms (the logical principles and the ontological categories) appear as somehow 'in us' and mental, yet applying to the concrete reality given to the senses. The distinction between understanding and sensation and their unity has to be properly understood. The normal and naive wakeful awareness includes awareness of sense-objects and of abstract forms not as separate factors. There is no distinction here of the universal and the particular, the form and the content. Empirical knowledge or concrete experience is formed-content, the judgment 'S is P' being a concrete unity of terms and relations, with no problem of relation of terms with relations appearing at this level of unreflective awareness. But philosophical introspection separates the two factors in knowledge and poses the question of their union. Philosophical introspection is but a form of the higher awareness (viz. awareness of non-existence) that pro-

duces the empirical reality from behind the wakeful awareness; so, with this introspection, the more pervasive and essential characteristics of this empirical reality first become known as somehow not necessary and objective, but 'in us', that is, in the subject of the higher awareness with which the empirical self now begins to identify itself. The separation of the formal factors from the material ones takes place with the dawn of Self-consciousness, which shows that the objects are but projections thrown out by the higher awareness for the enjoying contemplation of the higher Self, though passively suffered as external necessities by the empirical self. The formal factors being the more pervasive ones are first to be objects of higher awareness and they are thus the *a priori* principles of objectivity. The logical law of identity or non-equivocalness, which is the foundation of the three laws of thought, and the ontological categories of space, time, causality, substance, quality, and quantity, which are essential *a priori* forms of all objects, become first apparent and distinct from the sense-data which they organize to yield the concrete reality. Philosophical introspection into wakeful awareness thus breaks it up into two parts and withdraws implicit belief from the formal part. This leaves empirical reality as a mechanical combination of the two parts with the pseudo-question, 'How they work together?' The answer to the question is that they work together because they are not really separable parts of a whole in wakeful awareness and when this awareness is partly disturbed by the awakening of the higher awareness (of nothingness that created it), they appear as parts and then they do *not* really work together, for there is already a withdrawal of the forms from the objective reality which is left as a meaningless blur of sense-data. Awareness of forms as 'in us' is a manifestation of the higher awareness and this leads to the awareness of the empirical world as an illusory one. This is the deeper implication of any form of critical philosophy such as Kant, for instance, offered us. The world of wakeful awareness appears as a

dream, a play of names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) created and enjoyed by the higher Self, but taken as reality and suffered by the lower self (which is a self-willed mode of the higher Self). The first stage of awakening of Self-consciousness of the higher awareness makes us aware of the forms as not in the object and leaves the sensuous content, now a meaningless haze or rhapsody, in the field. This reduces the world to an illusion that is not over, but continuing, like a dream we sometimes have, one of which we are conscious, yet which is continuing. But a further transformation takes place as the higher awareness fully comes to its own. Then the sense-data too are found to be 'in us', that is, in the higher Self, which being aware of them as its own doing does not treat them as objective. This leads to the sublation of the sense-data just as the awareness of the dream as such leads eventually to its sublation. This awareness of the empirical world as a kind of dream is induced by philosophical introspection (of course of a meditative nature and not of a merely speculative sort) that persistently questions the objectivity of the objects given in awareness. It is also occasioned by the awareness of such phenomena as contradict the *a priori* forms or laws, e.g. the miracles connected with the lives and works of saints. In both the cases of waking up of the higher awareness, it is the same awareness working through the lower level from behind that is responsible. The dream is broken by a faint appearance of a questioning of the dream-reality and also by such events or situations in it as are grossly improbable. In both the cases it is after all the higher awareness (in the case of the dream it is the wakeful awareness) that is responsible. Thus it is understandable why it is said that it is Grace that is responsible for our enlightenment and salvation. 'The Self cannot be gained by the Vedas, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. The Self chooses him as his own' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*). The Zen Buddhists believe in the cult of non-effort and sudden illumination (*satori*). 'If you search

for it (Reality), it goes farther from you', says a Zen Master. 'When the mind is ready for some reasons or other, a bird flies, or the bell rings, and you at once return to your original home; that is, you discover your now real Self', says the Zen philosopher D. T. Suzuki. *Dhyāna* (meditation), practised by the Zen monks, is merely a quieting exercise of the mind and not a search after something beyond. The transcendental operation of the higher awareness in the lower as described here is the basis of the general doctrine of the mystics that the lower self (the ego) has to be stilled in order to realize the higher Self, the subject of the higher awareness. 'The Lord dwells in the heart of all born, O Arjuna, and with magic (*māyā*) makes all born beings spin about as though set upon a whirligig (*Gita*, XVIII. 61).

IV. THE AWARENESS OF NON-EXISTENCE: ISHVARA AS ITS SUBJECT

The wakeful awareness is the awareness of existent things. The objective pole of this awareness is the empirical world of science and common sense and the subjective pole is the empirical self that takes the world as implicit real. The awareness higher in grade than this wakeful one is the awareness of non-existence and possibility, as said before. The subjective pole of this awareness is the higher Self for which there is nothing existing as actuality, but there is an indefinite object without any determination signifying possibility of objects to appear. This state may be directly experienced through pursuing in meditation (*yoga*) our ordinary experiences back to their origin, uncovering in the way layers of awareness veiling and modifying the higher ones. But this may also be roughly guessed through an analogy with a similar state in the lower plane of awareness. When one is just thinking of some indefinite object, just wishing any object to appear before one's imagination or memory, one experiences a similar situation. As the mind is turned objectward, there is an indefinite object or pure objectivity standing over against the mind. And then some particular object

appears. It may be a word, a scene, or a thing. Thus I may have words like horse, the moon, a murder scene, and as soon as I suggest to myself that I must have the objects signified by any word, the particular object appears answering to my demands. I demand and I get. The desire for something in general produces a thing in particular out of nothing which is thus not merely nothing but alive with possibility and spontaneity. 'And God said, "Let there be light", and there was light', says the Bible. 'Thereafter rose desire in the beginning, desire, the primal seed and germ of spirit (*Rg-Veda, Nāsadiya Sūkta*). The awareness of non-existent objects is the ground of the awareness of existent objects: the former awareness being of the object in general or the indefinite object and the latter of the objects in particular or existing things. The question how particular objects appear can never be solved if we confine ourselves to the empirical level and try to explain them in terms of existents and causal laws. We shall then be landing ourselves either in an infinite regress or in a *petitio principii*. We have to break the magic circle and recognize the higher level of awareness as the creator of the wakeful awareness and its object, the empirical reality. As has been said before, it is not nothing creating something, but awareness of nothing (in particular) producing awareness of something in particular.

Now this higher awareness of non-existence of objects is the awareness enjoyed in relation to Ishvara of Vedanta as a subject. The object of this awareness, the non-existence of objects, is pure objectivity that negates all particularity or existence. Existence is particular spatio-temporal occupation and awareness of non-existence is awareness of the object in general. This pure objectivity, negating all concrete objects or existence, is *māyā* and Ishvara is Brahman (awareness in itself) standing over against *māyā*. Ishvara thus takes all existence as illusory. This awareness of non-existence has two internal modes. In the one, its object is pure and actual non-existence, when there is a blank before it, the empirical

world having either not appeared as yet or disappeared. In the other mode its object is virtual non-existence, when there is the empirical world in the field, but it is through and through infected with and shot by non-existence in the sense that it is known as illusory and not taken for reality. These two states of awareness of non-existence are analogous to two states of empirical awareness, one in which the dream is not appearing (either sublated or to be appearing) and the other in which the dream is appearing but, the sleep having broken in part, it is taken as illusory and not mistaken for reality. Now Ishvara, the subject of this higher awareness of non-existence, has two modes of being corresponding to these two modes of awareness. Ishvara as contemplating pure objectivity and actual non-existence is one, and the other is for whom the world appears, yet which is known as illusory and created by Himself for His aesthetic enjoyment. In both these modes of godhood, Ishvara is *māyādhīśa*, the wielder of *māyā*, with the power to project and retract the phenomenal world. Again, this awareness of non-existence, pure or virtual, of the world is awareness of its essentially non-describable and enigmatic nature recognized by Mādhyamika Buddhism and denoted by *śūnyatā* (void). Awareness of pure non-existence is regarded as *śūnyatā* when it means 'nought' which is said to be the matrix of all things. Thus *śūnyatā* is a negation, yet an affirmation. Awareness of virtual non-existence of the empirical world, that is, awareness of it as illusory, as what appears, but is not real and abiding, is also called *śūnyatā*, but now meaning this indescribable and equivocal nature of the empirical reality. Thus *śūnyatā* is sometimes said to be the begetter of the empirical reality and sometimes as the characteristic nature of this reality.

One further point may be mentioned. Just as the empirical awareness is not wholly modified into the dream-awareness, but also remains transcendent in an unconscious state working from behind the dream and waking to consciousness any moment, to reveal the

dream-world as an illusory one, so is the case with the higher awareness of non-existence. In other words, Ishvara is transcendent besides being immanent, He is always there behind our wakeful awareness and He is awakened in us any moment when our empirical self lapses. The occasions we find in the empirical world to wake us up to the higher awareness, such as our philosophical, religious, ethical, or aesthetic disciplines or any strange accident such as a pathetic scene or a miracle, are all ultimately worked from behind by the transcendental Ishvara. As noted earlier, this is the intuitive basis of the doctrine of Grace in religious and mystical literature. The working of the unconscious higher awareness in the conscious from behind and then its waking up or becoming self-conscious is a well-known fact in modern depth psychology. 'The unconscious is an unglimpseable completeness of all subliminal psychic factors, a total exhibition of potential nature', writes the renowned psychologist C. G. Jung.

V. THE HIGHEST AWARENESS: BRAHMAN

Ishvara is ever working in us unconsciously and also becomes self-aware in us at times when our empirical self lapses and we are aware of the world, first as an illusion that appears, and then, as an illusion that is over (or possible). Now this awareness of non-existence is again an illusory one to a still higher awareness for which there is no object whatsoever and no subject. That is, this awareness is neither of existence nor of non-existence and it is the awareness belonging to no subject. It is awareness in itself or pure consciousness. To this awareness, non-existence, pure or virtual, i.e. *māyā*, is itself an illusion that it first enjoys as an illusion and then negates altogether. Negation of a negation here is not equivalent to a positing of object originally negated, for the two negations are not on the same plane of awareness. Non-existence, as illusory or cancelled, reveals the pure awareness that is above any real relation of itself to *māyā*. *Māyā* thus rejected

is known as *tuccha-māyā* and awareness that so asserts itself without any reference to *māyā* is Brahman. Brahman, unlike Ishvara, does not shine against a dark background of the pure object (i.e. non-existence and possibility) in relation to which it may be understood or defined. Brahman is perfectly self-evidential and self-subsistent ultimate reality with no parts or qualifications. Awareness in itself is the ultimate stuff out of which comes everything else and in terms of which all things may be described. This Brahman is thus not known or proved by negating anything, because we are aware of it implicitly (for it works in us from behind) and we are never convinced of the ultimate reality of any object. We question and doubt and negate everything till we reach, after passing through many layers of illusory objectivity and corresponding illusory subjectivity, Brahman-awareness that is self-evidentially ultimate and does not question itself. The dream-awareness is operated from behind by the empirical wakeful awareness which then remains outside the focal consciousness in the marginal one. When this comes to full awareness, it is found to be worked unconsciously from behind by the awareness of non-existence of objects which then remains in the background as an unself-conscious activity. Again, when this awareness becomes explicit, it is found to be implicitly operated by a higher awareness which is beyond existence—non-existence and subject-object. Ultimately this higher awareness becomes explicit, revealing the lower as illusory. This highest awareness that is beyond existence—non-existence has been realized by the Upanishadic and other mystics. 'Then was not non-existent nor existent. . . . That one thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever' (*Rg-Veda, Nāsadīya Sūkta*). 'To think "it is", is eternalism, -to think "it is not" is nihilism: of existence and non-existence, the

wise cling not to either' (Nāgārjuna: *Mādhyamika Śāstra*, Chap. XV). The highest reality is known as suchness (*tathatā*) in Mādhyamika and Zen Buddhism and it is described as beyond all categories,—existence, non-existence, unity, plurality, etc.; it is said to be neither *sūnyatā* nor its opposite. Thus it is that the Zen monks try to realize it through contemplating on such paradoxes as the following: 'This stick is neither what it is nor what it is not, what is it?' It is beyond everything we can think of as an object or subject. *Neti, Neti*,—not this, not this (nor that), says the Upanishad. Dionysius the Areopagite says, 'The cause of all things is neither soul nor intellect, nor spoken or thought of, it is neither number nor order, nor magnitude; . . . not divinity or goodness, nor even spirit as we know it'. So does Ashvaghosha write (in his *Awakening of Faith*), 'All things in the world from the beginning are neither *rūpa* nor *citta*, nor *prajñā*, nor *vijñāna*, nor *bhāva*, nor *abhāva*, they are after all inexplicable'. Here the ultimate reality or foundation of things is said to be beyond conceptualization, yet realizable. 'Speeches turn back from it, with the mind', says *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, yet it is always and implicitly working in us and we are aware of it in a way. So it is said that, 'He (also) does not know (i.e. is incorrect) who thinks he knows it' (*Kena Upaniṣad*). It is Brahman in us that causes the illusory levels of awareness, yet it is Brahman again that does not let us rest satisfied with anything short of Brahman and always stirs us to question and doubt the given objects. It is only a matter of knowing Brahman implicitly first and explicitly afterwards, in other words, Brahman in us first remaining as a silent and potential principle and then as a self-aware actuality. To know Brahman is to become Brahman.

(Concluded)

EVALUATION OF SENSORY PHENOMENA IN MYSTIC LIFE

BY DR. RAJ NARAIN

There are, broadly speaking, two types of sensory phenomena in mystic life: (a) sensory experiences proper of, say, light or sounds—the so-called photisms and auditions; and (b) meaningful and imaginal experiences, popularly known as the phenomena of voices and visions in mystic life. It is necessary to observe this distinction between these two types of sensory phenomena in mystic life, because mystics have assigned different values to each class of phenomena. We shall proceed to consider the evaluations of the second type of sensory phenomena first. The evaluations of Western mystics as a rule refer to this class of sensory phenomena. The first type of sensory phenomena do not figure conspicuously in their evaluations. These have been more systematically treated in Indian mysticism.

We can discern three major attitudes towards meaningful and imaginal experiences in mystic life. The first is represented by Tertullian, an early Church Father, who says calmly that 'The majority of, almost all, men learn God from visions'.¹ As a matter of fact, Tertullian's attitude towards visions marks a stage in the development of the Hebrew conception of communion with the Deity. 'In the period presented by the J document, communion with God was thought to be half commensal and half conversational. In either case God was anthropomorphically conceived, although the crassest phases of anthropomorphism were passing away. When we pass from the J to the E document, i.e. from the ninth century to about 750 B.C., we come to a more exalted conception of communion. God no longer appears in human form, freely to converse with men; it is in dreams and visions of the night that He

appears to impart His will and to give inspiration'.² The early Church, thus, does not condemn visions in mystic life, as some of the later Western mystics do.

Quite opposed to the view of Tertullian is the second attitude towards voices and visions in mystic life. Its representatives may be taken to be Dr. Tauler and the author of *Theologia Germania*. They reject outright the sensuous elements of mysticism—its apparitions, its voices, and its celestial phantasmagoria.³ Hugo of St. Victor in his *Mystical Theology* is equally emphatic about discarding all sensuous images in the 'simplification of the soul'. He is careful to guard against the delusions of the imagination, against mistaking a mere visionary phantom—some shape of imaginary glory—for a supermanifestation of the Divine Nature to the soul.⁴ St. John of the Cross positively asks the mystic to peremptorily reject all visions and 'special manifestation', come they from God or come they from the devil,—not even to reflect upon and recall them afterwards, lest grievous harm ensue.⁵ Molinos follows St. John of the Cross in disparaging visions which he says are often snares of the devil.⁶ And Albert Magnus declares that all those visions 'which contain a sensuous element are always dangerous'.⁷

The third major attitude towards voices and visions in mystic life represents a compromise between the extreme views of Tertullian and Tauler. It neither condemns them outright nor accepts them unconditionally. Its followers make a distinction between good and

² G. A. Barton: *Communion with Deity (Hebrew)*, Ency. of Rel. & Ethics.

³ A. R. Vaughan: *Hours with the Mystics*, London, 1895, Vol. II, p. 253.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁶ W. R. Inge: *op. cit.*, p. 233.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹ W. R. Inge: *Christian Mysticism*, London, 1925.

evil visions. The former are believed to come from God, the latter from the devil. The way to distinguish between good and evil visions is given by Walter Hilton in the following words: 'If thou be stirred because of the liking that thou feelest to withdraw thine heart from the mind and the beholding of Jesus Christ and from ghostly occupations—as from prayer and thinking of thyself and thy faults—from the inward desire of virtues, and of ghostly knowing and feeling of God, to set the sight of thy heart and the affections, thy delight and thy rest principally therein, weening that it should be a part of heavenly joy and of angels' bliss . . . this feeling is suspect and of the enemy. And therefore, though it be ever so liking and so wonderful, refuse it, assent not thereto, for this is the sleight of the enemy. Nevertheless if it be that this manner of feeling let not thy heart from ghostly occupations, but maketh thee more devout, more fervent to pray and more wise to think ghostly thoughts, and though it be so that it astonish thee in the beginning, nevertheless afterwards it turneth and quickeneth thy heart to more desire of virtues . . . by these tokens mayest thou know that it is of God, made by the presence of a good angel'.⁸

A good vision is thus distinguished from an evil one by a pragmatic test. If a vision leaves a residue of spiritual strength and determination, it is good and not a deception of the Tempter. Good visions were regarded as special rewards bestowed by the goodness of God on the struggling saint, and specially on the beginner, to refresh him and strengthen him in the hour of need. St. Theresa ably argues: 'Like imperfect sleep, which instead of giving more strength to the head doth but leave it the more exhausted, the result of mere operations of the imagination is but to weaken the soul. Instead of nourishment and energy, she reaps only lassitude and disgust; whereas a genuine heavenly vision yields to her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches, and an admirable renewal of bodily strength'.

⁸ W. Hilton: *The Scale of Perfection*, London, 1927, pp. 16-18.

Although mystics like St. Theresa and Walter Hilton admit the value of good visions in the development of spiritual life, they expressly declare that visions should not be desired or cultivated. For, says the Spanish mystic, self-induced visions inflate us with pride, and do irreparable injury to health of mind and body. St. Peter of Alcantara also observes: 'Much less should anyone desire visions, revelations, ecstasies, and so forth which may be very dangerous indeed to such as are not founded in humility. Let no one be herein afraid of going against the will of God'. Walter Hilton similarly deems it well that visions should not be 'greatly desired', for as visions can both be good and evil and yet are alike in the manner of outward feeling, it is very likely for one who cannot distinguish between them to be deceived and beguiled by the devil.

Thus, in the words of Dean Inge, 'We do not find that the masters of spiritual life attached very much importance to them (visions, etc.) or often appealed to them as aids to faith. . . . Very earnest cautions were issued that no efforts must be made to induce them artificially, and aspirants were exhorted neither to desire them nor to feel any pride in having seen them'.⁹ We may analyse the reasons for such an evaluation of meaningful and imaginal experiences in mystic life.

Tauler and the author of *Theologia Germanica* condemn visions altogether because these are not warranted on their philosophical presuppositions. These, according to them, do not constitute the highest order of devotion. Tauler speaks of the conversion of the outward man into the inward reasonable man, where senses and reason are welded into one. Man has to fling himself in the 'Divine Abyss' for this purpose. He has to pass through image, above all image and figure, through the outward exercise of the sense to the inward ground of his soul, where properly the kingdom of God is. In that supreme state, sensory experiences would not occur.

St. John of the Cross rejects visions, for

⁹ W. R. Inge: *op. cit.*, p. 16.

only two ideas have room in his philosophy—All and Nothing. 'Whatsoever is created is finite: whether actual or ideal, it bears no proportion to All,—it cannot, therefore, be helpful to any on their way to All. The Something is no link between the opposites of All and Nothing. Therefore, if any view of a particular divine perfection, any conception of Deity, or image of saint or angel, be even supernaturally presented to the mind, it should be rejected'.¹⁰

Similar is the reasoning of Dionysius the Areopagite. He holds that the highest spiritual truth is revealed only to those 'who have transcended every holy height, and have left behind all divine lights and sounds and heavenly discoursings, and have passed into that Darkness where He really is (as saith the Scripture) who is above all things'.¹¹

The Yogi in the *madhumati* (honeyed) stage is for a similar reason enjoined not to be led away by the invitations of those-in-high-places.¹² The pleasures of sensual things, deceitful as dreams, should not deflect his attention from the goal, the attainment of *kaivalyam* (isolation).

Apart from philosophical considerations, Christian mystics were led to deprecate visions on religious grounds. The Christian mystical discipline aimed at following the ideal of Jesus Christ. And Christ is believed to have definite modes of working in man. Therefore, there was no need to have recourse to, or to have faith in, other types of spiritual favours like visions, etc. In fact, the danger was that visions may not have their source in Christ, but in the devil. The Bible definitely deprecates visions. In the *Book of Job*, Ch. 42, 5-6, it is said: 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes'.

Psychological considerations were also responsible for an attitude of depreciation towards voices and visions in mystic life.

These phenomena were sometimes interpreted as spiritual favours from God. This not unoften resulted in spiritual pride. And spiritual pride was dangerous to spiritual progress. It was suicidal for the Christian virtue of Humility. Christian mysticism aims at the replacement of self-love by the love of God. Self-love expresses itself mainly in two ways: pride and selfishness. Therefore these two evil tendencies had to be replaced by their opposite virtues, viz. humility and charity. Inasmuch as visions, etc. induced spiritual pride they struck at the very roots of Christian mysticism and sapped its foundation, and were therefore looked down upon.

It has been pointed out that visions and dreams were at one time held to be legitimate instruments of communion with the Deity by the Hebrews. When later, however, this living by dreams and visions was given up in favour of living by faith, the former naturally came to be deprecated.

The medieval masters of spiritual life were also led to condemn visions, because these had become very common in their times. The superabundance of these phenomena led to a reaction against them in the leaders of spiritual life. Moreover, the claims made by the visionaries that the truths revealed to them during their visions were to be prized even if they went against the dictates of reason and the body of established religious doctrines were disconcerting to religious heads, who therefore reacted by adopting an attitude of condemnation towards visions.

The spiritual guides of aspirants reacted unfavourably to visions because of another reason too. They were aware that such experiences often came of disordered nerves and weakened digestion, or as a result of the disturbance of the 'humours'. Says Jeremy Taylor: 'Indeed, when persons have long been softened with the continual droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impressions by the assiduity of prayer, and the continual dyings of mortifications—the fancy, which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm and in a

¹⁰ A. R. Vaughan: *op. cit.*, p. 188.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹² *Yoga Sūtras* of Patanjali, III. 51.

disposition and aptitude to take to fire, and to flame out in great ascents; and when they suffer transportations beyond the burdens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what, and call it what they please'.¹³

So far we have discussed the attitude of mystics towards meaningful and imaginal experiences. We may now pass on to consider their views about the role of sensory experiences in mystic life. These, according to the teachings of the Upanishads, are the precursors of Self-knowledge. Says the *Śvetāśvatara* (II.11):

Fog, smoke, sun, fire, wind.
Fire-flies, lightning, a crystal, moon,—
These are the preliminary appearances,
Which produce the manifestation of Brahman in
Yoga.

The *Maitrī* reveals a similar view. It lays down that seven different sounds are heard on the mystic path; passing through this world of sounds, the Yogi is ultimately united with the soundless Brahman, and becomes indistinguishable from It, just as the flavours of various flowers are indistinguishably lost in the taste of honey (VI.22).

In Hatha-kundalini Yoga we find a reiteration of the Upanishadic view. The *Gorakṣā-paddhati* (II.17) records that when the *prāṇa-vāyu* reaches the void of the thousand-petalled lotus, the sounds of bell, drum, etc. manifest themselves; this is a sign that success in Yoga is near.

Sensory experiences can also be taken by the mystic as 'milestones' in his progress. In a dialogue with his disciple Anuruddha, Buddha expounds the view that the perception of an aura (*obhasa*) and a vision of forms are the criteria by which to judge whether concentration was present or not. Anuruddha had perceived both an aura and a vision of forms. But lately these had all vanished and he did not attain to the after-image. There-

upon Buddha told him: 'But this is what you must attain to. I too, indeed, before I became wholly enlightened and Buddha, perceived both aura and vision of forms. And then in my case too they vanished. So I pondered over the cause of this and discerned that concentration had left me and hence the vision'.¹⁴

Besides indicating the mystic's progress on his path, sensory experiences subserve a function in the economy of spiritual development. In commenting on *Yoga Sūtra*, I.35, Vachaspati Mishra observes: 'In one performing fixed attentions and contemplations and concentrations there arises, as a result of success in these, that direct perception which is a supernormal consciousness of odours.' Similarly what is said is applicable to the other sense-activities also. And this is to be believed on the strength of the authoritative work and not from probable-reasonings (*upapattitah*). These sense-activities when arisen bring the mind-stuff into a relation of stability and dispel doubt and become a way of approach to concentrated insight'.

The next *Yoga Sūtra* (I.36) gives another example of how sensory experiences help the development of mystic life. It says that an undistressed and luminous sense-activity when arisen brings the central organ into a relation of stability.

Despite the function that sensory experiences play in the economy of spiritual life, it should not be forgotten that they are but means to the end. They may indicate nearness in the realization of the goal, yet they are not themselves the objects of mystic quest. They have, therefore, to be transcended and left behind. It is not necessary to distrust them, as many of the visionary experiences have to be; but like the latter, they have to be discarded and passed over before the goal of mystic life can be attained.

¹³ W. R. Inge: *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18, n. 2.

¹⁴ C. A. F. Rhys Davids: *Buddhist Psychology*, London, 1914, pp. 105-6.

MAN, THE MAKER OF THE UNIVERSE

BY KSHITISH CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI

The immaterial part of man is known as the Soul. The Soul is really devoid of all distinction conceived to exist *within itself* (as among the various parts of a composite thing). The Soul is also without any distinction usually found between two or more objects similar in nature. The Soul really has no *external* diversity, i.e. the human soul (in one individual or another) and the divine soul are essentially one spiritual Principle. The Subject of knowledge or subjectivity, according to Vedanta, is one, not many.

But do not we in everyday life see the world full of numberless human beings? Do not we experience ourselves as passing through different states (such as waking, dreaming, etc.)? Do not we, as created beings, look up to our external Creator as an object of adoration?

The *Satopaniṣad* declares in reply that the individuals whom we see are 'such stuff as dreams are made on', and the whole world, we who behold it, as distinct individual knowers or subjects, and the Creator do not constitute Reality. They present a false appearance, and are, like the Apple of Sodom, utterly hollow and unsatisfactory. They are the product of non-knowledge of the true Self, which is the one Subject of all knowledge. This *ajñāna* or nescience is without beginning. The *Satopaniṣad* text *sublates* the phenomenal show by suggesting the underlying truth of the beholder *himself* above the three states of waking, dreaming, and sound sleep. The one transcendental Self of the beholder is impelled by his unconscious, inner longings (present in *ajñāna*) and creates the manifold world present to his and our consciousness. So long as he does not realize his nature beyond the relative plane of consciousness he will be dominated by *ajñāna* and project to himself the diverse show of men and things. Like the proverbial

spider he is the one spiritual Principle who spins this wonderful fabric of creation out of himself; the one Soul in him thus appearing as the many. Thus multiplicity, strictly speaking, is false. Many souls do not truly exist. Maya or *ajñāna* also becomes sublated with the dawn of spiritual knowledge, having been originally superimposed on the one Subject.

Another Shruti, *Kaivalyopaniṣad* posits the phenomenal show as arising from the one Soul through the ignorance of the transcendental Reality.

'*Puratraye kṛṣṭi yaśca Jivastatassujātam sakalam vicitram*'.

'The wonderful variety of the creation has arisen from the one Soul that experiences the three states'.

Both the Shrutis thus declare the falsity of many souls as being the direct result of nescience. The Creator also is not an external deity, but the same one Soul that, empirically speaking, experiences waking, dreaming, or dreamless sleep.

We may here ask: Is the human soul related to the body? If it is Spirit, not associated or identified with a body, it cannot be called a Soul. The state of embodiment must imply many bodies and their limitations. Besides, the individual mind also must put its own restrictions upon the Soul. How can the human soul then, thus fettered by psychophysical bounds be free from limitations and one only without a second? The *Praśnopaniṣad* enunciates the *oneness* (indicated by the singular number) of the Self, the substratum of the sixteen elements, as well as its *embodied* state as residing inside the body. The spiritual Principle which lives in the body is the one location for the elements like *prāṇa* etc. The Upanishad clearly explains the erroneous nature of life and death (perception of embodied existence and departing from the

body), etc. as being due to wrong identification of the Spirit, the Creator of the sixteen elements like *prāna* with the principle of life created by him. The two passages thus *prove* the bodily state of the Soul. Moreover, the mind, as being created, is one and is *contained* in the Spirit-Man. It cannot therefore bound the *container*. The Soul is thus infinite in nature (*vibhu*). The *Praśnopaniṣad* also thus establishes the *oneness* of the Soul.

Those who hold that souls must be many in number raise an objection: If the Soul equipped with one internal organ (mind) is regarded as all-pervading (*vibhu*) then a person must happen to be directly cognizant of the joys and sorrows of others. But this is never the case.

The objection is thus met: The contender himself is the one Soul. All others have been imagined by the one mind that he has (through ignorance of his real nature) created for himself. They are 'such stuff as dreams are made on', and as such do not possess any *separate* inner organ by which they may be said to feel pleasure and pain. Thus there is neither any wherewithal for an actual experience nor any real pleasure or pain, on the part of the shadowy creatures. There is thus nothing for the objector (i.e. one Soul) to know. He continues to be one and infinite in his nature.

The *Kaṭha*, *Muṇḍaka*, and *Praśna upaniṣad* texts also refer to the Soul—characterized by the mind and projecting the material world out of itself—as *one*, as is indicated by the singular number in '*yah*', '*asya*', and '*manasi*'. The *Kaṭha* text describes the state of dream-experience, when all empirical things such as *Prāna* dissolve into the mind. Then the Soul, impelled by latent desires and aided by *avidyā* (ignorance of true Self) of marvellous power, creates a romantic world of objects (like wife and children). The Soul does not sleep, but remains awake to experience and enjoy the objects thus created by it. This inner Soul is Brahman, the esoteric Principle in man. It is on this spiritual witness that the wonderful variety of subjective creation,

like the globe, etc. is superimposed. Just as the snake falsely seen in a rope has no existence beyond that of the rope (is in essence nothing but the rope itself), so the whole world of dreams is identical in essence with this one imperishable Spirit in man.

The *Muṇḍaka* text sets down the world of experience as being of the same stuff as the mind, which is the characterizing adjunct of the internal Self without any real form. The world that is presented to consciousness consists of modifications of the mind, into which the world of waking reality lapses in dream, and with the dissolution of which into *ajñāna* during dreamless sleep the world ceases to be experienced.

The reasons why the world of perception is unreal are: (i) that it disappears during dreamless sleep, and (ii) that it emanates on waking from the mind, like sparks from a fire. The vast world thus is an offspring of the mind. (It is to be noted that at first there is the one *universal* mind created by the formless Self, which later identifies itself with it and projects the world of individual men and things, including itself as a person with its *individual* knowing mind).

The *Praśna* text (anticipated in the *Muṇḍaka*) lays down that the world is composed of modifications of the mind. Pippalāda, the teacher here, replies to the question of Gārgya by saying that just as the rays of the sun indistinguishably merge into it at sunset, and again come out of it at sunrise and scatter themselves in all directions, similarly all these familiar objects and the percipient senses merge during dream into the very luminous mind. (The mind is said to be superior to the senses because it regulates their functions. Every sense organ has a presiding deity of its own and the mind, still a brighter deity). All objects of sense-perception become, at the time of dream, one with the mind; the senses, such as the eyes, thus have nothing to perceive during dream. They remain functionless, merged in the mind. The five gross elements (earth, water, etc.) and the material world they compose are made of the stuff of the

mind and created by the Self whose characterizing mark is this mind (i.e. the human soul under the spell of nescience).

The empirical knower (*vijñānamaya*), with the mergence of the individual attributes (like the mind, etc.) into *ajñāna*, their cause, himself gets established in the state of sound sleep and is known as *prājña*, the immutable witness of dreamless sleep. This unchanging spiritual Principle by virtue of mere association (not identification or *adhyāsa*) with *ajñāna* becomes the *locus*, where the five elements and their products (such as the mind) lose themselves. This one imperishable Reality (which is the very essence of the individual Subject) does not then see any object of dream-creation (which, together with the creative mind, has totally lapsed into the material cause, *ajñāna*). This is the one Soul or sole Subject of knowledge. In essence, it is pure subjectivity, on which *ajñāna* is merely superimposed; without there being any identification therewith of the spiritual witness, *prājña* shines in its own light after the complete dissolution of the gross elements (earth, water, etc.), their products (the globe, the seas, etc.), the subtle elements, and their finer effects (the ten senses; intellect, mind, etc.; their states), together with the presiding deities of them all.

The purport of the texts of the above-mentioned Upanishads is that it is *one* Soul, with the mind as its characteristic mark (*upādhi*) that has created the material universe.

Another difficulty arises: It is said in the Shastras that the eyes are what pertain to oneself (*adhyātma*), that which is to be seen is the outer object (*adhibhūta*), and the sun-god is the deity (*adhidaiva*) presiding over the eyes. It is the sun who inwardly controls visual perception. According to the above dictum there are clearly spiritual entities besides the human Soul that experiences the three states—sensuous, psychical, and causal.

The difficulty can be thus obviated: Take the state when we experience a dream. The empirical senses cease to operate. The mind creates the dream world. We then change,

as in an ideal romance, into something rich and strange. We perceive a new world, and then feel happy that we have received the favour of some gods.

But is it not the empirical ego in us, which, under the force of sleep, visualizes the romantic world, including the gods and the blest recipient of their favour? Just as we then create the gods and control them, but at the same time, through the foregoing of our empirical nature during sleep, we wrongly regard ourselves to be blessed by the gods we have created; so it is possible for *one* human Soul to be favoured by the gods of whom in truth he is the material cause.

It may be here asked: What is the difference between the soul that imagines a dream, and the souls that are then imagined? We may here take the example of an oil-cloth painting of a finely-dressed gentleman. There is considerable difference between the actual *cloth* on which the painting stands, and the clothes (made of colours only) that the gentleman in paint has been made to wear. Similarly, the shaper of the dream corresponds to the actual cloth, and the shadowy creatures, to the painted clothes. Thus it is clear that the beings of the dream world have no real existence; they are mere appearances. The empirical man who has fallen asleep and projected the magical show alone is real.

This is also clearly borne out by *Praśna*, *Mundaka*, *Kauṣītaki*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Kaivalya*, and *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣads*, all of which point to the falsity of the many created souls (or egos) and reality of the one Soul informing and underlying them. It is this only one spiritual Principle that becomes liberated through the attainment of inner light.

Praśnopaniṣad states: (i) that the percipient senses, such as the eyes, cease to function during dream through lack of objects (like forms of things) and remain thus merged in the mind; and (ii) that the empirical show of things is a mere appearance fashioned by the ignorant soul, limited by the mind which is the material cause of the five gross elements and all their products.

A text of *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* uses the very word 'apiyanti' (get dissolved) and establishes beyond doubt the fact of dissolution being the uniform import of the *Praśnopaniṣad* text, though the latter uses the word 'sampratiṣṭhanti'. The *Praśnopaniṣad* text concludes by asserting that he who realizes this *prājñā* or *akṣara* to form his own inalienable nature comes to acquire plenary knowledge of the world which he has built in imagination and sustains by the might of his own being.

When the empirical ego, characterized by the mind (*viññānamaya*), changes, during sound sleep, into *prājñā* (designated by the word *prāṇa*) he does not then witness the phenomena of dream; as they, together with their percipient senses, have now lapsed into the omniscient Soul wrapped in mere sleep. When this *prājñā* (the immutable spiritual Principle beyond self-arrogation or *tādātmyā-dhyāsa* with *ajñāna*) comes to waking life, then the senses (such as the eyes), the presiding deities (such as the sun-god), and the divine abodes (such as heaven) successively come out of the Soul marked by sleep, like sparks from a lighted fire. *Muṇḍaka* Shruti also expresses a similar view. Both *Kauṣītaki* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads* thus posit *prājñā* (the one unchangeable Soul wrapped in sleep) as the cause of creation. (According to the *Kaṭha* and *Praśna Upaniṣads*, however, the omniscient Soul, in sound sleep, is the locus of dissolution of the world).

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* Shruti also lays down that creation proceeds from the Soul enveloped in sleep.

The *Kaivalyopaniṣad* also supports the same view and affirms that the human soul that passes in succession through the three stages of waking, dreaming, and sleeping soundly (in the threefold vestures, gross, subtle, and causal that enshrine the soul), as

being withal felt—directly¹ and without intermission—as the 'I' principle is the plenary cause—efficient and material—of manifold creation, including the external divine Maker and all objects of dream and waking life. Such a creation becomes possible by the force of false knowledge, a magazine of many marvels.

Regarding the Soul surrounded by sleep it is said in *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* that this spiritual Principle is omniscient, as having been the previous illuminer of the multifarious phenomena of dream and waking life that is now over. It is this one Soul that has created the subtle element of space (*ākāśa*) and the other illusory elements, together with their products (e.g. the mind, the senses, and all objects of perception); as such it is the very God of the universe.² It apprehends everything through a bare awareness of whatever object it presents to itself in the three states of experience. It is the Inward Controller (*antaryāmi*) of whatever is spontaneously imagined to be, as in a dream. It is the origin of everything. All things come out of it and again return into it.

In the light of the above survey, we find that it is erroneous to regard oneself as being blest by the gods. The one Soul that creates and shapes all phenomena alone regulates them from within; it is the Supreme Lord.

This is the verdict of Vedanta.

¹ By its own light even before it is known by the mind. The self-identity can be clearly noticed by the subject in the intervals of two mental states, when, with the attentive mind, merged in consciousness, he has a momentary glimpse of his inner Self. Compare Shankara's *Laghuvākyaavṛtti*, and Wordsworth's 'The Boy of Winander'.

² This divine semblance finds an echo in 'Hamlet'. 'In apprehension, how like a god'. Romance, in essence, is a search for the soul, which is of perennial interest to man, alike in its strangeness and its beauty.

“How wonderful! In me, the shoreless ocean, the waves of individual selves rise, strike (each other), play (for a time), and disappear, each according to its nature.”

—*Aṣṭāvakra Samhitā*

JIVANMUKTI AND AVIDYA

BY P. S. SASTRI

Indian systems of philosophy are directed towards the enunciation of a pathway to liberation. Liberation means putting an end to the wheel of life and this in its turn implies the realization of a pure spiritual existence untrammelled by the world of appearances. The Sāṅkhya and Advaita systems of philosophy declare that such an existence is possible even during our stay in this world of appearances. As Pratyagrūpa argues: '*Tad-īha yadi jīvati jñānam utpannam api avidyām na nivartayate, kā vārtā kālāntare tan-nivartate. Jīvata eva ca jñānotpattiḥ, itarathā tad-utpādakakāraṇābhāvena anutpattiḥ prasangāt. Tad-yadi muktir-asti, astyeva jīvanmuktīḥ*'.

It is held that Avidyā or the absence of Knowledge is the root cause of our bondage to the spatio-temporal world. It makes us fail in realizing our true nature, which realization alone is the final liberation. Hence Pratyagrūpa asks, 'If Avidyā is capable of being dispelled by Vidyā or Knowledge (=Self-Knowledge), then it must happen even when we are having an embodied existence. If it cannot happen here and now, then what guaranty is there that this Avidyā disappears after the body is left behind by the self?' That is, a true spiritual existence must be possible even in this world of appearances. Besides, the truths of any philosophic system are intuitively apprehended in experiences; and only those who have lived through such experiences are capable of imparting the spiritual instruction. Experience or Anubhava is the final criterion in all such ultimate problems.¹ Unless one has the real experience of truth he cannot guide the rest. The very idea of having a Guru in all philosophic or spiritual matters implies that the Guru must

have the immediate and direct experience of Truth.² This can be possible only if *Jīvanmukti* is possible.

But how can we explain the bodily existence of the Jīvanmukta? The body is said to be the product of ignorance. If so, it must cease to exist as soon as the true knowledge of the Self or Reality dawns on the individual. There are three theories which attempt at an explanation of this anomalous position. They are known after the terms *avidyā-leśa* (the residue of ignorance), *avidyā-gandha* (the impression of ignorance), and *avidyā-samskāra* (the momentum of ignorance). It is assumed by all these theories that Avidyā must exist for some time for the free individual; and this is accounted for on the basis of Karma. That form of Karma known as Prārabdha Karma is the most potent one. It cannot be overcome by any means other than that of living it. As the *Vedānta Sūtras* declare, '*Bhogenā tu itare; kṣapayitvā sampadyate*'. Karmas other than the Prārabdha can be overcome; but this one comes to an end only when we have gone through its consequences completely. It is the original burden that we carry with us in our long journey through the wheel of life. It is only after the Prārabdha Karma is exhausted that the individual can be perfectly free from the mortal coil. Till then there must be and will be the bodily existence.

In his *Brahma Siddhi*, Maṇḍana maintains the Samskāra theory of Avidyā. The person who has the knowledge and experience of Reality has no Avidyā left in him or for him. It is only the Samskāra that makes him have a body. To take an example: the rope is cognized as a snake. Even after we know that it is no snake but a rope, for some time still

¹ See Shankara on *Vedānta Sūtra* I. i. 2: '*Anubhavaś-ca yathā sambhavam īha pramāṇam; anubhāvāvasānatvāt Brahma-jñānasya*'.

² Cf. '*Acāryavān puruṣo veda*'; '*Upadekṣyanti te jñānam jñāninastattva-darśinah*'. Vimuktatman writes, '*Acāryābhāvāt vidyālābhāt mokṣābhāvah*'.

the quivering and the fear continue. This is due to the impetus given by the previous experience. In the same way the body too exists even after ignorance is destroyed. Vimuktatman rejects this argument on the ground that the absence of Avidya amounts to an absence of its Samskara also: '*Samskāra tadvatoh avidyā śarīratvam*'. The persistence of the quivering and fear can only be due to the continuance of ignorance. As such Vimuktatman arrives at the theory of *avidyā-leśa*. The Upanishads have given such intuitions as 'the liberated is liberated', 'being Brahman he becomes Brahman', 'the wise one here becomes immortal'.³ The commentator of Vimuktatman illustrates this theory by saying that the sun can dispel the darkness everywhere but never the darkness that is behind the curtain. This darkness is technically *tamo-leśa*. One might well retort this commentator by saying that the light of the sun has not entered that place and as such there persists darkness. True knowledge is the antithesis of ignorance. In such a case knowledge has to dispel even *avidyā-leśa*. The so-called Prarabdha Karma also cannot account for the existence of the body since all Karma is the product of ignorance. If the body were to persist even after the destruction of the root cause, then we will be driven to the unhappy conclusion that the body is after all not the product of ignorance, and that the Prarabdha Karma is something superior to ignorance.

Chitsukha, therefore, asks, 'What is *avidyā-leśa*'? Is it a part of Avidya? Or is it a manifestation of Avidya? It cannot be the former, for nescience has no parts in it. It cannot be the latter, for when the original cause is removed, its effect or shadow too must disappear. The author of *Jñāna Siddhi*, who was the teacher of Chitsukha, is said to have maintained in his *Nyāya Sudhā*, that even though Avidya is only one, it has a good many forms (*Ākāras*). One form represents the cause of our belief in the reality of the world; a second one manufactures the objects and

the activity inside the universe; and a third is responsible for the creation of the belief in the existence of the immediate. When the reality of Advaita is grasped the first form comes to an end; the second terminates when truth is realized; and the third disappears when the Jivanmukta has his higher immediacy, while it follows at other times as the cause of the appearance of this universe. With the destruction of Prarabdha Karma this third variety ultimately vanishes. Here at least we have a genuine approach to the problem. The wheel of life, which is due to the Prarabdha Karma, is subject to the various categories. These categories have their origin in the self and their application to the spatio-temporal world. To have an eternal experience of Reality one has to withdraw these categories into himself; and this means absorbing the finite world into the world of consciousness. This happens in every instance of higher immediacy. And in all such cases, Prarabdha Karma ceases to operate since it is only another form of the relation between the individual and his categories which presuppose objects. The denial of the separate existence of the objects amounts to the denial of the categories and the annihilation of all Prarabdha Karma. And Karma as such amounts only to a certain Samskara or impression that we carry with us.

One can reasonably understand that there can be *avidyā-samskāra*. But it is impossible to accept the *avidyā-leśa* unless one prefers to be illogical. If Avidya is not a whole of parts, how can there be a residue? If knowledge is opposed to ignorance, how can there be even a speck of ignorance in knowledge? If the Prarabdha Karma can function even outside of the world of the categories, then knowledge cannot be the knowledge of Reality. That this Karma cannot function with reference to the Self which is the foundation of all the categories, is evident from such an intuitive utterance as '*Nistraiguṇye pathi vicaratām ko vidhih, ko niṣedhah?*' It is in this light that Padmapada observes: '*Brahmātmābhīmaninah pūrvavanna samsāritvam. Vaiṣayikas-tu sāksād-*

³ Cf. '*Vimuktas-ca vimucyate*'; '*Brahmaiva san Brahmāpyeti*'; '*Vidvān amṛta iha bhavati*'.

anubhavābhimānah samsāra viṣaye ārabdha karma śeṣa nimittah, timira nimitta dvicandravat'.

When there is Self-realization, there can be no operation of the wheel of life as before. Something of the Ārabdha Karma seems to remain in so far as the individual still clings to subject-object determinations. The moment we admit the objects as independent existents, that very moment we are also admitting falsely the finitude of the Self. It is this implicit assumption that constitutes the meaning of the Prarabdha Karma.

In this controversy the philosophers have been discussing the necessity of the bodily existence. This question necessarily implies that the body is an appearance, that it is something that gives rise to a false knowledge of the Real. The author of the *Vivaraṇa* maintains that the experience of Reality and of the body do not coexist: '*Kadācid-asampra-jñāta ātmaikatva darśanam, kadācid-ārabdha karmopasthāpita doṣa-nimitta dvaita darśanam ceti*'. That is, we have the experience of the Absolute when we are in a state of higher immediacy, and at other times we have the bodily experiences or finite experiences due to the Arabdha Karma. And the whole Karma, the finite world of categories, is sublated in the higher immediacy: '*Na ca aparokṣa darśanam antareṇa kṛtsna karma vināśah*'. He concludes this argument with the pregnant utterance: '*Prārabdha karmavataś-ca tattva darśanam saśarīrasyaiva sambhavati. Vyāsādīnām ca saśarīrāṇām eva aparokṣa darśanam śrūyate*'. Even when there is the Prarabdha Karma or an experience in the world of the categories, there is a possibility of the apprehension of the Real. The bodily existence does not come in the way, because the body constitutes the mode assumed by consciousness.

The mind needs the external, and it exhibits at every step the co-operation of the adaptations and acquisitions stored in the body. The very ideas of man do not rise from the vacuum but from the universe around him. Nature co-operates with the

mind of man. Pringle-Pattison observes: 'It is certainly on the physical continuity of my organism with the whole material system that my entire knowledge of that system depends. . . . Body is the medium of mind'.⁴ In the same way the mind too becomes the medium of the body through which the mental is revealed as related to the physical. The psychical is inherent in the physical and comes 'to light under conditions of relative perfection'.⁵ It is because of this that nature becomes a copula for the finite mind and the Absolute. The immanence of consciousness makes out the actual soul to be the perfection of a living body. In the living body there is the awakening of consciousness. The non-living is that in which consciousness has not yet come to develop itself. That is, when the material world reaches a certain level of organization, there appears consciousness. To this consciousness externality functions as a medium. And consciousness sums up in itself the whole universe which is organic to itself. The soul, then, is 'a centre of unity of experience, in connection with a certain material arrangement, which has every appearance of being the condition of its special and distinctive organization, and of its peculiar adaptation to the environment'.⁶ The soul has a body 'to store up and adopt the necessary resources for self-maintenance as a distinctive world'.⁷ The soul, then, sums up the meaning of the universe in itself because the meaning of the universe is constituted by the spirit immanent in it. The Self as phenomenal is closely linked to the body. It is as phenomenal that we normally apprehend the Self. But it is as noumenal that we are to apprehend it. Such an apprehension is bound to take us to a pan-psychism such as the one implicit in Avachcheda-vāda and in Green's Spiritual Principle.

The Absolute Reality is spiritual. It is a

⁴ *Idea of God*, p. 124.

⁵ Bosanquet: *Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 175.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

unity of the Self and the not-Self; but the not-Self does not maintain its non-Selfhood. The unity of these two is reproduced in every finite organism. Such a reproduction is the 'negation' of the Real. Consequently the Real is finitized into itself and into its opposite. And what the Jivanmukta does is to overcome this negation or finitude by withdrawing himself into himself. In the state of Jivanmukti it is the total organism that has the experience. The body does not appear as the body but as a living soul. And Bosanquet argues: 'Nature, then, lives and is complete in the life of our minds, each of which draws its content from some particular range of Nature, so that all the detail of the universe is elicited into mental foci, and "external" conditions are held together in such foci, and pass, through them, into the complete experience which we call the whole or the Absolute'.⁸

At this stage we have to be clear about the meaning of the word 'Consciousness'. Take the sculptor working on a marble and giving us a beautiful statue. Who has given the statue? It is not the sculptor alone; the marble too was responsible in its own way. The potential statue lay hidden in the marble and the sculptor had the insight to feel it. The marble is the material copartner of the sculptor in the physical universe. Both the marble and the sculptor co-operated in this adventure; and with his superior intelligence the individual began controlling his object and laying bare its implicit capabilities. And in the evolution of the work, both worked together in the sense that they were united harmoniously in this venture. The finished product represents the meaning or significance of that unity. In other words, in that peculiar unity of the sculptor and the marble there was an idea struggling for expression, for life, for consciousness. That is, there is no pure matter devoid of consciousness and significance. All matter is potential mind. This may appear to be a restatement of the old pantheism. But it is something that presses

itself on our minds and we cannot brush it aside. Nature is potential mind or soul, while the individual soul turns out to be the transition between Nature and the Absolute Spirit. Hence it is that the individual is only a finite centre of experience, a mode of the Eternal, a Self that is delimited or finitized. Any philosophical doctrine has to start with this idea: for, the Self is the first affirmation of any consistent metaphysic of experience. Without the Self there is no experience, and equally so without the object. But the Self and the object cannot be taken as two separate entities. As disparate entities they become only the fleeting phantoms and the creations of a diseased mind. Any experience has a certain character, a certain unity. It is a character which does not belong to any part of this totality. And this character is intelligible only in spiritual terms. Consequently the finite centre of experience and the object constitute the two aspects of the same spiritual entity. And in all higher immediacy we experience this spiritual unity; and during those moments the body ceases to function as a biological appendage. It functions as transformed, as a living soul. In other words, we are not conscious of it as a body, since experience becomes intelligible only with reference to the immanent ideal.

Is there a human experience or does the Absolute alone have experience? It is *we* that take up the point of the whole; it is in *our* experience that a certain idea is found. Any distinction between our experience and the Absolute experience is only *our distinction*. That is, there can be no relativity of knowledge. Nor can the experience be confined only to human beings. All finite centres have experience or do experience.⁹ That experience is found only in finite centres is only an empirical fact, a detail within the ultimate fact. Experience is the one and sole ultimate fact which simply *is*. It does not occur. And we have only to show the inner necessity that runs through all its forms. We are concerned only with the question, 'Where

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.

⁹ See Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 226.

and how experience "occurs"?' The individual self, we have implicitly argued, is a part of the objective content of experience. The other elements too must have the same sort of existence as we have. Every form and kind of existence is a manifestation of the Absolute. Bosanquet speaks of the Absolute as a 'society of selves' and observes that we cannot get the 'content of life, pains, conflicts, sacrifice, and satisfaction' out of a universe composed only of persons. We need an 'outside', and 'other' composed of non-persons. 'It is things, (is it not?) which set the problems of life for persons; and if you turn all things into persons, the differences which make life interesting are gone, except in as far as practical purposes, you turn the persons back again into things, i.e. your food, or your own body, or the place in which you were born. . . . If the instruments and attributes of my life are turned into other persons, I, surely, am deprived even of my character, for my character is not without external activity. This criticism may be mistaken, but it may pass as affirming that we must take as actual the distinctions which give life its content'.¹⁰ But these distinctions cannot remain as distinctions in that higher immediacy of which we are speaking. The distinctions are necessary, and the things should exist along with persons. But they retain their separate individualities in that experience of the Absolute which seems to be the foundational experience. Our universe cannot be a mere universe of persons. It is also a universe of not-selves which do, no doubt, participate in the Absolute experience. The same conclusion is forced on us when we argue from another point of view. Consciousness is an awareness of an 'other', an object. Consciousness, awareness, or experience can be described only in terms of its objective content. That is, it cannot be a member in an antithesis, because apart from its content it is featureless and blank. In the absence of a contrast, the problem of unity does not arise.

¹⁰ 'Contradiction and Reality' (*Mind*, N.S. 57, p. 8).

Our starting point has been 'knowledge', by which we mean the knowledge of Reality. All the 'categories or the principles of mutual relation and explanation are necessarily involved in our experience of the known world, and without them no knowledge would be possible at all'.¹¹ This implies the necessity of a permanent subject of knowledge with reference to whom alone can we speak of the existence of objects. This individual or subject or Self is both an individual that carries all the Samskaras and the universal that transmutes these Samskaras. The interaction between individuals becomes possible only if they are all embraced within one Reality. This Reality may be said to constitute the unity of the cosmos or more correctly the principle that welds the cosmos into a unity. We arrive at this unity from an awareness of the unity of our Self-consciousness. This implies that each self, though unique in itself because of the Arabdha Karma, is not in reality exclusive of the other selves. That is, the fact of knowledge and the unity of the universe can be explained only in terms of a Transcendental Ego which is the condition of time and of the other categories. The denial of such an Ego results in the denial or self-contradictory nature of all our experience. Knowledge, then, is a process with an ideal and the ideal is the actual moving power in the process. It is realizing itself in the process. This knowledge thus turns out to be the articulation of experience. And we can then say that knowledge or experience is the very 'substance' of the mind, its most concrete form of existence.¹²

We have said that consciousness is to be described in terms of its objective content. This objective content is to be described in terms of the characteristic category which unifies the multiplicity of details. And we have then the levels of experience or categories in an ascending series, the higher including

¹¹ A. Seth: *Hegelianism and Personality*, pp. 10, 11.

¹² Cf. J. B. Baillie: *An Outline of Idealistic Construction of Experience*, pp. 275, 276.

the lower. Thus we have perception and its category of substance, understanding and its category of force, the self and its accompanying differences and identity, and finally the Absolute or Reality. This puts an end to the distinction between our ideas and the 'real' facts which is the mark of all higher immediacy. At this stage we have the highest knowledge which, though it might sound paradoxical, is the Absolute's knowledge of itself. But is the Absolute self-conscious? Bradley has shown that the Absolute as such cannot be said to be self-conscious and that the Absolute manifests itself in finite centres some of which are self-conscious. This is a daring piece of metaphysics. If the finite centres, at least some of them, are self-conscious, and if to be self-conscious is the ideal of knowledge, there is no reason why the whole itself is not self-conscious. We have only to remember that all matter is animated matter. The many individual consciousnesses have an identical content. They are united

with one another and they are conscious that in it they find their true self-realization.

There are various planes of experience. They are both the stages in the temporal evolution of the cosmos and the moments in the eternal completeness of the Absolute. The temporal is only the shadow of the eternal. Yet each mode of experience has its own value which it contributes to the whole. The highest stage is different from all the lower, contains the lower within itself as moments, and offers the clearest knowledge of the principle operating in all its stages. Since Reality is spiritual, all the levels of experiences are the moments of the highest. They appear as stages, but in fact they are not stages. It is this appearance that the Jivanmukta leaves behind. This leaving behind is in reality the overcoming of ignorance by knowledge; and knowledge is the knowledge of the Self. This Self-realization constitutes the content of all higher immediacy or *Aparokṣānubhūti*.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The poem, *Swami Vivekananda*, with which the current issue opens, is from the pen of one of the fortunate few who saw and heard Swami Vivekananda and are happily in our midst today. She lives in Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A. . . .

When the Soul hungers for God, nothing else can ever satisfy the devotee. As the story of Uddhava's visit to the devoted milkmaids of Vrindaban betokens, the more intense and absorbing one's love and devotion to God are, the clearer and swifter one's realization of Him is bound to be, even when such love and devotion are directed towards an Incarnation without knowing that he is God. . . .

Prof. Gordon W. Allport of Harvard Uni-

versity pays a handsome tribute to *Sri Ramakrishna*. . . .

The Philosophy of Education by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, is a radio talk in the series 'The Concept of Man', broadcast by him (on June 5, 1952) over the All-India Radio, New Delhi, to whom we are thankful for their kind permission to reproduce the script of the talk for the benefit of our readers. . . .

Dr. Raj Narain of Lucknow University, a new and welcome contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*, examines the significance of non-material and mostly esoteric but tangibly experiential phenomena which form a substantially valid branch of the history of every religion in the world. In his brief *Evaluation of Sensory*

Phenomena in Mystic Life, the learned writer aptly indicates how such phenomena found a legitimate place in Indian mysticism, while they failed to evoke appreciation, much less acceptance, in the West. . . .

In his learned paper *Man, the Maker of the Universe*, Prof. Kshitish Chandra Chakravarti, M.A., B.L., has attempted a critical and thorough-going examination of the abstruse implications of Indian monism. Being the outcome of much original and independent research, the author's writings have made a distinct contribution to the advancement of knowledge and literature on creative Vedanta, and we hope to publish further articles from his erudite pen in the coming months. . . .

The conception of Jivanmukti may be regarded as the pivot of Vedantic thought and culture, though it has been the source of much discussion and controversy. The thought-provoking treatment of the subject, *Jivanmukti and Avidyā*, by Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., will be read with interest.

THE GOOD EARTH AND ITS ABUSE

How many of us realize that the flowering of even elementary forms of civilization depends on the intelligent harnessing of Nature's rich resources? It may seem strange that man's efforts at building a civilized society should be dependent upon such an obviously mechanical factor as the careful conservation of the resources of the earth's soil. The history of the growth and progress of civilizations bears testimony to this fact. Man's lack of foresight in dealing with the hidden forces and treasures of Nature has been not a little instrumental in delaying or arresting the progress of society.

'There is ample confirmation of the fact that thousands of square miles of desert country were once thickly forested or cropped, and the change for the worse has been brought about by the agency of man, not Nature. Every traveller in Asia and Africa has seen the ruins of once great cities which, when flourishing, were surrounded by fertile fields, but which are now in the heart of deserts'.

Thus observes James Read in his thought-provoking article on 'The Abuse of the Earth',

circulated by A. P. S. and reproduced in the *Hindu*. He traces the conversion of once fertile lands into arid deserts to the practice of wrong agricultural methods. Referring to the vexed problem of increasing food production throughout the world, he writes:

' . . . man is ruthlessly destroying the very source of existence—the soil of the earth. Apart from the menace of war it is no exaggeration to state that the gravest menace which threatens the human race . . . is the methods by which man himself is ripping from the earth's surface the soil which Nature has taken hundreds of millions of years to create.

'As a result, in four out of five continents there is relentless advance of arid, desert conditions. In America, Africa, Asia, and Australia, the sands are waiting like wolves at the very doors of civilization, every year swallowing up tens of thousands of acres of once fertile land. . . .

'In brief, these are the stages of the gradual deterioration of the soil. Primitive man disturbed it no more than did the animals, but in his first step upward he became a devastator. By exploiting the soil he deprived it of its protective covering, clearing virgin forests, burning off and over-grazing the herbage, and exhausting the humus'.

While some natural calamities resulting from earthquakes and cyclones are beyond human control, it is within man's power to arrest the denudation of the soil, whose ill effects are more calamitous as they are not perceived immediately but only after several decades. Man's dependence on the soil for the production of food reveals the vital role the good earth plays in the affairs of men. Man, whose welfare rests upon the cautious use of the soil, has to devise and enforce ways of dealing with the earth on which he lives and which preserves and produces the essentials of life. This problem is all the more important today in view of the growing population of the earth.

The future of our civilization demands that those of the present generation should seek to solve this problem from an ethical, rather than a constitutional or economic, point of view in the interests of posterity. For, often such abuse of the earth may not appear so serious a menace for the moment, though it spells disaster in the long run. The

nations of the world are feverishly preparing for defence against atomic attack. But the demands of human progress call for more circumspection in respect of the expending of funds and energies for the one purpose of increasing armaments. It is necessary that these should be diverted to the solution of more urgent human problems such as the

conservation of the 'good earth' and the discontinuation of the practices that lead to its abuse and waste. The forces that make for disintegration are imperceptible and hence more insidious. Unless counter-measures contain the forces, man, with all his grand aspirations, may yet find himself a helpless victim of a Frankenstein's monster.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A PRIMER OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE. BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI. *Published by the Author, 45, Lloyd Road, Royapettah, Madras. Pages 116. Price Re. 1-8.*

Sri Ramaswami Sastri has distinguished himself by his valuable publications on cultural subjects of perennial interest. This book, intended to supply the needs and requirements of those who do not look for any lengthy treatment of the vast subject, is a small and admirable one of its kind. The book, though small in size, is really remarkable in its contents, since it purports to present in a nutshell the rise and growth of the whole of Sanskrit literature—both Vedic and classical. The writer himself tells us that the present attempt is to present a bird's-eye view of Sanskrit literature, in all its fullness and variety, for the benefit of the ordinary man. There is not the least doubt that the attempt is a great success.

The book is divided into nine chapters in which he glances over the Vedic and classical literature, touching upon those topics which and those poets who are of real interest to the common man. He has done full justice to the Vedic portion, but the classical Sanskrit literature, vast and varied as it is, has not received equal treatment at his hands. The author is boldly nationalistic in his cultural and literary outlook and he furiously denounces those occidental scholars who pin their faith on the theory of the foreign origin of Aryan culture in India. On account of the limitation of space, he has described the literary achievements of only the very best poets in Sanskrit. The epics, Mahā-Kāvya, and dramas have been described in some detail, but prose literature, aesthetics, and metaphysics have been given lesser treatment in a few pages. The learned writer has a forceful style, and he has presented the panorama of Sanskrit literature in a manner which evokes admiration for his lucid treatment and appreciation for his depth of scholarship. We hope the learned author will be able to write out a full-fledged history of Sans-

krit literature, with due emphasis upon the Indian method of criticism and appreciation, for which he is by his learning and attainments so very admirably qualified.

BALADEVA UPADHYAYA

THE STORY OF THE BUDDHA. BY AAMIR ALI. *Published by the Oxford University Press, Mercantile Buildings, Lal Bazar, Calcutta 1. Pages 138. Price Rs. 5.*

In this short but well-written life-story of Buddha, the author has presented in a simple yet graphic manner a fascinating picture of one of the greatest spiritual personalities of the world, narrating the glorious events in story fashion having an eye to its suitability for children. By a skilful blend of facts and legends concerning Buddha, the learned author has transformed biographical history into a moving tale which can be read with ease and closely understood by children as well as adults. The circumstances of the birth of the Blessed One, the story of his childhood, his great renunciation and Illumination, the long years of his preaching and teaching, and the final scenes of his life are all woven into the texture of the work with vision and imagination, creating the very atmosphere of Buddha's times. The book is also interspersed with the teachings of Buddha, which, while not appearing too technical or abstract, fit naturally with the scheme of the story, thus making it a very appropriate channel for conveying to young minds the sublime truths of ethics and spirituality. The book is appropriately illustrated with delightful sketches drawn by Leela Shiveshwarkar.

SATYAGRAHA IN CHAMPARAN. BY DR. RAJENDRAPRASAD. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House Ahmedabad. Pages 236. Price Rs. 2-4.*

Days of freedom have come, but there the story does not end. As a free nation we have yet to work hard, in fact, increasingly, to secure all-round national stability. This reissue of *Satyagraha in Champaran* is timely and helpful. The reader

gets, as he progresses through the book, into the spirit of the great struggle for emancipation. And this is enough. Real emancipation is not far off. How things happened in Champaran and how those very things were re-enacted on a larger scale throughout the country, under the same inspiring and unfailing leadership—that of Mahatma Gandhi, are here described by one of India's most eminent leaders—Dr. Rajendraprasad, the President of the Indian Republic—who was actively and directly associated with the Champaran Satyagraha campaign. The book has its own special appeal and fascination for the patriotic citizens of independent India.

B. S. MATHUR

WHITE DAWNS OF AWAKENING. BY LOTIKA GHOSE. *Published by Thacker Spink & Co. (1933), Ltd., 3, Esplanade East, Calcutta. Pages 96. Price Rs. 4-8.*

The poems of spiritual ecstasy in this volume are inspired by deep sincerity and feeling, but their expression is at times faulty. There are too many echoes of Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats, and Swinburne, not to speak of Tagore, as in 'high azure dome', 'the mystic unborn has opened its casements', 'the dawn of a far awakening beyond troubled visitations of birth', 'Oh world, oh life, oh time'. A second failing is the extreme haziness of meaning and the excess of unfused imagery, especially in the first group of poems. The mid group of poems—'Waves of Eternity'—has, however, some splendid pieces, like 'My Abode' and 'The Meeting', which reveal the poet's lyrical gift at its best. 'The Cross Roads' has poignant beauty and 'Identity' is a fine lyric of love, reminiscent of Jacobean poetry.

A. V. RAO.

SUBLIME THOUGHTS. BY KANWAL SINGH. *Available from the author, V. & P.O. Jharli, Dt. Rohtak, Punjab. Pages 206. Price Rs. 3.*

This is a miniature 'dictionary' of wisdom compiled by an ex-Subedar of the Indian Army, who has taken pains to collect and bring together a large number of elevating thoughts from great thinkers and writers of every part of the world, covering a wide range of subjects, ancient and modern. There are nearly 1,800 quotations in all, distributed under suitable topical headings, which, in turn, have been arranged alphabetically, to facilitate easy reference. The quotations, all in English, bearing upon almost every aspect of life, are culled from such varied sources as the Book of the Dead of the Egyptians, the Vedas, and the epics, and the writings or speeches of Kālidāsa, Shakespeare,

Emerson, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and many more eminent persons.

BENGALI

SWAMI TURIYANANDER PATRA. *Published by Udbodhan Karyalaya, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta—3. Pages 345. Price Rs. 2-4.*

Swami Turiyananda, more familiarly called Hari Maharaj, was one of the leading direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He was not only a saint and a seer but also a lover of humanity, who was pre-eminently fitted to lead countless persons along the spiritual path to the attainment of the highest goal of life. When he wanted that Swami Turiyananda should go to America to carry on the Vedanta work inaugurated by him in that country, Swami Vivekananda told him, 'Oh, learning and books they have had enough! They have seen the Kshātra power (meaning himself); now I want to show them the Brahmana!' Swami Turiyananda was the very embodiment of the great and powerful Brahmānya ideal—calm, meditative, utterly unselfish, austere, pure, and holy, and his life was an inspiring example of Vedanta in practice, influencing and animating all those who came into contact with him. He did not write any books as such. But all his elevating thoughts and teachings are preserved for us in the records of his illuminating and instructive conversations with devotees and in his numerous inspiring letters written to religious aspirants who eagerly sought solutions for their problems in spiritual life. His soul-entrancing conversations were translated from the original Bengali and published serially in the columns of *Prabuddha Bharata*.

The Letters of Swami Turiyananda were first published in two parts. In this second edition, all these letters, together with about eighty new letters, have been brought together in one volume. The letters are arranged chronologically. Highly useful foot-notes have been added, giving the full texts of Sanskrit Shlokas alluded to in the letters and also complete references to Shlokas quoted therein, besides adding useful and exhaustive explanatory notes where necessary. The letters reveal the depth of learning and the profundity of spiritual realization of the Swami and his masterly grasp of the inner meaning of the Scriptures. He was like a blazing fire and each and every one of these letters possesses this spiritual fire in large measure. His was a harmonious combination of Jnāna and Bhakti, with due emphasis on personal character and individual effort. It is a vade-mecum of the most practical spiritual instructions, suited to every type of truth-seeker, and an invaluable boon to the Bengali-knowing public.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF SUNDARBANS, 24-PARGANAS

The public is aware of the relief work the Ramakrishna Mission is conducting in the Hasnabad and Haroa Thanas of the Sundarbans in 24-Parganas, for which an Appeal was published in our last. Till the end of the first week of July, over a period of about three weeks since the starting of the relief work, the Mission has distributed 444 mds. 9 srs. of foodstuffs to 6,741 adults and 1,303 children. From the second week, many more areas have been inspected and help rendered. Relief is being extended to a section of the poor and middle-class people of the Taki Municipal area as well. The Government of West Bengal has kindly sanctioned 2,750 mds. of rice and as many maunds of Atta for free distribution.

The above are some of the worst affected-areas. The relief activities will have to be continued till December next, the distress growing more acute in September.

In addition to food, there is need of cloth, medicines and milk for children. The expenses of transporting foodstuffs by boat and cart to long distances, which are very high, as also the cost of maintenance and travelling of the workers, have to be met by the Mission. Difficulties of communication and transport, through rivers that are in spate, in bad weather conditions, have made the task of the workers very hard, and they are often falling sick. In spite of all this, the work is being pushed on and is gradually getting regular.

Large funds are required to make the relief adequate and extensive. The generous and kind-hearted people all over the country should contribute liberally to the Mission's Relief Fund and thus help mitigate the distress of their unfortunate sisters and brothers.

Contributions for the purpose may kindly be sent to: The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math (Howrah).

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

AN APPEAL

A great many people all over the world are well acquainted with the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. But a majority of them do not know much about Sri Sarada Devi—The Holy Mother. Her simple and unostentatious life, lived mostly in cloistered seclusion, and remarkable for its depth and universality of outlook, has many valuable lessons for humanity.

Betrothed to Sri Ramakrishna as a young girl of five, she grew up all by herself in her quiet village home. When she was about fourteen years old, Sri Ramakrishna came to his native village to recoup his health. He then called Sri Sarada Devi to his side, and taught her many useful and precious things, both secular and spiritual. This brief contact left an unforgettable impression on her mind.

Except for this meeting, they lived apart as if they were utter strangers. For Sri Ramakrishna was then engaged in a long and

strenuous spiritual discipline, and was all the time absorbed in divine ecstasy, completely forgetful of the world and its concerns.

In the year 1873, when Sri Sarada Devi was nineteen years old, rumours reached her ears that Sri Ramakrishna had gone mad. She felt sorely distressed, and at once decided that it was her paramount duty to be by the side of the Master and serve him in his hour of need. Unmindful of the toils and difficulties, she walked on foot all the distance of about 60 miles from Jayrambati to Dakshineswar.

The subsequent life-story reads like a super-miracle. She found Sri Ramakrishna always in a God-intoxicated state of mind. Yet when he met her, he admitted her claims upon him as his wife, but pointed out that his mind was wholly given to God. Sri Sarada Devi was in no way behind the Master in her spiritual hankering. She readily renounced all vulgar pleasures of the family life. She

only wanted to partake of his exalted spiritual attainments. She thus became his first and foremost disciple, and during the thirteen years of Sadhana under the Master, she attained to such summits of spiritual realization that she was spontaneously venerated as the Holy Mother in the Order of Sri Ramakrishna.

After the passing away of the Master, for nearly thirty-four years she ministered to the spiritual needs of thousands of sincere seekers of God. She lived her quiet life, far from the madding crowd, but was always full of sympathy for the struggling souls caught in the meshes of worldliness.

All those who had the rare privilege of coming in contact with her felt that she was an embodiment of grace, purity and simplicity. Her readiness to help all without distinction of caste, creed or colour, even regardless of their merits, was most striking. Her simple words went home to the hearts of the listeners and gave them complete satisfaction.

A story of this unique life is bound to help in popularizing the noble and lofty ideals of womanhood of our motherland gathered through the ages. This precious heritage needs to be placed prominently before our rising generation, which is in imminent danger of losing its national moorings.

It will, therefore, be in the fitness of things that we celebrate her Birth Centenary, which falls in December 1953, in a befitting manner. To give a start to such a worthy cause, the authorities of the Ramakrishna Math at Belur have formed a Provisional Executive Committee, with Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, as its Chairman.

The Centenary Celebration Committee is now engaged in the task of preparing an authoritative and exhaustive account of Sri Sarada Devi's life. The publication 'The Great Women of India', dealing with their lives and contributions in various spheres of life and different epochs of our history, is also under preparation. A short biography of the Holy Mother will also be published in as many Indian and foreign languages as possible.

In addition to the above publications, the Committee has sponsored the following plan for the celebration:

1. The Birth Centenary should be observed during the period between December 1953 and December 1954.

2. An Album containing pictures of the Holy Mother in as many postures as possible as also of the important places associated with her memory should be published.

3. Steps should be taken for the collection and preservation of articles used by the Holy Mother as well as her letters.

4. Pilgrimage to Jayrambati, Kamar-pukur, and other important places associated with the memory of the Holy Mother should be organized.

5. An arrangement should be made for putting tablets at important places associated with the memory of the Holy Mother.

6. An Essay Competition on the life of the Holy Mother should be organized for students.

7. Ladies' Meetings in different places, particularly in women's institutions, should be organized to discuss the life and teachings of the Holy Mother.

The Committee has purchased, at a price of Rs. 2,300/-, the house at Jayrambati where the Holy Mother spent the major part of her rural life. Efforts have also to be made for the repair and proper maintenance of this house and other dwelling places associated with her memory.

The Committee has decided that all contributors of Rs. 20/- and above to the Central Celebration Fund will be enrolled as General Members of the Committee.

It is estimated that more than a lakh of rupees will be necessary for the successful implementation of this plan of celebration. We appeal, therefore, to all who believe in the advancement of womanhood and the worship of motherhood to contribute their mite for this worthy cause.

All contributions for the purpose may kindly be sent to: The Secretary, The Holy Mother Birth Centenary, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal.

MAYAVATI CHARITABLE HOSPITAL

REPORT FOR 1951

Origin and Growth: The Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati was started by Swami Vivekananda—far away in the interior of the Himalayas in the Almora District, U.P.—to be a suitable centre for practising and disseminating the Highest Truth in life. In addition to its religious and cultural work through publication of books and the magazine *Prabuddha Bharata*, and a library consisting of about 6,300 select books on various subjects, the Ashrama also runs a hospital to serve the suffering humanity as embodied divinity, without any distinction of caste or creed, and high or low.

The Mayavati Charitable Hospital came into being in response to most pressing local needs. The condition of the villagers, mostly ignorant and poor, is so helpless in times of disease and sickness that it was found necessary to open a regular dispensary in 1903. Since then it has developed into a hospital and has been growing in size and importance. Now quite a large number of patients come from a distance of even 50 to 60 miles taking 4 to 5 days for the journey.

The hospital has 13 regular beds. But sometimes arrangements have to be made for a much larger number of indoor patients, there being a great rush for admission. People come from such great distances and in such helpless condition that they have to be accommodated anyhow in improvised beds.

The operation room is fitted with most up to date equipment and various kinds of operations can be done here. This has been a great boon to the people of this area. There is also a small clinical laboratory, which is a rare thing in these parts. Almost all kinds of medical help that one can normally expect in a small town in the plains are available here. A small library, a gramophone, and a radio set are also provided for the recreation of the patients.

Work during 1951: The total number of patients treated during the year in the Indoor department was 175 of which 124 were cured and discharged, 31 were relieved, 15 were discharged otherwise or left, and 1 died. In the Outdoor department the total number of cases treated was 7,395 of which 5,653 were new and 1,742 repeated cases. Altogether 53 different kinds of diseases were treated.

The visitors' remarks show a great admiration for the tidiness, equipment, efficiency, and usefulness of the hospital.

The hospital has to depend for the most part on the generous public for donations and subscriptions. The Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December 1951, shows Rs. 8,335-5-0 as the net expendable receipts and Rs. 7,240-2-0 as the expenditure during the year. The hospital needs funds for its improvement and expansion. Contributions for endowment of beds, one or more, may be made in memory of near and dear ones.

The Management express their grateful thanks for the donations by the generous public and hope they will extend the same co-operation on which the work of the hospital depends and thus help to serve the sick and the diseased in this far-away mountain region.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI YOGESHWARANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U.P.