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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE HOLY MOTHER'S SPIRITUAL MINISTRATION

BY HENRIETTE GIRRE

At last 'tis Vrindaban, the goal of the voyage;
The Lord's game is thereat pursued from age to age;
Bhagavan Sri Krishna, Lord of the wise *Gita*,
Is for the devotee the beloved Ishta.¹

The Holy Mother compares her own fate with that of Rādhā;²
Without her dear lord³ there is no Ānanda.
Absorbed in the Divine by constant train of thought,
Her vision is keener. Gradually, she is brought
To visualize her lord. He affirms his presence
And in him she merges, being of same Essence.

One night she was thus lost in deep meditation,
So real and intense became the vision,
So profound and so deep her state of consciousness;
Ramakrishna told her, in serious earnestness:
'To Yogen⁴ you must give the initiation'.

But so troubled was she at this intimation,
Fearing people might think she wanted renown—

¹ Ishta-devatā or Chosen Deity,—the particular form or aspect of the Divinity an individual specially chooses for his spiritual practices.

² A young woman devotee and contemporary of Sri Krishna, whose name is popularly associated with that of Krishna and who loved Him as her sweetheart.

³ It refers to Sri Ramakrishna.

⁴ Swami Yogananda, a Sannyasin disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

Numerous devotees and pupils of her own;
 Three times was the vision to her own sight recalled.
 She then learnt that Yogen, on his side, had been told
 In a wonderful dream and by Ramakrishna
 To ask for her blessings and propitious Mantra.

Thus in the golden book of spiritual message,
 The Mother had opened her first page,
 Under the protection of the Lord of Radha,
 In initiating Swami Yogananda.

* * *

Back to her lord's village
 After the conclusion of such a long voyage,
 More ordeals await her.
 For, her part as Mother has only just begun
 In the game she must play, whether for truth or fun,
 Many long days will pass till the task is over.

The few who know her source, her divine origin,
 Who drink at the fountain of her mercy, would deem it a sin
 To let the Mother live in such poverty.
 They move heaven and earth. They make it a duty
 To find in new quarters a much better house
 Where in comfort may live their dear Master's spouse.

It is in Calcutta, thanks to the kindness shown
 By some of the Master's disciples and her own
 That the Holy Mother will in future reside,
 In lively Baghbazar as the spiritual guide
 Of Jivas who aspire to their liberation.
 She is so kind-hearted, so full of compassion,
 That all find at her feet the greatest indulgence.
 She will bear their failings with a mother's patience.

When Sarat⁵ does object that such facility
 Be granted, when flagrant is the impurity,—
 Fearing illness may later be her heritage:
 She says that suffering is her true privilege
 Even though she, unconsciously, may shrink away
 From doubtful supplicants. For, among so many
 Who long for her *darśan*, what may not be hidden
 In mental misery, or physical burden,
 In past sins and failures! The Mother bears the stress.
 But when the evening comes, so great is her distress,
 So burning her poor feet, through others' trespasses,
 That many times Golap⁶ sees, as she passes,
 The Mother cooling them with Ganges water.

⁵ Swami Saradananda, a Sannyasin disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

⁶ Golap-Mā, a woman disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and a companion of the Holy Mother.

Her compassion,
 Like a mighty current, since its emanation,
 Can but run unheeded towards the estuary,
 Even if those who want Moksha are unworthy
 To reside by its banks. For they must quench their thirst
 And the Holy Mother is the one and the first
 To help them and lead them to their destination,
 For, all cannot equal in predestination
 The spiritual giants, those formidable men—
 The Master's initiates, whom he called his 'children'.

When sleep cannot be hers, in the course of the night
 The Mother, knowing well how the devotees' minds are light
 And great their laziness, repeats in their own name
 The holy Mantra they value not, although same
 May be the key that will throw Moksha's door open.
 From desire she would like to free all her children,
 Make them wiser and possibly give them a chance
 To progress and to lift the veil of ignorance
 That hides and limits Reality from their vision.
 From her motherly heart, ardent supplication
 Goes to Ramakrishna: 'O Lord, bless and help them.
 May the holy Mantra, like a joyful anthem
 Burst from their hearts and lips! By its sacred virtue,
 May they, freed from Maya, reach the goal they pursue.
 Alternate births and deaths are so painful always
 Deliver them, O Lord, from the world and its ways
 And grant them all at last final liberation'.

The Mother's helping hand is like a true compass
 Pointing to the goal, however narrow the pass
 That the ship has to cross to enter the haven.
 She is the precious duct from which pours unbroken
 Sri Ramakrishna's grace, always ready to flow
 Unto the driest heart, so that it may melt and glow
 With divine light and love. Many in her presence
 Gain in truth and wisdom what they lose in nescience.

Her ear to prejudices of caste will not listen.
 She welcomes everyone and all are her children.
 Under her compassion and inner modesty,
 She veils unto their eyes her sacrosanctity.
 Whosoever suffers in one's body and soul
 Has a right to her love; she must answer the call.

It is easy indeed to blame her compassion,
 To find fault and tax it of exaggeration.
 Love, when divine, will flow on inexhaustibly
 Though the duct bringing it may break gradually.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

BY KUMUD BANDHU SEN

Like Sri Ramakrishna the Holy Mother could read books like the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*. Yet, one cannot, from this, describe her as educated or learned. Besides, she was born in a very orthodox Brahmin family, hailing from a village, far away from any city that could then boast of a modern or Western atmosphere. She was brought up in surroundings which were not influenced even in the smallest degree by the sophisticated modernism of her days. Though her utter simplicity often revealed her as one subject to typically rural conventions and traditions, the divinity that distinctly manifested itself in the Mother's life unfolded her great personality which broke loose of all shackles of sectarianism and parochiality. Even in her days of childhood her playmates and companions could not make her yield to the weakness of a humdrum mundane existence characterized by petty jealousies, light-hearted gaieties, and untruthful conduct. While still a little girl of tender age, the Mother dreamt a divine dream and played a divine play. She engaged herself in the worship of clay images of gods and goddesses, moulded into form by her own gentle hands. While at play with her companions, she often preferred the role of a priest making offerings to the deity. Herself always calm and serene, she would never let her playmates quarrel among themselves even, for, her love and generosity had a remarkable effect on them.

At heart little Sarada cherished immense sympathy for the poor and the needy. Once when Jayrambati and the neighbouring villages were affected by famine,—she was then eleven years old—Sarada Devi took it upon herself to do her bit. Her father had arranged to feed the hungry people with cooked food and she would keep on continuously fanning the very hot rice-preparation served to the

people so that they might relish it without finding it too hot.

She was often seen to remain in a meditative mood even in her early days. Once during the Jagaddhātri Pujā¹ in her native village, she was standing in front of the image deeply absorbed in meditation. At that time there came an old man from an adjoining village to see the image of the deity. As he was looking intently at the image, he was struck by the radiant and serene face to Sarada, standing motionless, fixed to the ground as it were. Suddenly a celestial glow surrounded her face and the old man found, to his astonishment, that he could not distinguish between the face of the deity and that of Sarada.

Master Mahashay² or 'M.', the well-known author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, often used to come to the Mother's place for her *darśan*. When he brought out for the first time in print a small part of the *Gospel*, mostly from jottings in his diary, it was in English and in the form of a pamphlet, copies of which were distributed to and read with delight by the Sannyasin and householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Yogananda³ suggested to M. to publish the *Gospel* in the original Bengali so that the readers might have access to Sri Ramakrishna's own utterances. But M. seemed somewhat reluctant to do so. Then Swami Yogananda appealed to the Holy Mother to tell M. to write and publish the teachings and conversations of Sri Ramakrishna in their original Bengali form. Earnestly en-

¹ A special worship of the Divine Mother, in one of Her aspects known as *Jagaddhātrī* (the Sustainer of the Universe). It comes off about a month after the Durgā Pujā (Navarātri).

² A prominent householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. His full name was Mahendranath Gupta.

³ A direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

treating the Mother, Swami Yogananda said: 'Mother, if you direct Master Mahashay to publish in Bengali, he cannot but obey you and this will be helpful in propagating the message of Thākur (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) in its true and original form among the common people. His (meaning the Master's) own utterances were nowhere preserved at the time they were spoken. M. alone had noted many of them in his diary. After the passing away of Thakur, he (i.e. M.) had refused to publish any part of his diary in spite of our repeated requests. Now that he is himself publishing parts of his diary in English, there can be no more reasonable objection to their being published in Bengali'. Mother agreed to comply with Swami Yogananda's request. Later I heard from Mother that she had asked M. if he had published Thakur's teachings in English from out of his diary and that he had answered in the affirmative. Then Mother had asked him tenderly why he had not so far published them in Bengali, for, if done so, Thakur's direct and forceful words would deeply influence the minds of the people. 'Will you read to me', she had finally said to M., 'what you have recorded in your diary?' In deference to her wishes, M. came another day and read out to her portions of his diary. At that time Golāp-Mā and other women companions and some devotees of the Mother were also present. Mother blessed M. and directed him to publish Thakur's conversations without delay.

I was present on that day in Swami Yogananda's room downstairs. When M. came down from the Mother's room to meet Swami Yogananda, the latter, who had inferred from Master Mahashay's facial expression that Mother had told him what he himself had requested her to say, said to M., 'Has Mother told you anything by way of grace and blessings? You appear to be full of joy'.

With his innate humility M. replied, 'You know everything. I did not accept your suggestion seriously when you repeatedly

requested me to publish Thakur's conversations in Bengali. Now, as our Brother Narendranāth (meaning Swami Vivekananda) was preaching the gospel of Thakur and as many people in the West had evinced great interest in his (Sri Ramakrishna's) life and teachings, I thought it would be useful to present, in English, glimpses of his sublime teachings and of his illustrious way of life as witnessed by me and as recorded in my personal diary. It seemed to me that his (Sri Ramakrishna's) great personality as recorded in a private diary which was originally not intended for publication, would impress the people of the West'.

'You know', M. continued, 'that Mother asked me to read to her what I had recorded in my diary and also that I have just now presented to her, according to her wish, a part of the diary delineating one day's occurrences and conversations. Now she directs me to publish my diary in Bengali so that the common people may have the privilege of hearing Thakur's direct words. It appears to me now that the time is ripe for bringing those utterances to light for the benefit of earnest aspirants'.

Swami Yogananda said, 'Yes, Master Mahashay, his (Sri Ramakrishna's) words are not only fascinating but full of life-giving energy and force which enter into the very soul of man and subject him to a real transformation. You have recorded his direct sayings from first-hand experience. His words are Mantrams, the Vedas of the modern age, and you have been fortunate in being able to preserve them. Bring them to light. I see that Thakur specially meant you for this great work. Freely distribute these jewels of Thakur's sayings among all the people and they will enrich human thought and character'.

Hearing these words of Swami Yogananda, M. was visibly moved. M. spoke again after a little while and said, 'Mother asked me suddenly, "Is it true that you have kept diaries in which Thakur's life and sayings as seen and heard by you have been recorded?

I wish to hear them". I humbly obeyed her order and so came today to read to her a day's events from my diary. Hearing my recordings, Mother told me, "When you read his (meaning Sri Ramakrishna's) words I felt as if Thakur himself was uttering them as he used to while at Dakshineswar. I hear that you are publishing them in English for the Westerners, as Naren (Swami Vivekananda) has preached his message in the West. I wish—and it is my earnest desire—that you should publish them in Bengali first, as there are many devotees in this country who hunger now for the direct utterances of Thakur and also for the minute details of his life. Thakur will shower his choicest blessings on you". I reverently said, "Mother, I must carry out your order (*ādes*). I will now venture to undertake it. Mother, give me strength and inspiration that I may carry it

out and fulfil the desires of your children". She blessed me, as I made my salutation to her, by placing her hand on my head'.⁴

Swami Yogananda's health was none too satisfactory. All the same, he never spared himself when others needed his help. Especially he was very particular about doing his duty towards the Holy Mother and attending to the minutest details concerning her needs and comforts. I have had to go to him often during his illness, conveying important messages to and from him. Yogin-Mā was nursing him. But Mother was extremely anxious for her dearest, 'son Yogen', as she used to refer to him. She too, following Sri Ramakrishna, looked upon Swami Yogananda as 'Arjuna' (one of the Pāndavas).

⁴ It may be mentioned here that *Kathāmṛta* (*Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*) in original Bengali, first appeared serially in the *Udbodhan*.

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF"

BY THE EDITOR

It is becoming more and more clear today than ever before to all thoughtful men that spiritual activity and understanding thrive least where they are expected and demanded most. In this age of mass production and mass destruction, individuals seem to count for nothing. The grace and inspiration upon which depends the life of the Spirit seem to have taken their reluctant flight from their abode in men's hearts. The ideal and end of life for the individual, who has to toe the line of enlightened modernism with countless others, is anything but the unitive knowledge of Godhead. Contemplation, devotion, and mystic absorption are regarded as 'queer' by the man of progressive practicality. One major result of such spiritual bankruptcy has been the phenomenal increase of fear, suspi-

cion, and misunderstanding. This state of affairs reveals the strength as well as the weakness of present-day society. Health, wealth, and prosperity are undoubtedly indispensable to a happy life. But it cannot be forgotten that there is a snake in the grass of these secular values. And it is easily seen that the richest and healthiest person in the world can still remain unhappy simply out of lack of self-control and self-contentment. This fundamental insufficiency of a purely hedonistic ideal has been recognized, though not remedied, by leaders of thought and science who have fought a brave battle against Nature for the enfranchisement of the body and mind of man.

Selfishness rules the world. But it is so ubiquitous that none takes any serious notice

of its evil consequences until and unless those consequences assume gigantic proportions and threaten the security of whole communities. The weakening influences of a life guided by pleasure and power of a temporal character are so numerous that men gravitate, in spite of their best intentions, towards lower and lower levels of egotistic selfishness. Hence it is no surprise that men and women everywhere are asking whether an awakening to righteousness and God-consciousness, such as religion insists on, is of any practical utility in solving the complex problems of life. Even those who have decided to have nothing to do with God and religion are finding themselves incapable of resolving these problems. Instead of religious or doctrinal differences they have now to contend with irresolvable and inveterate racial, political, national, and ideological differences. Love and fellow-feeling have been conspicuous by their absence in human relations. The clarion call of the great spiritual leaders of the world—Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, and many others—still rings in the ears of men, though the latter are moving further and further away from the path to perfection laid down by the former.

To say the least, the world is not suffering from either lack of or an overdose of spirituality. The winds of spirituality are always blowing everywhere in perfectly even degree, and it is for the individual yacht of the soul to spread out and suitably adjust its sails in order to be able to derive the full benefit of the energy and power of the winds. God cannot be expected to be partial and to treat with special favour, one 'chosen' race or nation from amongst the whole of humanity. He loves all and showers His grace on all equally and simultaneously. If that were not so, His children in every land could not have cherished the ideal of loving one another with perfect impartiality. So long as true love of God has not been awakened in one's heart one cannot be free from the comparative distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*, high and low, or rich and poor. With true

love of God comes the vision of perfect equality (*samadarśitvam*) and unselfishness. And when men learn to love God as the one common parent of them all, it will then be possible for them to love one another without making any obtrusive distinction between oneself and one's neighbour.

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' said Jesus Christ. This month, as Christmas draws nigh, Christians as well as non-Christians are reminded of the life and message of Him whose glorious advent this joyous occasion signifies. It goes without saying that sincere and liberal-minded devotees of God all over the world revere the personality of Christ as God-incarnate. While orthodox Christians usually view Him as the one and only Incarnation of God, the 'only begotten Son' the earth has been blessed with, the Hindus, most of all among non-Christians, unequivocally hold that the Lord has manifested and will manifest Himself several times, not only in the form of man but in other forms too. There is the fact that philosophers and theologians differ and are undecided regarding the implications of God incarnating as man. But it is also a fact that of all religions Hinduism alone believes in many Incarnations, of the past, present, and future, and proclaims that it is a fanatical superstition or ignorant mistake for the devotee to think that God can incarnate Himself only once and that whosoever does not believe in the personality of that one Incarnation cannot attain salvation. This Hindu idea of the Incarnation seems no less rational and scientific than most other ideas and ideals of Hinduism. A keen analytical mind easily realizes that if God once came down (*avatāra*) to earth and lived among men, in flesh and blood, in order to show men the way to life everlasting, He may do so again any time anywhere He pleases.

In this respect, the correct Hindu view of Christ has broadly been enunciated by Swami Vivekananda himself: 'If I, as an Oriental, have to worship Jesus of Nazareth,

there is only one way left to me, that is, to worship him as God and nothing else. . . . Let us, therefore, find God not only in Jesus of Nazareth but in all the great Ones that have preceded him, in all that came after him, and all that are yet to come. Our worship is unbounded and free. They are all manifestations of the same Infinite God. They are all pure and unselfish; they struggled, and gave up their lives for us, poor human beings. They each and all suffer vicarious atonement for every one of us, and also for all that are to come hereafter'. God is therefore an omnipresent Reality, not limited by place or time and not confined to pulpits or scriptures of any one school of thought. The reality of God encompasses all aspiring souls who seek and strive to be illumined. 'The Lord resides in the heart of *all* beings', says the *Gita*. His presence is a felt fact of direct and immediate experience by man. As Jesus says: 'The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! For, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you'.

Today most people who uncritically follow the leaders of political parties, economic systems, and social reforms are in a strange dilemma. For, they are repeatedly told by most of the leaders to enthuse themselves in loving and working for their community and country and for world peace and prosperity in general. In times of peace they are asked to love their friends and allies, but remain wary of or indifferent to those who do not see eye to eye with them in everything. During the period of war the people are strictly told to sacrifice their utmost for the defence of the country and do the worst they can to the enemy. Secular humanism, democracy, socialism, and communism—all these proclaim, though in varying tones and tunes, their ethical norms for establishing and ensuring peaceful and harmonious relations between man and man. The basis of civic life and civil behaviour is fellow-feeling. Mutual love, trust, and understanding of the

other man's point of view are absolutely essential if unity and unanimity have to be ensured in corporate living. To love one's neighbour as oneself is therefore a necessity of supreme importance for building up an ideal society. This is realized by the elders and taught, parrotlike, to the youngsters generation after generation.

But what do we see in effect? Neither the elders nor the youngsters attach any importance to this great teaching of Jesus, even among Christian nations, who, by their effort and daring, have achieved political and military supremacy today. The reason is not far to seek. Love of fellow-men can never be aroused without a knowledge of the common spiritual unity. With all their effort, the humanists of our day cry hoarse over the lack of love and brotherhood among men. But they are averse to spiritual values, let alone any reference to God. Do they or do they not realize the pregnant utterances of Jesus Christ (whom, of course, they cannot deny), wherein this Divine Messenger clearly demonstrated the close relation between man's love of God and man's love for his brother-man?

When there came a young man to Jesus and asked, 'Good Master, What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?', Jesus assured him that 'there is none good but one, that is God, and instructed him to keep the commandments. The young man persisted: 'All these things have I kept from my youth up: What lack I yet?' To this, the reply given by Jesus contains one of the most fundamental steps to realization of a perfect life: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me'. Not merely to renounce possessions or give them away to the poor, but also to *follow* Him—was His advice. By following an Incarnation of God one reaches God. By learning to love, revere, and worship God, through His Incarnation, one learns to love one's neighbour as oneself.

Next to one's own self and then one's kith and kin, the nearest object of love for the individual is his neighbour. To all practical purposes, the neighbour is a 'stranger' and gross selfishness always stands like an iron curtain between oneself and one's neighbour. Why should one love one's neighbour as oneself and of what good will that be to oneself? This may (and does to many today) appear a pertinent question from the purely hedonistic point of view. The ethics of loving one's neighbour as oneself, as Christ taught, cannot convincingly be established by those who try to preach the need for a good life without God or religion. As was to be expected, the efforts of secular humanists and godless materialists have failed to evoke the necessary feeling and sympathy in man to make him love his neighbour as himself.

To the Hindu there is nothing which is not God. In the *Skandopanishad* we find the great idea preached by Sri Ramakrishna, viz. 'Jiva (everyone) is Shiva (God)': 'Man is Shiva and Shiva is man; man is nothing but Shiva in His absolute state. . . . When there is bondage, there is the separate individual man; but when bondage goes, man is nothing but immovable Shiva'. Man loves his own self most of all things, and next to himself he places his affection in persons and things that are nearest to his heart. When a man feels and knows his neighbour to be none else but himself, looks upon him as non-different from what is closest to his heart, he can bestow the purest love on the neighbour. By loving the neighbour he loves God, nay, he loves himself. Hatred or even indifference is impossible in such a relation. According to non-dualistic Vedanta, the One Supreme Self, without a second, dwells in all beings. He who sees the Self in all and all in the Self has reached perfection in love and knowledge. In the neighbour a person sees and recognizes his own Self and thus his love goes forth spontaneously. In dualistic thought, God is seen as the Supreme Father or Mother of all beings (not Hindus, Mohammedans, or Christians only, but all), the

Supreme Ruler of the Universe, from whom all beings come forth, in whom they flourish, and to whom they finally return. All men and women, even sub-human species, are His creation. Being thus children of one common human family, a man looks upon his neighbour as a brother, nay, more, as one not separate from or alien to him.

Jesus Christ did not stop with preaching only. He exemplified, in His own life, this principle of love—love of God leading to love of neighbour—applicable in everyday action. Every one of the teachings uttered by Him in the Sermon on the Mount was amply and aptly fulfilled in His life. One could say that the Sermon on the Mount has made the deepest appeal to the Hindu heart, as it contains the core of the teaching of Jesus. He preached renunciation without reserve, though today Christian writers are seen to point their finger of accusation at Hindu spiritual teachers for advocating the path of renunciation. 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal'. Not unlike today, people in His days too were selfish and ease-loving, being attached to bodily comforts and sensual pleasure. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'. So Jesus told his followers, 'Whoever will lose his life for My sake, shall find it'. Without the ideal of perfect renunciation and unselfishness, it is hard to gain mastery of the senses and mental processes. Without renunciation, love of God is a far cry and the lack of God-centredness is the root-cause of egotistic selfishness. In a civilization where egotism is on the increase and love of God on the decrease, how many will there be who could be expected to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ by loving their neighbours as themselves or by turning their left cheek when smitten on the right?

When a lawyer asked Jesus, 'Which is the great commandment in the law?', the latter's answer was forcefully and unambiguously clear:

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

'This is the first and great commandment.

'And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets'.

Says, again, the Son of God: 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: Continue ye in my love. . . . This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you'.

To love them that love him would not be of much consequence to the individual because, Jesus says, 'Even sinners love those that love them'. So He goes one better and advises: 'Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be the sons of your Father

which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust'.

The brotherhood of man and neighbourly love need foundations that are stronger than mere good intentions. Aggressive evil has to be conquered by aggressive good. As St. Paul said, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good'. The greater the spiritual power in society the greater the bond of relationship between the individuals who comprise it. In paying our homage to Jesus Christ, one of the greatest prophets the world has seen, we can do no better than express the universal prayer of every Hindu devotee in the following words of Swami Vivekananda: 'Our salutations go to all the past Prophets, whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race, clime, or creed. Our salutations go to all those God-like men and women, who are working to help humanity, whatever be their birth, colour, or race! Our salutations to those who are coming in the future,—living Gods,—to work unselfishly for our descendants!'

THE HOLY MOTHER

A TRIBUTE OF ADORATION

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

I always keep in front of me a rare picture—rare in its combination of precious beings—often seen in many houses, the figures of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother in the foreground and that of Kāli, the universal Divine Mother, in the background—a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity. Nothing gives me such supreme happiness as the thought that we are all the spiritual children of that childless couple, who were twin rays—representing spiritual bliss and spiritual peace—from the central glory of

the Mother Kali and that we can and will be led by their grace to the presence of the universal Mother and attain Brahmananda by Her grace. When I was at Dakshineswar I worshipped at all the three shrines dedicated to Kali, Sri Ramakrishna, and the Holy Mother.

Sri Sarada Devi—more well known as the Holy Mother—was born in Jayrambati, an obscure village in the district of Bankura, West Bengal, just as Sri Ramakrishna was born in the obscure village of Kamarpukur,

at a distance of four miles from Jayrambati. The two villages are now world-famous as the birth-places of the two highest spiritual manifestations of our age. Sri Ramakrishna was a born Yogi, whose mind naturally turned to God as a lotus-bud does to the sun. His mother and elder brother were at a loss when they heard rumours that he had gone mad. They tried Mantric treatment, but the 'divine madness' would not leave the devotee. Then they thought of marriage as a means of curing his malady so that he might be made to lead a normal worldly life. In May 1859 he was married in his twenty-third year to Sri Sarada Devi who was in her sixth year. This did not mean for him any desire to enter into the matrimonial state in the ordinary sense of the word, and she was almost a child at that time. It is said that Rama and Sita were almost of a like age when they were married. There is a charm and beauty of a rare type in such a marriage. In such an early marriage there is scope for much imaginative idealization and spiritual faith. To Sri Ramakrishna, she was the incarnation of the Universal Mother. To Sarada Devi he was God himself.

After marriage, he actively helped her in the blossoming of her spiritual nature. She was his wife by the rite of *saptapadi* before the nuptial fire, but she was his spiritual disciple by the rite of *saptapadi* before the divine glory. Thus she became his intimate and beloved disciple and devotee. When she was eighteen years old, she heard rumours that her husband had been in abnormal moods. But Sri Ramakrishna had already taught her that all were 'lunatics' in this world—some being mad after money, some after fame, some after power, and some after wealth—while he was mad after God. Being his disciple and devotee she understood his 'madness' of ecstatic love of God aright. She could measure and weigh and value it justly, though to others it was imponderable and disquieting in the extreme. She felt an imperious inner call to go to her lord and master. She covered, mostly on

foot, the sixty miles from her birth-place Jayrambati to Dakshineswar where he was living.

The story of their meeting is one of the most ennobling and uplifting stories in the world's literature, though it is pathetic in the extreme. He conceded her rightful claim on him as his partner in life, but pleaded that he had given his entire mind to God and could not therefore look upon her even as an ordinary husband would and could be expected to do. Here one is reminded of what Vishnupriya had done in relation to Sri Gauranga. She prayed to her husband for showering his grace upon her by accepting her as his disciple. He agreed and she was overjoyed. Sri Ramakrishna had various other women-disciples also such as Golāp-Mā, Gopāler-Mā, and others. Nay, among his own Gurus a high place was given to Bhairavi Brāhmani, who taught him the Vaishnava and Tantric Sadhanas. Thus the Mother became the spiritual successor, as it were, of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Vivekananda venerated her as the Holy Mother—a veneration which all his Gurubhais shared with him, and which all the women-disciples of Sri Ramakrishna also felt in regard to her. Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886 and Swami Vivekananda passed away in 1902. But Sri Sarada Devi lived for nearly thirty-four years after her lord had attained Mahā-samādhi and she was venerated by all as the living aspect of Sri Ramakrishna and as the embodiment of Hindu womanhood. The spiritual wisdom given by the universal Divine Mother to Sri Ramakrishna and given by him in turn to Sri Sarada Devi is now the heavenly treasure of Hinduism as a whole and also of the whole world through Hinduism. Her mercy and love to all, her beatific spiritual realization and her communication of it, in a rich measure, to all who sought it, her Tapas, Tyāga, Viveka, and Vairagya—were all a continuation of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual ministration to humanity.

Thus the Holy Mother was the most perfect of all wives, as she was her lord's God-

given ally in the war of the soul with the senses. This idea has been given a deathless form in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* where Kashyapa Prajāpati describes his wife Diti in the following terms: 'He who is a Grihastha takes all the other Ashramites with him, as in a ship when crossing the sea, to cross the ocean of misery. The wife is to be considered a moiety of one's self if one desires spiritual auspiciousness. He can rest the burdens of life and live at ease. Like one in a fort who sallies out for fight and victory, he can, with her protection, fight the senses which are otherwise invincible. We can never repay your (wife's) help even with our whole life'.

The mundane element in the relation between Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi was so sublimated into the spiritual element that their matrimonial life became equivalent to the communion between Divinity and devotee and also was filled with indescribable, supreme, spiritual bliss. Such an elevation from domesticity to divinity has no parallel elsewhere in the world's life or the world's literature. In the words of Valmiki's *Rāmāyana*, she was '*Pativrata mahā-bhāga chāyeva anugatā sadā*', because she was his God-given Sahadharmachārini in the performance of his supreme Dharma of God-realization and divinization of others.

She was not only the ideal wife, but she was also the ideal woman. Her simplicity, purity, piety, renunciation, self-sacrifice, and altruism, were unique and boundless. Her mind and heart were completely surrendered to God. The Holy Mother retained just a little ego-sense of the purest kind in order to serve all, including Sri Ramakrishna himself, and to give the divine Amrita of spiritual bliss to and to purify and uplift the souls of all her disciples and devotees. Just as Sri Ramakrishna was the greatest saint and prophet of our own times by reason of his supreme spirituality and religious synthesis, even so the Holy Mother was the greatest woman-saint, an ideal for women in India, for the very same qualities.

She was also the perfect Divine Mother in a human form. Sri Ramakrishna himself performed Shodashi Pujā, regarding and venerating her as the Divine Mother (*Śrī Mātā, Śrī Mahā-rājñī, Śrīmat Simhāsaneśvarī, —Śrī Śivā, Śivaśaktyaikarūpiṇī, Lalitāmbikā, —to use the opening and closing words of Lalitāsahasranāma*). She became the mother of one and all because of her unbounded maternal affection for all, and she gave spiritual initiation to everyone who sought it and enabled him or her to attain its fullest fruition.

DIVINE LOVE

My Mother is here.
 My Mother will take care of me.
 O world,
 Do you believe that you can
 Touch me?
 How?
 I am in the bosom of my Mother.
 Her infinite arms clad
 About me,

Smother me
 With infinite love.
 No more can voices harm
 Or eyes betray
 The venom hidden under
 Sweetened lips.
 No more! No more!
 My Mother is here.

—STUART GRAYSON

SRI SARADA DEVI—THE HOLY MOTHER

BY HEMANTA CHANDRA VEDASHASTRI

The year 1953 is indeed a memorable year, especially to all those who are ardent devotees and followers of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. For, the great birth anniversary of Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother, the worthy spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna, which marks her Birth Centenary, comes off towards the end of this year, more precisely, in the last week of this month (December). Hundred years ago the Holy Mother was born in a rural part of Bengal, quite close to the birth-place of Sri Ramakrishna himself, to help and serve whom and to fulfil whose spiritual mission she came into this world. She was born dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna in thought, word, and deed, even as Arjuna, the third Pandava, was to Sri Krishna. Herself the very embodiment of faith, devotion, service, and all other womanly virtues, Sri Sarada Devi was fully conscious of her divine mission and encouraged and inspired her saintly husband in every way and at every step.

The Holy Mother was married to Sri Ramakrishna when she was very young; yet, she knew well enough in her heart of hearts that she was to him more than a mere wife in the worldly sense. So, she took upon herself most energetically the onerous task of moulding her own life in order to be fit to act as his worthy disciple, consort, and spiritual successor. She understood that her noble husband had been engaged in a mission which embraced the whole of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, or nationality and she fully co-operated with him and adjusted herself accordingly. Like Sri Ramakrishna, she too was completely free from any trace of sectarianism or dogmatism. She never tolerated any encroachment upon the

individual freedom of thought, feeling, or action of truth-seekers.

The Holy Mother lived throughout a most silent and self-sacrificing life. She had absolutely renounced all hankering for even the barest minimum of mundane comforts and conveniences. Her life was a glowing example of disciplined and non-egoistic struggle for progress in the spiritual path. She was an ideal wife of an ideal husband whose wishes she always respected and carried out most willingly.

She bore no ill will against anyone, not even against those who might have caused her pain or grief. Her life was, in short, resplendent and divine. She would never brood over her misfortunes or difficulties, as women are often wont to do. Because of her great and noble qualities, all others regarded her as the Holy Mother.

Her compassion was showered equally on all, without any narrow discrimination. She was always ready to help the needy and the afflicted to the best of her means. She used to cook for, feed, and look after the numerous devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. No sinner was ever turned away from her door. Rather, she would console him (or her) and reform the person by bestowing motherly care and affection.

Her piety was unequalled. Like a true devotee, she felt blessed in her marital relation with Sri Ramakrishna, which relation she looked upon as a great privilege given her for serving God in human form. Sri Sarada Devi stands out as the typically ideal Indian woman—wife, mother, and spiritual guide, all in one—representing the best traditions of ancient Indian civilization. She presented in her life whatever is noblest and best in womanly virtues and spiritual realizations in the annals of Indian cultural heritage.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

BY DR. A. W. MAILVAGANAM

There was a time when science was regarded as a potent factor contributing to the progress and happiness of mankind, and there was much reason for this view-point. The forces of Nature, which once had instilled fear in the mind of man, came to be understood and in turn used for his purposes; superstitions were dispelled, the causes of famine and pestilence were to a great extent eliminated, leisure and the means of enjoying this leisure for the many came to be provided. It seemed that we were at the dawn of a golden era, with peace, happiness, and prosperity for all.

But science has not always been looked upon as a fairy godmother. Even when she was giving of her best to man, signs of discontent with science and disapproval of her methods were not wanting, and in recent times voices of protest have become pronounced and insistent. We hear on all sides of the vandalism of modern science, that it is the very antithesis of religion and of all the values we cherish, that its benefits are superficial while the harm it has done is profound. It is our purpose here to examine the position carefully and to see whether science can enter into conflict with religion and whether science and Religion are really incompatible.

That science, divorced from philosophy, cannot possibly conflict with fundamental religion can easily be seen. The two have no common ground; and where there is no common ground there can be no reason for antagonism. There must be something in common to quarrel about. Science deals with the phenomenal universe as revealed to us by our senses whereas religion, provided it does not speculate on cosmology, takes for its province ultra-sensory experiences. The conflict that one hears about is actually between

science and traditional religion. Traditional religion is a way of life, both physical and spiritual. The Code of Manu, which is an integral part of traditional Hinduism, is more a set of rules regulating society than a religious doctrinal system. Hinduism, as we know it today, is a composite structure, with cosmogonic, sociological, political, and economic overgrowths. And with religion of this type, science could come into conflict for there is much ground in common between the two.

We now turn our attention to the second question we posed at the beginning. Is there any incompatibility between science and religion? Is it possible for an honest scientist to be deeply religious at the same time and *vice versa*? To answer this question let us for a moment consider the springs of human action—the intellectual, the emotional, and the spiritual. These faculties are present in every man, but developed to different degrees. When they have been developed so as to be in harmony with each other we get the integrated human personality which is the ideal aimed at by most educational systems. An over-development of any one faculty to the exclusion of the remaining two leads, in general, to a lop-sided human personality. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan,

'The realm of spirit is not cut off from the realm of life. To divide man into outer desire and inner quality is to violate the integrity of human life. The illumined soul acts as a member of the kingdom of God, affecting the world he touches and becoming a saviour to others. The two orders of reality, the transcendental (i.e. spiritual) and the empirical (i.e. the scientific) are closely related. The opening section of the *Gita* raises the question of the problem of human action. How can we live in the Highest Self and yet continue to work in the world?'

Several centuries of scientific endeavour have revealed the physical universe, from the most distant nebulae to the minute electrons

inside atoms, as a giant system obeying exact laws with utmost precision. The laws that regulate the motions of planets round the sun also hold the electrons in their orbits about atomic nuclei. Everything takes place at its appointed time and its appointed place. Thus, for instance, solar eclipses can be predicted exactly many many years in advance. The contemplative person cannot fail to be impressed by the majesty of law and order in the universe. He is filled with admiration and respect for the First Cause, be it Providence, a Personal God, or whatever it may be, which was responsible for this mighty organization. And this respect and admiration provide an adequate basis for his spiritual aspirations. That he has been endowed with the power to unravel the mysteries of the universe and to understand its working elevates him from a feeling of insignificance he otherwise would have had. And thus we develop a feeling of gratitude to the First Cause for allowing us to be observers whilst being actors in this world of ours.

Nor is this all. There is clear evidence of the wisdom of the First Cause. Take for instance the structure of a cell in a honeycomb. It is a twelve-sided solid (called dodecahedron) and a number of these in contact with one another go to form the honeycomb. Why does the honey-bee build its cell in this fashion in preference to any other shape? What is the peculiar property of this solid? Mathematicians have shown that for a collection of cells in contact with each other this is the only solid that provides the maximum storage space for a given outlay of wax. How is the bee to know all this? Some say 'instinct'; others call it 'economy of Nature' or 'survival of the fittest'; but these statements are mere formulae. Surely there is some force which impels the bee to construct its cell in this and in no other way. Many more examples of this kind occurring in Nature can be given. And when one surveys these one comes face to face with the wisdom of Providence. One realizes that one is in the hands of a benevolent and wise Provi-

dence to whom one could resign himself with every confidence. Well does the *Gita* say: 'Knowledge as a sacrifice is greater than any material sacrifice, for, all works without any exception culminate in wisdom'.

From the field of biology we get further information that helps to throw light on religion. We find that life has the property of integration. From the moment protoplasm appeared on earth, life started developing from the simpler into the more complicated forms. We have first the virus, then the unicellular organism, the multicellular organism, a number of multicellular organisms with well-defined division of labour associating together to form a more complex organism. And so the process goes on until we come to man. We find that on each level the previously integrated complex becomes the unit for the next stage. Thus the multicellular organism obtained by the integration of unicellular organisms, becomes the unit for the next level. So far the process of integration and the consequent evolution has been primarily biological. With the advent of man a change occurs in the mode of integration, and we owe this change to the invention of language, one of the more important milestones in the development of life on this planet. The integration now becomes sociological. Man becomes the unit of the family, the family that of the community and we get the well-defined stages in the evolutionary process: man—family—community—township—nation; and today we are witnessing efforts made to weld nations into one world nation. How long this process will take one does not know, but the signs of the process are definitely there.

The problem of good and evil appears to be connected with this evolutionary process, once the sociological process had been started. We find that good acts and intentions help this process whereas evil ones hinder it. We have here then a definition of good and evil in an absolute sense and not inconsistent with that given by the religions of the world.

From this point we are naturally led on to the individual and human conduct. How much can the individual be held responsible for his acts? This is far too big a point to be dealt with in the course of a short paper and the scientific evidence is not yet conclusive. But the study of the endocrinal glands (e.g. pituitary, thyroid, adrenal, etc.) and the effects of their secretions on human beings has already yielded some evidence on problems of human conduct. We are told that abnormal behaviour in any individual can in many cases be traced to the malfunctioning of these glands and that it may be possible in certain circumstances to restore normal behaviour by suitable treatment. Endocrinology is still in its infancy, but as further

researches are carried out results of far-reaching importance may be expected.

From this brief survey we find that science and religion could not possibly come into conflict, that the two are compatible with each other, that they are indeed complementary. We learn that the realm of spirit must not be cut off from the realm of mind, for, quoting again from Dr. Radhakrishnan, 'the sense of eternal values and the way in which the ultimate mysteries are illumined by the light of reason and moral intuition provide the basis for agreement in mind and spirit so very essential for keeping together the world which has become materially one by the universal acceptance of the externals of civilization'.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PEOPLE

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

'Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. . . . Your duty at present is to go from one part of the country to another, from village to village, and make the people understand that mere sitting about idly won't do any more. Make them understand their real condition and say, "O ye brothers, all arise! awake! How much longer would you remain asleep!" Go and advise them how to improve their own condition and . . . instruct them in simple words about the necessities of life in trade, commerce, agriculture, etc. . . . Let these people be your God—think for them, Work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way'.

Thus spoke Swami Vivekananda, more than half a century ago, to his countrymen, and exhorted them to the service of the people in the villages, where resides the real soul of India. It is a truism that a country is advanced in proportion as the masses are educated and made prosperous. Fortunately for the country, after the attainment of independence, a distinct change in the national

outlook has come all over the land, and more thought is now devoted to the mitigation of the sufferings and hardships of the sons of the soil living in the far-flung rural areas.

It is indeed a happy augury that the Central Government has also drawn up a grand scheme for national development, covering almost every phase of life. The main objective of this scheme is to reinstate the lost economic balance of the country, raise the people's standard of living, and open to them opportunities for a richer and happier life. The scheme has already been launched, and there cannot be two opinions that its successful implementation will ensure positive progress and stability of the nation. A poor country like India, with her limited resources, cannot survive the economic onslaughts of better placed countries, unless she makes an all-out effort to increase her wealth and bring

herself on a par with other progressive countries of the world.

It is, however, not too much to say that in a democratic State like ours no stable result can be expected from any nation-building scheme if it is left to be worked out only by the Governmental machinery of the party in power. It is, after all, the people who are the force behind the Government and it is their willing and active co-operation in any national scheme that alone can ensure its success. So at the very outset one should bear in mind that the people must become partners of the national plan from the very start, and be associated closely with its formulation, as also its implementation, stage by stage. Then alone can it be termed a national plan and its success guaranteed beyond doubt. The fulfilment of the people's hopes and aspirations and improvement of their material condition are indeed conterminous with the national development.

It should be remembered that the problems of a country will never be solved where only a handful of its citizens have the privilege of thinking about their solution, to the exclusion of the vast majority of its populace who remain as passive spectators. In a democratic country the Government is after all of the people, by the people, and for the people and therefore a great responsibility for the welfare of the State devolves upon the people themselves, who must on all occasions be ready to shoulder it efficiently. Apart from the Governmental efforts, or any party programme, the people in general have a great part to play in the sphere of national reconstruction and development. They are destined not only for the present but also for all time to come to fulfil many important duties to build the nation. It is from the rank and file that the leaders in every field of national activity generally come. The people must by all means be made conscious of their onerous duty of rearing such leadership for the benefit of the country as a whole. There must therefore be scope in society for everyone to develop his or her inner ability

and latent power through the service of the people outside the framework of the Government, so that when the occasion arises, he or she may be able to fill up the gap in the line of national leadership. Moreover, no democracy can survive long unless it is backed by an enlightened public opinion. There also the duty of the people is not less arduous than in other fields. They must be ever alert and vigilant over the affairs of the State; then alone the hard-earned independence can be preserved and placed on a solid basis.

But unfortunately for the country, the bulk of its population miserably lack in any civic consciousness and have no idea about improving either the individual or the corporate life. 'It is like a sleeping Leviathan', said Swami Vivekananda. No sign of life or activity is still discernible in our masses. Engrossed in the struggle for existence, they have no opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge and the development of their personality. Age-long poverty and ignorance have eaten into the very vitals of the people.

But the time has come for a change, and everyone is being slowly disillusioned. To hasten this process of uplift, there is the necessity of a band of selfless workers who will devote themselves exclusively to the service of the people and the country. It is no good frittering away one's energy in a vain struggle for capturing power. If one's character is built through selfless service, leadership and power are sure to come as a matter of course. Again, there is hardly any time for the mere expression of pious wishes. Everybody should now set himself to the nation-building work. Let one's deeds justify one's words.

But this is not at all an easy task. It requires tremendous strength of character to work for the good of others. Even a man of determination, when faced with the stern reality of life, fails miserably to rise to the occasion. But where there is a will there is a way. And if the workers place the love of the people and the country above every-

thing else, they will be irresistible, and success is bound to follow sooner or later.

Our rural folk have a special inclination to learn from the philanthropic and religious bodies. So success in winning the hearts of the people and guiding them through proper channels is more easily achieved by such bodies than by Governmental authority or any other agency. The popular philanthropic and religious organizations, therefore, have a special duty to perform in evoking in the people a sense of responsibility for bettering their own lot and in contributing thereby their quota to the national development.

The drawbacks of our people are many. To remove them one must go to the root of the problems and try to find out the remedies. Most of the ills in the rural area, however, centre round some fundamental needs, of which shortage of food is the most pressing one inasmuch as it occupies a pivotal place in the village economy. The emaciated appearance of most of our rural folk, which is a common sight in every village, betrays their lack of nourishment and abject penury. All attempts at development will be frustrated unless the people are properly fed. So full attention must now be focussed on the increase of food-stuffs. In so far as the large-scale schemes of irrigation, fertilization, land-reclamation, and communication to facilitate the increase in and proper distribution of food-stuffs are concerned these may be left to the Government for their implementation. The people's responsibility lies the other way. It is better if the people confine their attention to improved methods of agriculture, regular cultivation of available lands, multiplication of crops in a year, and maintenance of the fertility of the soil by manuring it with cow-dung, composts, and green manure, which are easily available in the village. If by a cheap and simple method gas can be extracted from the dung of live-stock without tampering with its manurial value, much of the problem of fuel and manure can easily be solved in the rural areas. These and other methods of turning waste into wealth are to

be introduced in the villages to help the people in their attempt to grow more food.

Apropos of agricultural improvement, there must also be industrial development in the villages. These are like the two wings of a bird; if one is absent, the other will be of very little use. Both must simultaneously be developed for an ordered rehabilitation of the rural economy.

The village industries are concerned in the main with the processing of local raw materials through simple techniques and making them fit for marketing. Introduction of new cottage industries and handicrafts and finding an adequate market for them will go a great way towards providing employment for the unemployed and the partially employed. To give effect to such a scheme, work-houses must be set up in the rural areas to teach the villagers simple techniques of industries and at the same time find for them some profitable occupations.

The reclamation of tanks also can contribute a great deal to the improving of rural economy. There are a large number of tanks in the villages which have long gone out of use, and now serve only to breed mosquitoes, to the great detriment of the health of the villagers. If re-excavated, the tanks may serve a triple purpose: they can be fruitfully utilized for fisheries which may fetch a handsome income; the water of the tanks may again be used for irrigation on a small scale; and, moreover, the problem of good drinking water will also be solved.

In so far as other rural industries are concerned, mention may be made of weaving, smithy, manufacture of buckets and trunks, iron-sheet wares, bell-metal wares, copper and brass wares, earthenware and such other indigenous goods, including even some articles of luxury.

Another most important factor in the development of rural life is education. Much is already in the air about the education of children and grown-ups. The State is allotting a large sum of money for this purpose, and sooner or later a network of institutions

for children and adults will grow up in the country. Apart from this effort of the State, there is enough scope for the people to do a good deal in this line. There may be schools, but very few students may attend them. Extensive propaganda on the part of the people must therefore be carried on to create a favourable atmosphere for education. Moreover, some direct result can also be achieved by the people if they follow a simple maxim like 'each one teach one'. Let each one of them take on themselves the duty of making at least one person literate every year and the illiteracy will be no more in the land in a few years.

There are various other aspects of rural development, but if agriculture, industry, and education are rightly tackled, the rest will be automatically adjusted.

In all attempts at national development the people's share of contribution is considered to be an important factor. For, any project, if taken up by them as their own, is sure to usher in a happier and richer society within a comparatively short period.

It is indeed good to awaken the potential energy and enthusiasm of the rural population to work for their own improvement, but unless they are taught to function as an organized group, there will hardly be any noticeable progress in their activity. It is the paramount duty of our village workers

to train the people to work through the co-operative process. If our poorly equipped villagers can pool together their scattered resources in men and money and build up a capital out of them to be utilized for their common good, they can easily withstand any aggression from outside, whether economic or other.

As the masses are the backbone of our nation, they should be made the first concern of the State. In working out the large-scale development schemes, the Government should bear in mind that unless special efforts are made to bring the villagers of slender means within the scope of development assistance, the beneficent results will accrue mostly to those who have already surplus resources, and thereby the rich will be made richer and the poor poorer. If such a contingency ever arises, it will deflect the social and economic balance in a wrong direction.

Both the Government and the people should now join hands in bringing about an ideal State where everybody will find his rightful place and an equal opportunity in society and work unitedly for the common weal. We cannot but reiterate the special charge of the people for the development of such a happy society. The field of social welfare will expand exactly in the measure the people accept responsibility for solving their own problems, and then only will it result in permanent improvement.

MOKSHA

BY DR. C. KUNHAN RAJA

Of the fundamentals of Indian thought, the most important are: (1) Karma and Reincarnation, (2) Svarga, and (3) Moksha. The idea of Naraka (hell) played a very subordinate position in Indian thought in all its ages. We see no trace of this thought in the *Rg-Veda*.

There is punishment for the wicked mentioned there; but this is not punishment *after death* but only *during life*; and that is not what we call 'hell'. There are traces of the doctrine of reincarnation even in the earliest strata of the *Rg-Veda*. The doctrine of Karma is also there,

though not in the rigid philosophical way. What is most prominent there is the idea of Svarga and of Moksha. The description of Svarga in the last five stanzas of the 113th Sukta in the 9th Mandala of the *Rg-Veda** is one of the most sublime pieces of poetry that I have read anywhere in literature, not only Indian but of any other country. There are other places also where the enjoyment in Svarga is presented in the most fascinating way, in the *Rg-Veda*.

The idea of Moksha is equally prominent in the *Rg-Veda* and the prayer of Shunahshepa to Varuna* is the place where we see the idea of Moksha most prominently. In the 1st Mandala, the last four stanzas of the 24th Sukta and the last stanza of the succeeding Sukta* form some of the most pathetic and touching appeals to the Supreme Power, for protection from sins and for release from bondage, that one can find in any literature.

The idea of suffering in life being the effect of some transgression and the possibility of supreme happiness through divine grace are found in other religions also. But what is not found in other religions is the true conception of man's real nature, of suffering, and of happiness and release.

This real nature of man is found in the Vedanta, especially in the Advaita system. There, Mumukshutva or a desire for release, is the eligibility for the realization of one's own nature. Although Shankara gives four items as eligibilities, *Bhāmatī* says that this last is the real eligibility. What is this desire for release? The idea is not that one is confined to a limited state and that he should get out of it to another place. There is no idea of a movement or transfer involved in this release or Moksha. It is only a realization of *one's own nature*. And that has to be worked out by man himself. This notion of man's real freedom is reflected in a passage in the *Rg-Veda*, of which there may be no parallel in any other religious literature. In the 3rd verse of the 86th Sukta of the 7th Mandala in the *Rg-Veda*,* Vasishtha asks Varuna what sin

it is that he had committed and he wants to find out the truth. He wants to question; for all wise people say that same thing, namely, that Varuna is angry with Vasishtha.

It is this idea of self-reliance for the attainment of one's ideals and of questioning even the Supreme that is peculiar to Indian thought. If man is in reality subordinate to anything that is Supreme, then man cannot have freedom, release. Subordination and bondage are parts of his real nature. If there had not been this idea in the Indian mind even from the very start, the notion of Brahma-Jñāna (realization of Brahman, being himself) would have been impossible in India.

This truth is not always realized nor presented to the world in this form, when Indian thought is interpreted to the world at present. The idea of a conflict between the interest of the Self and of the world and the idea of a movement and a transfer are still visible in the presentation of the doctrine of Moksha. There is no step, in the process of such realization, like a giving-up; there is only a receding of hallucinations as a limitation, and a revelation of the unity of what appeared as limitations; instead of being limited by them one starts encompassing them and realizing oneself as identical with the All.

When a prisoner is let off from his confinement after his term of punishment, really, in his capacity as citizen there is no transfer. A true citizen finds himself as identical with the whole of his 'State', which contains the prison also. For his freedom, what he wants is only to avoid being limited by the prison; it is not necessary to abolish or give up the prison. He should realize the unity of the State in which there are prisons and also to identify himself with that unitary State.

Similar is the case with the man in the world; he does not give up anything to become free; it is a process of realization and not of change. The idea of Moksha, in India, developed from the philosophy represented by the questioning Vasishtha (who was the wisest) and not from the supplications and prayers of the boy Shunahshepa. Both were approaching

*A free rendering is given at the end of the article.

the same Supreme Divine Being—Varuna. Vasishtha wanted to question and to know, and that is Mumukshutva (desire for release); Shunahshepa wanted to be released from one state so that he can be in another state; he wanted a change. Indian 'Moksha' developed from Vasishtha, while the 'Shunahshepa position' remained in another place where also salvation was sought after.

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SVARGA

(*Rg-Veda*, IX. 113. 7-11)

'Where light is eternal, in which region heaven is placed, O purifier, place me in that region, indestructible and undecaying; O Soma, for Indra's sake flow freely. (7)

Where the son of Vivasvān (Yama) is the king, where is the centre heaven, where are those young waters, there make me eternal, O Soma. (8)

Where movement is according to one's wishes, in the third heaven, in the third region of light in heaven, where the worlds are full of light, there make me eternal, O Soma. (9)

Where are desires and intense desires (realized), where is the seat of the sun, where there is power and satisfaction, make me eternal there, O Soma. (10)

Where are happiness and enjoyments, bliss and supreme bliss, where the yearnings of desires are attained, make me eternal there, O Soma'. (11)

PRAYER OF SHUNAHSHEPA

(*Rg-Veda*, I. 24. 12-15)

'They say so to me day and night; that the light of my heart sees; He to whom Shunahshepa in confinement appeals, may that Varuna release, the king. (12)

Shunahshepa in confinement, being tied up to the three posts, appeals to the son of Aditi; may the king Varuna let him free; may he, the wise, the true, loosen the bonds. (13)

We appease thee in thy anger, O Varuna, with prayers, with worship, with oblations; O Asura (the Great), having domain over us and having wisdom, O king, loosen the sins that may have been done. (14)

O Varuna, loosen the bonds above, the bonds below, those in the middle. O son of Aditi, then, may we remain in thy law, free from sin, fit for freedom'. (15)

PRAYER OF SHUNAHSHEPA

(*Rg-Veda*, I. 25. 21)

'Lift up our upper bondages, move off the middle ones, pull down the lower ones, so that we may live'.

VASISHTHA'S QUESTION TO VARUNA

(*Rg-Veda*, VII. 86. 3)

'O Varuna, wanting to see, I ask of that sin; I approach you with the question wanting to know; the wise people tell me the same thing: "For you, this Varuna is wrathful".'

A FORLORN CHAPTER OF INDIAN HISTORY

BY ISHWAR CHANDRA BHATNAGAR

(Continued from the November issue)

AIMS OF SUFISM

The aims which the Sufis set before themselves are to free the soul from the yoke of the passions, to deliver it from its wrong inclinations and evil instincts, in order that in the purified heart there should only remain room for God and for the invocation of His holy name.²⁸ The attainment of a high degree of

²⁸ *Confessions of Al Ghazzali*, p. 41.

sanctity thus becomes the aim of every true Sufi. In order to attain this he leads a life of sinless retirement from the world and spends his days and nights in selfless prayer and meditation. His mind becomes more and more completely absorbed in Sufic contemplation.²⁹

Abu'l-Hasan Mohammed Ibn Ohmad Al-

²⁹ *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, p. 21.

Farisi used to say, 'The elements of Sufism are ten in number. The first is the isolation of unification; the second is the understanding of audition; the third is good fellowship; the fourth is preference of preferring; the fifth is the yielding up of personal choice; the sixth is swiftness of ecstasy; the seventh is the revelation of the thoughts; the eighth is abundant journeying; the ninth is the yielding up of earning; the tenth is the refusal to hoard'.³⁰

The idea of ultimately attaining divine communion impregnates his mind. The Sufi looks upon every mundane interest as unworthy of consideration and his mind becomes more and more engrossed in Sufic contemplation. As a result of his constant invocation of the name of God, he bears even in the midst of a noisy crowd nothing but the name of the Deity which he repeats.

'The more destitute a Sufi is of worldly goods, the fewer are his ties to earth; the more emaciated his body with privation and fasting, the speedier his advance in Sufic spirituality. The burdens of existence affect him not and death has no terror for him'.

In Sufism the aim has been first to lose oneself in the Oneness of God and secondly to return to 'sobriety' from 'intoxication'. The first state is called Fana, the passing away of consciousness in union with the One Infinite Being. The second state is that in which the Sufi recovers himself and lives in God. 'He becomes endowed with divine attributes, displays the divine truth, and fulfils the divine law in the world'.³¹ The infinite distance between man and God is bridged by his eternally active will. Junayd says:

'Unification is thus, that one should be a figure (Shakhs) in the hands of God, a figure over which His decrees pass according as He in His omnipotence determines, and that one should be sunk in the seas of His unity, self-annihilated and dead alike to the call of mankind to him and his answer to them, absorbed by the reality of the Divine Unity in true proximity, and lost to sense and action, because God fulfils in him what he hath

willed in Him, namely, that his last state should become his first state, and that he should be as he was before he existed'.³²

A poet philosopher has sung:

'I am slave to the dash and daring of that worshipper of Self who sees God with (or "by means of" or "in") the light of his own self'.³³ The Sufi prepares for divine communion by a process of self-purification. From material cares and passions he detaches his spirit. He studies to be quiet that his soul may reflect the face of God.³⁴

The Sufis hated the material world and the worldly things. They clearly realized the necessity of reforming. At first their renunciation took the form of avoiding the company of kings and courtiers and other rich people. But under the influence of monastic religions like Buddhism and Christianity, it slowly developed into seclusion³⁵ and they preached the gospel of 'By love serve one another' and practised it. Sarmad, the great Sufi of Mughal times, has aptly written:

'Love only holds me and my heart in light,
Pliant as wax and like the candle bright,
And by the light of love that shines from me
I know the secret of men's hearts' delight'.³⁶

The Khalifs Ali and Abu Bakr, actuated by the desire to fulfil literally that precept of the Koran which says that 'He is the best of men who is most useful to his fellow-men', gave up their worldly goods to the common use, and entered upon a career of service to others, calling themselves Safa-bashis to indicate the purity of their lives.³⁷

AMIALE RELATIONS BETWEEN HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

The cardinal point of Sufism is the brotherhood of men resulting in the moral and spiritual unity of all human beings. This message of Islam was delivered to India at an apt time by the Sufic class. It

³² *Theory and Art of Mysticism*, p. 156.

³³ *Philosophy of Faqirs*, p. 49.

³⁴ *God and the Soul*, p. 154.

³⁵ *Islamic Culture*, April 1933, p. 350.

³⁶ *Islamic Culture*, Vol. VIII, (1934), p. 10.

³⁷ *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, p. 1.

³⁰ *Doctrine of the Sufis*, p. 78.

³¹ Nicholson: *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*, pp. 14, 68-69.

developed into a personal religion and led ultimately to amiable relations between Hindus and Muslims. The essence of a religion is to have an ideal, whether a personal god, or a moral code, or an abstract principle, and to try to realize it in all the activities of life.³⁸ This angle of personal approach developed a moral and spiritual consciousness in which the patterns, duties, aims, and ideals of the individual were personified into a personal religion. The Sufis continually realized in the brotherhood of man and in the spiritual contact with the ultimate reality of God, the desired attainment of peace and mental bliss. All this led to amiable relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. The development of this aspect of religious thought and culture in Mughal India has been the most important contribution of Sufism. A gigantic effort was automatically made to bring about a synthesis in the midst of diversities of various types. During the different epochs this effort has been continued through successive generations of her great Sufis and Sādhakas. Impact of this orientation released the latent forces of India's religious life. It was by the Sufis and mystics that a synthesis was sought to be brought about between the contradicting elements of the two. Those who guided this movement were persons free from the bondage of scriptures or of any institutional religion.³⁹

The Islamic penetration in India, unlike that of the Scythians and the Huns, imported not only divergent but completely contradictory ideas, ideals, and creeds. Their religious experiences as well as their opposing ideals coincided with the Bhakti cult in India.⁴⁰

There is much material similarity between the systems of Sufism and Vedantism. They leave 'the laws of action' to Shariat or Dharma and concentrate on 'the mainspring of action'—the motive of motives or the goal of goals. Both are the names of one and the

same attitude of mind aspiring with a strong conviction to man's relation with God and Nature and claiming the nearest proximity possible. The Sufi and the Vedantin do not differ save in the mode of worship they follow in their constant efforts to reach the Absolute. The attitude and approach of both, which is termed Tasaw-waf, towards Nature and God are similar. Both conceive the Eternal Truth and perceive Absolute Beauty in Nature. Both are exceedingly tolerant of all the religious forms of worship and meditation. This tolerance of all other faiths is a great virtue which they practise.⁴¹

The Islamic rule in India gave the country a new precept of the brotherhood of mankind. Despite the Vedantic view of equality and oneness of mankind, the factor of caste and creed in society was in vogue, being founded on the *Dharma-Sāstras*, which were adapted as the times required. The early Sutra period was represented by Āpastamba and Baudhāyana groups, the 'middle age' orientation was manifest in the Smritis of Manu-Yājñavalkya, and during the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. the later group of Nārada and Brihaspati are there. The infusion of Islamic faith and culture in the form of Sufism stirred the depth of religious emotions. During the Medieval and Mughal periods the country was blessed with a number of religious sects which propagated the doctrine of intrinsic value of man as man and pulled down the rigid walls of social inequality. The watertight compartments of race, class, etc. separated the Hindus and Muslims. But the infusion and action of this new healing balm based on the principle of 'By love serve one another' buoyed up their hopes, Rajjab, the chief Muslim disciple of Dādu, declared, 'All the world is Veda, and all creations the Koran'.

Sri Chaitanya broke through the narrow fetters of caste and freely accepted Islamic followers.⁴² Sufism and Vaishnavism began to preach love of man and God for the reali-

³⁸ 'Rise of Indian Civilization', *Modern Review*, April 1941, p. 419.

³⁹ *Medieval Mysticism of India*, p. ix.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴¹ *Philosophy of Faqirs*, p. 22.

⁴² *Cultural Fellowship in India*, pp. 51-52.

zation of God. Ibn-al-Arabi declared, 'I follow the religion of Love'. Guru Nanak also declared.

'He lives who loves God's person ;
No other lives'.

Hafiz too had sung the same tune in the following lines:

'Love is where thy glory falls
Of thy face on convent walls
Or on tavern floors,
The same inextinguishable flame'.

The Indian Sadhaka, Ravidās, said, 'Thou seest me, O Divine Man, and I see Thee, and our Love becomes mutual'. Dadu, Rāmānanda, and Kabir were throbbing and pulsating with the music of love. It is a fundamental truth that when people meet they start a game of give-and-take in an imperceptible manner and even amidst the strife of war and distrust and uncouth dealings the very process of action and reaction goes on in a latent form.

Thus there was influence on both sides, and the Sufis borrowed some of the Buddhistic ideas, particularly in respect of their later conception of Divine absorption. The following remark by Abu Bahu Al-Shibli definitely portrays the belief that the Sufis inculcated certain ideas from the Vedānta philosophy: 'Tasaw-waf is control of the faculties and observance of the breaths'.⁴³

It will be appropriate to bear in mind that the system of Kabir is a synthetical attempt at a fusion of Islamic Sufism, having as its object an intense devotion to a single God and Hindu traditions. It appears that he remained in spiritual communication with a Muslim Sufi, Sheikh Taqi of Jhusi, who had settled in the neighbourhood of Allahabad. Taqi was the son of Shaban-ul-Millat, and belonged to the Suhrawardya Order of Sufis. It is generally believed that he gave spiritual power to Kabir to efface the religious divergences between the Hindus and the Muslims, and to weld them into one.⁴⁴

And what would have been the India of

⁴³ *Persian Mystics: Jalal-ud-din Rumi*, p. 28.

⁴⁴ *Islamic Culture*, Oct. 1933, pp. 654-55.

today had Prince Dārā become emperor and ruled India, instead of his bigoted brother Aurangzeb, for about half a century! Dara had his inclinations towards Sufism. He wrote as the first couplet of his 'Mathnavi' the following lines:

'In the name of Him who hath no name at all
And yet respondeth to thy spirit's call—what-
ever name thou usest in thy need'.

Dara's thesis is that there is no difference between true Hinduism and true Islam.⁴⁵ Princess Jahānārā has very nicely put into words the lamentation of her soul during her imprisonment in the Agra fort: 'Here they should have flowed together into one, the two oceans, Islamic and Indian wisdom—the dream of my brother Dara; out of the vineyards of mysticism Sufis, Yogis, and Pandits should have produced the costliest of wines and poured it into the sparkling chalice of poetry and eloquence, as in the time of Akbar'.⁴⁶

Sir Akbar Hydari has very well remarked:

'Hindus have their virtues and their special gifts and so have Muslims. Both have contributed greatly to the culture, art, and thought of India and of the world. They have their separate histories well deserving to be studied; but what I would impress upon you here, you students . . . is that Muslims and Hindus have a common history and a splendid common history, here in India, extending over several hundred years'.⁴⁷

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, speaking on the cultural unity of India, expressed that out of the impact between the metaphysical Hindu genius and dynamic Islam (which came to this country) a new culture was born.⁴⁸ The Mughals who invaded this country, when they finally settled down here, desired to be the people of this country and not merely conquerors. The fusion that they achieved was basically not of compromise but of unity. Its automatic outcome was more amiable relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Muslim invaders of India were alien by

⁴⁵ *Philosophy of Faqirs*, p. 23.

⁴⁶ *Autobiography of Jahanara Begam*, p. 13.

⁴⁷ *What India Thinks*, p. 21.

⁴⁸ *Civil & Military Gazette*, 19 July 1941.

race as well as by religion. They had a different culture and civilization. Their tradition and temperament were diverse. The armies of Mahmud of Ghazni and Shahab-ud-din were fanatical, ferocious, and determined, being overcome with an iconoclastic zeal. The new conception *did not* Islamize India. According to Professor K. T. Shah: 'But the magic spell of this ancient land fell upon Islam, and Islam was Indianized in art and culture, in social grouping and political structure'.⁴⁹ A process of acclimatization and assimilation had set in. The two great ideals and civilizations had come into conflict and

⁴⁹ *The Glory that was Ind.*, p. 29.

out of this conflict had grown a welding of the two diverse communities into a common nation by the universal common bond of social service and infusion of Sufic precepts and principles. In the panorama of Indian history it will not be uninteresting to trace and follow this action and reaction of Hindu-Muslim culture and thought in this domain. The story is too vast, intricate, and complex, but still it is worth the time and labour to proceed with a sincere effort in order to research into the fundamental basis of the development of this great Sufic movement.

(Concluded)

THE VEDANTIC CONCEPTION OF BRAHMAN AS SACHCHIDANANDA

BY DR. ROMA CHAUDHURI

(Continued from the November issue)

III. BRAHMAN AS ĀNANDA

Finally, Brahman is designated as bliss or Ānanda. Brahman is said to be altogether devoid of hunger and thirst, suffering and delusion, decay and death (cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III. v. 1). Brahman is designated in exactly the same manner in other Upaniṣads as well. Thus, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it is said: 'This Self is free from sins, decay, death, sorrows, hunger, and thirst—all its desires and resolutions come to be true' (VIII. i. 5). All these descriptions are summed up in the designation of Brahman as Ananda. Brahman is Ananda, because in Brahman there can possibly be no hunger or thirst, no suffering and death, which so irrevocably cling to human existence and thereby subject it to endless pains and misery.

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, the conception

of Brahman as Ananda occupies the central place. In the second chapter, we meet with the theory of coverings (Koshas) by which our Self is surrounded and through which we must break to reach the inmost essence of our being, i.e. Brahman. Man, it is first said, consists of food, i.e. Matter (Anna-rasamaya). In this self of foods indwells another, filling it, the self of Breath (Prāṇa-maya). In this again, the self of Understanding (Mano-maya). In this again, the self of Intellect (Vijñāna-maya) and finally, in this self of Intellect indwells the self of Bliss (Ānanda-maya). Bliss is, thus, the innermost essence of man,—Bliss is Brahman.

In the third chapter, again, the conception of Brahman as Bliss is once more reiterated. Here Bhrigu approaches his father Varuṇa, with a view to attaining the knowledge of Brahman from him. By continued meditation

Bhrigu, step by step, reaches higher and higher truths, viz. Matter (Anna) is Brahman, Breath or Life (Prāṇa) is Brahman, Understanding or perceptual consciousness (Mana) is Brahman, and Intellect (Vijñāna) is Brahman. Finally, he reaches the highest of all truths, viz. that Bliss (Ananda) is Brahman. Everything is created and sustained by Ananda and everything returns unto it.

Brahman is described here as '*raso vai sah*'. It is difficult to render the term 'Rasa' in English. In fact, this conception of Ananda beggars description. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* rightly says: 'From whom speech and mind turn back, not getting Him. By knowing the Bliss of Brahman, one fears not anything' (II. iv). This Ananda is not something to be described by means of words—it is something which is to be directly realized. Only those who can rend asunder the bondage of Avidyā and rise above the world of decay and death can realize it and be blessed. Otherwise it is impossible for us to conceive it. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* points out that the Ananda of Brahman is hundreds of hundreds of times greater than mere human happiness. We should say that the former differs from the latter not only in degree, but in kind as well, and hence so long as we are in the empirical plane of existence, it eludes our comprehension.

Ananda or Bliss implies fulness of being. In our finite experience, we are conscious of the fact that with the growth and expansion of our inmost being, we attain greater perfection and fulfilment of our self, and delight as a result thereof. Self-perfection and Self-realization mean a full growth and a harmonious blending of all the sides of our being: thought, feeling, and will. This expansion of our whole being (not only of a part thereof) can alone result in true and lasting happiness. This is what is insisted upon by the Eudæmonists as against the Hedonists (who urge the expansion of only one element of our being, viz. sense or feeling) and the Rigorists or Rationalists (who similarly urge only the expansion of reason or thought). Contrac-

tion or repression of any part of our being thus inevitably leads to discord and pain consequent thereon, and expansion or growth is the only key to true happiness.

This psychological truth underlies the doctrine of Brahman as Bliss. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says: 'That which is Great and Full alone is Bliss. There can be no happiness in the small and the limited' (VII. xxiii). In Brahman there is nothing that hinders the full manifestation of being—no sense of want or mutation of being. Brahman is 'Bhūmā, Mahān', an all-pervading, all-perfect, complete, and full being. Brahman is 'Pūrṇa', and as perfect being, Brahman is identical with perfect Bliss.

In the Upanishads and the Vedānta, we find the conception of Brahman as 'Sūtrātman' or 'thread-spirit' (as Gough calls it). Brahman, viewed as stringing together all dreaming souls (in the stage of Svapna), clothed in the subtle, invisible bodies (Sūkṣmaśarīras) that accompany them in their migrations, is the Sūtrātman or Hiraṇyagarbha. Now, the question is: If Brahman be conceived of as the totality of subtle bodies, every experience of these bodies must pass through Brahman. In that case, how can Brahman be called all-blissful (Ananda), seeing that the experiences of Jīvas are mostly painful?

The same contention is found in a different form in the *Vedānta Sūtras*, II. i. 21. It is alleged here that the Śrutis teach us that Jīva and Brahman are identical. In that case, Brahman must be subject to disease, decay, and death to which the Jīva is also subject.

The answer to these contentions is given by Shankara in his commentary on the next Sūtra (II. i. 22). The whole problem arises from a confusion between two ways of looking at things—*empirical* and *transcendental*. If we speak from the empirical point of view, then Paramātman is different from the Sūtrātman, Brahman from Hiraṇyagarbha. The former corresponds to the stage of Turiya, the latter to that of Svapna. Hence, the

experience of the latter can have nothing to do with the former. In the same way, from the empirical point of view, Brahman is *not* identical with Jiva. Brahman is eternal (Nitya), pure (Śuddha), perfect knowledge (Buddha), and completely free (Mukta), while Jiva is none of these. Hence, the pain and misery of Jiva can have no effect whatsoever upon Brahman.

On the other hand, from the transcendental point of view, the problem does not arise at all. Transcendentally Hiraṇyagarbha is no more real than the Jivas. Both are due to the principle of Māyā, and the experiences of both are ultimately falsified. Thus, Brahman is the sole, ultimate reality, and Brahman is Bliss.

The conception of the ultimate reality as Ananda is peculiar to the Vedanta system as distinguished from other systems of Indian philosophy. According to the Vedanta, Mukti is essentially a state of Ananda. But this view is not countenanced by the Sāṅkhya, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, and Buddhist schools of thought. According to the Sāṅkhyas, for example, the Puruṣas are in essence pure intelligence, but not bliss, for happiness is due to the Sattva Guṇa which belongs to the side of Prakṛti. Thus, Mukti is not a manifestation of Bliss or Ananda, for then the Puruṣas are free from all attributes and shine only as pure intelligence in the timeless void.

According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas also, Mukti is a negative state of painlessness and not a positive state of bliss. A state of pure pleasure, they point out, is a psychological impossibility, for pleasure is always more or less tainted with pain. Moreover, happiness requires the bodily mechanism for experiencing it; hence if the released soul is to have everlasting happiness, it must have an everlasting body. Thus freedom is nothing but a state of pure indifference and individual substantiality when the soul-substance is freed from all its attributes, including knowledge and joy.

According to the Buddhists, again, Mukti or Nirvāṇa is not a positive state of bliss, but

the destruction of the narrow individuality of the self in an indescribable state of Pure Consciousness.

The inner significance of the notion of Ananda is not grasped by these schools. Ananda does not imply human happiness. Hence it does not require the bodily mechanism as its *conditio sine qua non*, as contended by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas. Mukti, in fact, must be a positive state and neither a state of pure indifference nor a state of mere void.

According to the Advaita school of Vedanta, Brahman is Ananda or Bliss and not Ānandin or a being having bliss for its attribute. But according to the theistic school of the Vedanta, Ananda is an attribute of Brahman.

According to the Advaita school, thus, Brahman is Nirguṇa or without any attributes, for if Brahman be the sole existence, there can be no difference between substance and attributes. The conception of Brahman as Sachchidānanda, according to Shankara, does not make Brahman a concrete existence, for it does not indicate any attribute, but by a common reference (Samāna-adhikaraṇa) points to the *identity* of Being, Consciousness, and Bliss, and not a *unity* or synthesis of attributes.

In fact, Shankara recognizes the fact that a Nirguṇa Brahman is essentially indescribable, because sentences and words which are based on difference, implying a distinction between the subject and the predicate, etc., are not, from the very nature of the case, suitable to express the non-differenced being or Brahman. Even the definition of Brahman as Sachchidānanda is imperfect, though it expresses the reality in the best way possible. It is more or less negative. The term 'Sat' implies the negation of all empirical being and differentiates the ultimate Reality from all fleeting and temporal objects. The term 'Chit' implies the negation of all objective being and differentiates the ultimate Reality from all Jada or material objects which depend on something else for their manifestation. The term 'Ananda'

implies the negation of all imperfect and growing being and differentiates the ultimate Reality from all suffering beings of the world. Brahman, thus, cannot be known positively, but can at best be described only negatively. Brahman is to be realized in direct intuition and not known by thought.

According to the theistic schools of Vedānta, on the other hand, Brahman is Saguṇa and not Nirguṇa. Brahman is the substance which is the abode of infinite auspicious qualities, including Sat (being), Chit (consciousness), and Ananda (bliss). Ramanuja contends that the conception of non-differentiated substance is an utter impossibility. Every school of thought admits of some or other *substance* as the ultimate Reality. It is regarding the *attributes* of the so-called ultimate Reality that there is divergence of opinion. Hence, the Advaitins themselves are obliged to 'qualify' their ultimate Reality as possessing existence (Sat), consciousness (Chit), and bliss (Ananda) in order to distinguish it from the ultimate Reality of other schools (cf. *Śrī Bhāṣya*, I. i. 1).

Thus, the true being, Ramanuja points out, is a *concrete* being, with all its wealth of attributes. Brahman is a synthesis of attributes—Sat, Chit, and Ananda. These attributes, however, do not destroy in any way the integrity and oneness of the ultimate being. They, no doubt, imply specifically distinctive merits, and a quality by itself is no doubt different from another quality, but still they do not exclude one another and by a common reference find a place and point to the unity in which they inhere as attributes.

The difficulty of conceiving the relation between substance and attribute is an ancient one. It is found in a full-fledged form in the philosophy of Spinoza. According to Spinoza, a Substance is an absolutely indeterminate being, yet the centre of infinite attributes, of which human intellect knows only two, viz. Extension and Thought. But the problem here is: How can the indeterminate possess

properties? How can God be both an unqualified being and an infinitely qualified being? This question has given rise to much debate. According to one class of interpreters, including Hegel and Erdmann, attributes do not really belong to a substance, but are merely *ways* of perceiving a substance. These interpreters emphasize the first half of the definition of an attribute as given by Spinoza, viz. 'By attribute I understand that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of the Substance'. Against this 'formalistic' interpretation, there is the 'realistic' interpretation of Kuno Fischer and others which emphasizes the second half of the definition of Substance and holds that attributes are real *properties* or essence of Substance and not mere human modes of knowledge.

What was Spinoza's real view is not at all clear from his writings. It cannot be denied, however, that his view is not altogether free from contradictions. How can the substance be both *Natura Naturata* and *Natura Naturans*? In that case the effect and the cause being identical, how can we speak of the substance as an unmodified, indeterminate, transcendental existence?

It cannot be denied that from the strict logical point of view, Shankara is more correct than either Spinoza or Ramanuja. Shankara retains the Absolute, and does away with the relative, from the transcendental (philosophic and real) point of view and thereby makes the Absolute completely absolute (Ekam-advitīyam). The demands of the heart, as also a distinction between substance and quality, are countenanced by Ramanuja, together with the demands of reason, in his Vishishtādvaitavāda (qualified non-dualism).

If we leave aside the logical presuppositions and implications of the nice point of distinction between the conceptions of Sat, Chit, and Ananda as *essence* of Brahman and Sat, Chit, and Ananda as *qualities* of Brahman (the logical presupposition of the former conception being that Brahman is an

abstract identity, and of the latter being that Brahman is a *concrete* unity), they come to mean for us very nearly the same thing. Qualities in truth indicate the *essence* of the substance in which they inhere. Hence, to say that Sat, etc. are qualities of the Absolute is not after all much different from saying that they are the essence of the Absolute.

And, this way of designating the ultimate Reality as Sat, Chit, and Ananda displays a wonderful insight and deep wisdom, rare in the history of thought. Attempts are ever being made—both in the East and the West—from the dim age of antiquity down to the present era, to formulate the nature and essence of the ultimately Real, and the results are naturally divergent and contradictory. That the ultimately Real is Sat—existent—is in one way or another recognized by almost all schools of thought, with the exception of a few (Heraclitus, the Buddhists, and others). That, again, it is Chit—a conscious principle—is also admitted by some. But the conception of the ultimate Reality as Ananda is very rare—both in the East and the West. Much rarer is the combination of these three—Sat, Chit, and Ananda—as the essence of the ultimate Reality.

In Bradley's Absolute, we have an attempt at such a synthesis. The Absolute, according to Bradley, is, first, existent and existent from all eternity. 'We cannot think', says Bradley in his *Appearance and Reality*, 'that the whole either moves on or backward. The Absolute has no history of its own. The Absolute has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruit, and blossoms. Like our globe, it never has summer and winter'. Thus, the Absolute is what it is from all eternity. This corresponds to the Vedantic conception of Brahman as Sat.

Secondly, the Absolute, according to Bradley, is 'sentient experience'. 'We perceive', he writes, 'on reflection, that to be real, or even barely to exist, must be to fall within sentience. Sentient experience, in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real'.

This may be said to correspond to the Vedantic conception of Brahman as Chit.

It is interesting to note that both Shankara and Bradley are anti-rationalists (which does not mean 'anti-reason') in the sense that they both maintain, against, for example, Hegel, that Reality is not identical with Thought. According to Shankara, Reality is consciousness, but not Thought. Thought, in fact, cannot comprehend Reality in its full essence. Reality cannot be *known* but can only be *intuited* or directly realized. This is Vedantic mysticism. Bradley also maintains that Reality is not Thought, but Experience which is wider than mere Thought. Reality is an all-inclusive Experience, including thought, feeling, and will, 'but that whole assuredly is not simply *one* of its aspects'. Thought being thus simply an element of Reality, it is presumptuous on our part to think that it can grasp Reality in its entirety. 'I do not deny', says Bradley, 'that reality is an object of thought. I deny that it is barely and *merely* so'.

Finally, as Bradley points out, we may fairly presume that in the Absolute there is a balance of pleasure over pain. It is common experience that harmony produces pleasure, while discord pain, and also that in mixed states, pain may be neutralized by pleasure in such a way that the balance is decidedly pleasant. Now, the Absolute is a *harmonious* whole, for somehow all the various appearances are reconciled in it. Hence it may be said that 'the Absolute possesses and enjoys somehow this balance of pleasure'. 'Since the reality is harmonious', writes Bradley, 'and since harmony excludes the condition which are requisite for a balance of pain, that balance is impossible. I will urge this so far as to raise a very grave doubt. I question our right even to suppose a state of pain in the Absolute'. This may be said to correspond to the Vedantic conception of Brahman as Bliss, although it is to be noted that 'Ananda' as understood by the Vedantins is very different from 'pleasure' as understood by Bradley. The latter bears

an empirical significance which is totally lacking in the former.

We should note, in conclusion, that the Vedantic formulation of the ultimate Reality as Sachchidānanda satisfies both the philosophic (or intellectual) and religious (or emotional) instincts in man. Our intellect requires that the ultimately Real, the Absolute, must be the permanent among changes (Sat), and self-luminous and spiritual among the material objects (Chit)—otherwise the intellect refuses to recognize it as the ultimately Real. On the other hand, our heart demands that the ultimate Reality must be a God of Love,

of Ananda, and not a cold and callous being. And, all these diverse demands—philosophic and religious—are admirably met with in the single designation of the ultimately Real as Sachchidānanda, in which the voices of both reason and heart find satisfaction. Herein lies the greatness of the ancient seers and prophets of old, as well as the great utility of a study of the Vedanta as a key to the nature of the ultimately Real, to grasp which, in the best possible way, has been the aim of mankind all along, generation after generation.

(Concluded)

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA*

India's greatest treasure is her ancient spiritual wisdom. She has a long cultural tradition from the remote past and possesses a great and worthy heritage derived from the world's most ancient civilization. In antiquity, richness, and variety the cultural wealth of India is unsurpassed by that of any other country in the world. The excavations at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa have revealed that India has a cultural history of very ancient origin. Rabindranath Tagore wrote that he loved India, not because he cultivated the 'idolatry of geography', not because he had had 'the chance to be born in her soil', but because 'she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great sons'.

Its hoary antiquity and rich variety apart, India's cultural heritage is deeply and distinctively spiritual to the core. Spiritual life is the true genius of India and religion forms the key-note of Indian civilization and the backbone of all Indian life and thought.

The spirit of Indian culture has never failed to maintain its youthfulness, catholicity, and integral life-affirmation, contrary to the incorrect views held and propagated by many a non-Indian writer. Though the cultural life of the Indian people has appeared, at times, to have been overcome by internal and external forces that have retarded its progressive march, sages, prophets, and reformers have been appearing on the scene, from time to time, in order to rid the spreading tree of Indian culture of its entangling weeds. In spite of the destructive critics and reformers, the cultural heritage of our motherland has always remained, at bottom, true and faithful to its original spiritual pattern. Not only that. The influence of Indian cultural renaissance has extended far, far beyond the country's borders and perceptibly inspired and animated the life and thought of many other nations. With the advent of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, India's spirituality and culture asserted themselves fully, once more, and revealed to the

* THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA—VOLUME III. *Published by The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 111, Russa Road, Calcutta 26. Pages xxi+695. Price Rs. 30 (U.S.A. \$ 7.50 ; U.K. and other countries 50s).*

doubting or ignorant outside world the greatness and glory of this ancient land—not in the field of religion alone, but in every other field. Today the time has once again come when the matchless gems of wisdom found in the cultural treasure-house of India should be brought forth and offered not only to Indians themselves but also to those of every other country.

It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that the first edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India*, in three volumes and about 2,000 pages in all, consisting of one hundred learned contributions by distinguished Indian scholars, was published in 1937 by the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary Publication Committee as a Birth Centenary memorial. This voluminous survey of the manifold aspects of the cultural history of India, containing as it did Oriental secular and spiritual wisdom of perennial interest, was acclaimed as a remarkable contribution to the cultural literature of the world and welcomed with sincere and warm praise by savants, scholars, and the press of the East and the West. '*The Cultural Heritage of India* is a monumental compendium of the treasures of Indian thought of centuries', observed M. Romain Rolland. 'A comprehensive stock-taking of the cultural inheritance of India', 'A work that is encyclopaedic in scope', 'One of the most notable enterprises of its kind yet attempted in any Asiatic country',—were some of the press comments.

The first edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India*, in three volumes, was sold out within a few years and the work had long been out of print. The preparation of the second edition was taken in hand in June 1947 by its present publishers, the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. Established in 1938, in fulfilment of one of the projects to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, the Institute of Culture was vested with the rights of *The Cultural Heritage of India*. The publishers rightly felt that instead of reprinting the work in its original form, a thoroughly revised and much enlarged edition, with the number of

volumes also increased, would be most appropriate to the primary need of the hour when independent India is not only attracting international attention but also actively playing a very important role in laying the foundation for enduring peace, unity, and concord for which all nations aspire. In its own humble way, this new edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India* can serve to contribute to the fulfilment of India's noble mission by promoting the study, correct understanding, and dissemination of the nation's achievements in every field of life and thought. As such, the publishers have rendered invaluable service to the cultural world by initiating the reissue of *The Cultural Heritage of India* in an improved form, in a series of independent volumes.

The book under review is the Third Volume, of the second edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India*. This volume, devoted to the 'Philosophies' of India, was the first to be completed according to the new scheme and has therefore been released for publication first. Explaining how this happened, the Publisher's Note says: 'In the first edition of this work there were a fairly large number of representative articles on Philosophy and Religion, the two subjects which, under the new scheme, have been assigned to Volumes III and IV. Thus these two Volumes acquired an advantage over the others, which required a much greater proportion of fresh material and it was therefore thought expedient to publish them first. Volume III will thus be followed by Volume IV'.

The present Volume contains thirty-nine articles, of which thirteen are from the previous edition, most of them having been revised by the authors themselves. A welcome innovation is the inclusion of two learned contributions in translation, one rendered from the original Sanskrit and the other from the original Bengali. Opening with a learned Introduction by the renowned philosopher, late Dr. Surendranath Dasgupta, the articles in this Volume have been grouped under Five Parts.

Part I, entitled 'The Philosophical Systems', consists of seven articles, viz. 'Rise of the Philosophical Schools', 'The Sāṅkhya', 'Yoga Psychology', 'Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika', 'Navya-Nyāya', 'Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā', and 'Materialists, Sceptics, and Agnostics'. Under Part II, entitled 'The Vedānta', are brought together thirteen articles (one-third of the total number) dealing with the different aspects and interpretations of this most important and most scientific philosophical system which may be said to be the highest achievement of Indian genius. 'Brahma-Mīmāṃsā', the first article under this Part, was originally written in Sanskrit and appears here in translation. The well-known schools of Vedānta, i.e. those of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka, Bhaskara, Vallabha, and Chaitanya, are all ably presented by distinguished scholars. There is an article each on 'Essentials of Vedānta' and 'Post-Shankara Advaita'. As basic to the theistic interpretations of the Vedānta, the article on the 'Philosophy of the *Bhāgavata*' is a useful addition.

Part III, entitled 'The Religious Philosophies' has six articles, dealing with Śaivism, Yoga in the *Gīta* (the only article on the *Bhagavad Gīta* in this Volume), Philosophy of the Yogavāsiṣṭha, Tantras (an elaborate treatment of which is reserved for the next Volume), and two other subjects of general philosophical interest, viz. the Philosophy of Mysticism and Philosophy in Popular Literature. 'The Problems of Philosophy' is the title of Part IV which consists of five articles. The initial article under this Part is on 'Religion of the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika'. The Nature of the Soul, of the Physical World, and of the Mind and its Activities form the subject-matter respectively of the next three articles. The Indian belief in the possibility of transcending empirical limitations by means of proper mental training and discipline has found expression in the last article of this Part, viz. 'Extra-sensory and Super-conscious Experiences'. Part V, entitled 'The Philosophical Sciences' consists of seven articles. The different philosophical sciences

have been synoptically treated in four articles, viz. 'Indian Theism', 'Indian Epistemology', 'Indian Psychology', and 'Indian Ethics'. This innovation has no doubt served a useful purpose by giving the general reader a bird's-eye view of the fundamentals of Indian philosophical thinking in its various aspects. Two informative and interesting articles in this Part are 'Types of Human Nature' and 'The Art of Philosophical Disputation': the former, which will be an eye-opener to psychologists and psycho-analysts, especially of the West, reveals the welcome fact that the modern problem of psychological types had its prototype and counterpart in different branches of ancient Indian literature; the latter, which was originally written in Bengali and appears here in translation, shows how the Indian philosophers carried on debates. Finally, in the last article of the Volume, viz. 'Philosophy of Values', the different ends of life, chiefly four-fold in character, i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kāma, and Mokṣa, have been delineated, interrelated, and graded.

The Volume carries some Illustrations, a useful Bibliography (cataloguing English translations and expositions), and an extremely helpful Index, the last two being distinct improvements upon the earlier edition of the work. The printing and get-up are superb in every respect, and the Volume as a whole is conveniently handy.

Here is presented for the first time an integrated view of the different philosophical problems and disciplines, which shows the interrelations of the different systems of thought. Thirty-five eminent Indian scholars, four of whom have contributed two articles each, have co-operated ably in this worthy task, as a labour of love and in a spirit of service. The Government of India have evinced kindly interest in this revised and enlarged edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India* and have made a generous grant towards the cost of the publication of the same. The present Volume not only incorporates expositions of the different systems and problems of Indian philosophy but also

emphasizes, through and through, the common interest, unity, and ultimate identity in the aims and goals of the apparently differing and dissimilar faiths, creeds, and schools. Thus it appropriately signifies the great ideas and ideals that have inspired the production of *The Cultural Heritage of India* which is dedicated to the hallowed memory of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of love, toleration, and harmony.

It may not be out of place here to notice the general scheme of the revised edition with reference to the Volumes that are to follow. As stated above, the next one to be released is Volume IV. Of the Volumes earlier in sequence to the present one, Volume I is planned to contain articles on Buddhist and Jaina cultures, including their philosophies, and Volume II will deal with the ethical and philosophical speculations to be found in the

epics (including the *Bhagavad Gita*), the Purāṇas, and the legal literature. According to the scheme each Volume will be self-contained and homogeneous from some angle of vision, with separate pagination, bibliography, and index, and will carry a suitable Introduction by an outstanding authority. The articles of the earlier edition are to be revised, a large number of new articles to be added, and the entire contents to be presented in a logical order, due regard being paid to historicity and critical treatment.

We heartily welcome Volume III of *The Cultural Heritage of India* and hope that this and the other Volumes (that are to follow) of this monumental work, now being issued in a new form, will have a wide appeal and touch men to finer issues in their search after fundamental truths.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother went on a pilgrimage to Vrindaban where she stayed for about an year. While there, she gave initiation to Swami Yogananda on receiving Sri Ramakrishna's command in a vision. Being the first initiation by her, this event significantly marked the commencement of *The Holy Mother's Spiritual Ministration*. Out of her boundless maternal love, she initiated, during her lifetime, a large number of men and women who went to her for blessings. . . .

The *Reminiscences* of and the two articles on *Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother*, in this number, will be read with more than usual interest in view of her Hundredth Birth Anniversary coming off in the last week of this month, marking the commencement of

the Holy Mother Birth Centenary celebrations. . . .

Dr. A. W. Mailvaganam, M.A., Ph.D., F.N.A.Sc., Head of the Department of Physics, University of Ceylon, writing on *Science and Religion*, shows that the two are not contradictory but complementary. . . .

Rural Development and the Responsibility of the People,—an address delivered at the Rotary Club, Howrah, by Swami Vimuktananda of the Ramakrishna Order,—contains thought-provoking observations and useful suggestions. . . .

Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, M.A., Ph.D., formerly of the Madras University and now Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Teheran, Iran, presents a stimulatingly original point of view on *Moksha*.

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

Sri Sarada Devi, known as the Holy Mother, was the divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna. Her simple and unostentatious, but profoundly spiritual, life was spent mostly in seclusion, away from the public gaze. As such details of her unique life and remarkable character have not been widely known. Outwardly quiet and uneventful, her great and godly life was unparalleled for purity, spiritual depth, and motherly affection in the annals of connubial perfection. All those who had the rare privilege of coming in contact with the Holy Mother felt that she was an embodiment of grace, love, and universality. Full of compassion for struggling or suffering humanity and regardless of narrow distinctions of caste, creed, or colour, she exemplified in her wonderful personality all the noble and lofty ideals of womanhood of our motherland.

Born on 22nd December 1853, Sarada Devi, even while a young girl, was betrothed to Sri Ramakrishna in accordance with divine dispensation. As the years passed and she grew up, the relation between the God-intoxicated husband and the spiritually awakened wife was the purest that could be conceived of. The divine husband worshipped his devoted spouse, looking upon her as the very embodiment of the Divine Mother. After many years of Sādhanā, under Sri Ramakrishna's guidance and in close and constant association with his exalted personality, she herself rose to the summit of spiritual greatness and wisdom. With the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother became his immediate spiritual successor and effectively carried his message to the world at large, fulfilling the Master's mission in every respect. She was a spiritual guide of the highest order and throughout the period of nearly thirty-four years by which she outlived Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother untiringly ministered to the spiritual needs of thousands of earnest seekers of Truth.

On 27th December 1953 falls the Hundredth Anniversary of the birth of the Holy Mother. It is also the opening date of her Birth Centenary celebrations, world-wide preparations for which are now in full progress. The period of the Centenary celebrations will last from December 1953 to December 1954. In addition to bringing out several Centenary memorial publications, big and small, in various languages, in India and outside, elaborate plans and programmes have been drawn up for the celebration of this happy and momentous occasion in a befitting manner.

It has been decided by the General Committee of the Centenary celebrations that all contributors of Rs. 20/- or more to the Central Celebration Fund will be enrolled as ordinary members of the Committee.

We of the *Prabuddha Bharata* are planning to publish, early next year, a special, illustrated and enlarged issue—*The Holy Mother Centenary Number*—of *Prabuddha Bharata* in commemoration of the great event.

VALUES—SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL

The story of civilization, ever since the human race came into its own, is a fascinating one. History of the remote past reveals the rise and fall and intermingling of cultures and civilizations on the soil of the great Eurasian landmass. But one civilization, that of the Indian sub-continent, has survived to this day, unimpaired in essence and adapting itself harmoniously to the vicissitudes of time. History of the recent past bears evidence to the fact that the great cultures of Europe have permeated the cultures of many other lands, including that of India. The bitter conflicts among European countries have been disillusioning many Europeans themselves regarding the supposed superiority and excellence of Western culture and its secular values. Though the whole world is passing through a crisis in culture, the present chaos in European social and cultural values is an indication of what fate will overtake a purely secular civilization which keeps its votaries in a state of frenzied pleasure-pursuit.

Writing briefly but pointedly, in *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, on the main aspects of European culture and diagnosing the malady that has afflicted its otherwise great and excellent system, Dr. D. M. Datta, renowned philosopher and author, concludes his illuminating article on 'The Crisis in European Culture' with the following pertinent observations: 'No nation can survive without agreeing to give up its attitude of exclusiveness, claims of uniqueness, monopoly, and superiority. We must realize that there can be many alternative, but equally

good, ways of living so that there should be room for many cultures living side by side and in perfect harmony, under different conditions. . . . No culture can survive unless its different components are harmoniously integrated by an adequate sense of lower and higher values. When, for example, political power or economic affluence or material comfort is allowed to violate moral and spiritual principles, decadence and downfall become the inevitable fate of the nation. Even secular culture cannot flourish long without a good moral and spiritual foundation'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE QUEST AFTER PERFECTION. By M. HIRIYANNA. Published by Kavyalaya, Publishers, Krishnamurtipuram, Mysore. Pages 120. Price Rs. 5 or 7 s. 6 d.

This is a volume of essays by the renowned philosopher, the late Prof. M. Hiriyananna of Mysore, published mostly in various journals during the lifetime of the author. The book owes its title to the Miller Lectures delivered at the Madras University by the author. There are in all eight essays which together constitute the author's conception of Values from the standpoint of Advaita. They provide a valuable framework of Vedantic ethics. When the critics of Absolute Idealism have been critical of the ethics of this system, it is happy to note that this handy volume provides a good argument and a fitting reply.

The training of the Vedantin begins much earlier than his formal initiation into the proper study of the Upanishads. This ethical background is enunciated in the opening essay. The Upanishads attempt at a synthesis of the individual and the common good, which alone offers the peace and tranquillity of the supermoral condition. This state is generally spoken of as one of pleasure; but pleasure, as dealt with by the Upanishads, is only a state of the Self. And the Self is our highest value. This leads Prof. Hiriyananna to an examination and analysis of the theory of Value; and this constitutes the major part of this work.

All the Indian systems of thought are agreed in advocating the 'Purushārtha' which term can be

rendered as 'Values'. Of these, 'Artha' is the economic good or value, 'Kāma' is the hedonistic good or psychological value, and 'Dharma' is the moral good or value. The brilliant analysis given by the author reduces 'Artha' to the status of an instrumental value. Moreover, 'Kama', in its widest sense, merges with 'Dharma'. 'Dharma', in its turn, was treated as an instrumental value by some ancients. This 'Dharma' presupposes the knowledge of truth. As such, both the *good* and the *true* cannot be accepted as ultimate values. It is not enough to think and know; one must also feel and experience. The knowledge that we obtain must needs be transformed into an immediate conviction. In other words, the art experience is transient and fragmentary, while the good is characterized by strife and endeavour. And these values cannot be absolute because all of them are necessary. Each appeals to one specific side of man's spiritual nature. We therefore need an absolute Value which removes the imperfections and limitations of the three values. Such a Value is provided in the concept of 'Moksha', the enunciation of which is the distinct contribution of the Vedanta. And Prof. Hiriyananna gives a very valuable analysis of this absolute Value which distinguishes Indian thought from the Western.

The conception of this ultimate Value leads the author to an examination of the concept of Jivanmukti which he accepts in detail. And since everything in the world gets its worth in reference to the Self, the Self is the object of ultimate Value.

But this does not mean a turning away from life. The Vedanta advocates only self-renunciation, not world-renunciation. From this principle, Prof. Hiriyanna proceeds to emphasize the harmony of Pravritti and Nivritti. From this position it is but easy to argue that the Self is Experience, Being, and Bliss.

This stimulating book of essays is a valuable contribution to the literature on Advaita Vedanta. Since these essays were written at different times for varied purposes, there are repetitions which could not have been avoided. And Prof. Hiriyanna has a racy and convincing style which appeals even to the layman. The profound truths of the Vedanta are presented here in a very simple manner.

P. S. SASTRI

WOMEN IN THE VEDIC AGE. BY SHAKUNTALA RAO SHASTRI. *Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty, Bombay 7. Pages 180. Price Re. 1-12.*

The distinguished publishers of this book and a number of other books in this series have been rendering great service to the culturally enlightened and interested reading public by producing valuable and informative books, through the Bhavan's Book University. This is the tenth book of the Bhavan's Book University. It carries a Foreword from the pen of Prof. F. W. Thomas.

The learned author offers a historical study of Indian womanhood from the Vedic period down to that of the *Gṛhya-Sūtras*. She begins her account with an examination of some interesting passages of the *Rg-Veda*. In the *Rg-Veda* we often hear of the freedom and culture enjoyed by the women of that time. They were well educated and were usually married during their youth. The marriage hymn of the tenth Mandala shows the origins of the institution of the Hindu marriage, though the present-day ceremonial is sufficiently complicated and elaborated. The writer attempts to show that the modern marriage ritual is *Atharva-Vedic* in origin; and she seeks to put forward the view that this ritual is sufficiently Indo-Iranian in origin and technique. She finds out Iranian sources for the *Atharva-Vedic* rites and ceremonies; and we are even told that the *Atharva-Veda* represents a second wave of the Aryan migration into India.

This is very fascinating though, it is difficult to prove that the Aryans migrated with two sets of different Vedas. We cannot afford to forget that tradition holds that Vyasa did the Vedavibhāga. This could not have been done prior to the so-called migration, even if it were a fact. Moreover, the Iranians of old were not foreigners to the Vedic Aryans. They were their own kith and kin. In such a case the marriage ritual as recorded in the *Rg-Veda* must be common to all the Vedic peoples.

The *Rg-Veda* does not record the entire procedure mainly because it had a different aim from that of the *Atharva-Veda*.

The author is at pains to read the modern social reformer's ideas into the ancient texts. She finds them mostly in the *Rg-Veda*; and as a consequence she is unsympathetic to the *Atharva-Veda* and to the *Gṛhya-Sūtras*. Particularly when she has to give an account of the Sūtras she becomes more descriptive. And this reveals her as being not much in favour of Sāyana—but for whom we would not have understood the Vedas. In spite of this the book is really interesting and thought-provoking. The author recognizes the fact that even to the authors of the Smritis the institution of marriage had a spiritual significance. According to the ancient Indians, life was to be harmonious and prosperous; and this could be achieved only when there was a profound spirituality permeating all that man did. To this end they wove the marriage ceremonial and gave it a sanctity that cannot be lightly brushed aside. It is upon the life of a householder that the whole system of the Purva-Mimāṃsā was grounded.

The work exhibits the diligence and care of the writer and is well brought out. Diacritical marks and an index would have enriched the value of the book.

P. S. SASTRI

THE GARLAND OF LETTERS (VARNAMĀLĀ). BY SIR JOHN WOODROFFE. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Ltd., Madras-17. Pages 308. Price Rs. 15.*

The Garland of Letters (or *Varnamālā*) is, as the title indicates, an exposition of the principles underlying the application of *varṇamālā* or the Sanskrit alphabet as a means of spiritual awakening by using its letters as *mantra*. Though it may appear hard to understand the relation between an alphabet and spiritual practice, there is a profound philosophy underlying the fact of such a relation,—the philosophy of *Sphoṭa* (the philosophy of *Logos* as it is known in the West),—which upholds the Tantric view that the Word (*vāk* or *śabda*) is the principle underlying the evolution of the universe and everything it consists of. The Tantras accept the Vedanta philosophy and the Sāṅkhyan cosmology. On account of the importance attached to Mantras in the Tantra-Shāstra, it has also come to be known as Mantra-Shāstra.

The work under review is a collection of studies in the Mantra-Shastra in 31 chapters. The renowned author is well known for his great work on the Tantras. Chapter 1 deals with the 'Word' and Chapters 2 to 9 treat of the principles of the general doctrine of Shabda. Chapters 10 to 21 are elucidations of some subjects in the Tantra-Shastra which

adopts the Mimāmsā doctrine of *śabda* with some modifications to meet its doctrine of Shakti. Chapters 22 to 31 deal elaborately with the Mantras *Om* and *Gāyatrī* and many other allied topics of technical interest. This important work, which is in its second edition, should find a place on the shelf of everyone interested in Hindu religion and philosophy in general and Tantra literature in particular. The Publishers deserve to be congratulated for the good printing and get-up with which this and other bigger works by the same author have been ably brought out in their latest editions.

A GLIMPSE OF THE HOLY MOTHER. BY CHANDRA KUMARI HANDOO. *Published by the Secretary, The Holy Mother Birth Centenary, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, W. Bengal. Pages 48. Price As. 8.*

Sri Sarada Devi, more familiarly known as 'Mother' or 'Holy Mother' among the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna, was born in December 1853. Her Birth Centenary will be celebrated everywhere, commencing from her 101st birthday which falls in the last week of December 1953. It is in the fitness of things that the Centenary Celebration Committee has planned to bring out a number of valuable publications in commemoration of this great occasion. This short biography of the Holy Mother, written in simple yet lucid style, is offered to the public as one of the initial publications by the Centenary Celebration Committee on the eve of the Holy Mother Birth Centenary. Divided into convenient chapters and with an Introduction and also with some esteemed 'Sayings of the Holy Mother' appended at the end, this short life of the Holy Mother ably and vividly presents the unique personality and attainments of a seraphic soul who was not only the worthy consort of Sri Ramakrishna but also in her own capacity, an embodiment of simplicity, purity, and spiritual realization.

J. C. DATTA

HINDI

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA (SAM-KSHIPTA JIVANI VA UPADESH). *Pages 40. Price As. 6.*

MATAJI (SRI SARADAMANI DEVI). *Pages 42. Price As. 6.*

BOTH BY SWAMI JAPANANDA. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Kutir, Bikanir.*

The first booklet gives a short account of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna which can

serve well to introduce youngsters to the life of the great Master as well as to whet the appetite of elders for knowing more about his wonderful life.

The language is simple and clear and the book makes a nice reading.

The author has appropriately appended a few pages dealing with Swami Vivekananda, the foremost disciple of the Master.

Two hymns composed by the author on Sri Ramakrishna have also been added in this second edition.

The booklet *Mātāji* is issued to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Sri Sarada Devi, more familiarly known as *Mā* or *Mātāji*, which comes off in December this year. People know more about Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, but scarcely anything about the Mother, whose silent grandeur is hidden away behind a veil of modesty and unassuming simplicity. What immense potentialities her life holds towards setting up an ideal for women in general, and Indian women in particular, and help mould their character is as yet hardly realized by the vast majority of people. But those who had the necessary insight to recognize the great and subtle power hidden in her life have predicted its great possibilities and in time others will come to realize the real implications and significance of that life to society. This booklet, dealing briefly with the life and teachings of the Holy Mother, is a welcome publication and should be read by all Hindi-knowing people, especially our young girls.

BENGALI

SRI-SRI-MĀ SĀRADĀ. BY SWAMI NIRAMAYANANDA. *Published by Swami Avinashananda, Ramakrishna Math, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, W. Bengal. Pages 100. Price Re. 1.*

This short and excellently written Bengali biography of Sri Sarada Devi, or the Holy Mother, the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna, is published on the eve of her Birth Centenary in commemoration of the event by the Centenary Celebration Committee. The narration is well planned, under suitable chapter-headings; the language is chaste, and the style is charmingly lucid. Some of the homely and instructive teachings and utterances of the Holy Mother have been given at the end of the book.

KUMUD BANDHU SEN

NEWS AND REPORTS

PRESIDENT, ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI

Swami Gambhirananda, a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, has been elected President of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, in place of Swami Yogeshwarananda.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BANARAS

REPORT FOR 1952

The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Banaras, has completed the fifty-second year of its useful service. It has an Indoor Hospital with 115 beds, Outdoor Dispensaries treating on an average about 1,300 patients a day, a Branch Outdoor Dispensary at Shivala, and two Invalids' Homes—one for male invalids, with 25 beds, and another for female invalids, with 50 beds. The Home of Service has also two operation-theatres, a pathological laboratory, and two X-ray units. The following is a brief report of its activities in 1952:

Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Home of Service: The Home of Service completed fifty years of its useful career in 1950. The actual celebrations of the Golden Jubilee were held in March 1952, for four days commencing from the 6th. The Golden Jubilee Celebration Committee, appointed by the Managing Committee of the Home of Service, collected a sum of Rs. 23,028-15-6 for the celebrations, of which Rs. 7,470-14-6 were expended and a sum of Rs. 15,000 was set apart for the creation of a Golden Jubilee Memorial Fund whose interest would be spent on the general expenses of the Hospital. The celebrations included an Exhibition depicting the ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad, variety entertainments by the boys and girls of some local educational institutions, inauguration of the X-ray Department of the Hospital by the Director General of Health Services, Government of India, and public meetings in which eminent personalities spoke on the Ramakrishna Mission and its ideal of service. Swami Vishuddhanandaji, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, inaugurated the functions. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee, the Home of Service brought out a Souvenir in English, pamphlets in English and Hindi, and Swami Vishuddhanandaji's inaugural Address, in English, on 'Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of Karma Yoga' in pamphlet form.

Indoor General Hospital: The total number of cases admitted during the year was 2,495, of which

2,074 were cured, 135 relieved, 78 discharged otherwise, 97 died, and 111 remained at the end of the year. The total number of surgical cases in the Indoor Hospital was 491. The total number of Ghat and road-side cases admitted during the year was 58.

Outdoor Dispensaries: The total number of new patients was 1,44,034 and that of repeated cases, 3,36,633, including the patients treated at the Shivala Branch Dispensary, where the total number of new cases was 67,082 and that of repeated cases, 95,238. The total number of surgical cases was 2,504, including 581 operation cases at Shivala Branch.

Refuge for Aged and Invalid Men and Women: The refuge is meant for poor and destitute invalids in the city of Banaras. Though there is accommodation for 25 men and 50 women, it was possible to maintain only 19 invalids during the year, owing to paucity of funds.

Other Activities: 102 cases of poor invalids and helpless ladies of respectable families received monthly out-door relief and the total expenditure was Rs. 1,832-1-6; some other people were supplied with clothes and blankets. Under the Chandri Bibi Dharmashala Fund, some men and women were given free food and shelter. 127 persons were given occasional relief and help in the form of books for students, food for stranded travellers, etc.

Finance: The receipts for the year under General Fund were Rs. 90,985-13-11 and the expenditure was Rs. 1,10,378-0-0, thus leaving a deficit of Rs. 19,392-2-1.

Needs: Funds are needed by the Home of Service for meeting its day-to-day expenses, for endowment of beds in the Indoor Hospital, for equipment, for construction of new buildings for housing the outpatients' department and wards, and for repairs. Contributions will be received by the Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Banaras 1.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME

REPORT FOR 1952

A garden-house at Sodepur (P.O. Sukchar, Dt. 24-Parganas) and a rented house in Calcutta (20, Harinath De Road) continued to house the Students' Home during the year. At the beginning of the year there were 47 students, of whom 26 were free, 9 were concession-holders, and 12 were paying. During the year, 21 students left the

Home and 22 were admitted. Thus at the end of the year there were 48 students, of whom 25 were free, 8 were concession-holders, and 15 were paying.

Out of 23 students who appeared at the various University Examinations, 21 came out successful. All 13 successful students in the I.Sc. secured first division, 2 of them also securing Government scholarship. All 3 successful students in the I.A. secured first division, 2 of them securing Government scholarship, one of whom stood *first* in order of merit in the University.

The spiritual atmosphere of the Home was ably maintained by holding regular scriptural classes and celebrating Utsavas like Sarasvati Puja, etc. Extra-curricular intellectual interest was stimulated by the students themselves taking part in occasional debates and discussions and Sunday classes and also conducting the manuscript magazine *Vidyārthī*. Monthly discourses were given by eminent scholars. The library and reading-room were well utilized by the students.

Almost all household duties were managed by the students. Besides, the students at the Sodepur Branch reared a kitchen-garden which yielded a good return.

53 deserving students of different Calcutta colleges were given pecuniary help towards their examination fees amounting to a total of Rs. 680 from a special Fund with the Students' Home.

For the permanent future residence of the Home, a big plot of land at Belghurriah (Dt. 24-Parganas), about 6 miles from Calcutta, was purchased in 1950, where it will be shifted as soon as necessary structures are put up. During the year the development work of this site was completed. A symbolic start was given to Vocational Section in the Belghurriah campus, by modest cultivation and operations of tree-planting and pisciculture. Two dormitories were built on the new site during the year.

PURNA KUMBHA MELĀ AT ALLAHABAD, 1954

AN APPEAL

The famous religious fair, the Purna Kumbha Melā, will be held at Prayag on the Triveni sands in the months of January and February, 1954. The important dates for Snān are 14th January (Makar Sankrānti), 19th January (Paus Purnimā), 3rd February (Amāvasyā) and 8th February (Vasanta Panchami). Pilgrims and Sadhus come to this Mela from all parts of India and the number

usually swells to more than thirty-two lakhs. Special arrangements have to be made for the medical care of the pilgrims. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Allahabad, will, as usual, open a camp on the Mela grounds for an outdoor charitable dispensary and first-aid for the purpose of giving medical help and attention to the assembled pilgrims. There will also be a boarding and lodging section to provide food and shelter to about four hundred pilgrims.

Qualified doctors and compounders and volunteers will be necessary to conduct the work. Medicines, dressing materials and foodstuffs will have to be purchased for the purpose. The contemplated relief-work, it is estimated, will cost Rs. 20,000/-.

The Sevashrama, therefore, earnestly appeals to the generous public to help it in this noble and humanitarian cause. Contributions in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged by any of the following:

1. The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthiganj, Allahabad, U. P.
2. The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math (Howrah), West Bengal.
3. The Manager, Udbodhan Office, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, FIJI ISLANDS

The nucleus of Vedanta work in Fiji Islands, in the South Pacific, started at Nadi as early as in 1937 and being successfully carried on by Swami Rudrananda since 1939, was incorporated as a Branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in September 1952. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch in Fiji, in September 1953, a new Branch Centre of the Mission was opened at Tailevu, situated about 30 miles from Suva, the capital of Fiji. The estate acquired by the Mission comprises about 400 acres of fertile land, with a big, decent bungalow and a dairy-farm on it.

The new Centre, marking the extension of the Mission work in this far off Island, was declared open on 26th September 1953 by Mr. C. Harvey, Director of Agriculture, in the presence of a distinguished gathering of over five hundred Indians, Europeans, and Fijians. Earlier on the same day, a portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was installed in the shrine with due ceremonies.

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CELEBRATIONS

The 27th December 1953 is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sri Sarada Devi, the divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna, also known as the Holy Mother. Up till now the details of her life and character have not been widely known: how her purity and love and her faith in Sri Ramakrishna took her to him not as a wife, in the ordinary sense, but as his first disciple; how under his guidance her spiritual life developed; and how outliving him by thirty-four years, she silently but effectively carried on his message and became the spiritual guide of thousands of earnest seekers.

Preparations are now being made to celebrate her Birth Centenary in a fitting manner and to place before the world the wonderful life and teachings of this motherly saint. The period of the Centenary Celebrations will last from December 1953 to December 1954.

The Centenary Committee invites the co-operation of all interested persons in these celebrations and suggest to them the following ways in which both individuals and local committees may find it convenient to organize activities of their own in order that the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother may be duly celebrated throughout the world:

1. A message of goodwill and co-operation may be sent to the Central Centenary Committee.
2. A religious gathering or prayer meeting may be held on the 27th December 1953, with a view to effecting throughout the world communion of spirit through prayer among all seekers after truth.
3. A memorial meeting may be held on a chosen date to bring before the people of the area the personality of the Holy Mother and the details of her life and teachings.
4. Meetings, Exhibitions, Conventions, Discussions, or other suitable functions may be held during the period of celebration on the lives of the great women of the world, emphasizing the spiritual value of womanhood to life and society, and with special reference to Sri Sarada Devi and her teachings.
5. Publicity may be given to the Centenary celebrations through the local radio and local journals and periodicals by means of notices of meetings and functions and by suitable articles on Sri Sarada Devi and on the ideals of womanhood in general.

It is earnestly hoped that all local committees will endeavour to organize celebrations on these and similar lines, and do all in their power to contribute to the world-wide success of the Centenary. The Central Centenary Committee will be very glad to receive an outline of the proposed programme when formulated. It will be glad to assist in any way possible and send literature helpful in preparing the celebrations.

THE SECRETARY, THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY
P.O. BELUR MATH, DT. HOWRAH, INDIA

THE HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

The 101st Birthday of Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother falls on 27th December 1953