Prabuddha Bharata

OR

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TO
PRABUDDHA BHARATA
VOL. LVIII

Editor: SWAMI VANDANANANDA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

THE ETERNAL QUEST

BY DR. AMARESH DATTA

So often have I thought:
My desires are so diverse,
And so deep inwrought,
That except by a divine boon
Could they be hardly sought in life
Ever or soon.

So have I often felt:
Vainly always, but never of my faith bereft,
That all my absurd dreams
May turn into 'is' from seems;
And a mysterious power
Would blessings shower
And would lovingly say;
Ask and pray;
I grant you all your prayer—
Have it now or never.

All my life have I pined:
In poverty for wealth,
And in ambition for fame of the highest kind.
In ignorance for light,
And fallen, I craved for the supreme might.
In impotent rage for mad revenge;
And for Beauty in love
Beyond my human range.
All these I thought
I would ask of my God
If ever he comes willing
And my prayer avails nought.

But if perchance
He sets the string wide, loose,
And lays the treasures bare,
And commands: Choose
And have your heart's measure.

Shall I be able to ask
For all that I need?
And take hurriedly in
All, to quench my greed?

When He would come with the gift,
Silence would numb my soul;
Such would be the magic of His being
That it would drown my desire, my hopes,
my whole,
And I would learn sure and soon:
It is easier to suffer
Than to ask for the boon.
For mine is the thirst for 'All'
And it could be quenched by Him alone.

LETTERS OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA*

Belur Math,
4. 4. 1917

DEAR D——,

I am glad to receive your letter . . . It is indeed very good news that you are keeping well. I see you are in fairly high spirits too, and good thoughts are ever arising and the desire for holy company is constantly awake in your heart. All this is very good. It is not only good but also very desirable that one should develop a distaste for worldly talk and the company of worldly-minded persons. The Lord is the one and only resource and goal of all; always think of Him in your heart. Why worry? He Himself will set everything right. Wherever He may keep you, always pray that the mind may think of His feet. However He may keep, that is for the best. Says Hafiz,[1] 'If my Beloved loves to see me wallow in the dust of poverty and if I turn my gaze towards the lake in heaven, then I am short-sighted indeed'. It is best if one can reconcile oneself to the state in which He places one. Because, He is All Good, the Inner Controller of all; He knows what is best for whom and always arranges everything accordingly. Meantime we only create difficulties for ourselves by demanding some odd thing or other suited to our liking,—isn't that so? Wherever and however He may keep us, if He, by His grace, allows the mind to dwell on His feet, that is enough.

'Vane'pi doṣāh prabhavanti rāgiṇām,
Gṛhe'pi pañcendriya-nigrahastapah'.[2]

This is the real truth. 'O Lord, wherever I may be, may I not forget you, may you grant me the company of your devotees, and do not place me in the company of worldly-minded persons'—one shonld pray thus; there is no harm in this. Call on Him with all your heart, He will do nothing but good.

Serve your mother as long as He will keep you (in the life) at home. All good can be attained if she can be served as if she herself were the image of the Mother of the universe. Whatever the road along which He takes you should be followed by you,—there is no doubt in this. Your duty, my duty, and the duty of all is to take to the way of the Lord, there is no other duty.

* Translated from the original Bengali.

[1] Well-known Persian poet.

[2] 'For those who are attached to desires, evils arise even when they retire to the forest; but those who have control over the five sense organs practise spiritual austerities (*tapas*) even at home' (*Hitopadeśa,* Ch. IV).

. . . Worship the Lord with body, mind, and speech. He alone is the One to be worshipped and prayed to by all. Nothing is left undone if He is worshipped. If watered at its roots, the entire tree is satiated and nourished in its growth.

SRI TURIYANANDA

* * *

Belur Math,
11. 5. 1917

DEAR D——,

I am glad to receive your letter . . . I can clearly see from your letter that your love of God and reliance on Him are growing more and more. This is evidence of the Lord's special grace towards you. May the Lord give you more devotion, faith, and inner strength, may you gradually advance towards Him and dedicate your life and soul to Him, being freed from the clutches of all trivial and useless thoughts, and may you take refuge in Him alone, knowing Him to be the mainstay of life. In that case, all pain and suffering, all want and imperfection will disappear and you will attain supreme peace.

The more you advance towards the east, that much more will the west recede behind. The more you will be able to fill your heart with thoughts of the Lord, the more will worldly thoughts and worries move away; you will not have to put forth any special effort in order to drive them away. One should cultivate the remembrance of God in one's heart, with love and good conduct, constantly and over a long period. Then only it becomes permanent. It is necessary that one should be ever prayerful. If one always makes known to Him one's inmost feelings, the Lord listens to them. I am happy to notice your mode of prayer. One should pray to Him for love, devotion, and affection. These alone are rare things, and once these are had, there will not remain any feeling of want for anything else. Then the heart becomes filled with sweet bliss and perfect peace is experienced in all situations. The task is to wait patiently at His door; if one could only wait thus, everything gets right automatically, and He himself will set right everything. . . .

The body goes this way only—sometimes good, sometimes bad. In short, its movement is towards dissolution. The body is not a permanently lasting thing. One day or other it is sure to go. So what more shall I say about it? Embodiment (life in the world) can become fruitful only if the mind can be fixed on the feet of the Lord. . . .

Resign yourself fully at His feet and be free from all worry. There is nothing better than this that can bring more good. . . .

SRI TURIYANANDA

* * *

Sasiniketan,
Puri,
10. 7. 1917

DEAR D——,

I was glad to receive your letter . . . Your prayers to the Lord are all very nice. This is very good. One should thus make known to Him one's sincere yearnings. He is the Inner Guide, and whenever He will find that the heart and the intellect are in unison He at once fulfils our yearnings. There is no doubt about it. Try to fix your mind on the feet of the Lord; there is no doubt that He will help you accordingly.

Doubt is seen to arise only then when the mind becomes impure. Be specially watchful so that no selfish feeling finds a place in the mind. You should 'sell' yourself

at His feet, and after so selling, you need no more go in search of Him. 'After selling my body in the mart of the world, I have bought the name of Mother Durgā'—if this could be done in the proper spirit, there will be no more fear or anxiety. Everything comes gradually. . . .

One should go on calling on the Mother. What more is needed? One should consider oneself blessed indeed if one can call on Her. If there is any desire other than this, then that is a worldly desire. Disbelief, doubt, and worry will inevitably come if there is desire. So beware, and let no desire—except the desire to call on the Mother—enter the heart. If any other desire comes, there will be trouble. Mother Herself will enable you to understand everything. Do pray, so that She may give you the power to carry out in practice whatever you understand to be right. If thought and speech become consistently one, everything will get right. . . .

Above all, the prayer to the Lord is this that the mind may remain fixed at His feet, wherever He place us. . . .

SRI TURIYANANDA

VEDANTA AND THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN RELATIONS

BY THE EDITOR

Time is no respecter of persons. Time and tide wait for no man. The onslaughts made repeatedly by the forces of old Father Time on the citadel of human aspirations have driven man to the necessity of seeking self-fulfilment in and through perennial existence which transcends the limitations of time and also of space and causation. Standing on the threshold of yet another year around the middle bend of the current century, perplexed humanity helplessly witnesses the enactment of what it most disrelishes. Though engaged in undertakings that affect the life and future of vast numbers of human beings, 'the world today is wild with the delirium of hatred'. The baffling problem of the post-war world has been in the main the problem of human relations. Individuals and communities, under the pressure of relentless forces of vicissitudinous times, have had to seek realignment and readjustment of mutual alliances. Ideological differences and national rivalries have assumed incredibly vast proportions, well-nigh wrecking every honest effort at human unification. The need for a right and effective ideal of human unity and co-operation was never more urgent and important as now when more and more evidence from every corner of the earth continues to confirm the suspicion that the greatest enemy of human rights is man himself.

What makes everything more difficult for the establishment of better human relations is the craze for domination, persecution, and exploitation of man by man. In addition to his subservience to the dictates of fleshly appetites, man finds himself a tool, willynilly, of parochial and bellicose patriotism. The world is too full of sincere and earnest patriots, but, alas, there are too few who are at the same time selfless and open-minded. This is perhaps inevitable in a civilization the aims of which derive inspiration from chauvinistic nationalism, economic determinism, and political chicanery. It does not necessarily mean that the world has gone from bad to worse. But what the gradual deterioration of human relations does indicate is the unmistakable fact that man's irrational hatred and anarchic impulse have become so powerful as to crowd out love and brotherhood, and, in fact, every essential ethical and spiritual value.

It is plain as a pikestaff that persons are not wanting who are engaged in reviving tyrannies and injustices at the very moment when the nations of the world are anxiously striving for the achievement of peace and understanding.

The substitution of order and co-operation for anarchy and mistrust is imperative if international relations have to be placed on a lasting and stable basis. Thinking men everywhere are more or less convinced that there is no hope of accomplishing this unless and until individuals are much changed and become better than what they are now. For, the initial step in the process of peaceful evolution of universal fellowship concerns the individual in particular. No philosophy of life which is incapable of ending the disorder in which the chaotic conscience of man is struggling will be of any help. As Bertrand Russell says, 'It will be necessary that individuals shall have less feeling of hostility and fear towards other individuals, more hope of security as regards their own lives, and a far more vivid realization that, in the world which modern technique has created, the need of world-wide co-operation is absolute, if mankind is to survive'. Without a positive interest in the essential divinity of human personality, the acquisition and utilization of material and intellectual forces is likely to lead to the purely biological and economic struggle for existence. And from this struggle originate all human afflictions which ultimately cause the apple of discord to be thrown into the midst of the human family.

The anodyne for the malady with which the human situation suffers today has to be found in Vedanta, the most daring proclamation of the truth of the unity of all existence and of the imperishable divinity that is present in all beings. Vedanta teaches that man's real nature is divine, that it is the aim of man's life to unfold and manifest this divinity, and that truth is universal. Ignorance or non-realization of this great truth is at the root of all difference, dissension, and disharmony. We feel and think that we are divided, limited, that we are separate from one another,—apparently becoming little individuals, with finite, perishable bodies,—all because of this fundamental ignorance. Lack of awareness of this spiritual identity between man and man gives rise to ideas of 'mine' and 'thine', of high and low, and of superior and inferior. Such distinctions are the direct cause of cruel conflicts and unceasing tensions, because they create artificial barriers of wealth and privilege and unjust inequalities. And it is well known that the edifice of human relations has been shaken to its foundations time and again by these offshoots of unholy greed and selfishness. Hence Vedanta insists on the elimination of all unlawful privileges and the cessation of all conquest and exploitation through the realization of the oneness of mankind, nay, of all life. The Vedantic basis of human relationship is the most stable ever, and it seeks to usher in the brightest future for despondent humanity through synthetic and constructive means, absolutely unsullied by blood and violence.

None can be Vedantists and at the same time claim to belong exclusively to any particular caste, class, or creed. Nor can they rightfully countenance any discrimination or disability imposed in terms of race, religion, or nationality. As the same divine power and potentiality are in everyone, there could be no place for privilege of any kind—material, mental, or spiritual. By its great teaching that the omnipresent and omnipotent Godhead is within each one of us, Vedanta offers a radical solution to the problem that constantly assails the unity of humanity. It teaches not merely universal love and brotherhood but also the close identity of man with man. Though each one is apparently separate from all others, every soul is one's own soul; every being is oneself. So if we harm others we harm ourselves. On the other hand, if we help any one we help ourselves. This practical side of Vedantic morality is as necessary today as ever in order that men and nations may come closer.

In an age of mechanistic materialism, when the average individual is too often tempted to

ignore spiritual values as not worth pursuing, the master-sentiment of self-esteem is naturally enthroned uppermost in the heart of man. Writes Prof. Sorokin: 'Blinded by its materialistic, mechanistic, and empirical bias respecting anything "superconscious", "spiritual", or "religious", this pseudo-science largely disregarded the teachings of Lao-tsze and Buddha, Christ and Saint Paul, Saint Francis of Assisi and Ramakrishna, the Yogis and ascetics, the mystics, the founders of monastic orders, and other eminent altruists and moral educators'. The skeletons in the modern man's political cupboard have become too many to admit of being hidden from public gaze any longer. The threat to human solidarity in our atom-menaced and bigotry-ridden world is not to be treated lightly. When nations, armed to the teeth, are ranged on opposite camps, indulging in what is known as the 'cold war', one could little expect the possibility of their applying Vedantic principles to the problem of human relations. The brutal struggle for existence and the internecine conflicts of power, so very characteristic of modern culture, mercilessly crush the affective, the gentle, and the weak who have eschewed force and fraud in their dealings with others.

It has been observed more than once in these columns that science coupled with Vedanta is the ideal of future humanity, best suited to the larger interests of collective good and security in the world. An ardent adherence to spiritual ideals alone would perhaps have been sufficient for the all-round progress of man if the times and circumstances had remained what they were when secular pursuits and spiritual ideals never clashed but formed one integral whole, the former always subserving the latter. Today, the challenge to spirituality from its self-styled adversaries, popularly known as humanism, secularism, and dialectical materialism, has assumed such tangible proportions that it has to be taken serious note of and adequately met. Under the fierce glare of modern scientific discoveries and political and economic theories, man cannot afford to withdraw into seclusion and make his spiritual life an unconnected, isolated thing, apart from the various other and now equally pressing concerns of life. This is an age of vigorous collectivistic action and collectively creative contemplation too. Human relations all the world over have diversified and complex patterns of expression and manifestation. This calls for a fresh readjustment on the spiritual plane, lest spiritual ideas should lose their appeal for the moderner by being considered 'unrealistic', 'unpractical', and 'life negating'.

The foundation of world peace and world understanding must be allied closely to the universally acceptable values of a synthetic world civilization. Each race and each nation have something distinctively original to contribute to the collective growth of human welfare. Again, every individual has his or her contribution to the general fund of national and international goodwill and effort. Though born with unequal aptitudes and temperaments, all are equal in the eyes of God. The State, and society too, while imposing inevitably necessary limitations on the freedom of the individual, have to grant him rights and privileges, enabling him to seek work, wealth, and happiness and freely live the life of his choice. For individuals, even as for nations, the days when isolation was possible are past. World organizations, comprising as many nations as possible, are taking active and effective part in contributing to the betterment of mutual co-operation and understanding. The indecent haste with which ideas and ideals are dubbed 'Eastern' or 'Western' and praised or decried at pleasure has been not a little responsible for the disequilibrium in human relations. It is a hopeful sign of the times that this artificial and arbitrary dichotomy of 'East' and 'West' is slowly but steadily disappearing, at least in the cultural field, though still persisting in the field of political realignments.

It would be a mistake to confuse the Vedantic ideal of human unity and understanding as a religious or philosophical system of the East, or even of India, propagated with crusading zeal. Nor is it fair to refuse to recognize the historical fact that the influence

of Indian thought on the thought of the countries far beyond her borders has been and still is considerable. No cohorts or legions were ever sent forth in support of the spread of such influence. Precisely due to this has Indian thought had a welcome reception and ardent acceptance in foreign lands. No truer words were so frankly uttered as the following by Swami Vivekananda: 'What is the goal? This that I have spoken of—Vedantism—is not a new religion. So old, as old as God Himself. It is not confined to any time and place. It is everywhere. Everybody knows this truth. We are all working it out. The goal of the whole universe is that. This applies even to external Nature. Every atom is rushing towards that goal. And do you think that any of the infinite pure souls are left without knowledge of the supreme Truth? All have it. All are going to the same goal—the discovery of their innate Divinity. The maniac, the murderer, the superstitious man, . . . all are travelling to the same goal'.

Modern civilization, with its marvellous discoveries and inventions, is realizing the external unity of man. But in the process of its unification it is as much destructive as constructive. External unity avails little if there is not the inner spiritual unity. This fact is becoming increasingly patent day by day. Every modern State strives to engender cultural affinity and national solidarity through economic, political, or religious uniformity. But Indian civilization has this distinction that it is characterized by love for peace and toleration, mysticism and meditation, spiritual joy and salvation,—in short, it has exemplified unity in diversity, which is a better and more stable basis for human relations than unity through uniformity. A study of the problems of human existence reveals evidence which goes to confirm the unfailing influence of spiritual idealism in bringing men and nations together and uniting them in the bonds of love and fellow-feeling.

The unity of religions is another aspect of the Vedantic basis of human relationship. Vedanta teaches that mere toleration is not enough and that positive reverence for the ideals of other religions is necessary. To be steadfast in one's own ideal and show respect to the ideals of others is one of the greatest factors of peaceful and neighbourly co-existence. As humanity includes all human beings, the Vedantic ideal of a universal religion includes all religions. Human relations are strained only when the innate struggle of man for freedom takes a parochial form of struggle for finite and sensuous freedom *for* the senses in place of a deeper and more inward struggle for freedom *from* the senses. Rabindranath Tagore, in one of his well-known poems, expresses this anguish of the soul and calls for divine grace in order that the hearts of men may be purged of iniquity. He says:

Man's heart is anguished with the fear of unrest,
With the poison of self-seeking,
With a thirst that knows no end.
Countries far and wide flaunt on their foreheads
The blood-red mark of hatred.
Touch them with thy right hand,
Make them one in spirit,
Bring harmony in their life,
Bring rhythm of beauty.
O Serene, O Free,
In thine immeasurable mercy, and goodness
Wipe away all dark stains from the heart of this earth.

Among all the challenges which our generation faces today none is more serious and threatening than that of the intransigence of man in his relations with his fellow men. The art of living together without friction or faction and at the same time not becoming imperceptibly self-centred is the need of the world. The obstacles to the solidification of mankind into a great common brotherhood have proved insurmountable. The achievement of the universal Vedantic ideal, viz. spiritual unity of and love and understanding among mankind, will undoubtedly take a long time and call for much effort; but it shall most decidedly change for the better the entire outlook of human relations throughout the world.

THE VOICE OF INDIA

By Swami Tejasananda

It has been loudly talked by many interested politicians that the independence of India has been the *generous gift* of the alien imperialist power. But one who has not as yet been trained to think or write to order would feel tempted to put the poser: Has human history ever recorded such a miracle, —*the voluntary gift of independence* to a race politically subjugated by a militant nation that has wielded its sword and exhausted its utmost energies for the complete cultural conquest and economic exploitation of the conquered for centuries? Anybody who has critically observed and followed the quick march of events of the last century, must have noticed how the suppressed and oppressed souls of India, after years of untold persecution and bloodbath, swung into a titanic struggle to gain back their pristine glories and honour, and how eventually they wrested from the grip of destiny their long-lost wealth of freedom in the face of organized vandalism of the foreign powers. It needs no straining of imagination to understand that it was not for nothing that hundreds of the heroic sons and daughters of India had to run to the gallows and gaols and to solitary cells and exile, thousands to become cannon-fodder, and millions to die as helpless victims of man-made famines and pestilence. The spontaneous martyrdom of these brave children of the soil for the liberation of the country from the tentacles of alien authority is but the living testimony of yesterday. Much water has not as yet run down the Thames or the Ganges to wash away from human memory these exemplary acts of heroism, as also the painful tragedies of Indian history.

No doubt, with the achievement of independence, the storm has subsided, and resurgent India has begun her historic march on her traditional track, with renewed vigour, to play her destined role as a teacher of humanity. But the question that naturally crops up in the mind is: What is the force that has kept alive this most ancient race, with its hoary civilization, even in the midst of the constant flux of political destinies? Like bubbles on the surface of the sea, the mighty empires of ancient Egypt and Babylon, Assyria and Persia, Greece and Rome sprang up into existence and, after a bloody career, melted away into the womb of the past, never to rise again. But India, snpposed to be politically dead and culturally crippled, has once again leaped into the full flame of life from the ashes of her material glories, like the phoenix of old, and her dormant power has effloresced into a sparkling variety of creative forms. The reason is not far to seek. Every nation, as Swami Vivekananda has aptly pointed out, has its distinctive line of growth and development. In India the foundation, the backbone, the life-centre is religion and religion alone. This nation lives; the *raison d'être* is because it still holds on to the Supersensuous, and the lofty ideal of the Upanishads,—the universal gospel of the Vedanta,—permeates every phase of Indian thonght and culture. The vitality of India lies in the cultural conception of the Eternal. Her religion is a clarion call to rise to the radiance of the Spirit, and her science and economics, arts and literature have the same upward look. This urge towards the Eternal and the fidelity to her ideal of renunciation and universal brotherhood constitute the distinctive characteristic of the people, which is radically opposed to the Occidental philosophy of 'enjoyment here and hereafter'. Romain Rolland, the celebrated French author of the *Life of Ramakrishna,* has touched the right chord of Indian life when he says, 'The age-long history of the spirit of India is the history of a countless throng

marching over to the conquest of Supreme Reality. . . She goes straight to the Centre, to the Commander-in-chief of the unseen General Headquarters; for the Reality she speaks is transcendental'. No truer words have been so beautifully uttered. This has been the immortal theme of Indian life, the song of her soul, and the message of her culture. And this has enabled India to withstand all vicissitudes through ages and to triumph over the brutal onslaughts made time and again by the forces of materialism on the citadel of her cultural life.

Today, while standing on the threshold of a New Era, we are transported back in imagination to the golden days of the past when the soul of India, embodied as it were in the radiant personality of Nachiketa—the wonder-child of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, began its historic quest from the old world to the new, for the discovery of the nltimate end of human destiny. His life-story is not merely a fiction fabricated to teach people certain moral platitudes, but furnishes the most positive facts revelatory of what has made India free today even after centuries of foreign rule and economic exploitation. For, herein do we find the key-note of Indian thought that has travelled down in all integrity through the corridor of time as a dominating dynamic force, as also the clue to the flowering of her many-sided genius in the modern age. The journey of Nachiketa from his paternal home to the realm of Death, in quest of the eternal glory of human life, was as arduous as perilous. For, he had to bid adien to the most tempting prospects of earthly happiness, to plunge into the depth of uncertainties, and eventually to encounter Death, who is looked upon as the most dreaded object by every mortal on earth. In the illuminating dialogue that followed between the two master minds, we are delighted to find that the spiritual genius of India did never shine in such sparkling brilliance as it did on this occasion. Yama, the Lord of Death, had at last to open all secrets of life and death, one by one, to the young enquirer in deference to his wishes

It is but common knowledge that hnman beings generally look up to heaven as the abode of eternal rest and peace after their painful sojourn on earth. Nachiketa, young in years but old in wisdom, reciprocated the natural cravings of the mortals and prayed at the outset for the unfolding of the technique of 'fire worship' whereby one became eligible for perennial happiness in heaven. Yama, whom Nachiketa accepted as his spiritual guide, promptly and gladly granted the prayer and laid bare all the mysteries of fire worship. But the boy quickly intuited that the apparently attractive heavenly life was only a lure to drive human aspiration godward, and was nothing but a passing stage in the course of the evolutionary march of mankind. He further realized that the purpose of his perilous pilgrimage to the realm of Yama would be entirely defeated and the destiny of men would also be sealed for ever if he stopped short at this stage and remained satisfied with this specious gift of God, which, in the ultimate analysis, was as unstable and worthless as any shoddy object of this mortal realm. For, does not the scripture say, 'The people who attain to heaven by dint of pious actions and sacrifices enjoy the fruits of their works there for a time. But after the accumulated fund of virtue has been exhausted by enjoyment, they once again take birth on earth and are dragged along the nnending cycle of births and deaths'. Nachiketa, who symbolized the indomitable spirit of India marching to the discovery of the Eternal Light of life, was not the person to be so easily dnped and deluded. He remembered his divine mission of bringing down to the land of mortals the highest Truth from the womb of mystery and of delivering the glad tidings to humanity at large. He could not be untrue to himself. For, does the Ganges give up her ceaseless flow in the middle of her course before she reaches her destination—the infinite ocean,—where all the travails of her long and ardnous journey are ended once for all? With due humility and respect and the unbending tenacity that befitted the worthy disciple. Nachiketa articulated his last

prayer to the Guru in the following terms: 'O Lord, some say that the soul exists after death and some opine that it does not. Be pleased to enlighten me on the ultimate destiny of the human soul'.

The Lord of Death could hardly believe his ears. He did never anticipate that such a crucial question about life and death and the ultimate destiny of the human soul would at all come from a mortal being who was not even in his teens. For, the knowledge of the Self could be bestowed only on one who had fully qualified himself for that blessed illumination after passing through the ordeal of the Sādhana-chatushtaya or the fourfold prerequisite for Brahma-jijñâsā (i.e. enquiry about Brahman). He fully realized that the boy was not an enqnirer of ordinary intellectual calibre but was gifted with superb spiritual genius and the knowledge of the scriptures. With a mind freed of all base desires and a countenance beaming with an ethereal effulgence born of the spirit of renunciation, Nachiketa now pressed forward this momentous question for the well-being of mankind; for, he felt very strongly that this secret must not be an exclusive monopoly of a privileged few but should be the common property of entire humanity from the highest to the lowest. It must be brought out from the hidden chambers of Death and broadcast to the wide world as a message of courage and hope to the erring souls toiling and trudging in this vale of tears. Yama was mightily delighted at heart though outwardly he showed great reluctance to disclose the secret.

In order to test the earnestness and fitness of the disciple for this crowning illumination, Yama offered one after the other all conceivable objects of enjoyment to Nachiketa, viz. eternal life here and hereafter, undisputed sovereignty over the whole world, illimitable wealth and prosperity, celestial nymphs and a plethora of pleasures in heaven, and all that rarely fell to the lot of mortals. The glowing prospect of a bumper feast of life was thus held before the boy to divert him from his divine mission. The scriptures say that many a stalwart seeker after truth, swayed by even a fraction of such glamorous gifts, has broken the journey of life, sat down to the dainty fare, and given up the quest. Nachiketa, sound at heart, pure in his motive, and resolute in his purpose, listened silently to the attractive offers of his Guru, but did not budge an inch from his noble pursuit. He told the King of Death, with the dignity that was his own, 'Life is short; time is fleeting, and all objects of enjoyment are transitory. I have therefore no need for such unstable things however pleasant and glittering they be. Let those pleasures and sense-objects that thou hast so generously offered unto me remain with thee. For, I know for certain that the enjoyment of wealth and pleasures only inflames one's passion for further enjoyment, debilitates the nerves and the senses, and gives no lasting satisfaction to the mind. He must be a fool who, knowing the limitations and consequences of earthly vanities and physical charms and pleasures, craves for those sordid objects from one who has got the knowledge of Brahman in his gift'. Nachiketa thus spurned with noble disdain all the tempting offers of pelf and power and leaped over the last hurdle with the tenacity, indomitable courage, and fortitude that adorned his character. The joy of Yama also knew no bounds to find that his disciple had earned the competency needed to receive the knowledge, for which hardly a fit aspirant was available on earth.

'There are two paths open unto mankind;' said Yama, 'one leading to salvation and the other to bondage. Those who welcome the first are blessed, as they are ultimately rewarded with the knowledge of the Self, the nature of which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; but those who take to the second one, the downward path of dalliance, are entangled in the quagmire of sense-pleasures, and suffer interminable travails of birth and death'. For, says the scripture: 'Not by wealth, not by progeny, bnt by renunciation alone. Immortality is reached'. Step by step Nachiketa

was led from the gross to the subtle plane of consciousness and was eventually admitted to the knowledge of the Supreme Reality. Needless to say, with the triumph of Nachiketa, the arduous journey of Indian genius in quest of the Truth Eternal was ended. This death-defying and venturesome expedition, as also the brilliant success that attended it, forms one of the most illuminating chapters in the annals of spiritual culture as recorded in the Upanishad. It has endued Indian thought with an uncommon halo of beauty, inasmuch as it has shown the triumph of Spirit over matter, of renunciation over sense-enjoyment. Nachiketa's achievement thus stands as a beacon-light to show to the struggling souls of all ages and climes the real orbit to be followed to reach the golden temple of peace eternal. That is why India has survived the shocks of centuries and sprung back again to her native glory. Time is now ripe for her to proclaim once more her eternal spiritual message—the message of peace, which Nachiketa of the Upanishad has delivered unto humanity, and which other saints and sages also have accentuated from age to age in the most stirring and unfaltering terms: 'Listen, Ye that live on earth and in the celestial realm! I have known the great Purusha (the Truth Supreme) that is effulgent as the sun and is beyond all darkness. Knowing Him alone one can transcend the limitations of birth and death; there is no other way for salvation'. In this age, when the voice of Truth has almost been drowned under the clang and clatter of arms, the need of this message of peace has been most seriously felt to save humanity from a headlong plunge into the unfathomable depths of ruin and destruction. Rightly has Swami Vivekananda pointed out: 'Hence have started the founders of religions, from the most ancient times, deluging the earth again and again with the pure and perennial waters of spiritual truth. Hence have proceeded the tidal waves of philosophy that have covered the earth, East or West, North or South, and hence again must start the wave which is going to spiritualize the material civilization of the world. Here is the life-giving water with which must be quenched the fire of materialism which is burning the core of hearts of millions in other lands'.

India, after a listless period of suspended animation, has once again come back to her own, with her rejuvenated spiritual culture, at this critical juncture, to deliver her goods. Race after race has tried to solve the riddle of life and the problem of the world on the plane of desires. They have all failed in the past,—the old ones have become extinct and the new ones are tottering to their fall under the impact of wickedness and misery. 'The question has yet to be decided', says Swami Vivekananda, 'whether peace will survive or war; whether patience will survive or non-forbearance; whether goodness will survive or wickedness; whether muscle will survive or brain; whether worldliness will survive or spirituality. We have solved our problem ages ago and held on to it through good or evil fortune, and mean to hold on to it till the end of time. Our solution is unworldliness —Renunciation. This is the theme of Indian life-work, the burden of her eternal songs, the backbone of her existence—the spiritualization of the human race'.

It is indeed a hopeful sign of the times that the saner section of humanity has responded to the stirring call of the great Swami—the Nachiketa of our modern age, and has woke up to the calamities repeatedly brought on to this earth by bombs and batteries. The world has grown sick of such orgy of bloodshed and holocaust of human lives. The way out of this tragic drama that is being enacted from day to day before our very eyes is therefore to listen to the voice of the prophets of humanity. For, the material civilization of the West, however awe-inspiring it may appear to be, is no better than a colossus stuffed with clouts and is tottering to its fall, and it can never be saved from ultimate destruction unless it is rebuilt on the solid foundations of the eternal spiritual principles of the Upanishads.

Schopenhauer, the great German philosopher, has rightly remarked during the first half of last century: 'In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death. The world is about to see a revolution in thought more extensive and more powerful than that which was witnessed by the Renaissance of Greek literature'.

Today his predictions are coming to pass, and we have every reason to believe that in the near future the cry of war-mongers for the blood of brothers would be stilled into silence, and in its place would be heard the eternal VOICE OF INDIA which is the voice of peace and goodwill amongst humanity at large.

KARMA-SAMĀDHI

BY R. R. DIWAKAR

The title gives one an impression that it is a paradoxical expression. Generally we understand by Samādhi a silent communion of the individual soul with Reality. It is, thus, a state of quiescence as opposed to Karma, which is activity, mainly of the body and mind. But this expression occurs in the *Bhagavad Gita,* though Karma there is qualified by 'Brahma'. The full expression in the *Gita* is 'Brahma-Karma-Samadhi'. But that does not make much difference. Karma does not cease to be Karma simply because it is 'Brahma-Karma'.

The context in which this expression occurs is when every action connected with Yajna is looked upon as Brahma, that is, the Ultimate Reality. Sri Krishna says that one can attain the highest Reality if one looks upon every activity in connection with a sacrifice as Brahma itself. But what is intriguing is the real meaning of Karma and Samadhi here. We have expressions like 'Bhāva-Samadhi', that is, emotional ecstasy, which we come across while describing Bhakti, or devotion. But the use of this expression 'Karma-Samadhi' in the *Gita* is unique. We do not find it anywhere else. It opens up a line of thought which is worth investigating.

A certain Kannada poet of the twelfth century, in his introduction to *Jagannātha Vijaya,* uses the expression 'Kāvya-Samadhi'. Rudra Bhatta, the poet, says, 'I am about to worship God by Kavya-Samadhi'. Obviously, here the poet means that writing poetry dedicated to God is itself an act of worship, and it is so intense an act of devotion that it might well be described as Samadhi, that is, ecstatic communion with God. This expression also is as much paradoxical as Karma-Samadhi, because the writing of poetry does involve an intellectual action, even if we leave out the very physical act of writing.

This leads one to think that it is not only quiet contemplation or meditation or silence that is consistent with Samadhi, but even vigorous action and intellectual activity are not inconsistent with Samadhi. This would mean that the particular person's inner self in such Samadhi is one with the Universal Spirit, while his physical and intellectual states of consciousness are carrying on their activities in the full realization that they are dedicated and that they are carried on as actions done by a dedicated person. This condition obviously involves a kind of double consciousness, which is sometimes described in books dealing with spiritual Sādhanā.

It is said that a spiritual aspirant can reach a certain stage when he can become a silent and detached witness of his own actions

as well as of his own thoughts and intellectual activities. Here, however, it is not merely the poise of Ātma-Sākshi, but one step higher than the same; because here the Atma-Sakshi is not only a witness of what he is himself doing, but is in ecstatic communion with the Spirit. This may be said to be the acme of spiritual realization in the case of a Karma-Yogi. Karma-Yoga would then mean not merely a spiritual path by which man attains the highest through detached Karma, but also a path the final experience of which is that of Karma-Samadhi. It is to describe this kind of spiritual status that Sri Krishna used this expression. It is not only the ultimate stage, but even while the aspirant is in the process of carrying on his Sadhana, he can, in the words of the *Gita*, enjoy the bliss of ecstatic communion with the Spirit. This means that for the attainment of ecstatic union it is not necessary —for a Karma-Yogi, at any rate,—to cease from activity. What he rather ought to attempt is to continue his activity in the spirit of detachment and self-surrender and also persistently seek to be in union with the Spirit through and in the midst of the very activity which he is carrying on.

It is obvious that it is this aspect of Karma-Yoga that is emphasized by the expression Karma-Samadhi, used in the *Gita* in connection with all dedicated activity. This aspect of spiritual Sadhana is emphasized by some other schools of thought also, where the aspirant is calculated to enjoy consciously the same kind of bliss as the Supreme Spirit. The expressions usually used in such a case are 'Sama-Rati' and 'Sama-Rasaikya'. It is not necessary to go into the details of the metaphysics or the philosophy of these schools of thought. What is, however, important from the aspirant's point of view is that the *Gita*, which is one of the greatest texts on spiritual realization, visualizes and emphasizes an ecstatic experience where there is a perfect synthesis and a resulting harmony in the activities of every part of a human personality. The seeming conflict between physical and intellectual and emotional activity on the one hand and inner spiritual quiescence on the other is capable of being resolved in the kind of Karma-Samadhi envisaged in the *Gita*. It has been rightly stressed often that the *Gita* does not preach a single Yoga, but that it is a synthesis of the several spiritual paths that lead to the realization of the Spirit.

To compare small things with great, the ecstasy enjoyed in Karma-Samadhi may be likened to the joy during instinctive action, if only one were self-conscious at that time. Such action can be truly described as 'free action' (Mukta-Karma) characterized by Henri Bergson. In fact, Arjuna himself must have enjoyed this ecstatic Karma-Samadhi even while engaged in the bloody slaughter at Kurukshetra, after having declared that his delusion had disappeared and that he was acting as an instrument of the Lord.

THE CONCEPTION OF HISTORY IN ANCIENT INDIA

By Dr. Nandalal Chatterji

The fact that ancient India could produce no Herodotus or Thucydides, no Livy or Tacitus, has misled the Western critics into thinking that the ancient Hindus were lacking in historical sense and perspective. Now, it is true that ancient Indian literature contains little by way of historical data, and much less still of dependable chronology. It is also undeniable that the so-called historical works of ancient India are scarcely better than legendary and mythological accounts. But, all this should not be interpreted as indicative

of an absence of the conception of history as a branch of knowledge. In fact, ancient India did develop a philosophy of history which is as distinctive as it is unfamiliar to the Western mind. One cannot appreciate this without a study of the ideology which inspired and underlay it. The modern historian may not accept this conception; yet he cannot ignore its meaning and significance as an early phase in the evolution of historical thinking.

To form a correct idea of the philosophy of history in ancient India, it is necessary to know certain basic facts which are usually overlooked. First, history in ancient India was not the study of fact as such, but was the symbolization of the idea behind the fact. The writer of the Itihāsa-Purāna fixed his gaze not so much on mundane events as on total reality which transcends matters purely temporal. His was, therefore, the pilgrimage, in the Hegelian sense, of the spirit from the spirit to the spirit. Second, history in ancient India was not an independent or self-determining *genre* of thought as it has been in the West. It was a part and parcel of religious and philosophical thinking and a means of moral edification. Third, history for the Hindu mind possessed a universal content, wherein fact and tradition were only a part of a bigger story comprising the entire drama of creation. Thus, historical literature was bound up with cosmogony, cosmology, mythic lore, religion, and legend. Lastly, the Hindu mind would not accept the past as more than a mere illusion. Death was not the final dissolution of man, nor was the physical existence the ultimate thing in life, for the deathless soul marched eternally through cycles of creation and destruction. A narrative of events on the basis of chronology thus could not be quite relevant to this kind of outlook on history.

In ancient India, history was a subject of serious study under the designations of Itihasa and Purana. Aitihāsikas or historians occupied the same status as the Nairuktas or etymologists, the Vaiyākaranas or grammarians, and the Parivrājakas or wandering sages. This is a fact which is borne out by Yāska's *Nirukta*. It is true that the boundaries of Itihasa and Purana were not well defined, and that often the two were mentioned in one compound word. But, according to the *Amarakośa,* Itihasa was *'puravṛtta'*, i.e. an account of past events, while Purana is described as possessed of five attributes—creation, dissolution, geneology, ages of the world, and biography. As a matter of fact, however, both these denoted history. But the scope of the subject was all-comprehensive, for it included Itivritta, Ākhyāyikā, Udāharana, Dharma-Shāstra, and Artha-Shāstra. In other words, history meant much more than what it implies today. In ancient Indian education, Itihasa formed an essential subject of study. It was commended by Kautilya as a guide for good conduct and as a means of moral enlightenment for student-princes. In short, history was intended to be 'philosophy by examples'. That history was also given the status of an Upanishad is a remarkable evidence of the importance of historical thought in ancient India. The recently discovered *Itihāsopaniṣad* (MS. No. 298 in the Madras Oriental Collection), which is ascribed to the *Yajur-Veda,* bears testimony to the fact that the historic sense had always been germane to the Indian genius.

History implied a quest for truth, and the Indian chronicler always endeavoured to uphold the cause of truth. Kalhana, the eminent historian of ancient Kashmir, has thus beautifully summed up the sacred role of the historian: 'That man of merit alone deserves praise whose language, like that of a judge, in recounting the events of the past, has discarded bias as well as prejudice'. This lofty view of the historian's task in a way anticipates by many centuries the stand of modern historians like Ranke and Acton. That Kalhana himself steadfastly followed this principle in his *Rājataraṅgiṇī* is admitted by a modern European scholar, Sir Aurel Stein, in these words: 'He (Kalhana) does not hide from us the errors and weaknesses of the king under whom he wrote. The undisguised manner in which he often chastises the con-

duct of those holding influential positions in his own time makes us occasionally wonder whether he could ever have intended to give full publicity to his narrative in his own days'. To how many historians could such a high tribute be paid even in our own times?

The historian in ancient India was not a mere story-teller. He was expected to rise to the heights of a seer. In the introductory portion of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, there are a few lines which throw a flood of light on the greatness of historical learning. One verse runs thus: 'Who else are capable of making the bygone age vivid to the eye, barring the poets resembling Prajāpatis, both being adepts in lovely creations? If the poet with his genius did not see (mentally) the existences which he is about to reveal to all, what other indication would there be of the divine perception of the poet?' This clearly brings out the fact that the historian in ancient India had to be a poet-sage, if he was to fulfil his task honestly and with success.

If the ultimate lesson of history is 'Know thyself', that lesson was abundantly brought out in Itihasa-Purana. In the consciousness of the ancient Indian historian all experience of the past was the eternal background for the ever changing and momentary present. If the historian drew upon myth and legend, it was because he refused to draw a line of demarcation between the actual and the imaginary, since the imaginary also sometimes served excellently, and more fruitfully than the actual, for the ends of truth. This juxtaposition of the real and the mythical, which sometimes characterizes Itihasa-Purana, may not find favour with the modern advocates of scientific history; yet it has a value of its own which even the scientific historian cannot deny. If history was not an end unto itself in ancient India, it was something more distinctive, for it was an organic whole in which universality and particularity were coexistent as the basis of human conduct. History was, in short, synthetic and not dialectical thought.

If the appeal of history to the Indian mind was essentially poetic in the last resort, it is hardly surprising in view of the fact that even to some modern writers history has seemed to be true poetry. Did not Carlyle say, while writing on Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, that 'History after all is the true poetry. . . . They who are gone are still here; though hidden they are revealed; though dead they yet speak'. The same sentiment is expressed by the ancient Indian master, Dandin, who, writing centuries before Carlyle, says, 'The fame of ancient kings stands imperishable, being reflected in the mirror of speech, though they are no longer here'. The significance of historical imagination has scarcely been better emphasized!

It is a mistake to think that the ancient Hindu paid little or no attention to the historical order of things and to chronology. The records of the Pattāvalis or the Vamshāvalis, and also the epigraphic inscriptions and copperplates exhibit a high standard of chronological sense. The dynastic pedigrees, succession lists, and deeds of grants are too well known to students of Indian history to require a detailed mention here. These accounts are valuable raw materials of ancient Indian history, and it is a pity that they have not yet been fully utilized.

Historiography in ancient India underwent a process of evolution which has yet to be adequately studied. The epic verses and the verses in praise of heroes were recognized branches of learning in the Vedic literature. The Gotra and Pravara lists, no less than the Gâthâs and the Narashamsis from Brâhmaṇa, Grhya--Sūtra, and Śrauta-Sūtra literature marked the beginnings of history. And, the next stages of evolution were of course reflected in Itihasa-Purana. But the golden age of ancient Indian historiography was from Yaska to Kautilya. With the advent of the Guptas to power, the Purana unfortunately became almost wholly sectarian in type, and its purely historical value deteriorated. It was probably on account of the social and political, not to speak of cultural, upheavals caused by foreign invasions that history-writing was interrupted in the later

ancient period, and we do not come across a great master until the name of Kalhana figures in the twelfth century. Things came to such a pass that, on the eve of the Muslim conquest, Alberuni, who came with Mahmud of Ghazni, was constrained to say: 'Unfortunately, the Hindus are very careless in relating the chronological succession of their kings, and when they are pressed for information and are at a loss, not knowing what to say, they invariably take to tale-tellings'. Alberuni's criticism only reveals the latter-day decline of history as a branch of learning. It would be the height of absurdity, if Alberuni's verdict, which was applicable to his own times, were regarded as true of the whole of the ancient period.

When all is said, the fact remains that the conception of history in ancient India has not yet received the attention it richly deserves. Loose generalizations, by way of a hasty or ignorant criticism, cannot obscure the central fact that ancient Hindus contributed in their own way to historical philosophy and learning no less than what their more publicized Western compeers—the Greeks and the Romans—had done.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE AT THE BELUR MATH

By C. Sivaramamurti

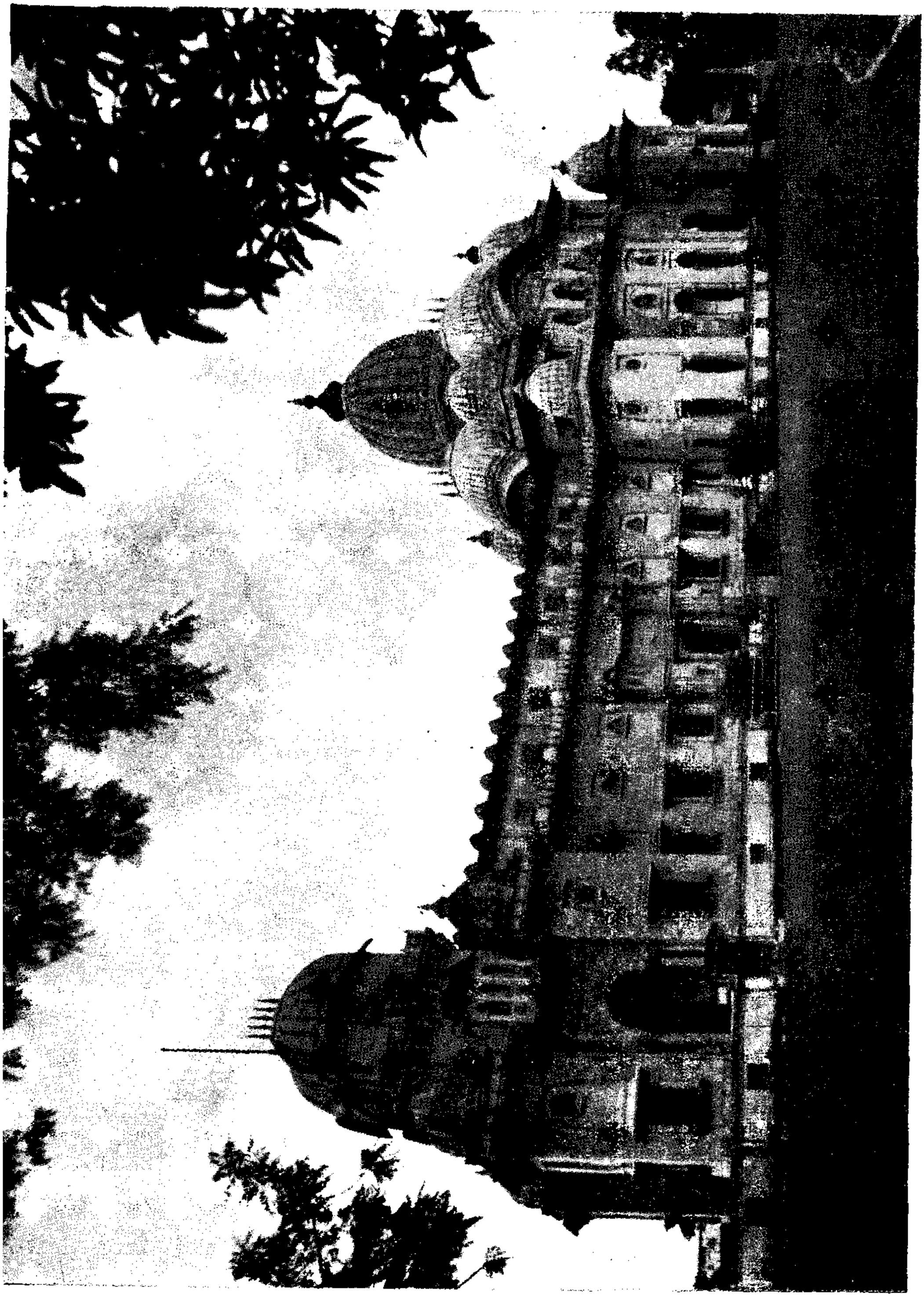
One of the most important places near Calcutta, which every visitor to the city makes it a point to visit, is the Belur Math, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. At Belur Math the most outstanding thing is the recently built temple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. This is a remarkable construction.

The most outstanding personality of the nineteenth century was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, whose magnetic influence has revolutionized Indian thought in recent times. His influence has been an abiding one and his very name has inspired great work in every part of the country and the world, as the Ramakrishna Mission has its centres of work not only all over India but also throughout the world. This simple and unsophisticated saint was probably the most eloquent interpreter of the highest Upanishadic thought of ancient India in modern times. The image of this great and glorious saint has been enshrined in a temple worthy of his catholic spirit.

The temple of Sri Ramakrishna is a remarkable construction. It combines in itself features of almost every phase of Indian architecture from the earliest times to the present day. And as a harmonious blend of all these, it creates a joy in the mind of the visitor by recalling, at every stage, as he moves around inside the monument, important architectural elements that he is probably familiar with in different monuments visited by him on different occasions in different areas and studied with wonder as aspects of Indian architectural genius.

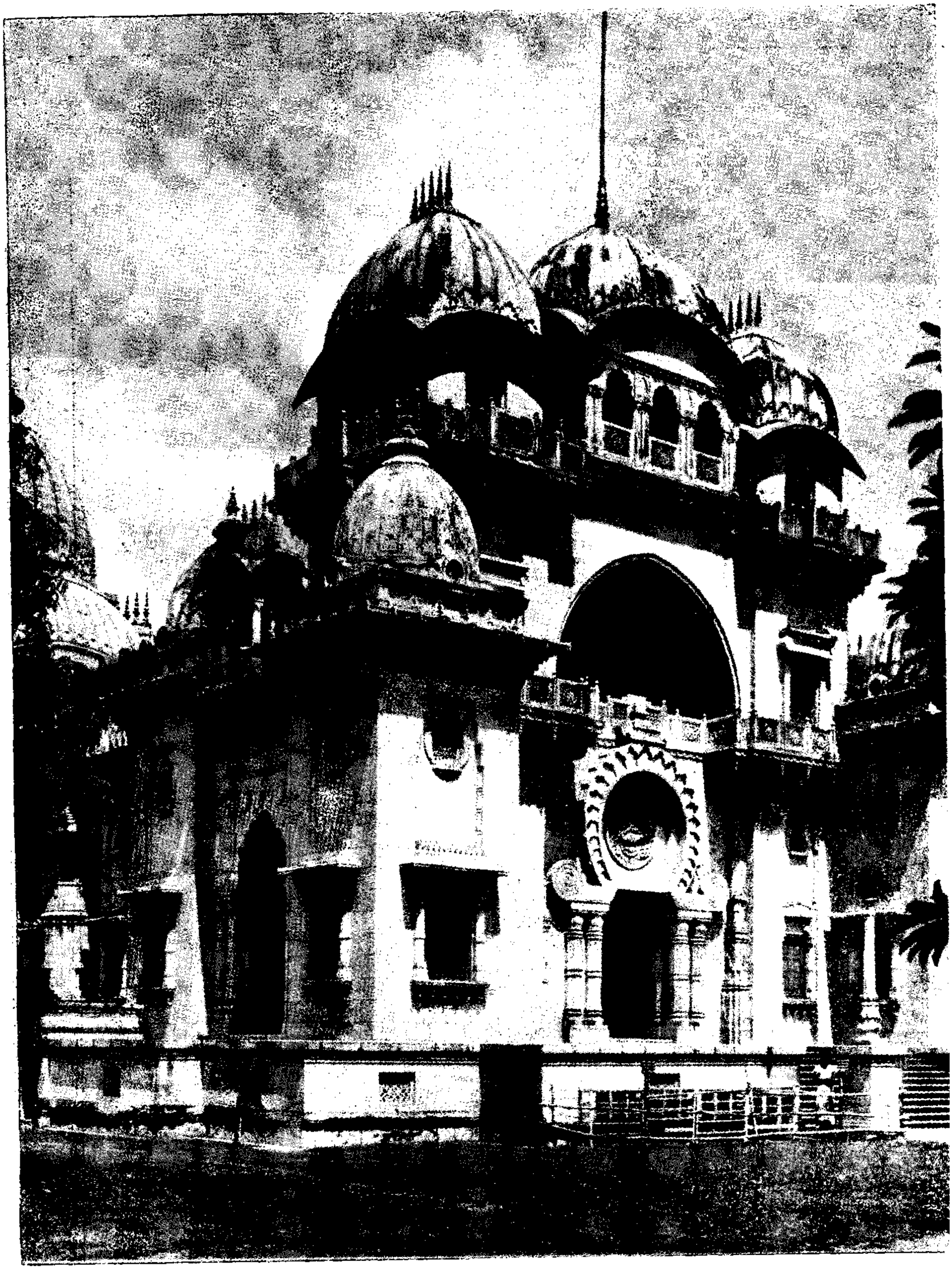
Normally a hotchpotch of different styles has an effect on the eye more jarring than soothing and a blending of different styles, unless most skilfully managed, is better not attempted at all. But in this case the main structure has a more or less homogeneous appearance, while details everywhere in it emphasize one or other of early or medieval architectural aspects.

Thus the general contour of the top to the entrance, which is very imposing, and the main shrine at the farthest end of the long hall presents a picture of the usual type of late medieval temples of Bengal, with curved



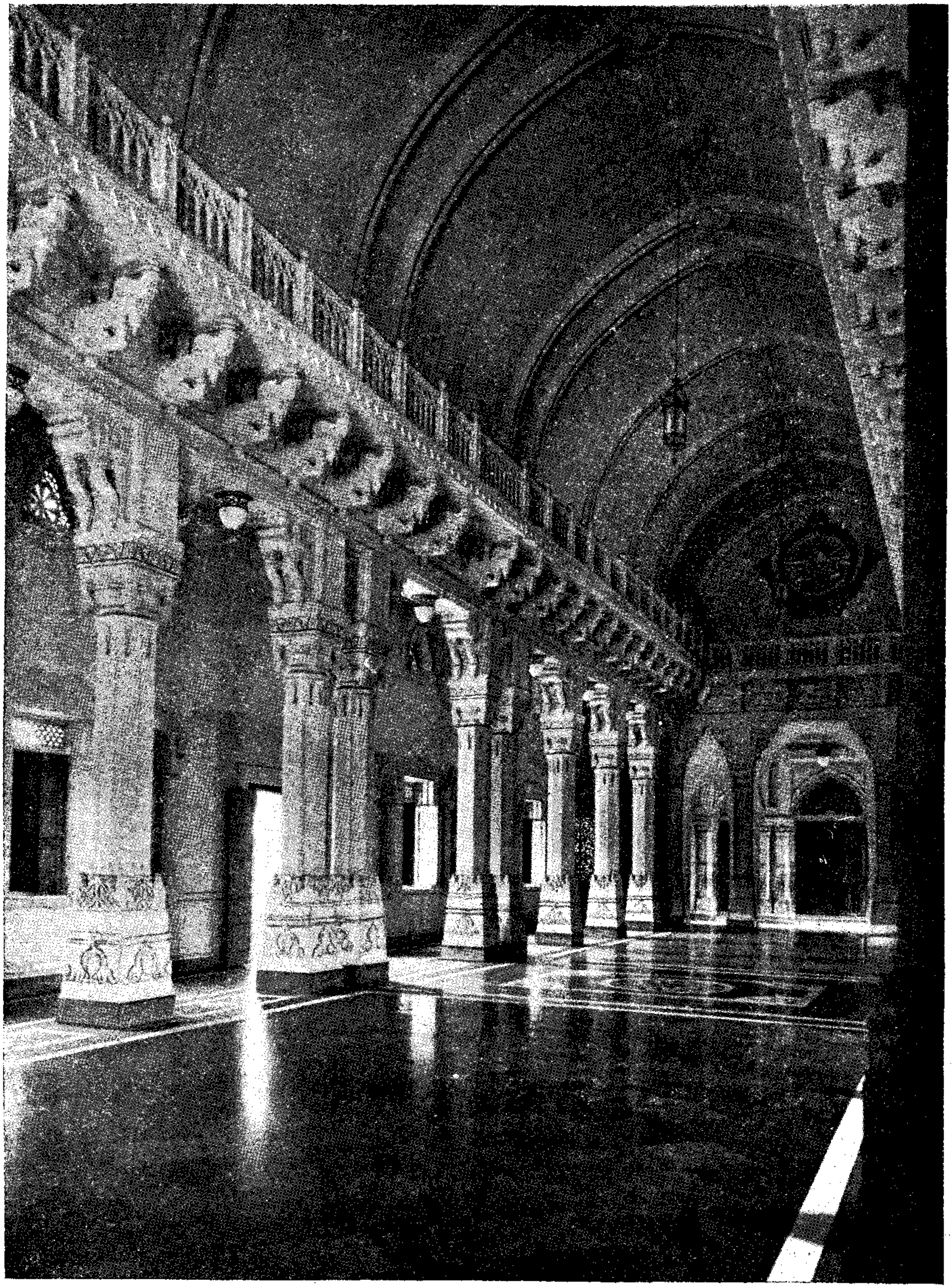
SIDE-VIEW FROM THE EAST

SHOWING THE SCALLOPED ARCH TYPE OF ARCHITECTURE, ALONG WITH LATE MEDIEVAL TEMPLE STYLES OF BENGAL AND RAJPUT STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE



ENTRANCE

SHOWING RAJPUT NAHABAT TYPE ABOVE, WITH ARCHES IN THE STYLE OF AJANTA, KONDANE, AND BHAJA CAVES BELOW, AND THE CREST OF 'SWAN ON LOTUS' SUPPORTED ON PILLARS FURTHER DOWN



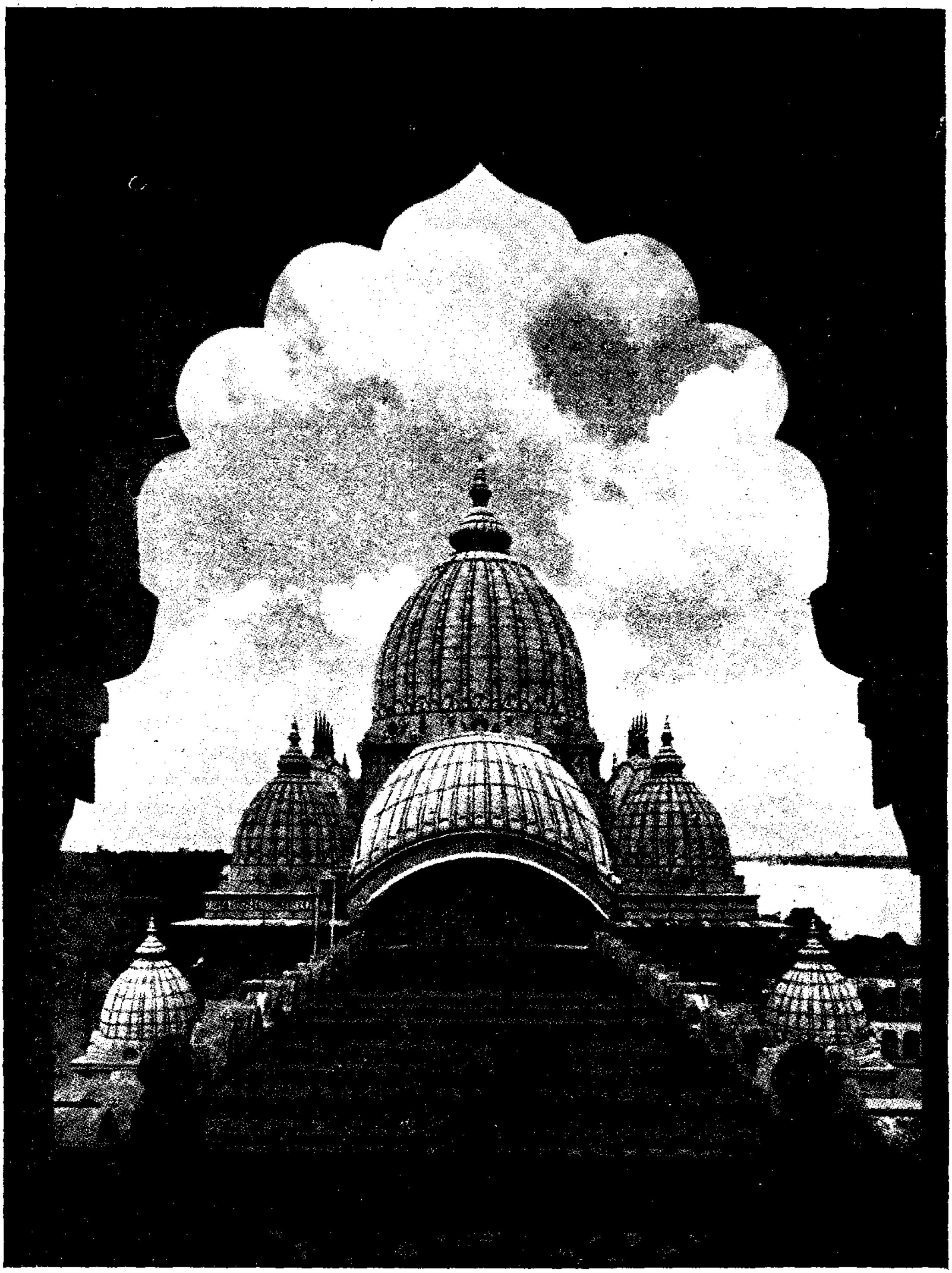
CENTRAL HALL WITH PILLARS

roof-line and alternating domes and pavilions surrounding the central elevated tower.

But against this, at the entrance, there is a large arch, supported by double pillars, which recalls a pattern we come across at Ajanta, modified to bring in an atmosphere of earlier Bharhut or Sanchi *torana* pattern by the coiled ends projecting from the pillar capitals as in the case of the *toraṇa* architraves. There is, at once, here a picture presented of the facade of the Western Indian cave type as, for instance, at Kondane and Nasik. It recalls the arch directly over the rectangular door-way and the larger arch of the open window above it in the Nasik Chaitya hall. The large open arch is indeed most effective in creating this impression. At the same time it also recalls somewhat the facade of the Chaitya hall cave XIX from Ajanta, showing the porch which is almost as it were compressed against the facade of this structure in such a manner that the impression of the portico is suggested, though it is lacking. It is also the elegance of this later Gupta work that suggests itself in this. The patterns worked on the arch above the double pillars are modern-looking and in the centre the emblem of the Ramakrishna Mission, showing the Swan and the Rising Sun, is beautifully arranged to occupy the entire place.

SIDE-VIEW OF THE MAIN SHRINE FROM THE EAST

While the general appearance, as one



SHIKHARA OR THE TOP

IN THE STYLE OF LATE MEDIEVAL TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE OF BENGAL

enters, is suggestive of the facade at Ajanta and other Western Indian Buddhist caves, the windows on either side and the door-ways with scalloped arch to the sides, as also the windows there, are suggestive of similar pattern in Moghul and Rajput palaces and recall Indo-Saracenic influences. The projecting balconies also suggest the same.

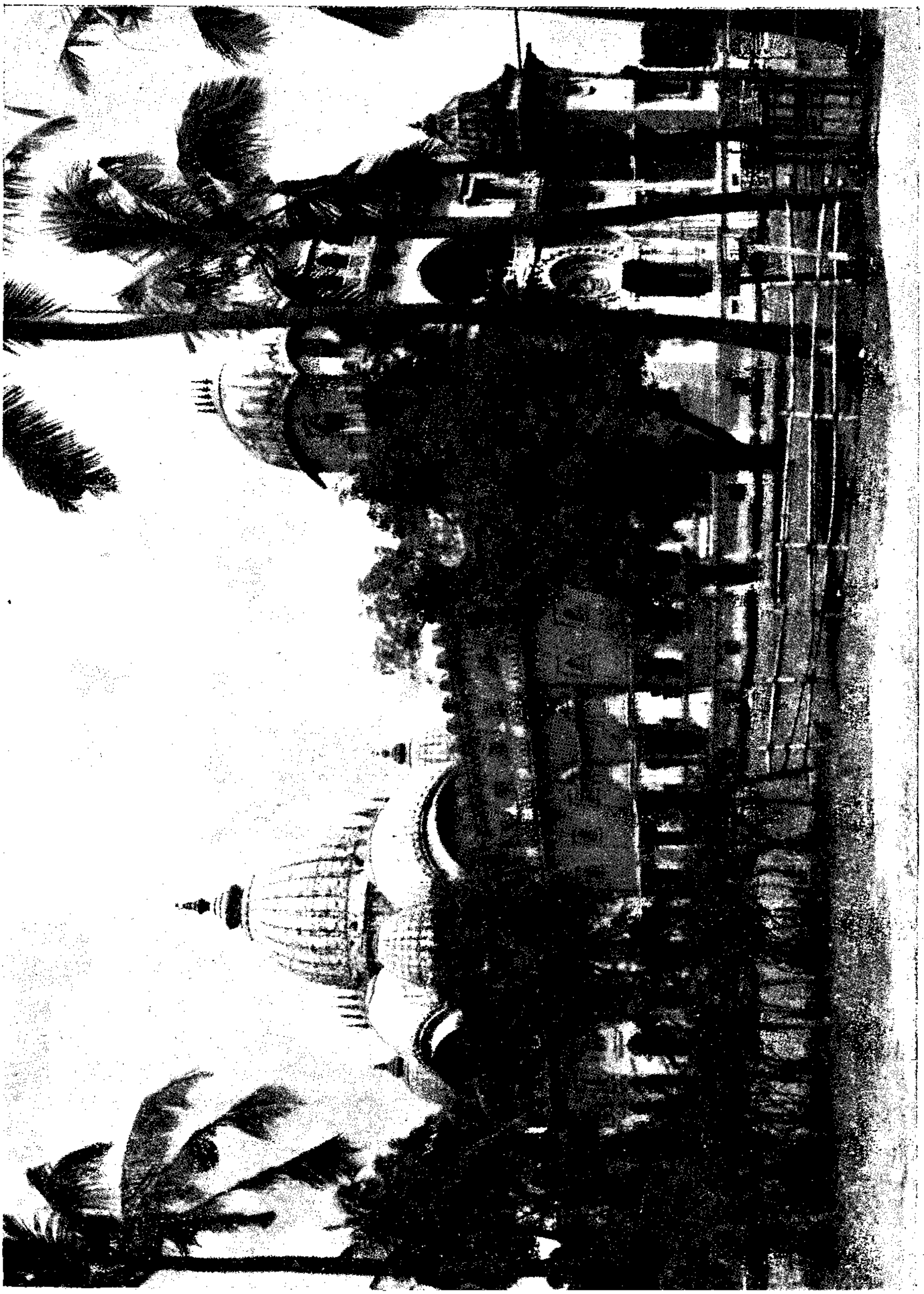
There is another point which strikes the visitor as he gazes at this entrance to the temple at Belur Math. The general appearance of the top has also something suggestive of the contour of the roof patterns in palaces from Rajputana, as at Jodhpur and Udaipur, though the curved roof-line is equally common in the case of temples in Bengal. Rajput style of work, as we see in some of the fifteenth or sixteenth century palaces, is at once suggested in the windows at the extremities on either side of the main entrance. The windows are rectangular in shape, with fine pilasters on either side, decorated with ornamented capitals supporting a canopy shade. These recall similar windows from the *kīrti-stambha* of Chitor in Mewar, so familiar in Rajasthan. There are ventilator type of windows, with lattice-work higher up, which are entirely different from the pattern below. In the case of the projecting balconies, the lattice-work pattern, though not entirely of the ancient type, has sufficient decorative charm to breathe an atmosphere of early-lotus pattern on rail. The three scalloped arches of miniature size in the central pavilion at the top are beautifully balanced over the large main arch down below. The four domes of the entrance block of this temple, the two side pavilions, and the three main pavilions on the top, are all exceedingly well matched.

The visitor, as he enters the interior of the hall, is struck by the long rows of pillars on either side and the long vaulted roof, which recall the interior of early Buddhist caves as at Karla and Kondane. Though the general appearance creates this effect, the pillars are definitely modern-looking and create a spirit of cheerfulness unlike the sombre rows of columns in those early caves. The windows on either side all along the hall light up the entire length which, with the beautifully polished floor with broad inlaid decorated pattern and the hanging balcony on either side, make the hall a very attractive adjunct to the main shrine which is situated beyond.

The suggestion caused by the vaulted roof in this building is only another of the many elements that contribute to create a picturesque effect on the mind by recalling the ancient splendour of early Indian architecture. Simulation of wooden structure, as seen in the carefully carved beam pattern and the pillars, worked with exuberance of ornamentation, still suggesting the wooden type in the cave at Karla, is absent in this cheerful hall where there is just a suggestion of the pattern without the heavy and oppressive atmosphere of the early caves.

The main shrine itself, unlike those of most temples in India, which have little or no light, is very well ventilated and as bright as any of the other parts of this building. In fact, the central shrine is the brightest here, even brighter than the long hall itself, unlike as in the cave temples just referred, where the most important *stūpa* towards the end is not particularly away from this row of pillars, but is just close to them within the curve of the *gajaprṣṭhākāra* shrine, which is only part of the hall itself, the farthest end of it.

The main shrine here is separate and independent beyond the long row of pillars and forms a structure by itself, an important one. The *pradakṣiṇavīthī* or the circumambulatory passage around the central shrine is equally attractive. The central shrine is 112 feet high and surmounted by a beautiful dome, and all the pavilions and domes surrounding it give a picturesque effect to the whole edifice. The small *ardhamaṇḍapa* that connects the main shrine and the long hall brings in a flood of light from both sides and reminds us of similar structures in early Chola monuments, with the entrance from the sides leading to the central shrine. Following the tradition of representing the Dikpālas and the Navagrahas all around the central shrine as in Orissan



PANORAMIC VIEW FROM THE WEST

temples,—a very common sight in Bhuvaneswar and Konarak,— such decoration has been introduced here, and all the planets are depicted and may be seen beyond the *pradakṣiṇavīthī*.

When one climbs up the topmost storey at the entrance and from the central pavilion there sees the *vimāna* group of the central shrine, one cannot fail to be impressed by the artistic effect this produces against the sky and the river flowing in the vicinity. The central dome, rising higher than the rest, and the four domes at the four corners, with a pavilion having curvilinear roof in between each pair of domes, together form a charming cluster of towers so characteristic of temples in Bengal.

The conception of this wonderful edifice we owe to the virile imagination of Swami Vivekananda, whose great desire was to see the relics of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa enshrined in it. On the bank of the Ganges, a shrine thus erected, for that noble God-filled soul, is bound to inspire generations of men and women in quest of peace. The elevation design of this building was prepared by Swami Vijnanananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, and blessed by the Holy Mother.

It was Swami Vivekananda's desire that this temple for Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa should embody features of the temple architecture of different creeds and religions so that everyone who came here to pray could feel at home and realize the great principle of universal brotherhood.

There have been modifications of the original plan in details, but the fundamentals have remained unchanged. Swami Vivekananda could not live to see his dream fulfilled and it took several years for the scheme again to come to the forefront. Due to the initiative of Swami Akhilananda[1] and the devotion and munificent help of two American devotees, the temple came into existence more than thirty-five years after Swami Vivekananda's demise. At a cost of several lakhs of rupees, it was possible to erect this lovely edifice, with grey Chunar stone facing, which is an ornament to the city of Calcutta.

It is a Hindu temple, in the main, as we see it. As we stand at the gate and as we enter the hall we have at once a feeling of ancient Buddhist cave temples. The windows and balconies, with several arches, recall the Rajput and Moghul style of architecture. The large hall, for congregational purpose, is, to a great extent, suggestive of a church. The domes and pavilions of the main shrine suggest the usual Hindu temple in Bengal.

On the 14th of January 1938, this great temple was duly consecrated. Swami Vijnanananda, the then President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, placed the relics at the foot of the altar. The place became a great scene of pilgrimage and as many as 50,000 joined in the celebration. A marble statue, representing Sri Ramakrishna seated on a lotus in most appropriate fashion, was prepared and installed on this spot. It has become one of the most inspiring figures for all devotees to come and visit and to carry a spark of the divine soul—whom many have not seen in flesh and blood, but can see in almost that form in this faithful representation of his in pure white marble, pure like his soul.

[1] The Swami has been carrying on Vedanta work in the United States of America for over a quarter of a century and is at present the Leader and Spiritual Head of the Vedanta Society of Providence and the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of Boston.

'To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions, was the mission of my Master. Other teachers have taught special religions which bear their names, but this great Teacher of the nineteenth century made no claim for himself. He left every religion undisturbed because he had realized that, in reality, they are all part and parcel of the One Eternal Religion.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

NEW HOPES

By Anirvan

In one of his recent books,* Bertrand Russell has surveyed the present world situation in his usual lucid, well-reasoned, and engaging style. Like the ancient Rationalists of India, he has followed the therapeutic method of practical philosophy: he has observed the symptoms of the illness, has diagnosed it, held out hopes for an ideal state of well-being, and suggested a method of cure. The parallelism of his thought with that of the old Rationalists is in some way striking enough to provoke a critical estimate of the values of the two systems. We may take Russell's view as representative of the Western mind's conception of the aim of existence and call his ideal world the neo-Rationalist's utopia, reflecting the dominating trend of Rational Realism in modern philosophy. Kapila, who is at the head of the Indian Rationalists had suggested no utopia and modern Realism might look upon him as an escapist. But he has also offered to humanity a way of thinking and a pattern of living which might be named Spiritual Realism to mark it from the Rational Realism of the West. Whether this brand of Realism is rational or irrational remains to be seen. We may concede that both Kapila and Russell are Realists in two spheres of philosophical living which might not after all contradict each other, although modern Realism is naturally suspicious of anything that smacks of the spiritual.

The neo-Rationalist's philosophy of life starts with an analysis of the conflicts in which human beings have always been involved. They are the conflicts of (1) man and nature, (2) man and man, and finally (3) man and himself. All conflicts in a sentient being are followed by a heroic struggle to overcome them and in case of a victory, may end in the emergence of a value of life higher than what it started with. The Sānkhyist took up the same problem, but described it in terms not of conflict but of pain. According to him, pain is a fact of life (which obviously results from a state of conflict), and its causes may lie (1) within one's own physical and mental self, (2) outside one's physical organism but still within the domain of living beings, or (3) in physical Nature beyond the control of human agencies and so providential in their working.

We find a close resemblance between the analysis of the problem in the two systems, but in the suggestion of a solution, they have not emphasized the same points, since their outlooks are fundamentally different. The objective method of removing the pain of conflict by apparent natural means, which is also the age-long collective method, has not been found sufficient for the purpose by the Sankhyist, although he does not deny its efficacy up to a certain point. There are three defects, he says, in the objective method: it does not provide a radical cure of pain, it cannot guarantee an independent source of happiness, and lastly, being confined to the mental plane, it leaves dormant the seeds of envy and hence of greed and unrest. And so he stands for the subjective method and prescribes the practice of critical discrimination and emotional detachment as the radical cure for all ills. Like the neo-Rationalist, he also speaks of fortitude as a prime virtue of the inner being, but unlike him, he changes its negative implication into a positive means of deepening and stabilizing the force of consciousness. The move is, of course, towards inwardization, which is, however, not a pleasant prospect to the extravert. But if pain is a phenomenon of consciousness, it is quite logical to seek for the means of its eradication in the principle of consciousness itself. If flowing in and flowing out are the two

* *New Hopes for a Changing World* (1951).

natural rhythms of the consciousness-force, one need not be afraid of losing the world by a little practice of conscious inwardization according to a perfectly rational and scientific method. On the coutrary, it will just bring in the desired balance between the inner and the outer life, the absence of which, in the long run, causes all the ills to which we are being subjected.

But the objective method still endures and will endure for all time as an expressiou of the natural impulsion of the creative forces. Its prestige has been enhanced by the labours of man during the last few centuries. Science has worked wonders and hopes to work more. It has met the challenge of Nature in many fields and put in man an unquenchable faith in his abilities. It has brought nearer to realization the prospect of One World knit in a comprehensive economic and political system. The scientific attitude of mind and its propagation through facile means of communication are going to stamp the whole world with a uniformity of culture. The spiritualist's dream of a brotherhood of humanity is going to be a tangible actuality in the near future. And, yet, within less than two generations, two world wars have been fought, and the nightmare of a third, even more drastic than its predecessors, is haunting the mind of civilized man. Evidently, everything has not been going well. Old Kapila might have the grim satisfaction of knowing that the solution of the positivist has not gone to the root of the problem and his own solution might still have some chance!

The whole of the civilized world, in spite of its splendid achievements, lives under a constant shadow of fear. Fear is there, because real unity has not been achieved; and unity cannot come unless there is a broadness of vision, a clarity of understanding, and a willingness to help and not to hinder. Though the superstitious fear of Nature is being dispelled by the spread of scientific knowledge, the social and moral causes of fear still persist. We are not afraid of Nature since we are learning her secrets; but we have not learnt the secrets of the cosmic life or probed the depths of the inner spirit. So, we are mortally afraid of our fellow beings because a blind rush for material acquisition has increased our greed and envy; and we are equally afraid of ourselves, because the uncontrolled lust of our nature is intensifying our sense of guilt. Civilization is morally and spiritually starving in the midst of material plenty and the prospect of a happy world is receding before the onset of aggressive nationalism.

The neo-Rationalist is perfectly right when he says that 'the real obstacles to world-wide social cohesion are in individual souls'. A happy world, constituted by a coalition of independent and yet freely co-operating units, cannot be built up unless there is a dominating influence of saue, tolerant, and intrinsically happy individuals. The whole problem then boils down to the training of the individual, keeping an eye to the development of those essential characteristics of his being which are in tune with the process of spontaneous expansiveness inherent in human consciousness.

The neo-Rationalist comes forward with a scheme of education beginning from childhood as a necessary prelude to the establishment of his utopia. The factors emphasized in it are: a congenial environment created by a happy and understanding family life, an attempt to cure 'provincialism in space and time' by iudicious teaching of history and internationalism, a creation of opportunity for the development of the artistic tendencies, and a careful guiding of the will towards some useful creative activity. The aim is to let life grow spontaneously. Spontaneity is the greatest virtue in children and we should trv to maintain and foster it by all means. 'The good life is a happy life. . . . The happy man can live the life of impulse like a child'. Indeed, all our hopes of the future lie in the preservation of this amiable virtue of spontaneity in all stages of life.

All trne. And yet we know, spontaneity is killed so soon in practical life. It is a fragile blossom that can hardly endure the rude blasts of life. The children are spontaneous only in an ideal surrounding we have been able to create for them. Suppose we have been able to

create for the adult world too an ideal surrounding by an accumulation and equitable distribution of material goods, a low birth-rate, a democratic or communistic pattern of government, a high grade of mental culture fostered by a scientific habit of mind, and enough leisure to enjoy all good things of life —all commendable Western values, serving as excellent materials for a Rationalist's utopia,—but are we sure we shall be able to retain 'the spontaneity, the expansiveness, and the joy in living' of a child? Can these virtues be sustained by a handling of the environmental forces alone without the aid of a cult of deliberate inwardization?

The spontaneity of a child may after all be a surface-value. To carry this spontaneity into the complexity of a grown-up life is not so easy as everyone may know from experience. Psychologically speaking, spontaneity is akin to simplicity and relaxation, and can hardly grow where complexity and tension prevail. A society built np only on the impulsive and acquisitive tendencies will not provide with an ideal surrounding for preserving spontaneity, even if we substitute co-operation for competition as its motive force. The reason is not far to seek. The world is growing fast and problems are multiplying. If we are determined to maintain progress on the impulsive side of life, we have to create a pull in the opposite direction to counterbalance the headlong rush of the natural propensities to avoid an inevitable crash. On the moral plane, to keep intact the full value of things that we have earned (*yoga-kṣema*), we have to supplant the Law of Desire by the Law of Sacrifice. Retracing a step further, we have even to cultivate the negative virtues of self-control and passivity, leading to the denudation of the field of consciousness, just to create a reserve of power within to absorb the shocks without. The serenity of comprehensive contemplation, which alone can disentangle complexities in the cognitive field, must be reflected on the active life also to relieve the tension created by the whirl of environmental forces. And to ensure this, we have to add another item to the Rationalist's scheme of education—that of the cult of intensive spirituality.

In the neo-Rationalist's utopia, spirituality, in its ordinary sense, hardly counts. There is no place for God there; but this need not be grudged. In India, where every system of philosophy is based upon some inner realization and prescribes an appropriate way of life, the concept of a Personal God was not found absolutely necessary for spiritual progress. If spirituality is not a dogma to be cherished, but an experience to be lived, it must be primarily subjective in character and must rest upon independent inner growth and expansion of consciousness. The Soul or Personality grows into the Universe and expands into an Impersonal Godhead—this has been the rationalistic formula of spiritual realization in India. The neo-Rationalist concedes to this in a manner when he asks the individual 'to open the windows of the ego as wide as possible', thinks that 'Plotinus was right in urging the contemplation of eternal things', and admires Spinoza who 'would have us live not in the minute, the day, the year, or the epoch but in eternity'. But presumably these will remain only as pious hopes unless a definite discipline is prescribed for the realization of the spiritual values.

Here the Spiritual Realism of the East can step in and fill up the gap left by the Rational Realism of the West. The individual must, of course, be the starting-point for creating a happy world and utmost emphasis laid on education in any scheme of social reconstruction. But broad-based education should develop the whole being of a man and not leave any part of it neglected. Rational Realism, being positivistic in character, will be occupied with physical, intellectual, aesthetic, and moral education of the individual. It will not be concerned with the problem of spiritual education and may hope that with the advancement of scientific rationalism, religion will die a natural death. But an antagonism between Faith and Reason is not inevitable. The religious instinct can be rationalized and the spiritual problem can be approached as

scientifically as any other problem. The Sankhyists did this and gave to the world a system of Spiritual Realism, supported by a detailed technique in the form of the Yogic cult. It has produced at least one of the world religions (Buddhism) which, with its trenchant rationalism and spiritual positivism, is perhaps going to lay the foundation of the universal science-religion of the future. The Sankhya doctrine of Subjectivism reduces all objective phenomena into psychic values and thence by a cathartic method reaches the Absolutism of the Pure Consciousness which 'looks on, sanctions, sustains, and enjoys' all Prakritic movements, controlling them by its sheer negative weight. It is just what is needed at the present juncture.

The problem of the world crisis has to be approached dispassionately without any rationalistic or spiritualistic bias. There is no question of shunning the responsibilities of the world. But then, if we have accepted and met the challenge of the outer Nature, we have equally to meet the demands of the inner Spirit. The mad rush of the collective consciousness, driven by unregenerate impulses, has to be checked. The Yogic method of comprehensive self-culture, which has stood the test of time and been scientifically formulated, should be made a necessary part of all educational programmes. The Spirit as Pure Consciousness and the psychic core of the being must be accepted as real realities and their secrets mastered just as those of the outer world. Spiritual Realism must be given as high a place as Rational Realism in the scheme of life unless we allow our new hopes for building a happy world to be belied by a wilful blindness to an integral vision of Reality.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA AND THE UNITY OF RELIGIONS

By C. T. K. Chari

Nothing is perhaps more familiar, in expositions of Ramakrishna Vedanta, than the statement that its message is the unity of all religions. But is the unity something obvious and easily intelligible? Is it one of the self-evident premises of Hindu religion? To those who have faced the dilemma of religion, so ably stated by Professor W. E. Hocking in his Hibbert Lectures,[1] the 'nnity' may be far from obvious, intelligible, or self-evident. The scandal of the particularity and multiplicity of faiths necessitates much earnest heart-searching and probing of bases. Every religion claims to be universal; but there seems to be no religion that is not heavily loaded with local idiom, mores, rituals, practices, and beliefs. Do not the 'World Religions' lack, in spite of their professions to the contrary, the global character that is so outstanding a feature of scientific research today? Many scholars, while accepting that science can and must transcend national boundaries and frontiers, have quietly assumed that the best that we can do, in the field of comparative stndies of religion, is to state the specific, distinctive, and historically unique features of faiths and leave them there. I make bold to say that Ramakrishna Vedanta, whatever else it may or may not do, cannot acqniesce in an irreducible plurality of religions.

One possible interpretation of Sri Ramakrishna's message of unity and harmony would be to urge that we need sympathy for a wide range of religious beliefs and practices. It is well known, of course, that Sri Ramakrishna had this exceptional sympathy for all manifes-

[1] *Living Religions and A World Faith* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1940).

tations of religion. A movement inspired by him must have the same catholicity or breadth of vision. But sympathetic toleration of a plethora of religious beliefs and practices will not, by itself, make for unity and harmony. Sri Ramakrishna's handling of his disciples shows that he was not always content to leave people worshipping just where he found them. He has so often been represented as the loyal and contented Hindu that we are apt to forget that he sometimes demanded radical transformations which may well dismay the progressive thinkers of today. One of his reported sayings is that 'the ancient rules and commands of our scriptures must be pruned of their accretions to make them suit modern times'.[2] Most of us know that Swami Vivekananda was capable of such unconventional utterances, but not all of us may know that the Master outran his disciples. How otherwise could he have made such disciples? Polite acceptance of diverse, even mutually inconsistent, religious beliefs and practices may mean that temperament and taste, in some crudely subjectivistic sense, decide the issue. There is no disputing tastes. *De gustibus non est disputandum.* No great faith will be prepared to rest its case here.

Wherein lies the strength of Ramakrishna Vedanta then? As I view the problem, *Sri Ramakrishna came to realize that his mystical experiences, supported by the profoundest traditions of his own religion, made him an heir to the mystical teaching of all other religions.* No exuberant sympathy for, or polite toleration of, a plurality of religions can pretend to be anything more than a feeble substitute for his powerful dialectic. 'The spiritually-minded', he declared, 'belong to a caste of their own beyond all social conventions'.[3] From his chief disciple and apostle to the West, we learn that the 'mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth. This is the real science of religion. As mathematics in every part of the world does not differ, so the mystics do not differ. They are all similarly constituted and similarly situated. Their experience is the same'.[4] Thus it is that 'No man is born to any religion; he has a religion in his soul'. Swamiji's intentional use of the analogy of scientific and mathematical knowledge is worth noticing; there is in it nothing of the evasiveness of scholars who gloss over differences by saying that religion is exquisite poetry, art, practical wisdom, and not a 'hollow scheme of scientific symbols'. Is mathematics, which is admittedly universal, a hollow scheme of symbols?

Only by raising religion to the mystical level, transplanting it to a new hinterland, broader streets, purer airs, and brighter skies, shall we discover, like Sri Ramakrishna, that religions can all be assimilated without converting one to the others. Whether any professed 'World Religion' decides to take this momentous step will naturally depend on how far it is prepared to honour its own mystics. That will be none too easy; for the mystics were frequently rebels, heretics, crusaders for righteousness; their lives were often at stake and their teachings were transmitted secretly, so great was the *odium theologicum.* If, and when, we realize that the true mystics all the world over constitute a brotherhood resting on too solid foundations to fear anything from censure or reproach, the need for an esperanto or eclectic religion, formed out of discrepant creeds, will never arise.

Why is myticism in any age never a merely local phenomenon? I submit that mystical experience is functioning on unique planes of awareness which transcend the deliverances of perception, reason, and history. Its 'incommunicability' has little or nothing in common with the blind immediacy of sensation or the privacy of mere emotion. The mystical Absolute cannot be exhausted by all the laws of determinateness, coherence, and intelligibility recognized in metaphysics. The metaphysical Absolute found one of its most persuasive

[2] *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1949), Saying 254.

[3] *Ibid.*, Saying 321.

[4] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Mayavati Memorial Edition, 1921), Vol. VI, 'Notes of Class-talks and Lectures', p. 47.

exponents in Hegel. 'The Absolute', he wrote[5] 'is the universal and one idea, which, by an act of "judgment", particularizes itself to the system of specific ideas, which after all are constrained by their nature to come back to the one idea wherein their truth lies'. The recognition of the mystical Absolute, on the other hand,[6] issues in a dialectic of supreme negation. The Absolute is the 'Wholly Other' (*das ganz Andere*). That which transcends every law of determinateness and intelligibility that our intellect is capable of formulating can be honoured only by the most perfect ignorance which despises all knowledge and by the most perfect silence which regards every assertion as false. As in two of my previous articles published in the *Prabuddha Bharata*,[7] I shall endeavour, by sampling the literature, to establish the consensus among mystics.

Sri Ramakrishna used a deceptively simple language of parables. 'Man thinks he knows all about God. An ant went to a mount of sugar. A small particle of sugar satisfied its hunger. It carried home another particle in its mouth. On the way, it thought, "Next time I will carry away the whole mountain". Such, alas, are the thoughts of small minds. They know not that God is beyond the reach of mind and thought. However great one may be, how shall one comprehend God fully?' The parable is worth comparing with the lofty approach of Plotinus. 'For of whatever you speak, you speak of a certain thing. But of that which is beyond all things, and which is beyond even most venerable intellect, it is alone true to assert that it has not any other name [than the ineffable]. . . Properly speaking, however, there is no name of it, because nothing can be asserted of it'.[8] The *Theologia Germanica*,[9] of unknown authorship, says: 'The things which are in part can be apprehended, known, and expressed; but the Perfect cannot be apprehended, known, or expressed by any creature as creature. Therefore we do not give a name to the Perfect, for it is none of these. The creature as creature cannot know nor apprehend it, name nor conceive it'. Angelus Silesius asked,

> Think'st thou in temporal speech God's Name may uttered be?
> It is unspeakable to all eternity.[10]

Jacopone da Todi testified:

> No longer the soul doth seek
> Power to tell and to speak,
> Transformed so utterly.[11]

Dante found that 'There (in the union of the human and the divine) we shall see what we hold by faith, not demonstrated, but intuitively known like the first truths a man believes'.[12] 'In the Kingdom of God', Sri Ramakrishna taught, 'reason, intellect, and learning are of no avail. There the dumb speak, the blind see, and the deaf hear'.[13] Again, *'Parā-Vidyā*, higher knowledge, is that whereby we know God. All else, scriptures, philosophy, logic, or grammar, as such, only hinder and puzzle the mind. The *granthas* (books) are sometimes *granthis* (knots)'.[14]

Sri Ramakrishna, through his mystical experiences, rediscovered the Truth—beyond all truths—enshrined in the sacred utterance or the *Mahā-Vākya* of the Vedanta 'That Thou art' (*Tat tvam asi*). The metaphysician would detain us with his obstinate query. What is the Truth so asserted? Identity without Difference,

[5] *The Logic of Hegel* (tr. Wallace. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1892), p. 353.

[6] See E. Récéjac's contrast between the two Absolutes in his *Essay on the Bases of the Mystic Knowledge* (tr. Sara Carr Upton. Kegan Paul, London, 1899), pp. 38-40, p. 4, pp. 61-64.

[7] January and February, 1952.

[8] *Enneads*, V. 3, 13. Cf. *Select Works of Plotinus* (tr. Thomas Taylor. Bell, London, 1909), p. 280.

[9] Tr. Susanna Winkworth ('Golden Treasury Series', Macmillan, London, 1913), p. 2.

[10] *The Spiritual Maxims of Angelus Silesius* (tr. Henry Bett. Published by C. H. Kelley, London, 1914), p. 34.

[11] *Lauda*, XCI. Cf. Evelyn Underhill. *Mysticism* (Methuen, London, 1910), pp. 477, 479.

[12] *Paradiso*, II. 43-46.

> Lì si vedrà ciò che tenem per fede,
> non dimostrato, ma fia per sè noto,
> a guisa del ver primo, che l'uom crede.

[13] *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Saying 144.

[14] *Ibid.*, Saying 160.

Difference without Identity, or Identity in Difference? But are 'Identity', 'Difference', and 'Identity in Difference' 'assertable' at all in this domain? If they are not, how can we construct a metaphysical ontology according to the familiar principles of exclusion and alternation? Gautama Buddha's great lesson has been set down in the words: 'Whoever perceives in truth and wisdom how things originate, in his eyes there is no "It is not" in the world. Whoever perceives in truth and wisdom how things pass away in the world, in his eyes there is no "It is" in this world'.[15] Or, in the matchless language of Dante: 'Not for His own greater good—to the Good can no good be added—but that His Splendour, in its reflected resplendence, might have the power to say I AM, within His own Eternity, beyond all time and understanding, after His own pleasure, in new loves did He, Eternal Love, unfold Himself'.[16] The *Mahā-Vākya* defies any or all of the conditions we may choose to impose on 'assertability'. We sometimes ask in perplexity: Shankara *or* Ramanuja? Sri Ramakrishna answered with emphasis and certainty, verily Shankara, verily Ramanuja.[17] The mystical experience of union with the Godhead can never be tamed into a metaphysical dogma or 'school'. 'For the book in which all mysteries lie', Jacob Böhme[18] said, 'is man himself; he himself is the book of the Being of all beings; seeing he is the similitude of God; the great *Arcanum* lieth *in* him, the revealing of it belongeth only unto God's spirit'. 'There is another principle of the soul', Jamblichus[19] pronounced, 'which is snperior to all nature and generation, and through it we are capable of . . . transcending the mundane order, and participating in eternal life . . .' Jalālū'ddin Rūmi sang,

> I shall become that which entereth not
> the imagination.
> Then let me become naught, naught.[20]

Eckhart exhorted: 'Thou shalt apprehend God without image, without semblance, and without means—But for me to know God thus, without means, I must be very he, he very me'.[21] The 'spark' in the soul ranks higher than every other mode. 'This spark is God' (*Diess Fünkelein, das ist Gott*). 'God in the depths of us', Ruysbroeck averred, 'receives God who comes to ns; it is God contemplating God, God in whom dwell healing and peace'.[22]

In Ramakrishna Vedanta, the highest negative or 'apophatic' theology and the highest positive or 'cataphatic' theology interpret each other. So they do in all profound mysticism. What appears to be the poorest of all abstractions has, nevertheless, an inexhaustible content. As Lao Tzu observed, 'though the Tâo as it comes from the mouth seems insipid and has no flavour, though it seems not worth being looked at or listened to, the use of it is inexhaustible'.[23] Speaking for the mystical theologians of the Eastern Orthodox Church, V. Lossky, the son of the distinguished Russian philosopher N. O. Lossky, has written: 'Even the highest theophany, the perfect manifestation of God in the world through the incarnation of the Word, retains for ns its apophatic character'. God's unknowability does not land us in agnosticism; rather does it call for a 'contemplative theology leading the spirit to realities which are above

[15] H. Oldenberg: *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order* (tr. W. Hay. Williams & Norgate, London, 1882), p. 249.

[16] *Paradiso*, XXIX. 13-19.

> Non per avere a sè di bene acquisto
> ch'esser non può,ma perchè suo splendore
> potesse, risplendendo, dir *Subsisto*,
> in sua eternita di tempo fore,
> fuor d'ogni altro comprender, come i
> piacque,
> s'aperse in nuovi amori l'eterno amore.

[17] *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Saying 479.

[18] *Epistles* (1649), IX. 3.

[19] *On the mysteries*, Section VIII, Ch. 7 (tr. Thomas Taylor. Dobell, London, 1895), p. 309.

[20] Cf. F. Hadland Davis: *The Persian Mystics* ('Wisdom of the East Series', John Murray, London).

[21] Tr. C. de B. Evans in *The Porch* (John M. Watkins, London), Vol. II, No. 2 (September 1914), p. 51.

[22] *Selected Works of John Ruysbroeck* (tr. 'C.E.S.', from the French, 1912. John M. Watkins, London), p. 48.

[23] *Taô Teh King*. 'Sacred Books of the East' (ed. Max Muller, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1879), Vol. XXXIX, p. 77.

reason',[24] Need we wonder if the 'religion of absorption in the Divine' and the 'religion of grace' form a 'mystical unity of opposites' towering above all logical laws of identity, contradiction, and exclnded middle? 'Discnssions or arguments about God', Sri Ramakrishna pointed out, 'continue so long as realization is not attained . . . The bee buzzes until it lights in the heart of the flower. It becomes qniet as soon as it begins to sip the honey'. The Spanish poet-mystic, San Juan de la Cruz, fonnd that, even during the 'Dark Night of the Soul' (*Noche Oscura del Alma*), his cares were laid aside among the 'forgotten lilies'. 'I was still and I forgot; I bowed my face upon my Love; all ceased and I was lost; losing my cares among the lilies forgotten'.[25] The caresses of the Divine Mother made Sri Ramakrishna's excrnciating bodily pain appear utterly unreal to him. He wonld not pray to be rid of the pain.

Elsewhere[26] I have nrged that the 'non-assertion' of the mystic, in so far as it is a stumbling-block to the proudly self-satisfied philosophic or scientific intellect, invites comparison with the much-misnnderstood 'Existentialism' of the great Dane, Sören Kierkegaard. Sri Ramakrishna was aware of the paradox that he, a man nnlettered and nnversed in the subtleties of science, logic, and philosophy, snrpassed in wisdom the pundits who came to try their strength with him; the awareness made him very hnmble. It is Kierkegaard's paradox of one and the same stream which is too deep for an elephant to swim, bnt which allows a sheep to wade across safely—in itself the greatest contradiction for the sophisticated intellect, as the great Dane remarked. 'Thns it is really terrible to have anything to do with God who neither can nor will give one direct certainty or a logical relationship'. [27] 'For God is a spirit. One can have only a spiritnal relationship to a spirit and a spiritual relationship is *eo ipso* dialectical'.[28] Ramakrishna Vedanta knows this snbtlest dialectic of all: the dialectic of life and death, of salvation; the call to humility, the rennnciation of the pride of the intellect, the slaying of passions, the dying to oneself, the world, and everything except God (Pascal's *'oubli du monde et du tout hormis dieu'*). Who indeed can say that he has succeeded in this supreme enterprise of 'becoming naked' as Kierkegaard called it? Kabir confessed:

'Tell me, Brother, how can I renounce Maya?
When I gave np tying of ribbons, still I tied
my garments abont me;
When I gave up tying garments, still I
covered myself in its fold'.[29]

To Sri Ramakrishna we owe a re-interpretation of the *Gita* ideal of *loka-Samgraha* which, in its rich spiritual significance, is comparable to the untranslatable *sobornost* of Rnssian mysticism. *Sobornost,* as interpreted by A. Khomiakov (1804-1860), a layman with no theological training who yet proved to be one of the most original theologians of the Eastern Church,[30] signifies a 'togetherness' achieved under the guidance of the Divine Light, a unification, without coercion, of all in man and of all men, the overcoming of intellectnal and other bonndaries, barriers, separations between them. Khomiakov maintained that the True Church needs no external guarantee of its orthodoxy and authority. Its Members, united in Love, are immune to all discords and 'heresies'. 'Faith and Love', Sri Ramakrishna taught, 'are the greatest treasnres of life. God is easily attained through love'. Love, yes; bnt not self-centred absorption. Love,

[24] See the citations from V. Lossky's *Essai sur la theologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* in N. O. Lossky's *History of Russian Philosophy* (International Universities Press, New York, 1951), p. 396.

[25] Quedéme, y olvidéme,
El rostro recliné, sobre el Amado,
Cesó todo, y dejéme
Dejando mi cuidado
Entre las azucenas olvidado

[26] *The Vedanta Kesari,* May and June, 1952.

[27] *The Journals of Kierkegaard* (tr. and ed. Alexander Dru. Oxford University Press, 1938), entry 1102.

[28] *Ibid.,* entry 763.

[29] *One Hundred Poems of Kabir.* Tagore's translation.

[30] See Nocolas Zernov: *Three Russian Prophets* (Student Christian Movement Press Ltd., London, 1944), especially pp. 61 f.

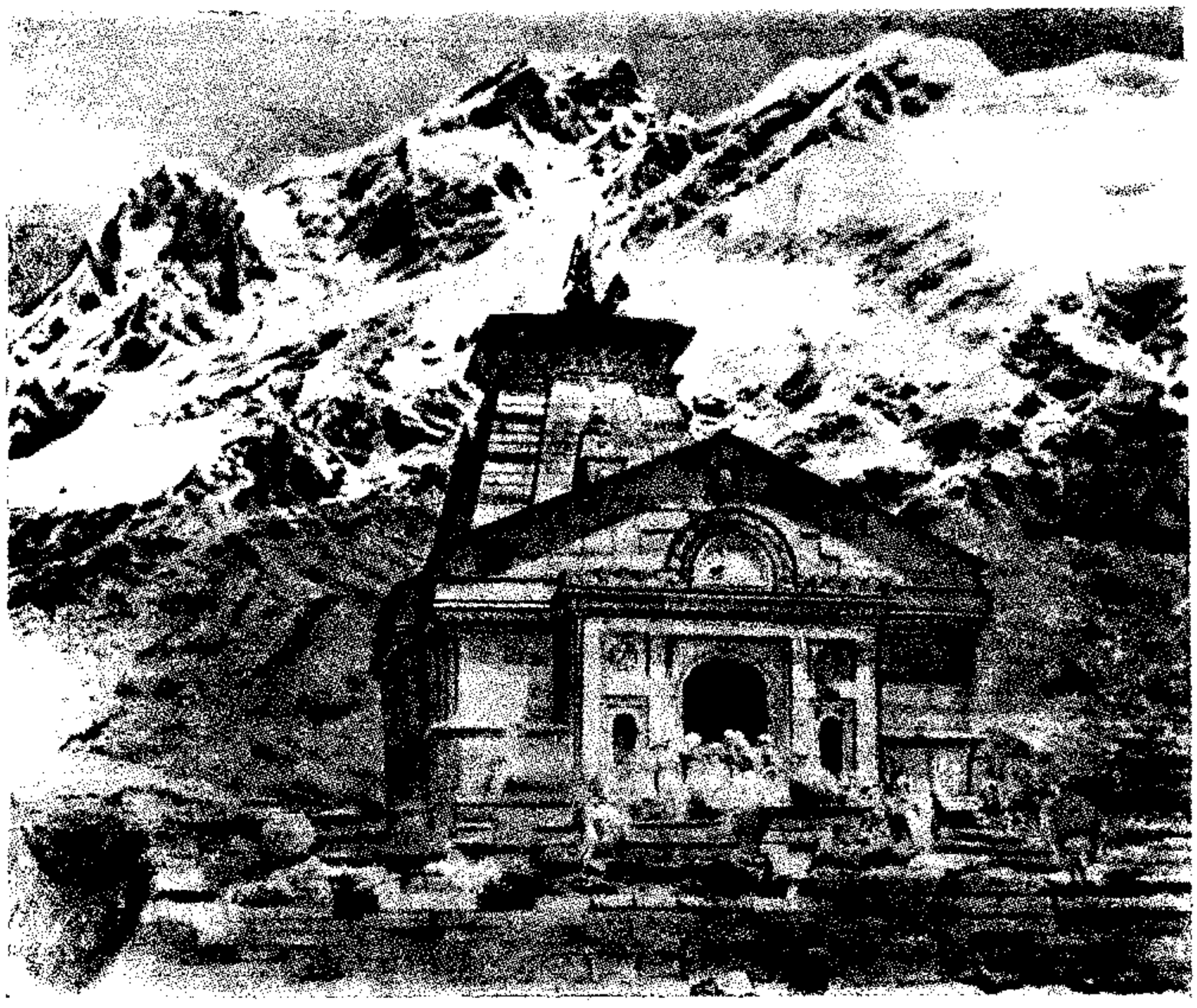
yes, for the 'spark' that dwells in all men and women, even the most reviled. Said the Master: 'The Vijñāni, who gains an intimate knowledge of Him, has his consciousness further extended. . . . First he realizes, "All is not, God *is*". Next he realizes, "All is God".'

Mystical religion, more easily than any other religion, can follow the 'Way of Reconception' recommended by Professor Hocking in his Hibbert Lectures. It can widen its speculative bases to include all that it finds valid in other religions, and infinitely more, as it functions at successively higher levels. The Russian philosopher Yuri Samarin said apropos of the dogma of the infallibility of the Church: 'Nothing that is *visible* in the Church is in itself *infallible* and nothing that is *infallible* in the Church can be *visibly* detected'. We all know that, to the orthodox Hindu, the Vedas are eternal. Ramakrishna Vedanta reminds the Hindu believer of the amplitude of his faith. Nothing that is narrowly, dogmatically, and exclusively interpreted is eternal and nothing that is eternal can be so interpreted.

A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

By Swami Apurvananda

The mighty peaks of the hoary Himalayas have always been an awe-inspiring riddle to adventurous mountaineers, many of whom have risked and even lost their lives in attempting to climb them. These mountains have boldly stood upright for ages, defying, as it were, the assaults of insignificant mortals. Apart from their austere and inaccessible heights, the Himalayas possess an irresistible charm and a regal majesty of their own. From time immemorial travellers and pilgrims from far and near have been attracted to the Himalayas, fascinated by their beauty, sublimity, and grandeur. The snowy peaks, the scenic beauty arising out of a combination of evergreen forests, murmuring streams, swift-flowing rapids, and the play of sunlight over hill and dale, and also the peaceful calm and the spiritual atmosphere—all these have invested the mighty and mysterious



TEMPLE OF KEDAR

JAMUNOTRI

Himalayas with an inexpressible and unforgettable enchantment that has stirred the interest and imagination alike of saints and scholars, of poets and artists, and of climbers and travellers.

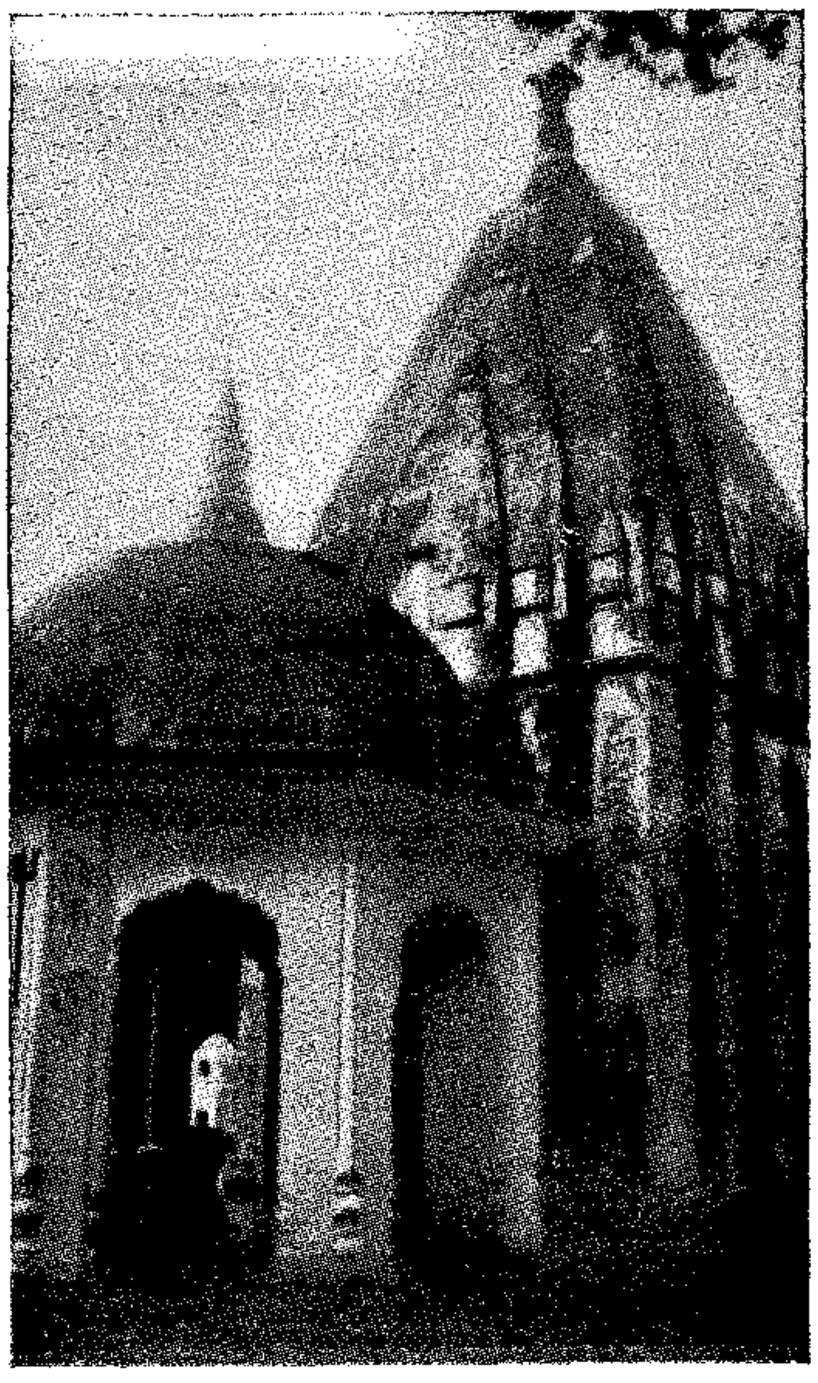
To the devout spiritual aspirant, the Himalayas possess, in addition to everything else, yet another and stronger appeal. Many sacred places and holy shrines of pilgrimage lie scattered throughout the Himalayas. Some of these are situated at high altitudes, far away from the plains, and remain buried in snow for the greater part of the year. Pilgrims, in large numbers, visit these sacred shrines every year during the warm season, when the snow melts and the weather remains favourable for the long and arduous journey to and from these well-nigh inaccessible regions.

It was my long-cherished desire to visit some of these sacred shrines and holy places in the interior of the Himalayas. Many a time I made plans in my mind towards this end. But as it often happens in life, circumstances do not always make it convenient for us to fulfil our desires even within a reasonable time after they arise in the heart. My plans to visit the important places of pilgrimage in the Himalayas did not, therefore, materialize till at long last I resolutely set out on the journey. I then travelled on foot far and wide into the interior of the Himalayas, covering over seven hundred miles of narrow and circuitous mountain-paths, sometimes climbing up to an altitude of over 16,000 feet above sea level and sometimes negotiating the most perilous ascents and descents on snow even in torrential monsoon rains. Carrying my personal luggage myself, and tramping and trudging incessantly for over two and a half months, I visited several places scattered over the Himalayan ranges, the most notable of which were Kedarnath, Badrinarayan, Satopanth, Gangotri temple and Gomukhi (the source of the river Ganges), and Jamunotri (the source of the river Jamuna). It was a most remarkable experience, indescribable in words, and the joy I derived was beyond measure.

This travelogue will cover in brief my visit to Kedarnath, Badrinarayan, and Satopanth (which is situated in the Satopanth glacier, towards what is known as Swargārohan or 'the way of ascent to heaven'). We were, in all, four in our party, including myself. The others were: a Sannyasin—who will be referred to as 'Mahatma' in this article, and two persons, Jaman Singh and Rupdev by name, belonging to the Kumaon[1] hills. All the three were well known to me.

GANGES STRUGGLING DOWN

[1] Kumaon (or Kurmāchal) consists of the hills falling within the present-day districts of Almora, Naini Tal, and Garhwal.



OLD DEVI TEMPLE AT NARAYAN KOTI
(On the way to Badri)

The Start

We started on our pilgrimage from Hardwar. At Rishikesh we two Sadhus managed to obtain the permit-ticket from Baba Kalikambliwala Charity Trust office for receiving free doles of food-stuff from their Sadāvrata Chatras (or distributing centres) situated at several places on the main pilgrim routes in the Himalayas. Such tickets are issued during the pilgrim season to a select number of *bona fide* Sadhus going on pilgrimage. It was from Dehra Dun that we had actually to commence walking and our first destination was Jamunotri, the source of the river Jamuna, situated at an altitude of over 9,900 feet above sea level. We had to proceed via Mussoorie. Though many persons advised me to carry a 'hill-stick'[2], as is the practice with many a hill-climber, I did not do so; and, as I discovered later, I was not wrong, for I felt not the least inconvenience by not carrying a stick. On the other hand, I may say from personal experience that such a stick is not very helpful, after all. Native dwellers of montane country never carry such hill-sticks even though they journey constantly on foot over the hills. In negotiating hazardous ascents and descents, it is always advisable to keep both hands free.

Arriving at Jamunotri, we spent a whole day and night there. The cold was severe and the temperature at night fell to freezing-point. After taking a dip in the icy cold holy waters at the very source of the river Jamuna, we visited the temple of Jamunotri. Thence we started for our next destination—Gangotri and Gomukhi, via Uttarakashi.[3] Tradition has it that the great Shankaracharya had the temple of Gangotri built (10,000 feet above sea level) and himself installed therein the image of the Ganges. Gomukhi (about 14,000 feet), the actual source of the Ganges, is nearly eighteen miles above Gangotri. The experience of biting cold at Gomukhi, where we had to spend a night in the open, was a nerve-racking one. I took a dip in the waters of the Ganges, at its very source. It was as it were a 'death-plunge', for the whole surface of the water was covered by thick layers of huge masses of snow. Even now, after so many years, the very thought of this causes an exciting thrill in my body and

ENTRANCE OF BADRI TEMPLE

[2] Long stout stick, often iron-shod, like the alpenstock, used as a help in climbing up or down hills.

[3] A well-known place in the hills of the Garhwal district, where many Sadhus stay and practise Tapasya.

mind and at the same time I feel as if the blood had frozen in my veins!

Down below Gangotri, it was a grand sight to see the waters of the Ganges—surging, foaming, and rushing fast down steep gorges. No wonder that the Ganges is held to be sacred, coursing along its bed untiringly, for the thousands of years, from its Himalayan abode to the sea, gathering volume from many a tributary on its long journey.

BADRI FROM A DISTANCE

It was the twenty-fifth day of our journey. During this period we had covered a distance of two hundred and seventy-three miles. Though physically exhausted, as was but natural, we felt spiritually much elevated. No strain or difficulty could daunt us any more. We could understand intuitively that some unseen Power was guiding us safely through the journey and would continue to do so till the end. Were we not saved from certain death on so many occasions? Who protected us at snow-covered Gomukhi, where we had to spend the night in the open, in severe cold, with additional hardship when it started raining at midnight? We were in no doubt about the answer, and our hearts were filled with joy inexpressible.

Wild Bear and Blind Pilgrim

Leaving the main road running from Gangotri to Uttarakashi at a place called Bhatwari, we took the road to Kedarnath, our next place of pilgrimage. At this point we had to cross the Ganges over a rickety temporary bridge, some fifty feet long. As I cast a last lingering look at the old road we were leaving behind and went over to the other side of the river, it started raining. The road we were now taking —it was really no road at all but a rough beaten

DEVAPRAYAG

path—was in a very bad condition, being narrow, broken at places, and strewn with stones and boulders. In pouring rain we continued to make our way up the hill. Very few persons use this road, especially during the monsoon season, for, most of the pilgrims bound for Kedarnath and Badrinarayan take the main pilgrim route straight from Rishikesh. The normal pilgrimage season begins about the last week of April and ends before the monsoon starts. But we could not avoid the monsoon months for various reasons.

After two hours of such strenuous walk, struggling against many odds, we reached Saura Chati. There were a few shops here. It was for the first time in our present pilgrimage that we came across a Chati.[4] Chatis are generally better and more comfortable than the public Dharmashalas, too often neglected and in disrepair. After resting awhile, in a shop, we started off again, without any idea of our next halting-place. The track began to grow more and more narrow as we proceeded, and thicker jungles than before were seen to surround us. It became well-nigh impossible to hold our umbrellas open even though it was raining. The path seemed gradually to melt away in the midst of a very dense forest. And what an innumerable number of big, long leeches! They attacked us in such great numbers that to get rid of them completely became an impossible task. The feet bled profusely at those places from where the leeches had fallen off of their own accord, after having sucked their full share of our blood.

Gradually we began to proceed through one of the most unfrequented stretches of the track. The forest around was very dense and no human habitation was visible as far as the eyes could see. All of a sudden the deep frightful growl of a bear resounded through the woods. Surprised and greatly frightened, we were at a loss to know how to get to safety. As there was no place of shelter near-by, all fonr of us huddled together and stood close to one another. Jaman Singh, one of our Pahādi companions, said to me, 'Swamiji, it is not safe to keep standing in one place like this. Let us be on the move. We are four of us and even if the beast were to attack us I shall fight against it. So long as I am not killed, you are safe'. The two Pahādis led the way, and we followed, all keeping a vigilant watch around. We could hear, as we moved fast ahead, the sound of the breaking of twigs and branches of trees and the peculiar shrill cry of wild bears, perhaps indicating they were now fighting amongst themselves.

Another hour of laborious walk brought us to a place of safety, where, to our great relief, we came across a solitary road-side shop. We rested here for a time and took some refreshments. The shopkeeper informed us that our path further on lay through a thick forest infested by wild animals, including man-eating tigers and leopards. In any case we had to go ahead. As we were preparing to leave the place, a piteous cry of a man shouting for help, 'Save me save me, if there is any one near-by!' reached our ears. All were taken aback. 'The man may have been attacked by some wild animal', said the shopkeeper. He at once took up his axe and we too got ready with sticks. Immediately we rushed towards the place from where the man's cry came. We had not to go far when we met two men—a blind old man and a boy aged abont fourteen, sitting in the jungle and crying. Hearing us approach, the blind man began to cry more piteously. On enquiry we learnt that they were father and son, belonging to the State of Bihar, on a pilgrimage tour of the Himalayas. They had been to Gangotri and from there were carrying the sacred waters of the Ganges for worshipping the deity at Kedarnath, whither they were now slowly proceeding. We helped the blind old

[4] 'Chati' is a cluster of small cottages, with shops attached, where pilgrims are offered free accommodation and supplied with utensils for cooking, if required, by the shopkeepers (who also own the cottages), on the understanding that the pilgrims will buy all their provisions and other needs from the respective shops. It is needless to add that the clever shopkeepers do not fail to strike a favourable bargain in selling provisions to the pilgrims, in return for the free accommodation they provide.

man to reach the shop. Both he and his son were shivering due to severe cold and blood oozed out profusely from their feet, where leeches had sucked them.

The blind man's life-story was indeed pathetic. He related to us how, betrayed by his third wife, through whom he had several children—the youngest of them being only three year old—and thoroughly broken-hearted, he had decided to leave home and go on pilgrimage to Kedarnath, in order to atone for the sins of his erring wife. Leaving at home his other children—his third son accompanying him on the pilgrimage—and all his property, he started from home two months back, obtaining his food and other minimum needs by begging all the way. He had lost his eyesight four years before, as a result of a severe attack of smallpox. We were deeply moved by the man's woeful condition and made him feel comfortable in the shop for the night. Before leaving we gave the old man as much monetary help as we could in our own circumstances—beggars as we, too, were.

From the shopkeeper at the previous halting-place we had learned that after another three miles of ascent we would come upon a Dharmashala at a place called Chhuna. We wished to push on as quickly as possible. So we proceeded on our way, even though it was drizzling. The strong determination of the blind old man, notwithstanding his many handicaps and physical disabilities, gave us fresh impetus to brave all difficulties. Before dusk we sighted a lone cottage in the midst of the forest. This was the Dharmashala we were expecting to reach and it became our place of shelter for that night. On arrival we fouud in the Dharmashala five pilgrims who had already come there before us. In fact, three of them had come there three days before and could not proceed, as they had fallen ill. They were very weak and helpless in that out-of-the-way place. We had been carrying with us a small chest of common medicines and first aid equipment. From the symptoms two of them appeared to be suffering from fever and the third from dysentery. We gave them the necessary medicines from our stock. The following morning we found, to our great relief, that all three patients were better. Here I may mention that our stock of medicines helped a great many pilgrims throughout our journey,—a matter of no small satisfaction to us.

Incessant rain made the grim solitude of the night in the dense forest appear all the more grim. Seeing that rain was continuing even the next morning, our Mahatma said, with a smile, 'So today we shall have a day of long-expected rest. Even wild animals would not think of leaving their shelter in such heavy rain'. Saying this he relaxed himself more comfortably in his bed. All of us were really tired and physically pulled down, too. The eyes had sunk in, and we looked like skeletons. We pitied one another. Nevertheless, for myself I thought that we should keep ourselves ready to start off again, in case the rain stopped. The long road had no mercy! We knew we could have no real rest till we had completed the remaining four hundred and odd miles of our journey, and during the coming weeks of severe trial not only our strength of body and mind but also our faith in God would be put to the test. We finished our morning meal by nine o'clock. To our great astonishment, and to the utter disappointment of Mahatma, the sky gradually cleared.

We went to take leave of the sick pilgrims, before resuming our journey. With tear-filled eyes, they begged us not to leave. It was very touching. For a moment it occurred to me,—why not abandon our pursuit of Kedarnath and stay on, instead, by the bed-side of these sick Narayanas, the living embodiments of God! But the attraction of great Kedarnath was irresistible and dragged us on. After giving the patients some more medicines, we left the place. Our intention was to reach a place called Jhala, thirteen miles away. *En route* there was a very steep ascent of about three miles. Four miles from Jhala was the well-known place—Budā Kedar.

(*To be continued*)

"PERSPECTIVE"

By Manu Subedar

The most remarkable thing in human life is the factor of time and space in so far as they affect the views or the feelings of a man on any event or any subject. A quarrel of two drunks in the street below assumes more importance than extensive damage by an earthquake, a tornado, or a flood in distant parts of the country or the world. Events, which were considered very important, fade into insignificance over a passage of time. Problems, which appeared insuperable at one time, become ridiculous when one is reminded of them later in life. Incidents, which occurred during journeys in foreign countries, whether they were pleasant or unpleasant, fade from memory, though at the time when they occurred, they appeared to be all-absorbing. Early hobbies, which engaged one's whole time, become meaningless in later years.

This is called perspective. In other words, this is the problem of values put on circumstances, persons, and things. Even in entirely worldly affairs these values change, but the major change is seen when the mind of a man is aroused on spiritual topics. Here again, a man may be reading the *Gita* as a boy, and as a youth later, and again in his middle age. He may have gone over the same line hundreds of times, but some day, suddenly, the full meaning rises in his mind like the reflection of the sun in a grain of sand on the seashore. The idea comes sharply, not because it is a new idea but because of life-long experience on the part of the seeker, which has prepared his mind so to say for receiving new truths, new harmony, and new meaning in proper co-relation with the facts of life.

In the Indian system of spiritual learning, the gradation has been so carefully and so precisely defined that one must acknowledge the profonnd knowledge of psychology and of human behaviour which the authors of the Shāstras generally, and more specifically of the *Bhagavad Gita,* had.

Until a man begins to see for himself that his values can change, and have changed in the past, he seldom makes any progress. He tries to ascertain the reason of this. We then stumble on the more positive teaching which says that man is not merely a bundle of flesh and bones. He is not even the holder of a mind which reacts, favourably or unfavourably, on things, persons, and events. He is not a bundle of desires, playing with realization or his own frustration.

Behind the body, the mind, and the intelligence, is his real self, which, when roused, makes him part of the more lasting and permanent nniversal Self.

Old devotees have constantly sung that life is fragile, and that death may overtake one any moment, and that nothing from this world can be taken. Saints and great teachers have therefore emphasized the need for a man to turn, as frequently as he can, inwards, towards God. When the cosmic feeling is once aronsed, the perspective with regard to all worldly things definitely alters. The nearest that ordinary mortals can get to this is when they have miscalculated, or when natural disasters, death, or any other event beyond our control and power occnr. Some of them, then, turn around and recognize that there is such a thing as destiny. Who has not seen the tremendous interest which a man takes in a game of chance? Who has not seen his expectation,—when there is a prize of lottery, or any other sudden goodluck coming to him? Often without understanding the process, man craves and hopes for big things in life; but he is too indolent and ignorant to try and go to the root of how and why things are, as they are.

Many in India have the tradition of and entertain spiritual beliefs, which others, with superiority complex, regard as mere superstition. Knowledge can come only to those who are willing to receive it and who are prepared to absorb it. When it comes, the values change. In wordly affairs, a currency note is not a piece of paper, and a diamond is not jnst a shining stone. In Indian spiritual teaching, we are instructed to analyse onr own tendencies, inclinations, and acts. We become our own masters. The part of us which thus questions and supervises is the more real part, when there is more frequent (and later habitual) reference to one's higher Self. Many likes and dislikes, gains and losses, praise and censure then appear different and unimportant.

To receive higher knowledge (and to feel it), the ground has to be prepared. Preparation takes the form of eschewing all worldly things and particularly desisting from harmful and antisocial activities; that is to say, a separation and elimination of Tamas. To check greed and desire and other sentiments that impel one to rash and evil acts is difficult, and is a matter of discipline; but many people, after some experience, good or bad, begin to do this automatically. When Tamas is reduced or eliminated, the other two, namely, Rajas and Sattva, automatically increase.

The next stage is more difficult. Men pursue their worldly activity with all their zest, and when they are told that such activity is futile and actnally harmful, they cannot adjust themselves to this position easily.

Even as there are physical changes from birth, as age increases, and there are mental changes and the mind grows after observation and experience and can do complex thinking, so there are changes in the general attitude of a man and in his spiritual growth.

The locomotive, the motor-car, the radio, and the aeroplane cause astonishment. But when the principle on which they work is known, the nnderstanding and the familiarity ease the mind. Similarly new truths dawn on the understanding of the genuine seeker and new values arise and he makes progress towards the condition in which all problems are solved and all doubts are removed. The mystery of existence ceases to be a mystery. It is a long journey in many stages and at each halting point, the vista is grand. There is satisfaction that much has been left behind. On the other hand, there is always still a great distance to be covered. The only difference is that it is easier than in the very initial period.

THE TANTRIC CULTS

I. SHĀKTA TANTRA

By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

'He who has not understood Tantra Śāstra has not understood what "Hinduism" is as it exists today'. Thus observes Sir John woodroffe, that pioneer in disabusing the modern sophisticated mind of erroneous notions about the Tantras. It was not only prejudiced propagandists of the West but also English educated Indians that believed, not long ago, that the Tantra was 'lust, mummery, and black magic', replete with 'silly and vulgar superstition'. And it required the leadership of a high-placed foreigner to set the philosophy of the Tantras in its proper light so that, instead of scoffing at it, the knowing minds may appreciate and honour it.

The Tantras constitute the scripture of

what are known as the Āgamas. It is a disputed question whether or not the Āgamas are to be traced to a source other than the Vedas. The orthodox view is that they are founded on the Vedas and that there is no divergence of doctrine as between Veda and Āgama. In the *Kulārṇava Tantra,* Śiva addresses Pārvatī and says that Kula-dharma, namely, the religious philosophy of the Tantras, is based on and inspired by the Truth of Veda: *Tasmāt Vedātmakam śāstram viddhi Kaulātmakam priye.* It is also believed that the four main classes of scripture, viz. Veda, Smṛti, Purāṇa, aud Āgama, are designed respectively for the four ages, or Yugas, Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali. The special scripture for the age we live in, then, would appear to be Āgama or Tantra.

Tantra, by definition, is that scripture by which knowledge is spread. The *Kāmikā Āgama* says that the Tantra is so called because it expounds the meanings of *tattva* and *mantra,* and saves man from bondage:

Tanoti vipulān-arthān tattva-mantra-samanvitān,
Trāṇam ca kurute yasmāt tantram-ity-abhidhīyate.

Popularly, Tantra is identified with the Śākta cult; but, in fact, it is much wider, and governs all the segments of Hinduism. Much of the temple and household ritual of the Hindus is Tāntrika in spirit and form. While there are restrictions about Vedic ritual as regards caste, etc. the Tantras are thrown open to all castes and both sexes. In the words of the *Gautamīya Tantra*:

Sarva-varṇādhikāraś-ca nārīṇām yogya eva ca.

The Tantra ritual is to be found not only in India but elsewhere also. Three divisions or Krāntas of Bhāratavarṣa are spoken of, viz. Viṣṇu-krānta, Ratha-krāuta, and Aśva-krānta, each having sixty-four Tantras to its credit. According to one account, the land east of the Vindhya Hills, extending up to Java, is Viṣṇu-krānta. The country north of the Vindhyas, including Mahā-Chīna, is Ratha-krānta. And, the rest of the country westward is Aśva-krānta. Again, on the principle of the principal deity worshipped, the Tantras fall into five groups, viz. Śākta, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, and Gāṇapatya. Besides these, there are also Bauddha and other Tantras. The object of all Tantra is to liberate the individual soul from its binding fetters.

Of all the religio-philosophical schools, the Śākta has, probably, suffered the worst on account of misunderstanding and malpractice. If only one went to the Śākta Tantras with a view to understanding them, one would notice that the principles taught therein are all sound and unexceptionable. Śākta-darśana is the philosophy of Divine Power. Its standpoint is that of non-dualism, similar to the one which has been made familiar through the works of Achārya Śankara. Reality, according to it, is non-dual (*advaita*); it is of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss (*saccidānanda*). It is *nirguṇa* in the sense that there are no distinctions in it. Nothing is real apart from it. All things are identical with it. The world of plurality is a mauifestation of the non-dual reality which is called Brahman in Vedanta. The principle of manifestation is Māyā. The one main doctrinal difference between Śānkara-Advaita and Śākta-darśana is that while for the former Māyā is a principle of illusion veiling the real Brahman and projecting the non-real world, for the latter it is a real Śakti really manifesting itself in the form of the variegated universe. In this respect, Śaktism and Kashmir Śaivism are one. According to both, ultimate Reality is Śiva-Śakti, Consciousness-Power. Śiva is the static aspect of consciousness, while Śakti is the kinetic aspect. This is pictorially represeuted in the Śākta Tantras by the figure of five corpse-like Śivas supporting the throne of the World-Mother, set in the wish-granting groves of the Isle of Gems (Maṇidvīpa) the golden sands of which are laved bv the still waters of the Ocean of Immortality (*amṛta*). Stasis and kinesis are both required for creation, maintenance, and withdrawal of the world. Śakti

has two aspects: *vidyā* or *cit-śakti,* and *avidyā* or *māyā-śakti. Cit-śakti* is of the nature of illumination or consciousness (*prakāśa*) and is the basis of the entire creation. *Māyā-śakti* is the same consciousness veiling itself; it is the potency of becoming, the seed of evolution (*vimarśa*). It is through Māyā, then, that the One becomes the Many, the Infinite finitizes itself, the world of Mind, Life, and Matter evolves out of the supreme Spirit. The evolution, however, does not exhaust the nature of Śiva, who is not only of the form of the universe (*viśvamaya*) but is also transcendent (*viśvottīrṇa*).

Although for both Śaivism and Śaktism the ultimate Reality is Śiva-Śakti, the Śaiva worships Śiva as the predominant principle and the Śākta adores Śakti as the dominant factor. It is a fascinating and beautiful concept that the Śāktas hold—the concept of the Motherhood of God. The modern world is so much male-dominated that a shift of emphasis to the other side will do it a lot of good. In Śākta-darśana, the woman, especially woman as Mother, has the first place of hononr. The worship of women and girls forms an important part of Śākta Sādhana. The Śākta Tantras prohibit all harm to women, such as the *satī* rite. Even female animals, according to them, should not be sacrificed. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* prescribes a whole day's fast to the man who speaks rudely to his wife, and enjoins the education of daughters before their marriage. The Muslim anthor of the *Dabistan* says, 'The Āgama favours both sexes equally. Men and women equally compose mankind. This sect hold women in great esteem and call them Śaktis, and to ill-treat a Śakti—that is, a woman—is a crime'.

The emphasis laid on the Mother-principle has made a Western critic characterize Śaktism as 'a doctrine for suffragette Monists: the dogma nnsnpported by any evidence that the female principle antedates and includes the male principle, and that this female principle is snpreme Divinity'. It reqnires no great effort to show what a gross misrepresentation such a criticism of the Śākta doctrine is. Because Śakti is the productive principle it is regarded as 'female' only symbolically. For purposes of worship the Śākta invests the ultimate reality with the female form. In truth, however, that reality is no more female than male. As a Tāntrika text puts it:

Neyam yoṣit na ca pumān na ṣaṇḍo na jaḍah smṛtah;

'This is neither woman nor man, nor what is neuter nor what is unconscious'. A hymn in the *Mahākāla Samhitā* addresses Śakti thus: 'Thou art neither girl, nor maid, nor old. Indeed thou art neither female, nor male, nor neuter. Thou art inconceivable, immeasurable power, the Being of all which exists, void of all duality, the Supreme Brahman, attainable in illumination alone'.

Śākta Tantra—like all Tantra—is preeminently a *sādhanā-śāstra,* i.e. a teaching about the practical ways one should adopt in order to reach the human goal which is *mokṣa* or liberation. The conception of the goal in Śaktism is the same as that in Advaita-Vedānta, viz. the realization of the non-duality of the supreme Spirit. But since in Śaktism the process of the One becoming the Many is real, the return of the Many into the One involves ceaseless activity; whereas in Advaita-Vedānta the becoming is illusory and what is required for realization is true knowledge alone. The Śākta beholds divine power everywhere — even in things and functions that are ordinarily held to be despicable and low. He does not shun Nature and run away from her. On the contrary, he seeks to rise throngh and by means of Nature. If one bears this in mind, one would see sense even in the so-called 'left-handed' practices, which are really not left-handed' at all but only 'left' (*viparīta*) in the sense that they are designed to help the Sādhaka in the 'reverse process' towards the goal. It is the 'outgoing' process that has taken the Jīva away from its true nature as Siva. The purpose of Sādhana is to put it on the return current which will enable it to recover the 'veiled' and 'lost' identity. The main principle of the Sādhana consists in

rousing the coiled power (*kuṇḍalinī śakti*) in the Jīva and making it ascend and reach union with Śiva.

Souls are classified into three grades: *paśu, vīra,* and *divya. Paśu* is the Jīva in bondage. Through Sādhana it has to rise to the higher grades of *vīra,* the heroic, and *divya,* the divine. In other words, the Jīva should overcome its animal dispositions and become completely divine in nature. Starting its journey as a *tāmasika* soul, it becomes in turn *rājasika* and *sāttvika.* The paths are also graded in accordance with the competency of the Sādhakas. According to the *Kulārṇava Tantra,* there are seven Āchāras in sequence, viz. *Veda, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Dakṣiṇa, Vāma, Siddhānta,* and *Kaula.* The first three are for the *paśu-jīva*; the next two are for the *vīra;* and the last two are for the *divya.* The first three Āchāras stand respectively for Vedic ritual or *karma,* devotion or *bhakti,* and knowledge or *jñāna.* In the fourth Āchāra, which is *Dakṣiṇa,* the results gained earlier are conserved and consolidated. So far it is only a process of going forth. Then commences the 'return current' or *vāmācāra.* It is this which is wrongly referred to as the 'left-handed' way. A certain aspect of *vāmācāra,* which involves the use of wine and woman, has brought down the name of Tantra itself. The *pañca-tattva* ritual, as it is called, consists in offering to the deity five things. As the Sanskrit names of these things begin with 'M', the ritual is also known as *pañca-makāra-pūjā.* The five things are; wine, meat, fish, grain, and woman. There are three ways in which this ritual may be performed — each subsequent being superior to the earlier one. The significance of the first method is the sublimation of even the most ordinary functions of life such as eating, drinking, and mating. The principle here is: 'By that one must rise by which one falls'. The second mode of the *pañca-tattva* is substitutional in character. Here, 'meat', for instance, means 'ginger', and 'wine' means 'cocoanut water'. It is these substitutes that are offered, and not the original elements. The *pañca-tattva* in the esoteric sense refers to the use of no outside material at all; it stands for certain Yogic practices. For example, *gomāmsa-bhakṣaṇa* does not mean 'beef-eating' here, but putting the tongue at the root of the throat. It is true that the ritual in the first sense has been misemployed by those who are ineligible therefor. But for that the *Śāstra* is not to blame. It is clearly laid down that the *pañca-tattva* is for the *vīra,* and not for either the *paśu* or the *divya.* The *paśu* is not equal to it; the *divya* does not require it. It is *rājasika sādhanā,* fit only for the *vīra.* He has to consecrate what are usually regarded as impure and repulsive substances and functions and learn to look upon them as manifestations of Divinity. The *vīrabhāva* or heroic disposition is not the final stage. Nor is the material offering of the *pañca-tattva* essential for progress in Tantra Sādhana. The last two stages in the Tāntrika discipline complete the process of making the Jiva divine. What is called *siddhānta-ācāra* consists in arriving at a final position after reflecting upon the relative merits of the path of enjoyment and that of renunciation. And, in the final stage, which is *kaula,* the Sādhaka pursues the path of renunciation to its conclusion and realizes Brahman which is termed *kula* in the Śākta system. All through the course of spiritual discipline, i.e. till the attainment of the goal, insistence is laid, in the Tantras, on the need for a Guru. Initiation or *dīkṣā* by a Guru is quite essential. The human Guru is a veritable manifestation on earth of the Divine Preceptor who is Śiva-Śakti.

The ritual worship of the Tāntrikas has several phases, ranging from gross physical forms to subtle mental modes. There is an elaborate technique, each part of which has a deep significance. The Sādhaka starts with outer worship or *bāhya-pūjā* and goes deeper gradually through chanting of hymns (*stava*), muttering of Mantras (*pūjā*), and meditation (*dhyāna*), until he attains the nature of non-duality (*advaita-bhāva*). At first, images are used in worship, and later,

objects with no definite shape, such as the Śiva-linga and Śālagrāma. The advanced worshipper contemplates the Deity in the lines and curves of a *yantra* and in the sound or series of sounds constituting a *mantra*. Complicated is the technique which the Sādhaka adopts in the worship of his chosen Deity. He first purifies his body which is composed of five elements. This is called *bhūta-śuddhi*. Then he performs what is known as *nyāsa*, which means touching the various parts of the body with the tips of the fingers and palm of the right hand, accompanied by the appropriate *mantra*. He invokes the presence of the Deity in the image by 'enlivening' it through the *prāṇapratiṣṭhā* rite. He makes gestures with his hands which are indicative of the different intentions and wishes of the worshipper. These gestures are called Mudras. The end af all these various ritual performances is to purify the mind of the Sādhaka and lead him to the realization of the non-dual Ātman.

The Śākta discipline is fasciuating and powerful. One has to be on one's guard while practising it. The expressed words may sometimes mislead. One must get behind them and catch their spirit. For example, there is a verse in a hymn to Kāli called the *Karpūrādi Stotra* which says that the Devi delights to receive in sacrifice the flesh, with bones and hair, of goat, buffalo, cat, sheep, camel, and of man. The inner meaning of this statement is that the Sādhaka should offer to Her his lust, anger, greed, stupidity, envy, pride, and infatuation with worldly things. In short, he has to offer himself to the Deity and merge his ego in Her. As the *Gandharva Tantra* puts it, he has to realize the identity of Jīva with Brahman: *Aikyam sambhāvayet dhīmān jīvasya Brahmaṇopi ca.*

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM

By Dr. Manindranath Sarkar

The Ramakrishna Mission has opened a Sanatorium, for the treatment of patients afflicted with tubercular affections of the lungs, at Dungri, situated about ten miles from Ranchi. The Sanatorium is connected by an all-weather road (constructed and maintained by the Sanatorium) with the trunk-road, running from Ranchi to Chaibassa, near about the eighth milepost.

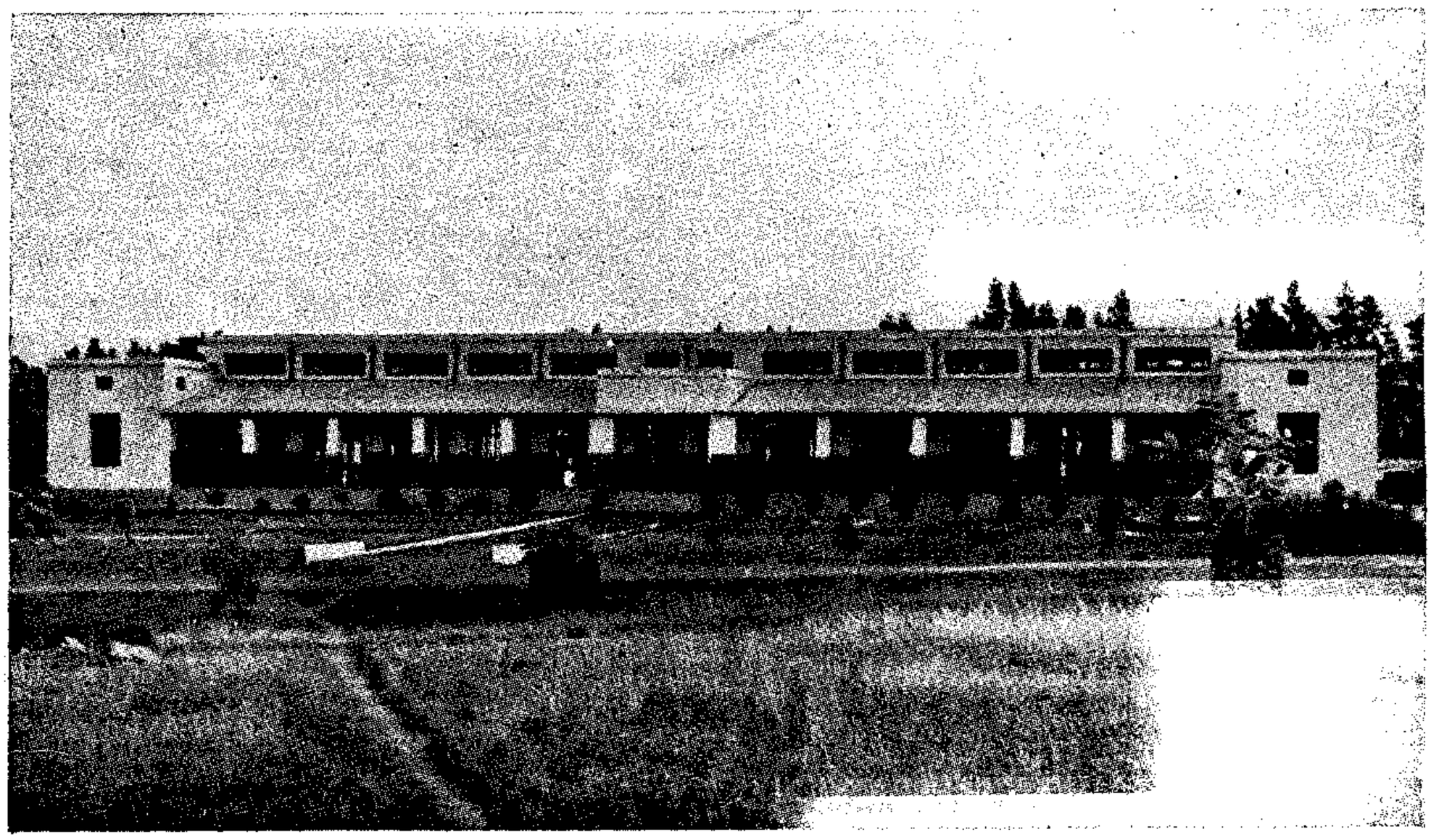
The country around the Sanatorium is typical of the Chota Nagpur plateau, with sal trees and undulating land. The soil is mainly rocky. There is sufficient superficial earthy crust to allow the growth of vegetation. The weather is generally dry. The rainfall is not adequate for the maintenance of sufficient subterranean water to feed wells throughout the year even when deeply sunk.

The Ramakrishna Mission came by the estate—over 250 acres in all—as far back as in the year 1939. Beyond clearing the native jungle of sal trees, just sufficient to build up temporary shelters for the monks, and procuring bricks for the future construction of buildings, nothing more could be done during the period of the world war and till 1948. The military used the grounds for artillery practice till 1945. When the military left the place, the monks started preliminary work on the construction of buildings. The jungles had to be guarded in order to prevent poaching of timber. Even up to the year 1949 the place looked no better than a jungle, with a few country-tiled houses with whitewashed walls. Since 1950 the change has been remarkably rapid. Having had the occasion to

visit the place frequently, at intervals of six months, one gets the impression that perhaps the 'Aladdin's lamp' of the story-book is active here.

As one takes a turn to the left, proceeding from Ranchi along the main Ranchi-Chaibassa road, one is led to the Sanatorium by a well surfaced road of about a mile and a half long. There is a road-barrier at this stage, where one stops. Then, taking a turn to the left, one reaches the humble lodgings of the monks. There are garages here to house the Sanatorium truck, car, and ambulance. This little group of houses has its own well for water. There is a large kitchen garden, worked and supervised by one of the monks, with the help of labour procured from the surrounding villages. The produce is abundant and of remarkably good quality. There is the potentiality of this garden supplying vegetables throughout the year. But there are two main difficulties to be removed. One is the inadequate supply of water during the dry months of the year and the other, perhaps more important than the former, is the want of money to pay the labour necessary to raise the crops. The Sanatorium authorities propose to maintain a dairy in time to come. They are already experimenting with a scheme to grow Napier grass for fodder and pine trees as a shelter against high winds. Their experiment has been successful. They look forward to the time when the results of these and other experiments will be put to practical application for the benefit of the Sanatorium.

With a view to ensuring self-sufficient milk supply, they are keeping a few milch cows, some of which are being looked after by professional milkmen from whom the milk is bought. I saw a pair of goats, of good breed, with a kid. The she-goat was yielding three seers of milk daily. The authorities will be well advised to keep a number of such goats in order to get more milk.



A GENERAL WARD

Coming back to the road-barrier, one now gets within the Sanatorium grounds proper. On the right is a decent bungalow, with all modern conveniences, including electricity. The bungalow is used, for the time being, as a guest-house.

As one proceeds along the road of even surface, one comes upon another house on the right. The Sanatorium Post Office is located in this building, and a general stores shop,

meant for the convenience of the Sanatorium inmates, will soon be located here. This will enable the inmates to purchase provisions and articles for everyday use. Ranchi town is ten miles away and there is no regular or convenient public transport between Ranchi and the Sanatorium. The stores will be conducted on a co-operative basis. The Sanatorium authorities have a plan to build, later on, a colony for the settlement of the cured ex-patients in the neighbouring area. When this comes into being, both the Post Office and the co-operative stores will be well utilized.

run by humanitarian organizations like the Ramakrishna Mission, can hope to start their work with assured financial help. They have to grow by stages from small beginnings. Similar has been the case with this Sanatorium, too. The buildings have been built with first-class materials. The rooms are spacious, and the verandas and windows have been built according to standard specifications, following similar institutions in the West.

The laboratory and an improvised surgical theatre have been located in one of the cottages. Though the space here is inadeqnate

INSIDE VIEW OF A GENERAL WARD

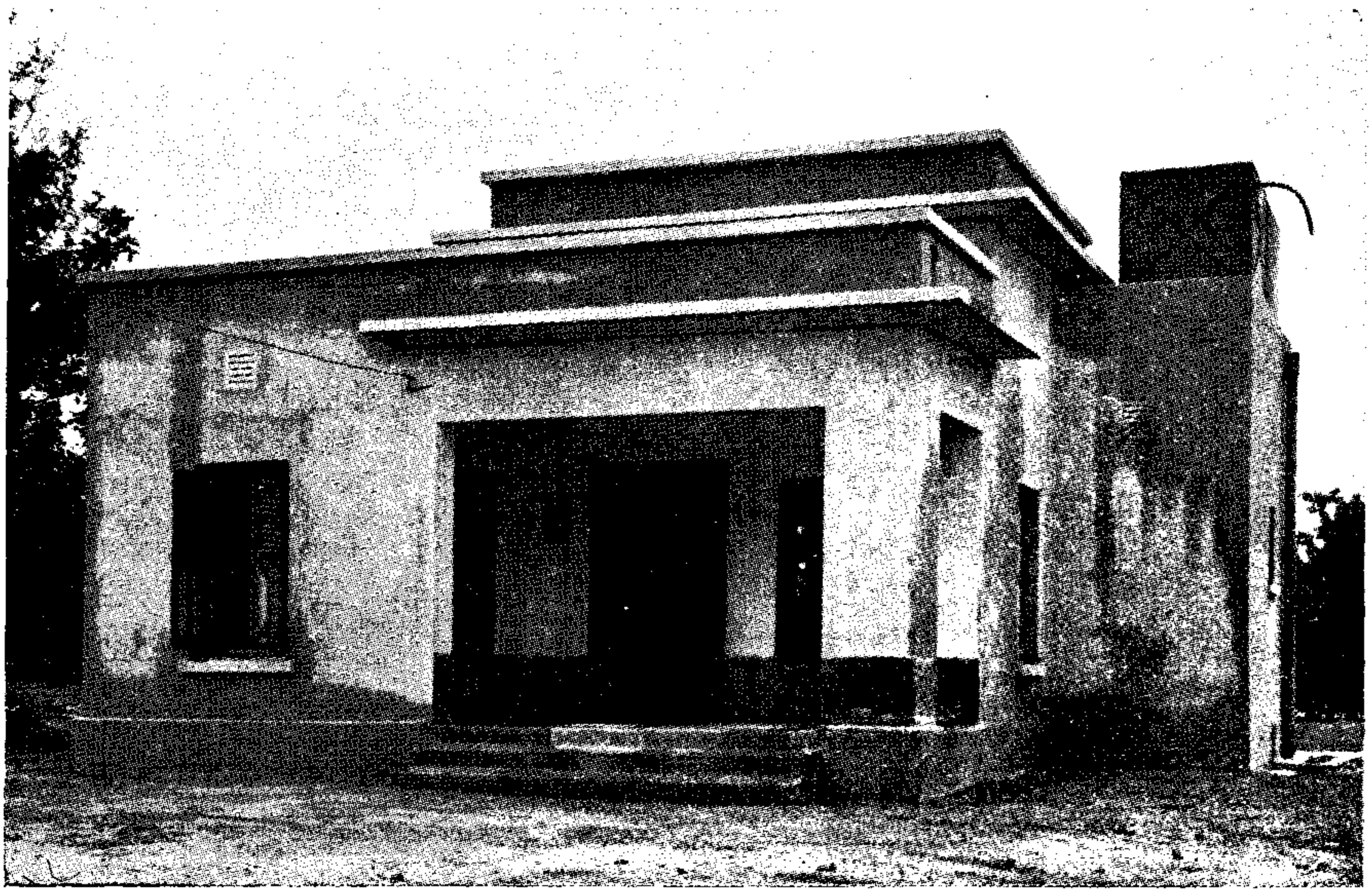
The same road, followed further, leads one on to other more prominent buildings, viz. the administrative offices, the doctor's quarters, the laboratory, the kitchen, some cottages to the left, and then the general wards and the special wards. Going still further, there are more cottages and the power-house to the right. A huge amonnt of money is no doubt required for founding a well planned sanatorium,—wherein it is desired to house a hundred or more inmates,—with all ancillary requirements. Few charitable institutions.

for the pnrpose, nevertheless, the tidiness and cleanliness are remarkable. Every work, however minor, is executed or carried on with high class precision and perfection. A structure where the operation theatre and the after-care ward of the surgically treated patients will be housed is nearing completion. It is likely to take time, unless funds are forthcoming, properly to equip the theatre and the ward with such essentials as the operation table, shadowless lights, instruments, surgical beds, etc. Modern scientific treatment of all

diseases in general and of tuberculosis in particular has to be guided from day to day by pathological investigations in the laboratory, such as examination of the sputum, blood, and so forth. The neat little laboratory is in charge of a well qualified pathologist, who comes there from Ranchi on two days in the week. The Resident Medical Officer works in the laboratory on the other days. There is a good microscope and a humble stock of chemicals and reagents.

Another essential aid in the diagnosis and treatment of patients is the screening of the patients' chests with X-ray. The Sanatorium has one 100 milliampere apparatus which has the capacity of catering for the needs of many more patients than are being treated now. For the working of this apparatus, electric current of suitable voltage has been provided for. A power-house has been erected, with two dynamos worked by Diesel oil-engines. The electricity generated also lights the entire institution—its buildings, roads, and outhouses. The power is utilized to pump water from wells to overhead tanks. Again for want of funds to provide for the expenses incurred, the dynamos work daily for a few hours only and for a couple of hours more on two days in the week for the sake of the X-ray department.

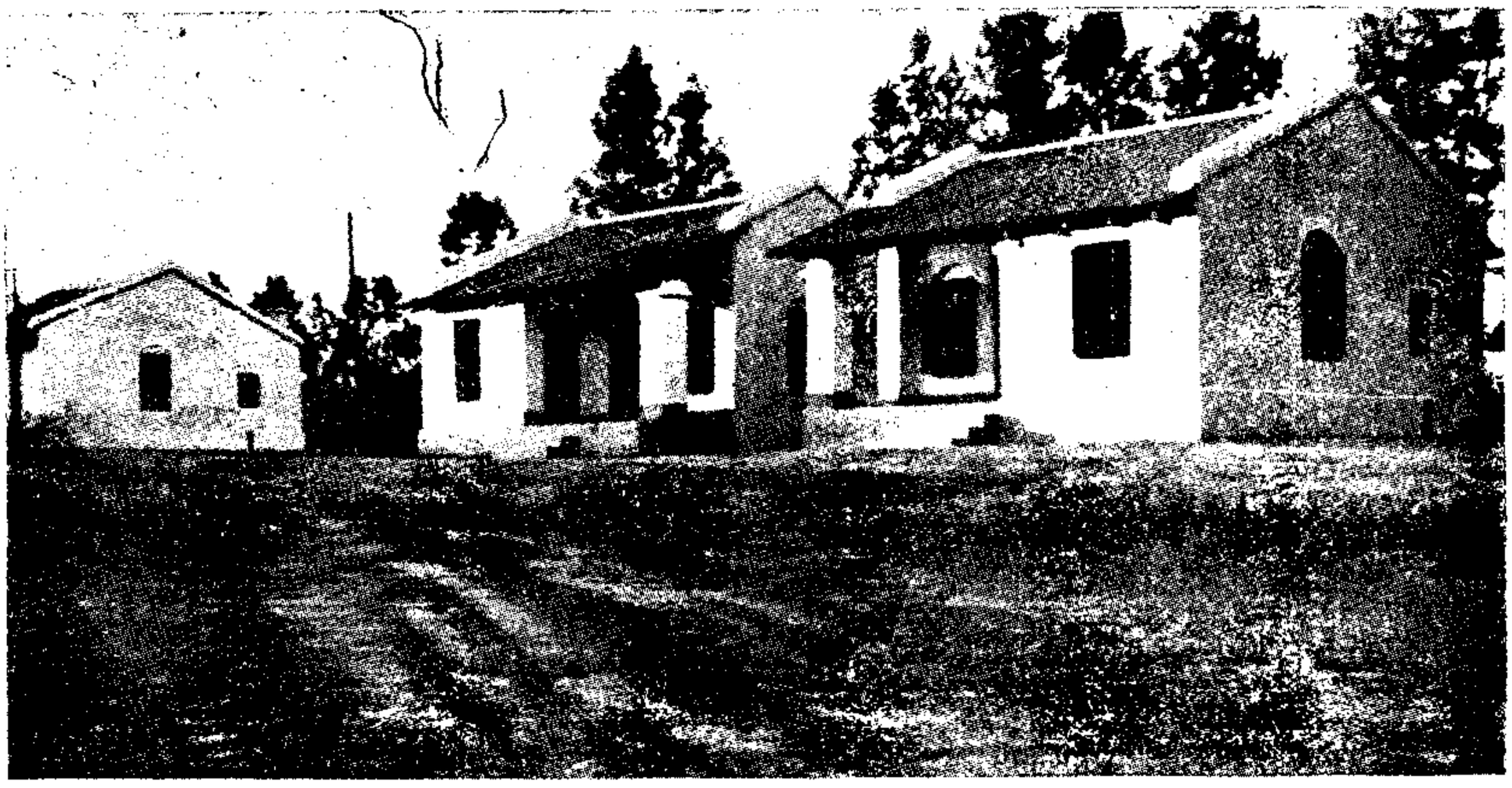
The Sanatorium has had to face several problems and has not yet got to the final solutions of many of them, the water supply of the place in particular. Four wells have been sunk. The deepest well, at the furthest end of the built-up area at present, has a pump, powered by electricity, fixed to it. Last summer even though the water-level went down alarmingly low, enough supply was there for the present population of about eighty heads. But with the gradual and expected increase in the number of inmates, such meagre supply of water cannot be depended upon. There is a small stream flowing close by, and it has been decided to dam up this stream and create a reservoir. This water may be utilized during the dry weather for gardening and agricultural purposes. The work on this scheme is proceeding, and is expected to be completed in the near future.



'A' TYPE COTTAGE

There is an idea of starting pisciculture in the reservoir. Fish, by the way, forms an important item of the daily food of the patients in particular and others in general. The drainage problem of the whole area has been solved by Nature. The buildings have so far been built on elevated areas from where there is natural drainage. The soil being rocky and sandy, the drains need not all be surfaced with masonry, though the ones within a reasonable distance of the wells have been properly cemented.

The cottages and the wards have water-closets connected with septic tanks to deal with



'B' TYPE COTTAGES

excreta and other refuse. This has obviously meant extra expenditure. But the comfort of the patients and the general sanitation of the place have been ensured to a high degree of hygienic perfection. A special incinerator has been built at a good distance from the wards in order to dispose of sputum and excreta.

The institution has to do the entire catering for all its inmates. This is no easy job. Apart from the all-important question of financial insufficiency, there is the commissariat problem of procuring wholesome articles of food. The arrangement for supply of good milk has been mentioned already. The general diet of the patients consists of the usual items of moderately sumptuous breakfast, lunch, light refreshments in the afternoon, and supper.

From the nutritional point the food is adequate. The cooking is cleanly done. The fuel used is firewood or coke. The kitchens are kept perfectly clean. The doors and windows are fitted with wire netting. There is running tap water. There is a big refrigerator for storing milk, fruits, etc. for the day only. No stale food, kept overnight, is supplied to the patients. There is no arrangement for keeping poultry. Fowl and eggs are bought at the weekly market (*hāṭ*) in the area. The chicken are kept for at least two days before they are prepared for the table. This precaution is taken in order to exclude diseased birds from being cooked. The proper and early arrangements for the upkeep of a poultry yard and of a dairy have to be made. The young worker who looks after the kitchen is a keen enthusiast and provides the patients with wholesome and nutritious dishes. Patients are generally very fastidious about what they find on their plates. From a look at the patients in this Sanatorium it is clearly seen that this worker in the kitchen is doing his job with great credit and ability.

There is accommodation for 58 patients in the Sanatorium and construction of buildings for 20 more is in progress. Most of the patients are housed in two general wards. These wards are as they should be, well lighted and ventilated. There are spacious verandas. The doors and windows are glazed. They are kept open day and night. Only when rain-water is blown in by strong wind, the doors and windows are closed.

I found the patients cheerful and happy. But one could think of many more things that may be done to make them happier. To provide suitable reading material for the inmates, a good library is necessary. Being aware of this need of the patients, the Sanatorium authorities have already started a nucleus of a small collection of books. The number of books in the library,—Bengali, Hindi, and English,—is nearly 500. There are some daily papers, periodicals, and picture-books. The patients want much more. Lying in bed and not being allowed to do anything else, the patients are naturally 'voracious' readers. Moreover, they need other kinds of entertainments, too. Radio-music, with individual head-phones, would be welcome. There are three radio sets operated by electricity. As the current is not available at all hours, the set cannot be used throughout the day. Provision for indoor games is another item of necessity. The want of all these is keenly felt both by the administration and by the inmates.

The Medical Superintendent is a well-known specialist in this line. He has had close contact with persons afflicted with the disease for years together. Apart from his professional skill, he has that personal sympathy for patients which goes a long way in building up the needed confidence the sufferers should have in their doctors. Such confidence helps both the doctor and the patient to engender a spirit of co-operation, which is essential for the success of such an institution. To help him there is another resident doctor who has also had training in this line, and there are also male nurses. Some of them are well experienced; others are in the process of being trained. The doctor is anxious to get more expert help in the nursing of the patients. The administration, too, is looking out for a suitable, fully trained nurse to take the entire charge of looking after the cleanliness of the wards and the work of the subordinate staff, viz. ward boys, cleaners, purveyors of food and water to patients, etc. Usually such work is entrusted to a matron or a sister-in-charge. There is no female personnel throughout the institution. It is evident that in future arrangement for the admission of women patients will have to be made. In that case female nurses will be necessary. Then the necessity for a matron will be more urgently felt.

No account of this young institution—still in its robust infancy, but with great promise of a vigorous future—will be complete without a mention of the selfless, diligent, and steadfast sincerity of purpose of the small group of monks of the Ramakrishna Mission, who have converted a native forest area into a modern sanatorium within the short period of three years. They, in their turn, give sincere expression to their gratefulness to the benefactors of the Sanatorium—individuals, the State and the Central Governments, and all others—whose generous help and contributions have provided them with the means and the materials to carry on the work.

The writer, in common with many others who have visited the Sanatorium, feels that if the public come forward to help this institution, their money will be well spent. The dividend they will earn in the shape of the gratitude and goodwill of so many afflicted persons and their families is worth more than what money can bring. Moreover, tuberculosis is no longer the fell disease it used to be. Modern scientific treatment does promise a sure cure. When cured, the individual will continue to be a useful member of society and so of the nation. Thus valuable man-power of the nation will be salvaged from premature loss, and surely this is of no mean consideration to every son of the motherland who loves his country and countrymen.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE COMMENTARIES ON THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

By Swami Vireswarananda

All philosophical ideas in India can be traced to their source in the Vedas. These ideas were there even in the Samhitās, and were later on developed in the Āranyakas and the Upanishads. Yet the Upanishadic thought did not constitute any consistent system but was merely a record of the spiritual experiences of the Āryan race, which developed later on into various systems of philosophy. These different systems grew side by side in the various centres of learning in the country, till they became very unwieldy and required regular systematization. Thus systematic treatises were written which were in the form of short aphorisms called Sūtras or clues to long discussions on particular topics. The maximum of thought was compressed into as few words as possible, and this desire for brevity was carried to such extremes that the Sutra literature now is unintelligible, and the *Vedānta-Sūtras* too are no exception to this.

Bādarāyana, to whom the authorship of the *Brahma-Sūtras* is ascribed, was not the only one who had tried to systematize the philosophy of the Upanishads. In the *Brahma-Sūtras* itself we find the names of Audulomi, Kāshakrishna, Bādari, and others, whose views have been either accepted or rejected by the author. This shows that there were other schools of Vedanta besides Badarayana's, though probably his was the latest and best, and so has survived time. All the Vedantic sects in India today hold his work to be the great authority and the various Āchāryas who have founded a sect have commented on these Sutras. The oldest extant commentary on it is by Shankara, the exponent of Monism. Shankara was followed by a host of commentators, all of whom have raised their voice against the monistic explanation of Shankara and his doctrine of Māyā, and have given a theistic interpretation of these Sutras, but there are various shades of difference amongst themselves. Madhva refers to twenty-one commentaries on these Sutras extant in his day. Each of these commentators tries to maintain that his system is the one that Badarayana propounded through the Sutras.

It has already been stated that the Sutra literature, owing to its extreme brevity of thought, is unintelligible. This difficulty becomes greatly enhanced in the absence of an unbroken tradition. While there is an accepted tradition as regards the division into Chapters (Adhyāyas) and Sections (Pādas), there is no such tradition as regards the division into topics (Adhikaranas), nor as regards the texts of the Scriptures (Shruti) that are discussed therein. Again, the same Sutra sometimes yields just the opposite meaning by a mere shifting of the stops, e.g., Shankara's and Rāmānuja's commentaries on III. ii. 11. The total number of Sutras, too, differs in the various commentaries, and sometimes a single Sutra is split into two, or two Sutras are combined into one, or a Sutra is dropped, or a new one added. The readings of the Sutras also differ in the various commentaries and the addition of a single letter like तु (but), च (and), or अ (the negative) makes the meaning completely different. Some of the words, too, used in the Sutras are very ambiguous, for in the Upanishads themselves they convey different meanings in different places. All this gives the commentators freedom to interpret the Sutras according to their predilections.

It is not possible to do justice to a vast subject like this, viz. a comparative study of the various Bhāshyas in so short an article as this. So we shall consider only a few of the Bhashyas, viz. those of Shankara, Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, and Vallabha, and that too on a few salient topics, taking

some significant Sutras only into consideration.[1]

PRELIMINARIES TO AN INQUIRY INTO BRAHMAN

Sutra I. i. 1 says: 'Now, therefore, an inquiry into Brahman'. The words 'now' and 'therefore' in this Sutra are interpreted differently by different commentators, which from the very beginning indicates to a great extent the lines on which their metaphysical thought would evolve.

Saṅkara takes 'now' in the sense of 'immediate consecution', the antecedent fact referred to being the four Sādhanas or spiritual requisites. The root cause of bondage is the superimposition of the Self and not Self on each other owing to ignorance (Adhyāsa Bhāshya). Release is attained by the destruction of ignorance through the intuitive knowledge of the unity of the Self taught by texts like 'That Thou art'. Such intuitive knowledge only destroys ignorance, and Brahman which is an eternally existing self-luminous entity, reveals Itself, even as when the illusion of the snake is destroyed, the rope reveals itself and is not in any way created. As knowledge alone effects release without auy further act to be performed, it has no connection with any action nor Upāsanā. Hence a knowledge of the Pūrva-Mimāmsā or the performance of work is useless to an aspirant after Brahman, and therefore cannot be taken as antecedent to an inquiry into Brahman (I.i.1). Nevertheless *all works* prescribed by the Scriptures (*Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 22) may serve as an indirect means to knowledge by way of the purification of the mind, but they have no part in producing the result of knowledge, viz. release (III. iv. 26).

The word 'therefore' according to Shankara expresses a reason and is interpreted by him to mean, 'As the results obtained by sacrifices etc. are ephemeral, whereas the result of the knowledge of Brahman is eternal', the inquiry into Brahman should be taken up.

[1] The numbering of the Sutras in the different commentaries varies. But in this study the references are according to Shankara as that would facilitate comparison.

Bhaskara, Ramannja, and Nimbarka also take the word 'now' in the sense of 'immediate sequence', but the antecedent referred to is the knowledge of the Purva-Mimamsa. Bhaskara prescribes the combination of works with knowledge (Jñāna-Karma Samuchchaya). The works prescribed for *all the Āśramas* are to be performed throughout life for the Scripture (*Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 22) enjoins them as auxiliary to knowledge for attainmg release (III.iv.26). Mere knowledge cannot effect release. So works are not to be given up even by an aspirant after knowledge. Combined with knowledge, they yield eternal results, viz. final release. Therefore a knowledge of the Purva-Mimamsa is a necessary pre-requisite for an inquiry into Brahman (I.i.1 and IV. i. 16).

Rāmānuja also prescribes a combination of works and knowledge, for Scriptures prescribe it (*Īśa. Up.*, 11). Though he holds that the knowledge of Brahman alone leads to release he understands by knowledge Upāsanā or devout meditation. Meditation, again, is constant remembrance of the object of meditation for which another name is Bhakti or devotion. Scriptures in texts like, 'Whomsoever the Self chooses, unto him It reveals Itself' (*Muṇḍ. Up.*, III.ii.3; *Kaṭha Up.*, II.23) show that mere hearing etc. lead nowhere, but it is only devotion alone to the Lord that leads to release, since he who is devoted to the Self is dear to the Self and is therefore chosen. For the practice of this devotion *all works* as are prescribed by Scriptures (*Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 22) are necessary, for the Lord pleased with the performance of such works vouchsafes such devout meditation to the devotee out of grace (III.iv.26). They are thus helpful to the origination of knowledge and since knowledge is to be practised all through life to attain release (IV.i.12), works also have to be performed all through life. Works performed without desires, as worship of the Lord, and combined with knowledge yield eternal result, viz. final release. Hence a knowledge of the Purva-Mimamsa is necessary (I.i.1 and IV.i.16).

Nimbārka also holds that all works prescribed by the Scriptures (*Bṛh. Up.*, IV.iv.22)

are not to be renounced by an aspirant after knowledge, but should be performed all through life, for these are not antagonistic to knowledge but helpful in its origination (III.iv.26 and IV.i.16). Hence a knowledge of the Purva-Mimamsa is essential.

Madhva connects the word 'now' with the qualification of the aspirant whom he classifies as ordinary, middling, and the best. One who is devoted to and has taken refuge in the Lord, has studied the Vedas, is dispassionate, and has renounced all work, is the best aspirant and fit for the knowledge of Brahman (I.i.1). Knowledge does not stand in need of works for securing release, but prescribed works are helpful in the origination of knowledge. After knowledge, however, works are to be given up (III.iv.26).

Vallabha takes the word 'now' as introducing a new subject, and does not think a knowledge of the Purva-Mimamsa or the spiritual requisites of Shankara as necessary pre-requisites for an inquiry into Brahman. Yet he also prescribes a combination of works and knowledge. Sutra III.iv.26 he does not interpret as, 'All works are necessary' or as, 'In all Ashramas works are necessary' but as 'All, viz. work, knowledge, and devotion, are necessary' for the origination of knowledge, and cites *Bṛh. Up.*, IV.iv.5 as authority. This text refers to a person who performs work with desire and says that he transmigrates. But one who performs work without desire, and who thus being free from all desires, attains the Lord and has all his desires fulfilled in Him, does not transmigrate (*Bṛh. Up.*, IV.iv.6). So works are necessary. This, however, applies to one who wants release and not to the extremely devoted viz. the followers of Pushtimārga (the path of divine grace), for whom there is no need of anything.

The word 'therefore' is interpreted by all the above commentators more or less like Shankara, though some of them, as Ramanuja and Bhaskara, would add the word 'mere' and say, 'As the result of mere works, i.e. works not combined with knowledge, is transitory', etc. According to Madhva, the word 'therefore' expresses a reason for the enquiry into Brahman. Without the knowledge of Brahman there is no grace of the Lord, and without it there is no release. Therefore an enquiry into Brahman should be made for attaining this knowledge.

(*To be continued*)

LITERATURE AND WORLD PEACE

By Dr. A. V. Rao

The world today is swept by the hot gusts of the 'cold war' between the great power blocs that two global wars have given it as a legacy. The echoes of the recent atomic explosion in the aptly named Devil's Island, Monte Bello, off the coast of Australia, still reverberate and remind us of the thirty and odd explosions that took place before it. In the war chancelleries of the great powers, generals and marshals move pieces on the international chess-board, while the living pawns in their hundreds of millions are wondering when the third world war will start and what the chances are of the survival of humanity in the mass destruction that the atomic bomb will achieve. It is true optimists calculate that just as poison gas was never used in the second world war, though kept ready in bulk by the belligerents, the atom bomb too will never be used, if only for the reason that the exciting game of war will be ended for professional soldiers almost before it begins in earnest. Even then, a third global war, fought with the weapons of the second, will assuredly put

back humanity by a hundred years, if not more. All thinking minds in all countries yearn, therefore, for world peace, not as a distant or ultimate goal but as a quick and effective measure to abolish war *now* once and for all. The Korean war, and the large-scale destruction it has caused, not so much to China or the U.S.A. or rather the UN forces, but to the millions of Koreans, is by itself enough reason to emphasize the urgent necessity of achieving peace not only in Korea but in the world as a whole. The cynic and the pessimist will undoubtedly say that there has been no time in the history of the world when there was no war, big or small, that human nature is essentially selfish, greedy, aggressive, and incorrigible and that all attempts at world peace had failed and will always fail. They point the finger of derision at the fifteen-months old truce talks in Korea and exclaim, with Puck, 'What fools these mortals be!' All this is apparently true, but even the pessimist proves by his indignation, scorn, or despair, that he, like men all the world over, longs for world peace.

War is supposed by many to be inevitable because it is part of 'human nature', that very indefinable and amorphous thing which is made the prime cause of all inexplicable evil. Human nature, claims the pessimist, is essentially selfish and stupid and incorrigible. He forgets, however, that self-interest is quite different from selfishness, and that because every man seeks food, shelter, and the satisfaction of the essential needs of his self,—an activity inspired by self-interest,—it need not and does not usually clash with other people's pursuits of their necessities. The proportion of acts that involve harm to others in the attempt to satisfy one's needs is after all very small. Man may go at times beyond self-interest and become selfish to some extent; but he is equally inclined to help and co-operate with others in the satisfaction of one other's needs. In fact, he is social-minded as much as he is moved by self-interest and the whole story of social growth and civilization and progress is proof of his co-operative and social habits, if not instincts. The claim that man is essentially stupid cannot be sustained, for the achievements of man in the arts and sciences are overwhelming proof of his intelligence, skill, and capacity to overcome the obstacles of Nature. That he is incorrigible and incapable of learning from experience is again not true, if for a moment we think of the stages throngh which he has evolved—from the nomad and barbarian stages to the social welfare state of today, or of the disappearance from the earth of evil institutions and savage practices, though it must be admitted they have been revived in times of violence even in the present century. There is no proof of any inherent aggressiveness in the human being, and history, natural science, and anthropology bear evidence to the fact that 'war in the sense of collective aggression', to quote Prof. Cohen, 'is no essential part of animal existence or of prehistoric man'. War came into being with the settling down of nomads, forced labour, the capture of men in tribal fights, their use as slaves, the emergence of caste distinctions and professional warriors, and, still later, of armies and national States, jealous of their sovereign rights.

War, therefore, not being 'inevitable', or a necessary part of human nature, it is the duty of all human beings to remove the causes of war—ideas of national sovereignty, economic imperialism, and so on, and to bring about a world State or a world government or, what Tennyson called, 'the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World'. It is true we came one step near our goal with the establishment of the League of Nations, but alas! it broke up after a brief existence of a score of years! The United Nations Organization has sprung up in its place, and already critics have started saying it will achieve nothing and be a failure like its predecessor. But this is too gloomy a view and a hasty conclusion, for barely seven years have passed since its inception. If humanity strives hard, its outlook can be changed. Even if national States are too slow to yield sovereign rights or to surrender power *to a world federation*, groups of

human beings everywhere, by earnest efforts at co-operation and tolerance and new methods of education, can bring about a real change. It is true that, in the last analysis, it is a 'change of heart' in human beings that will achieve the millennium, the 'thonsand years of peace', and that, in this 'change of heart' the means are as important as the end. One way of bringing about a radical change for the better in human outlook is re-education for adults and a new type of education for the youth of the future.

World peace then can be achieved, not through force, not through authority imposed from above,—though it is to soine extent necessary,—but essentially through education. In the new education for world peace, literature has a very important and vital part to play.

Literature is composed of those books primarily which have an abiding and abounding human interest of a general nature, and which delight, move, or instruct us by their form, beauty of expression, and significance. Literature thus grows out of life, out of the experience and awareness of life, or the imagination or emotional response of tlie writer based on his contact with life. It cannot be divorced from the social environment and it cannot flourish in a vacuum. Whether it arises from the creative instinct or the desire for self-revelation or the study of hnman motives and actions or the weaving together of reality and imagination, it cannot but be a vital factor in the liberal education of humanity. Prof. Hudson's analysis of the themes of literature is a usefnl classification that enables us to consider how the study of literature can be a means of education for the new world order or ideal of peace and progress we plan to achieve. He divides the themes as follows: 'The literature of purely personal experience; of the common life of man as man (the great questions of life and death, sin and destiny, God, man's relation with God, the hope of the race and hereafter, and the like); of the social world, with all its activities and problems; the literatnre which treats of Nature; and the literature which treats of literature and art (criticism and appreciation)'.

It has to be confessed that a good deal of the literary creations of all countries, especially drama and fiction, is *apparently* hardly conducive to the inspiration of a new co-operative existence, of a world of tolerance, sanity, mutual understanding, of international amity, and of the pursuit of peace and progress. The reasons are not far to seek. All the great masterpieces of epic, drama, and fiction are conditioned by the social order of the ages in which they were written and they naturally reflect the ideals and beliefs which are hard to accept today. Thus the glorification of war, the delight in conquest and prowess in the battle-field, the subservience of man to dictatorial authority, the institution of slavery, the feudal order, chauvinistic patriotism and nationalism, and the assertion of the individual will and power are themes which do not lend themselves to re-education in a world which seeks the social welfare of the masses, a comparative equality of status, tolerance, and brotherhood. Concrete instances can be easily cited: Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* and *Dr. Faustus,* the patriotic address of Henry V, the glorification of England in Shakespeare's dramas, the glorification of war in the great epics of East and West, the apotheosis of imperialism and the white man's burden in Kipling's works, and the cult of hero-worship in Carlyle—would not, rightlv speaking, it is argued, be in tune with ideals of the new world. Nor would many characters of some of the great dramas and novels of the world be *apparently* desirable characters to study or emulate. Their morbidity, ambition, jealousy, or fanaticism may be and are objects of study and analysis like clinical cases for the doctor, but they can be hardly held up as examples for emulation and they *may* leave a harmful impression on the mind of the adolescent. The lives of the Napoleons and Alexanders of history must not be allowed to thrill the minds of the young. So should the Becky Sharps and Emma Bovarys be not permitted to allure and fascinate readers, the more so, when the

'good' characters are often so ineffective—the Colonel Newcomes and the Amelia Osbornes of fiction. I have deliberately used the words 'apparently' and 'may' above, because the danger of young minds being warped is really not so great as puritans may imagine. All that is needed is a shift of emphasis and a better way of reading these masterpieces or revealing their significance to young minds. The great masterpieces of fiction and drama and biography still give us a clearer understanding of human motives and conduct. From apparent evil so much real good can be extracted that the study of literature in fact ought to make us understand human nature better. Nor should we forget the catharsis at the end of a great tragedy—the purging of the emotions of pity and terror that are aroused by the tragic situation—and 'Calm of mind all passions spent'. The epics of Greece and the *Mahābhārata* may give accounts of sanguinary battles, but they also inspire men to noble deeds of chivalry, self-sacrifice, and heroism. The themes of Greek classical dramas may at first sight seem full of bloodshed, violence, and even incest, but the noble fortitude of the characters and their loftiness of feeling are unforgettable. In fact, the staging of great dramas of the past and the dramas of modern times, like the plays of Shaw, Ibsen, and Galsworthy or Eugene O'Neill is itself a fine medium of education and a channel for co-operative activity in schools and colleges.

There are, however, other spheres of literature,—poetry, for example, viz. the great poems of Dante, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Goethe, and Tagore, to take only a few instances,—which express all the idealism, dreams, and aspirations of great minds. Thns the longing for liberty, political and spiritnal, for a new world of peace and harmony, for friendship among the nations of the world, find noble expression in the works of Shelley and Tagore. The meditative, thoughtful, and formative books of mystics, saints, and divines are also literature in the real sense of the word, as also devotional songs and lyrics. Thus the New Testament, the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas á Kempis, the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, the parables and stories and teachings of Christ and Buddha, and of Confucius and Lao-tsze, the *Gita,* the lyrics and songs of Traherne and Blake, of Mirabai, Tulsidas, Tukaram, and Kabir, are as great a heritage as the great dramas and novels of the world. If we laid greater emphasis on these works in our educational institutions than we give at present, a real change can be brought about in the human outlook. The message of tolerance and mutual understanding, of friendship between man and man and race and race, is one that can reach the human heart easier through the above works than through mere preaching.

The UNESCO is doing valuable spade-work in attempts to make each nation understand the thoughts, feelings, and ways of living of other nations by getting the masterpieces of literature in each country translated by competent scholars and writers and distributed in other countries to as many educational institutions as possible. This is another big step in the direction of international friendship.

The literature of the future, it is hoped, will lay aside the morbid, the unhealthy, the fanatical, and the evil tendencies in man and dwell on all that is sane, co-operative, and healthy and emphasize the liberal and benign tendencies. It must, of course, remain art all the time and not degenerate into mere propaganda. It will lead humanity to peace, cohesion, and tolerance. Chirst's message was 'Peace on earth, goodwill toward men' and the rites of our own religion end with the prayer for peace, 'Om! Shāntih! Shantih! Shantih!'. May the literature of the world be imbued hereafter with the same longing for love and peace and understanding!

SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF ADVAITA VEDANTA

By Swami Gambhirananda

The term 'Vedanta' is very comprehensive and in a way it includes all the post-Shankara schools of Hindu thought. For, after Shankara's scholarly defence, enunciation, and systematization of the basic ideas of Hinduism, no important school could neglect the Prasthāna-Trayas—the Upanishads, the *Gita,* and the *Brahma-Sūtra*—on which Shankara raised his metaphysical structure. But in spite of all these later-day ramifications of Vedantic thought, Shankara's place is still so pre-eminent that in popular parlance Vedanta means what Shankara thought, taught, and practised. And though attempts have been made during the last thirteen centuries to tear down his Vedantic edifice, he is still the most representative Indian philosopher. As Thibaut writes, 'The doctrine advocated by Shankara is, from a philosophical point of view, and apart from all theological considerations, the most important and interesting one which has arisen on Indian soil; neither those forms of the Vedanta which diverge from the view represented by Shankara nor any of the non-Vedantic systems can be compared with the so-called orthodox Vedanta in boldness, depth, and subtlety of speculation'. And Gough adds, 'The teaching of Shankara is the natural and legitimate interpretation of the doctrines of the Upanishads'.

This Advaita Vedanta, however, we must remember, is not a creation or discovery of Shankara, though he made the greatest contribution to its popularity. It existed before him and it has been elaborated by many a philosopher after him. From the time of the Upanishads there has been a continuous flow of this thought. For thousands of years this philosophy has been sustaining the spiritual life of a large section of Hindus and influencing a larger section of humanity all over the world. With its wide sweep, broad catholicity, and ready adaptability it has ever been proving itself a living force. Having lasted for such a long period and catered for the needs of varying aspirants, it differs very much in its details. The post-Shankara philosophers are not agreed on many important points. The result is a vast literature to which one can hardly do justice within the scope of a small article. The specific task before us here will be to see how this colourless Advaita philosophy could be the starting-point of a colourful, active, and varied religious life, imparting inspiration not only to men of action like Sri Krishna and Arjuna but also to idealists like Gaudapada and the author of the *Aṣṭāvakra-samhitā,* not only to thinkers like Shankara and Padmapada but also to devotees like Sridhara and Madhusudana. In our times, too, it inspired the active programme of Swami Vivekananda.

Shankara's life gives the lie to the popular belief that a non-dualist loses all touch with the world. Shankara certainly did not negate the world in any crude sense of the term. He ate and drank and moved about the length and breadth of the country, establishing temples, monasteries, and orders of monks. He did not deny variety in everyday life; he bowed down to all the Hindu deities and composed hymns in their praise. He supported Tāntric worship and wrote treatises on it. He practised Yoga and he was a worker. Fired with a zeal for re-establishing and revitalizing Hinduism, he wrote books and fought verbal duels, and he brushed aside with a mighty hand all the demoralizing ideas. In fact, he was a Jnāni, a Bhakta, a Yogi, and a Karmi rolled into one.

This activism was the outcome of his life's mission which was nothing if not a defence of Hinduism as a whole; and by Hinduism he meant all that is best in human nature. Shankara approached his task in a positive

manner. He was no iconoclast who denied any quarter to others. In his fights he did not aim at any personal victory or the elimination of any particular Hindu group, but rather he sought to bring order out of the chaos into which Hinduism had reduced itself. The problem before him was to fit everything into a grand and abiding edifice. And the key to this master plan lay ready in the Prasthāna-Trayas which delight in harmony among apparent disparities and in reconciliation of diversity with unity. In this effort he had the support of his great predecessor Gaudapada, who maintained that Advaitism is an 'accommodating doctrine' (*Nirvirodhavāda*).

Advaita philosophy argues like this: Truth is one, though sages call it by various names. In the highest realization one has the Absolute Brahman, but in relative life there is variety. In order to assert the ultimate Truth which is non-dual, one need not deny the existence of this variety in daily experience. People being in different stages of growth, there must be a gradation in the comprehension of Truth; and, as such, no religious life, however humble, need be condemned and no metaphysical conception, however crude, need be rejected. It is only when all and sundry create confusion by claiming absolute finality for themselves that the non-dualist has to divert attention from pettifogging to the higher reaches of experience where all limited visions find their final consummation. Really speaking, the acceptance of the Advaita standpoint, far from making a man intolerant of weak peoples' failings, makes him all the more mindful of others with whom he is identified in Brahman. In fact, the highest sanction for a good social life lies in this unity of all, which leads not to condescending sympathy but to respectful worship. 'Vedanta', wrote Paul Deussen, 'is the greatest support to morality'.

The non-dualist does not say that the totality of our world experience is false. There are five factors involved in such an experience—viz. existence, knowledge, bliss, name, and form. Of these existence, knowledge, and bliss cannot be denied, for they are the essence of all experience. It is only about name and form that the Vedantists speak of *unreality*, and not *falsity*. This unreality again is spoken of in relation to a certain state of realization; and, as such, there is no reason why we, ordinary people, should be scared away by it. Do we become unnerved when the scientist reduces our worlds of life, light, and beauty into a mere play of particles of energy? The scientific assertion of a drab uniformity does not rob you or me of variety. For the scientist and the non-scientist alike, love, hope, and faith do not cease to exist just because somebody has discovered the truth to be otherwise. The same is the case with the *felt truth* of Advaita. What matters is the experience and not any information of it. So long as it is a theory, it means little to me; and when it is a felt reality, your assertion to the contrary matters little. Religion is not talk, but realization; and when we argue with each other, we must know from which plane we are talking—are we in the scientific laboratory, amidst our equals, or are we in the market-place bnying and selling the goods of this life?

The gulf between talk and realization is humorously referred to by Shankara in his introduction to the *Brahma-Sūtra*, where he notes that although reality and unreality are entirely distinct, yet in everyday dealing we mix them up to make life a going concern, and that in their reaction to the sense-impacts even learned men do not differ from animals. Now, because this disparity exists between thought and action, between reality and actuality, would you like to reject the higher achievements of thought and advance some crass theory more in conformity with your animal life? Would you realize the ideal or idealize the real? The logical attitude should be to find out the truth or falsity of what the non-dualist says and not to reject it just because we cannot comprehend it or it runs counter to our cherished ideas.

The ordinary man's difficulty is that non-dualism is too high for him. The ancients

knew this difficulty and kept their vision secret. But now knowledge is democratized, and the ordinary man, with his limited experience, makes the mistake of thinking that by positing a featureless Brahman the non-dualist denies him his world. Should one accept such an ignorant estimation? Would one, for instance, accept a too negative interpretation of the word 'independence'—meaning non-dependence on any one, and equate that positive political conception with anarchy? Nothing could be more unreasonable.

According to the non-dualist, the world is not *false,* but rather *unreal.* The two ideas are entirely different. In Vedanta philosophy Māyā and Brahman coexist in the state of ignorance; and in realization the finite is not negated or annulled in any physical sense of the terms. Vedanta does not believe in the doctrine of Parināma or transformation, which would require the annulment of the finite in order to regain the perfection of the Absolute. Realization is an all-transcending and yet all-absorbing experience which is wholly unique. The man of realization leaves nothing behind as a rejected real but takes everything as a perceived truth. Though knowledge and ignorance cancel each other, Brahman and Maya are not contradictory. Indeed it is the reality and consciousness of Brahman that imparts a transitory life to the unreal. The world is unreal only when considered by itself apart from Brahman. 'Everything everywhere has reality as its basis' (Shankara's Commentary on *Gita,* XIII. 14). 'All modifications beginning from name and form are real when considered from the standpoint of reality; but in themselves they are unreal' (Shankara's *Chāndogya* Commentary on VI. iii. 2). In fact, change and variety can be conceived only on the background of unity and infinity.

Variety being undeniable in life, the Vedantists acknowledge the need of presenting the truths in accordance with the capacity of the recipient. In matters of detail they do not stand by any set dogma but adopt any mode of expression that reveals the central truth to the best advantage in a given situation. They agree to differ by fastening their attention on the final truth. Says Sureshvaracharya:

Yathā yathā bhavet puṁsāṁ vyutpattiḥ pratyagātmani,
Sā saiva prakriyeha syāt sadhvī sā cānavasthitā.

And Appaya Dikshita adds, 'If there is any conflict among the different factors adduced as a means to the establishment of transcendental reality, it does not vitiate the main issue' (*Parimala*). This he says with regard to the difference among the Vedantists themselves. This standpoint was in evidence in resolving external conflicts too. Thus, though the supremacy of Vedanta is asserted by saying that knowledge is dependent on the Upanishadic texts, Shankara points out that other scriptures have their relative value. All the subsidiary religious practices that conduce to the final realization are assigned their due position because success depends on practice. Along with their practical utility, certain portions of their doctrines, too, are accepted in so far as they can be reconciled with the Upanishadic truths.

Shankara went further and asserted that since even after liberation the world in some sense exists for the Jivanmukta, the attitude of Bhakti comes natural to him:

Satyapi bhedāpagame nātha tavāhaṁ na māmakīnastvam,
Sāmudro hi tarangah kvacana samudro na tārangah.

'O Lord, though in truth, when all duality vanishes, I am Thine, yet Thou art not mine; to the ocean belongs the wave, but not the ocean to the wave'.

The irresistible conclusion from this position is that for no living being is the world non-existent. It is there for one and all, though the perceptions of it may differ. Men have certain predispositions which cannot be easily transcended, nay, it is perilous to make forced marches. The paths of religious progress must, therefore, be finely adjusted. No

wonder that through such a respect for others' point of view, Vedanta should have inspired people in various walks of life and different stages of development as noted earlier.

We can consider the Vedantist's touch with world reality from another point of view—that of the reconciliation of the evidence of the Upanishads about the non-dual Brahman with the ideas derived from other means of knowledge. The Vedantist's position is that they are all valid within their respective domains. Conflict arises only when one trespasses into another's preserve. Thus about the validity of the evidence of the senses Shankara remarks: 'The Shruti has no validity with regard to the objects of the senses. It has validity only with regard to the relation between the results and accessories of such rites as the Agnihotra, which relationship is beyond the scope of such means of knowledge as perception'. And the *Bhāmatī* says, 'Mere Shruti is not superior to the evidence of perception, but that Shruti which has a definite import.' With regard to reasoning Shankara says, 'If the basis of all reasoning is removed then all human action will cease; for it is seen that with a view to getting or avoiding happiness and sorrow, people follow future paths in conformity with the known paths past or present' (*Brahma-Sūtra,* II. i. 11). All these attempts at accounting for human behaviour and the relative validity of different kinds of experience, cannot be interpreted as an annulment of the world.

But even so, it may be argued that Shankara being an ascetic, preaches against all activism. Before any such hasty judgement is passed, we should do well to look at Shankara's life and then, in the light of what he did, read the *Gita* and his commentary on it. As a defender of Hinduism in its totality he could not but assign a place of honour to activism as illustrated in the life of Sri Krishna. Conscious of this task and having imbibed the Hindu spirit thoroughly, he says, in his introduction to the commentary on the *Gita*: 'The Vedic religion has two forms, characterized by the performance or non-performance of the rites etc. enjoined by scriptures'. Shankara could not stop with this only. The task that he set before himself was not merely a defence of Hinduism but a better enunciation of its higher thoughts. So with regard to the secret of work he says: 'This is my duty, I am the agent and I shall perform this duty for this result—this (kind of thought) is ignorance which has no beginning. This ignorance is eliminated by the realization, "I am the absolute reality without agentship, action, and result".' (*Gita,* XIV. 66). As a first step towards the cessation of this ignorance one must begin by offering all actions with their fruits to God. When that occurs, work ceases to be work. Such a man of detachment has nothing to gain by work, though apparently he still persists in his duties. But we must not confuse this higher activity with the works we are acquainted with in ordinary life (*Gita,* II. 11). The final realization is a thorough reorientation and not a mere forcible withdrawal from work. Work does not cease; but the springs of action change. This becomes more apparent in the illustration of Janaka, who, though a man of knowledge, continued to be a king. The remarkable fact to be noted here is that there was no break in the even tenure of Janaka's life, though internally he became a changed man (*Gita.* IV. 20).

Such a position is quite understandable in the light of the theory of the Jivanmuktas, enlightened souls who are still embodied. To these the world has some existence, whatever the reasons may be. Or, in other words, the Vedantists here assert that the ultimate realization does not absolutely militate against the continuance of the world. The Jivanmuktas live and act, though the world does not continue to have the same meaning for them as it had before enlightenment. The motive for work, too, is totally changed. The Jivanmukta now acts not because he has something to gain, but rather because he has something to give, and that too under the guidance of a Higher Power. Appaya Dikshita carries this idea still further in his

theory of Sarvamukti in which he asserts that there can be no such thing as isolated emancipation. Liberation will come when the world as a whole is redeemed, and to that end all must address themselves.

In Vedantic Sādhanā the importance of social and psychological adjustment to a greater whole is stressed. There is need of moral perfection, which includes good neighbourliness, material and other help to others, and a positive effort to produce more so that charity may be more abundant. No good work is decried, rather it is encouraged; and the importance of the householder in the scheme of life is admitted (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I. iv. 16).

And yet the Vedantist cannot wholly escape the charge of disruption of society inasmuch as he advocates withdrawal from the world for certain aspirants; to that extent his philosophy is a negative one. If this is a fault, it is one that the Vedantist has in common with almost all the big world religions. We cannot do better than present here a few excerpts from Dr. Radhakrishnan: 'Asceticism is associated with all religions and represents a basic need of human nature. It is the outgrowth of the demand that the highest religion requires—the surrender of the individual claim—and identification with the universal life'. 'Asceticism has entered far too deeply into the texture of religious life for it to be regarded as a mistake'. 'We are preoccupied with gospels of world affirmation to the exclusion of world negation. We are unable to control the "here and now" because we have lost conscious contact with a sphere of existence that transcends our own'. 'Those who tell us that asceticism is superfluous, that contemplation is perilous, and the precept "be perfect" means "make a success of life and attend if possible to the perishing moment", do not understand the High Destiny of man' (*Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, pp. 106-114).

Every religion has to accept an abiding and perfect reality, without which the world with all its intrinsic contradictions, selfish conflicts, helpless oppression, and unredeemed misery, is reduced to a mockery. And in so far as we aspire to a better life, a more successful establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven, in so far do we deny our present order of things. And yet, in the Vedantist's scheme of spiritual advance there need be no such absolute rejection. For, the call of the Ultimate becomes so insistent and forceful that the soul naturally rushes towards it and every advance is a greater fulfilment.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

By Dr. Mohan Lal Sethi

Modern experimental science is a child of Europe. It was born when Galileo questioned and subjected to experimental test Aristotle's centuries-old axiom. Aristotle had laid down that if two different weights of the same material were allowed to fall from the same height, the heavier would reach the ground before the lighter, proportionately to the difference in weight. Aristotle himself was a careful observer. It is strange but true that he never tried the experiment to test the axiom he had laid down. It is stranger still that up till 1592 no European philosopher before Galileo had thought of testing Aristotle's axiom by actual experiment. One morning, while professor of mathematics at Pisa, Galileo mounted the famous Leaning Tower, carrying with him a ten-pound weight and a one-pound

weight. In the presence of a gathering of professors, priests, philosophers, and students of the University of Pisa, he let the weights go from the top of the tower. The two weights fell together and struck the ground at practically the same moment. Yet such was the spell cast by Aristotle's genious over the minds of Europeans that though they saw the two weights strike the ground together, they persisted in maintaining that Aristotle was right and Galileo was wrong. After this, things were made so unpleasant and hot for Galileo that he ultimately resigned his post and left Pisa.

In September 1592 Galileo was lucky to be appointed professor of mathematics at the University of Padua. Here he was free to teach and make experiments. Students from all over the continent began to flock to Padua. Galileo was very original and rational. At Padua he began to specialize in astronomy. From a mathematician he grew into an astronomer and an experimental philosopher. Before Galileo, Ptolemy's system of cosmogony held the field in Europe. According to Ptolemy the earth was the centre of the universe and the other heavenly bodies revolved round the earth. His system came to be known as geocentric. Certain other philosophers, particularly the Pythagoreans, disagreed with Ptolemy and held that the universe was heliocentric. According to this system the sun was the centre of the universe with the other heavenly bodies revolving round it. For a long time the heliocentric system had no following in Europe. It was revived by Copernicus. but it was left to Galileo to put the heliocentric system on a sound footing and convince those who were open-minded that Ptolemy had been wrong. In 1613 Galileo drew the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome to the discrepancies between the heliocentric system and certain passages in the Scriptures. In 1616 the Holy Office in Rome characterized the proposition that the sun is immovable in the centre of the universe and that the earth has a diurnal motion of rotation as heretical. Galileo was admonished by the Pope Paul V not to 'hold, teach, or defend' the condemned doctrine. Galileo published his *Dialogue on the Two Principal Systems of the Universe* in 1632 and upheld the heliocentric system. This brought him immediate recognition and fame in the learned world, as also ecclesiastical censure. He was cited to Rome by the Inquisition. The Inquisition examined him under menace of torture. Galileo recanted and was sentenced to incarceration at the pleasure of the tribunal and by way of penance was enjoined to recite once a week for three years the seven penitential psalms.

One shrewd writer has made the following comment on Galileo's recantation:

'Had Galileo but added the courage of the martyr to the wisdom of the sage, had he carried the glance of his indignant eye round the circle of his judges, had he lifted his hands to heaven and called on the living God to witness the truth and immutability of his opinions, the bigotry of his enemies would have been disarmed, and science would have enjoyed a memorable triumph'. 'Probably the bigotry of his enemies would have sent him to the stake. but he would have been spared eight unhappy years and would have passed out of life with his name unsullied and science would indeed have enjoyed a memorable triumph. The victory was with science in any case; it would have been a more glorious victory had Galileo stood true to his innermost convictions'.

From the fourth century onwards Christianity became very chary of opinions contrary to the orthodox doctrines. Varions heresies emerged which endeavoured to open up more or less dangerous divergencies from the main stream of Christian religion. The Church tried to put down these heresies. This tendency on the part of the Church gradnally culminated in the Inquisition. The Inqnisition dealt with the detection and punishment of heretics and all persons guilty of any offence against the Catholic Chnrch.

Galileo was not alone in receiving attention from the Church. Because of his eminence among the learned, his personal contacts, and his recantation, he escaped with a light sentence. Men of letters and books could not escape the watchful eyes of the Chnrch. Religious censorship was complete over the

minds and manners of Western man. Many a Calvin, Luther, and Wycliffe had a busy time of it all their lives trying to shake off the chains of this intellectual and religious slavery.

One might ask why has there been conflict between the Roman Church and science? It is mainly due to the difference in the approach of the two towards truth. While for the Church truth was revealed once and for all time, for science there is no finality and truth is being rediscovered every day. Accepted axioms in science are constantly under the fire of criticism and are being subjected to experimental tests. They are being reviewed and reassessed. No doubt science accepts many things on authority, but no authority is incapable of erring in science. Science knows no diplomatic immunity. It is on account of this approach towards truth that science was and is progressive while the Church was more or less static.

Modern science was thus born within the four walls of ecclesiastical bigotry and orthodoxy in Europe. Science is experimental and rational. The final appeal in science is to experiment and reason. In the Semitic religions,—particularly Christianity,—the final appeal is to the Scriptures. Christian cosmogony has proved inadequate in the light of discoveries made by modern explorers and scientists. Christian ecclesiastics held on to the Scriptures and the result was a conflict between science and religion in Europe. This conflict could not be resolved. Although strictly speaking the proposition has just been talked out, in fact science firmly holds the field now. In discarding outmoded beliefs in religion, the Europeans have thrown out religion altogether—core, accretions, and all,—like the unwary nurse who threw out the baby also along with the bath-water. The present-day agnosticism and atheism in the world are the net results of this tug of war between science and religion in the Middle Ages.

There is nothing in Indian history to compare with the persecution of Galileo in Europe. Things in India have been very different. Heresies there have been, but there has been no persecution of heretics. The majority of the Hindus always accepted the authority of the Vedas and have been known as the 'Āstikas'. Others who challenged the Vedas and did not accept them have been known as the 'Nāstikas'. The extreme heterodox views were held by the Chārvākas. The intrepid Charvakas openly rebelled against the Vedas and wanted to discard them completely. Perception was the only source of knowledge to these people. The teachings of the Charvakas have been preserved. They are a complete denunciation of the Vedas, their authority, and the religion they taught. Other heterodox creeds were Jainism and Buddhism. They were allowed to flourish. Hinduism, from the earliest times and down to the early centuries of the Christian era, was progressive. That is the main reason why there was no clash between orthodoxy and advanced heretical thought in India. Proof for the progressiveness of Hinduism is to be found in the Vedas and the other Hindu scriptures. The hymns of the oldest scripture, *Ṛg-Veda Samhitā*, indicate that the early Aryans were polytheistic and they believed in a plurality of gods and goddesses. The hymns were recited by the priest to propitiate the gods for his own benefit, but more often for the benefit of the Yajamāna. According to one author, the Rig-Vedic atmosphere was surcharged with a spirit of bargaining between gods and men. This polytheism gradually evolved into the elaborate ritual of the *Brāhmaṇa*. In the Āranyakas and the Upanishads there is a rising wave of protest against this ritualism. The systematization and classification of the early Rig-Vedic gods led to the more logical monotheism. From monotheism to the sublime monism of the Upanishads, the transition is believed to have taken place through the conception of the *Ṛta*.

Nobody in Hindu India was ever persecuted for his religious or secular beliefs. Hindus had realized very early that no two persons were alike in their intellectual make-up. Accepting this basic truth, which modern science has recently discovered through the

sciences of cytology and heredity, ancient Hindus never interfered with the intellectual or spiritual growth of anybody. This is the main reason why religious persecution, which was the rule in the Middle Ages in Europe, was unknown in India. As a result of this tolerance, India became a land of many faiths and Hinduism a confederation of many creeds.

Religious teachers, with a few noble exceptions, have been parochial in their outlook and have generally claimed infallibility for their own creed. Science and scientists have abjured political and racial barriers. It must be confessed that more often than not so-called religion has divided man from man. It is to the credit of modern science that, during the few centuries it has been at work, it has brought different races of mankind physically and economically very close together. Political and religious orthodoxy have to cope with what science has already accomplished.

The novelty of science has not worn out. How can it wear out? With newer and newer discoveries being made every day, the sense of awe intensifies. Atomic discoveries and their application in the second world war have horrified mankind. While the war-lords of the two blocs are secretly increasing their piles of atomic bombs, advanced thinkers throughout the world are devising ways and means to check this prostitution of science. With advanced science tending towards metaphysics, there is a ray of hope. Humanity can yet escape total effacement, which is staring it in the face, by making science religious and religion scientific.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The *Prabuddha Bharata* enters the fifty-eighth year of its career with the publication of this number. We offer our cordial greetings and good wishes to our readers, sympathisers, and all others, in every part of the world, who have placed us under a deep debt of gratitude by their hearty and generous co-operation. It is our earnest hope that with such public sympathy and patronage the *Prabuddha Bharata* will be enabled to continue to contribute as hitherto its quota of humble service in the cause of truth, peace, and world understanding. . . .

Sri Saradamani Devi, afterwards known as the Holy Mother, was born on the 22nd December 1853 at Jayrambati, in the district of Bankura in West Bengal. As the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna and by virtue of the dignity and inner beauty of her own saintly character, she was the perfect embodiment of womanhood at its best, combining in herself the salient features of the ideal wife, mother, and nun. This year—and the month of December, to be more precise—marks the unique occasion of the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother. The *Frontispiece* in this issue, viz. 'Matri-mandir at the Holy Mother's Place of Nativity', shows the temple at Jayrambati, erected on the site where the Holy Mother was born. . . .

The Holy Mother Birth Centenary celebrations will be observed throughout the world during the period between December 1953 and December 1954. . . .

Dr. Amaresh Datta, M.A., PH.D., of the University of Sagar, contributes the Poem with which the issue opens. . . .

Swami Tejasananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, and Principal of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur, writing with much erudition and clarity, calls the attention

of the world to the eternal spiritual message of India in his thought-provoking article on *The Voice of India*. . . .

How can action and awareness be combined without minimizing the due emphasis on either? Sri R. R. Diwakar, Governor of Bihar, opens up a new line of thought in the understanding of what the *Bhagavad Gita* terms as *Karma-Samādhi*. . . .

Dr. Nandalal Chatterji, M.A., PH.D., D.LITT., of the University of Lucknow, refutes the Western historian's suggestion that ancient Hindus were lacking in historical sense and perspective, and briefly but lucidly presents the salient aspects of *The Conception of History in Ancient India*. . . .

Everyone who has paid a visit to the *Sri Ramakrishna Temple at the Belur Math*, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, near Calcutta, has been struck by its architectural grandeur and originality of design. Sri C. Sivaramamurti, M.A., Superintendent, Archaeological Section of the Indian Museum at Calcutta, who has made a close stndy of the architectural technique and other details of the temple, contributes a very illuminating article, together with suitable illustrations, admirably delineating the points of comparison and contrast between this and earlier Indian temple architecture. The temple itself, originally a daring and novel conception of Swami Vivekananda, represents a happy blend of the main features of the architectural styles of various schools and of different nations, being, as it were, the commentary in stone of the grand universality and unique religious harmony so very characteristic of Sri Ramakrishna's own life and teachings. . . .

Making a critical survey of the grounds for *New Hopes* for a happier and better world, in the course of a short comparative study of ancient Indian and modern scientific conceptions of life and world affirmation, Srimat Anirvan, our esteemed contributor, makes a plea for giving Spiritual Realism as high a place as Rational Realism in our schemes for the all-round development of the whole being of man. . . .

Sri C. T. K. Chari, M.A., whose thought-provoking writings are always forceful, distinctly original, and profoundly scholarly, strikes a refreshing note of broad understanding in his stimulating study of *Ramakrishna Vedanta and the Unity of Religions*. Pointing out the deep and extensive significance of Sri Ramakrishna's mystical union with the Godhead, the learned writer aptly leads the readers to the core of Sri Ramakrishna's message and rightly reminds them that in and through the Master's simple teachings one discovers that religions can be assimilated without converting one to the others. . . .

Swami Apurvananda of the Ramakrishna Order, who has travelled extensively over the Himalayan mountains, gives a vivid and charming account of that part of his *Pilgrimage through the Himalayas* which relates mainly to the famous shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan. Illustrations accompany this initial instalment of the long article. . . .

One of the remarkable things in human life, viz. *'Perspective'*, is briefly dealt with by Sri Manu Subedar. . . .

Śākta Tantra—dealing with the fascinating and beautiful concept of the Motherhood of God—is the first of a series of four radio talks on *Tāntric Cults* by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., PH.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, broadcast from the Madras Station of the All-India Radio—by whose kind permission we are enabled to publish this script for the benefit of our readers. The remaining talks will be published, one after another, in the following issues. . . .

The interesting and informative article, suitably illustrated, on the *Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium*, Ranchi, is contributed by Dr. Manindranath Sarkar, B.A., M.B., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G., an experienced and highly distinguished doctor, who has visited this unique institntion of the Ramakrishna Mission on several occasions. . . .

Swami Vireswarananda of the Ramakrishna

Order, who is the author of a scholarly translation and annotation of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, based on Shankara's commentary and whose learned rendering of Ramanuja's *Śrī-Bhāṣya* on the First Sutra was published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* serially during the year 1938, now contributes a comprehensive article on *A Comparative Study of the Commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtras*. Commencing with the current issue, the article will be continued in successive instalments. . . .

Dr. A. V. Rao, M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Lucknow, writing with thoroughness and insight, emphasizes the need for the creation of the right type of *Literature* in order to succeed in our efforts at establishing *World Peace* and leading humanity to a higher level of thoughts, feelings, and ways of living. . . .

It is repeatedly asserted by ignorant and misinformed critics of Advaita Vedanta that it is a completely life- and world-negating philosophy. But they will find much food for serious thought in Swami Gambhirananda's admirable exposition of *Some Positive Aspects of Advaita Vedanta*. . . .

The vexed question of the conflict between *Religion and Science* is discussed briefly by Dr. Mohan Lal Sethi, D.Sc., who calls for a new and synthetic outlook that will go a long way in checking the prostitution of science and the bigotry of religion by making science religious and religion scientific. . . .

We wish to share with our readers some details regarding the frontispiece ('The Holy Mother and Sister Nivedita') published in our December 1952 issue. The picture is a reproduction of a photo taken in Calcutta, some time between 1898-1899. From the seating and other arrangements seen in the photo, it seems that the two other poses of the Holy Mother alone, in sitting posture, giving slightly different front views,—one of which is well known,—were taken on the same occasion at the same place. This photo of the Holy Mother with Sister Nivedita was not available in India all these years. It must have been presented by the Sister to the first Countess of Sandwich, who was a daughter of Mrs. Francis H. Leggett, an American disciple of Swami Vivekananda. The photo was handed over to Brahmachari John Yale of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, who met Lord Sandwich on his way to India via England.

EMERGENCE OF NEW INDIA

India today is once more awake, vital, and free, and is seeking to regain her rightful place in the van of civilization. The springs of her national life-current have remained as powerful and sound as ever principally due to the fundamental spiritual unity of her culture. The call of the Vedic sages, addressed to her sons and daughters in the following unequivocal terms, is still ringing in their ears: 'Subdue the senses, give alms, and be compassionate. Practise these three virtues—control of the senses, charity, and compassion' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, V. ii. 3). The tremendous energy and creative vigour which we are witnessing today in the life of our nation are not an expression of her political revival alone. They spring from a deeper level, from the indomitable urge of the Indian spiritual genius for perfection and progress, expressing itself in and through every individual citizen. The impact of India with the West appropriately served to stimulate her life, enabling her to accomplish a fresh spiritual and social readjustment and to revitalize the course of her cultural life.

Addressing the new graduates at the last annual Convocation of the Madras University, Rev. Jerome D'Souza emphasized the important role that they, as the future custodians of the glory and independence of their motherland, have to play in contributing to the emergence of a new and awakened India. He observed:

'It is essential that in our entire education certain fundamental attitudes, in consonance with our historic spirit and our present-day mission, should be sedulously cultivated; that the men, who step out of the portals of the universities and take up their appointed tasks as formed men, should be fixed in those attitudes and imbued with those ideals. I mean the ideals which foster peace,

which foster democratic liberty, social justice, and communal harmony.

'To be convinced upholders of international peace, it is essential that we believe in the possibility of international co-operation, in the workability of a machinery for international arbitration. Our Government have consistently supported the ideal of the United Nations. But an effective international organization is not possible, if States are a law unto themselves, and if the final arbiter in a dispute is power and self-interest. We must acknowledge the primacy of the moral law and the obligation of all men to submit to it even if it should go temporarily against their material interests. It is no use shirking the fact that the problem of peace in the last analysis is a moral and a religious problem. Are we not in danger of losing this firm faith in the primacy of spiritual values? Are we not inclined to think that the secularism of our State implies indifference to religion? No doubt the multiplicity of religious faiths and the violence of religious quarrels have taught us a wise reserve. Specific religious teaching may not be always and everywhere practicable. But an attitude of reverence and faith in cardinal doctrines can and must be inculcated. If the spokesmen of India cease to believe in the fundamental truths, which have upheld mankind through the ages, if they are not, in a very real sense, men of God, then the prestige of India will suffer eclipse'.

The intellectual open-mindedness and the readiness to assimilate new ideas from everywhere and create a harmonious synthesis, which have characterized the civilization of India, are not new in the history of our country. That her civilization is not a fossilized one is more than evident from the historical fact that India has never been impervious to the changing influences of the times, nor lacking the necessary suppleness and elasticity to respond effectively to the challenge of new ideas and conditions. As Rev. D'Souza has pointed out in his address,

'No description of the long course of our secular history would be more untrue to fact than the facile assertion sometimes found in Western writers that Indian civilization, like other Oriental civilizations, reached maturity at an early stage and then sank into a long period of stagnation. That notion is also responsible for the statement, sometimes repeated even by educated Indians, that the study of Indian history is not fruitful of any deep insight into human nature . . . This might be true, if we confine history to the sickening chronicle of wars and the rise and the fall of dynasties. But the true story of man does not lie there. It lies in the activity of his mind, in the way he conceives the nature of his destiny here below, the standard of values which he adopts in the conduct of individual life . . . Far from being fossilized and stagnant, our people have shown throughout the ages an intellectual energy, a dynamic capacity to absorb new ideas, to adjust themselves to changing conditions, and to begin anew after a catastrophe which is without parallel in the history of nations'.

India, true to her genius, gave birth to great spiritual personalities, steeped in the traditions of the motherland and imbued with a rare breadth of vision and assimilative spirit. Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest awakeners of modern India, touched the very heart of the nation when he addressed the following words of benediction to the *Prabuddha Bharata* (or 'Awakened India'),

'Resume thy march,
With gentle feet that would not break the
Peaceful rest, even of the road-side dust
That lies so low. Yet strong and steady,
Blissful, bold, and free. Awakener, ever
Forward. Speak thy stirring words'.

The New India will be neither a pale imitation of the past nor a blind replica of the present-day West. It will be a healthy and harmonious synthesis of her highly perfected spiritual culture and the inventive and practical spirit of the modern times. Reminding the youth of India, especially the educated elite, about the right ideals they have to choose for themselves, Rev. D'Souza dwelt on the essential aspects of the training and instruction that would enable them to assume the responsibilities that will be placed on their shoulders in the years to come and added,

'The life of youth, today more than ever, is not always calm and self-possessed. There are events, contacts, successes, and failures, which lead to intellectual and emotional storms, storms that outmatch in violence the roar of wind and rain . . . In such moments all that seemed eternal and unchangeable disappears from our consciousness. The notion of God, of soul and immortality, of justice and courtesy melt away before the fierce heat of pride and passion. In such moments of moral crisis, let me beg you with all the earnestness I can command: Make not haste in time of clouds. Come to no irrevocable decision, do not

throw to the winds the lessons of a lifetime and the wisdom of the ages. The eternal verities of God and soul and righteousness and harmony among men stand immovable, whatever the violence of passing storms'.

SISTER NIVEDITA ON THE YOUTH OF INDIA

Sister Nivedita was not only an indefatigable champion of the cause of Indian women but also a dauntless and forceful inspirer of the youth of India. In the year 1902 she paid a visit to Nagpur and delivered some inspiring lectures there. Recalling the events of this occasion, Sri G. V. Deshmukh of Nagpur, who had attended some of her lectures and also had the opportunity of meeting her, records his valuable reminiscences of Sister Nivedita in his book, in Marathi, entitled *Kāla Samudrātil Ratne*. The following excerpts are from a translation, received from the author, of those portions of his book that relate to Sister Nivedita:

'In the year 1902 Sister Nivedita, the disciple of . . . Swami Vivekananda, had come to Nagpur, about the Dasserah time, and delivered spirited lectures here. The Morris College students arranged a ceremony of distribution of prizes under her presidentship, on the day of *paḍhan*—the day before the Dasserah day, when arms are worshipped, to such individuals of a cricket team as had done well in a cricket match. The main idea was to create an opportunity to hear her lecture. The function was in the morning, in the Drawing Hall of the Neil City School. I was then in the Morris College and so attended this function. She distributed the prizes, but took advantage of the opportunity to rebuke the Morris College students for taking pride in playing foreign games and for encouraging these while neglecting their own national games. She even said that she would not have presided over the function if she had known what the function was going to be. It was a day on which arms were worshipped. And Goddess Durga was the presiding deity to be worshipped during the Dasserah days. So, Sister Nivedita was surprised how we could have forgotten the Goddess Durga and Her sword and also Her Message! She had expected, she said, in this capital of the Bhonsla Rajas, to see on that day something of the bravery of the Marathas . . . She went on castigating the audience, consisting of college students and professors. All this might have been swallowed—and was swallowed—by most of the hearers, with a wry face, but what caused them worry was the immediate expression by Nivedita of her desire to see sword-play, wrestling, and such other activities of a martial character the next day, i.e. on the Dasserah day. After she left, a search was made to get some college students to give a good demonstration of sword-play, wrestling, etc. The professors (except Prof. M.) and most of the students left the hall with the satisfaction that they had heard a good lecture—a lecture full of fire and fury, well delivered and with patriotic fervour. They had come for that and theirs was no other business. But Prof. M. was anxious that Sister Nivedita should not go disappointed and with a bad impression about the educated boys of this place. He spoke to some students about it. They mentioned names of four persons including myself. Of these I only knew fencing, sword-play, lathi-play, etc. On my being asked by Prof. M. to arrange a demonstration of these things as desired by Sister Nivedita, I consulted with some of my friends and an exhibition of sword-play, wrestling, etc. was fixed up in the Morris College Hostel.

'On the appointed day, Sister Nivedita, the professors, and most of the students took their seats. I, with my colleagues, took part in most of the items. The function was over in about three hours. This was in fact the first time we gave public demonstration of these feats before college students and teachers who generally used to think derogatorily of those young men who attended Akhādas and practised use of sword, lathi, and such other weapons of offence and defence. I happened to mention this fact casually in the presence of the professors and the students to Sister Nivedita.

'She said to me, "You are college students, are you not?"

' "Yes", I said, "I am; not the rest".

'This made her address a few words to the gathering of students and, as far as I remember, she said something to the following effect:

' "We are having too much of higher education and too many graduates are turned out of the universities, who are completely physical wrecks, unfit to protect themselves, their mothers, or their sisters in times of difficulties. Such weaklings can be of no use to society. The country needs robust and patriotic men instead of persons who serve a foreign government and dominate over their countrymen. They alone can uplift the country. You should feel disgusted to perpetuate the authoritarian rule of a foreign government by serving it".'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CHIEF CURRENTS OF CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY. By Dr. Dhirendra Mohan Datta. *Published by the University of Calcutta, Senate House, Calcutta. Pages 557. Price Rs. 10-8*

In Dr. Dhirendra Mohan Datta, the recently elected President of the Indian Philosophical Congress, we have a thinker whose competence has been evidenced in a series of weighty publications. The early note he contributed to the British Philosophical Quarterly *Mind* (1927), in which he attempted a spirited defence of verbal testimony as an independent and valid source of knowledge, is worth remembering. His present volume is a survey of trends in Anglo-American, Continental, and Indian Philosophy during the last hundred years or so. It opens with an excellent account of the great Neo-Hegelians: Stirling, Green, Caird, McTaggart, Lord Haldane, Bradley, Bosanquet, and Royce. Importance is attached to Stirling's 'transformation of Kant' in his *The Secret of Hegel* and his declaration: 'I have not sought, and do not seek, to be considered a disciple'. But, as Muirhead pointed out in his article 'How Hegel came to England', contributed to *Mind* (Vol. XXXVI), although Stirling brought Hegel, 'he cannot be said to have naturalized him there'. Dr. Datta stresses the key concept of identity-in-difference reached through a reinterpretation of the Laws of Identity, Contradiction, and Excluded Middle. Caird's opinion that all that Hegel denied was the absolute validity of the traditional 'Laws of Thought' is quoted. We know that G. R. G. Mure has advanced the considered opinion in his *An Introduction to Hegel* that the antithesis is not the *negation* of the thesis but the *negated* thesis and so stands on a different level. Dr. Datta's account should compel us to notice Mure's magnificent apology for Hegel in his recently published *A Study of Hegel's Logic*: 'Between passive and active, particular and universal, sense and thought, there may be chasms which philosophy can never finally cross, but the demand that they be bridged is the very essence of philosophic thinking. . . .' Dr. Datta makes a very appropriate reference to Dr. Haldar's treatment of Personality in the long Appendix to his *Neo-Hegelianism* which is still the most authoritative book on the Neo-Hegelians written by an Indian. Dr. Haldar's position is, of course, that the Absolute can be a Self as well as a system of selves.

Dr. Datta's chapter on 'Italian Idealism' summarizes the teaching of Croce and Gentile. Although Croce accepted Hegel's conflict of opposites in a sense, he revolted against the identification of Logic with Reality. Reality is unambiguously a process rather than an 'eternal structure'. Croce attempted also to provide for the non-logical manifestations of Spirit. In Gentile the emphasis on history is, for anything, heavier. But he recognizes Spirit as Self-consciousness, Subject and Object in one, growing multiplicity out of itself without losing identity. Dr. Datta does not refer to the return to religious philosophy in Italy in more recent times. Olgiati saw no difference between mysticism and metaphysics as regards the object (God), but only as regards the mode of apprehension.

A distinctive feature of the book is the discussion of Indian Idealism. The outlines of Dr. Radhakrishnan's philosophy are familiar to every educated layman, but K. C. Bhattacharya is not so widely known. One source of his philosophy, namely the concept of the 'Indefinite', requires careful attention. Dr. Datta shows how Bhattacharya corrects the dogmatism of rival 'logics' by the admission of the 'Indefinite' and erects a metaphysic on that basis.

The account of the Pragmatists, James, Schiller, and Dewey in the book is most informative. One does not miss anything except perhaps a short comparison of Pragmatism with the 'Philosophie de l'action' fashioned by the French Voluntarists Blondel and Laberthonnière. Blondel censured Anglo-Saxon Pragmatism for making 'Action' an extrinsic criterion of Truth. 'Action' is not the result of synthesis but the living synthesis itself. God is immanent in the human will, but is also transcendent so far as the goal of 'Action' cannot be an object for the understanding. In Laberthonnière's philosophy, the will is transfigured by Love. Reality is a unity of individuals bound by Love. Anglo-American Pragmatism has not always led to predominantly religious consequences although, as Dr. Datta remarks, James was preoccupied with problems of religious experience.

Bergson's Temporalism has often been studied for its tremendous impact on the age. Alexander even declared that the recognition of the importance of Time is the gate of wisdom. Students will find that Dr. Datta has given a comprehensive account of Bergson's philosophy marshalling passages skillfully. The 'dichotomy' of 'intellect' and 'intuition' is handled most sympathetically. The discussion of Neo-Realism and Critical Realism is scarcely less admirable. The Neo-Realists hankered after direct

awareness of the object while the Critical Realists were out to insist that cognition is a 'salutation not an embrace' as Santayana put it vividly. Dr. S. Z. Hasan pointed out in his elaborate book *Realism* that Critical Realism chronologically follows Neo-Realism, but logically is prior to it. The subtleties of the 'sense-data' of Moore, Russell, Broad, and Price do not escape Dr. Datta. Whitehead's 'Philosophy of Organism' and 'Emergent Evolution' claim two chapters. Lloyd Morgan and Alexander are the two emergentists whose theses are examined. Space limitations probably prevented Dr. Datta from referring to Smuts's 'Holism', Boodin's 'Cosmic Evolution', Northrop's 'Macroscopic Atom', Conger's 'World of epitomization', Noble's 'Evolution', and Overstreet's 'Enduring Quest'.

Dr. Datta makes the readers aware of the scope and limitations of Marxism and Logical Positivism. One misses, however, mention of the advances made possible by the method of 'truth-tables'. Frege was the first to maintain that mathematics was a part of logic, but he fell foul of the difficulties created by the theory of aggregates. Russell attempted to escape the fate by a theory of types. The 'Axiom of Reducibility' assumed that corresponding to any characteristic of a higher order, there was a characteristic of a lower order. Wittgenstein held that all propositions express agreement and disagreement with truth-possibilities of atomic propositions. Thus the propositional function 'x is red' determines a collection of propositions which are its values and we can assert that all or at least one of these values are/is true by saying 'For all x, x is red' and 'There is an x such that x is red' respectively. Given n atomic propositions, there are 2^n truth-possibilities, and we can agree with any set of these and disagree with the rest. There are two extreme cases: One in which we agree with all the possibilities and another in which we agree with none. The first gives us a 'tautology' and the second a 'contradiction'. All the primitive propositions in the *Principia Mathematica* can be regarded as 'tautologies' with the exception of the Axiom of Reducibility. Dr. Datta's book presumably went to press too soon to notice the Critiques of Logical Positivism offered by W. M. F. Barnes and C. E. M. Joad.

A noticeable omission in the book is the absence of any reference to Existentialism which is an influential contemporary school of philosophy on the Continent. It would be a mistake to suppose that all Existentialism is loose, incoherent, imaginative philosophy, judging by the wilder utterances of Sartre. The original Existentialism of Sören Kierkegaard deserves careful study by Indian philosophers not only because of the penetrating criticism of Hegel it offers, but also because of its profoundly religious implications. Heidegger takes ontology for his point of departure. He is interested not in Descartes's 'I think' (*Cogito*) but in the 'I am' (*sum*). 'I am in a world of things' (*Dasein-in-der-Welt-Sein*). Heidegger's insistence that death is a part of life influencing all that man does or thinks—Man is *Sein zum Tod*—has implications for the metaphysics of time.

The appendix to the book, reprinted from the American *Philosophical Review*, makes appreciative references to Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Gandhi, and Tagore. The dates set against Swami Vivekananda's name should be corrected to 1863-1902. Among the major trends of Indian philosophy which deserve world recognition, Dr. Datta mentions the following: the persistent attempt to survey *all* the aspects of human experience; catholicity of thought with the recognition of human freedom; an emphasis on unity; the realization that philosophy is *for life*. The book can be unreservedly recommended as a manual for students of philosophy at various Indian universities and as a source-book for all non-professional philosophers. Dr. Datta is a sure-footed guide.

C. T. K. CHARI

MAHATMA (LIFE OF M. K. GANDHI) (VOL. V). BY D. G. TENDULKAR. *Distributors: Publications Department, The Times of India Press, Fort, Bombay 1. Pages 460. Price Rs. 25.*

The historic account of the emergence of Gandhiji as a leader of extraordinary eminence, possessing great influence over the masses and effectively striving for the consolidation of the Indian people into one united nation, was vividly and systematically dealt with by the learned biographer in the preceding four volumes of this series. The evolution of Gandhiji's dynamic philosophy of action in the social, political, and cultural life of the nation is a fascinating chapter in the long and chequered history of this sub-continent. The fourth volume had ended with the events of the year 1937, —hinting at the gathering war-clouds which later burst out, enveloping the globe, and revealing Gandhiji's insistence on and advice to stand by non-violence in peace or war. There were rumblings in several parts of the country, including the Indian States. He brought the scattered forces to a focus and directed the people's movement.

The fifth volume now under review, depicts Gandhiji's re-emergence in the political field as a 'warrior of peace', during a critical period, when his thought and action, inspired by his supreme faith in the non-violence of the strong, gave courage to the people of a warring world and urged them to follow the path of supreme self-sacrifice and service. The period (1938-1940) covered by the present volume witnessed great changes,—some of

which were in a way most momentous in the world's history,—following the outbreak of the second world war. Gandhiji's experiments in non-violence were put to severe test during these crucial years. On the one hand was the insistent and patriotic demand for national freedom; on the other the compelling pressure of the international political situation which sought to draw India into the vortex of the war. How Gandhiji succeeded in fighting back the forces of unholy violence with his new weapon of non-violence can be gathered by going through the fascinating and well-documented chapters of this volume. From the inspiring writings and speeches of Gandhiji on the subject of war resistance and Ahimsa, appropriately reproduced here by the learned biographer, it becomes clear that Gandhiji had set before himself the Herculean task of transforming the philosophy of non-violence from a personal creed into a mighty social force. While the entire world was plunged into gloom and confusion, as the tempo of war rose in Europe, Gandhiji, with his characteristic wisdom and foresight, followed a consistent policy during the period, even at the risk of being misunderstood.

The war had its repercussions on the internal situation in India. There were leaders within the Congress who differed from Gandhiji on some of the vital issues of policy and programme. The passing of events, with special reference to the Congress organization, especially the stormy Tripuri Congress session and the Rajkot fast, are chronologically described in detail in these pages. The reader is also led through the familiar and prominent avenues of the contemporary Indian political scene, such as the meetings and parleys between the Congress and the Government and the Congress and the Muslim League, Gandhiji's exhortation to Indians to 'spin for Swaraj', the dissolution of the Gandhi Seva Sangha, and the Ramgarh session of the Congress in 1940. The silent but steady influence of Gandhiji is easily discernible in the cautious and clearcut approach adopted by the Congress towards the problems of the minorities, the non-violent struggle for independence, and the war.

As a protest against the involvement of India in the war without the people's consent, Gandhiji advised non-violent civil disobedience. As the movement was gathering momentum, the Government sought to weaken it by calling all parties to a conference for forming a 'united front' for the efficient prosecution of the war. The talks having failed, Gandhiji unfolded his new plan of individual civil disobedience, with Vinoba Bhave as the first individual chosen by him to start this movement. This was the beginning of Gandhiji's assertion of the right of free speech and the preparation for fight against the gagging orders during the war period of 1938-1940.

These three years, crowded with intense political activity were not without corresponding activities in the social and cultural fields. We see Gandhiji pleading for the adoption of and pursuading opponents to agree to prohibition, which he considered vitally necessary for India. Some of the most readable portions of the volume graphically deal with Gandhiji's meeting with Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan, his interview with Dr. Fabri, a Hungarian Buddhist, on the question of prayer and its efficacy, his discussions with Dr. Kagawa, a Japanese and sponsor of co-operative movement, and interviews with journalists and members of various Christian denominations, Indian and foreign,--all of which possess an intrinsic interest of their own.

The wealth of illustrations and documents in facsimile and the excellent get-up make this volume as attractive as its predecessors.

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI. By Gopinath Dhawan. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-9. Pages 415. Price Rs. 6.*

This scholarly treatise, approved for the Doctorate of Philosophy of the Lucknow University, bears ample testimony to the author's factual understanding and critical appraisal of the Gandhian philosophy of life and action. The book was first published in 1946 by different publishers; it has been revised by the author for this second edition.

Gandhiji, as we all know, was essentially the creator of a new vision and made the supreme, far-reaching experiment of his time to vindicate the truth-claims of that vision. He had such tremendous power over the springs of human action that he could conquer the age-long inertia of his countrymen and even the resistance of a mighty alien power to his ideas. As such, Gandhiji remains the most symbolic revolutionary figure of the modern age—an age all distracted in its frantic efforts to 'save' itself from its own nihilisin, to escape from the senselessnes of violence that attaches to 'all life in the flesh'. To co-ordinate the thoughts and utterances of such an energized personality and set them forth in the context of the fundamental, organic ideas of Ahimsa and Satyagraha is itself an uphill task and the author has very creditably performed that task.

Almost at the outset he advisedly devotes three entire chapters to the discussion of the metaphysical and ethical implications of these pivotal ideas and never side-steps the issues, but faces them with a scrupulous regard for the subtle, abstract distinctions of thought. Ordinarily we do not seem to

be particular about these distinctions in our impatience to get a workable knowledge of Gandhiji's political philosophy. But surely it is now high time that we searchingly study that philosophy, and if we are to do so, we must raise these metaphysical questionings and understand them. In explaining these difficult philosophical issues, the learned author observes admirable watchfulness of thought and expression. Similar watchfulness characterizes his exposition of the non-violent theory of the State and his criticism of the view that non-violence is a form of coercion, though on a higher plane. But as we follow the author in his exposition of this subject, we are confronted with a fundamental problem of political philosophy. One may no doubt recognize and accept non-violence as a means to the reconciling or harmonizing of wills, as a way of life securing the optimum social and political freedom for the individual. From this it does not follow that one must accept non-violence as a means to the reconciling or harmonizing of wants and desires, and it is by the measure of its success in this direction that the modern political theorist will judge it. Moreover, the author, in his exposition, follows the older, absolutist method in political philosophy, which used to judge its concepts by criteria drawn from themselves. This defect in the method becomes all the more conspicuous when he comes to discuss Gandhiji's view-point regarding social questions. At this point one cannot but feel that, instead of arguing on the merits of the case, the author is eager to show how the Gandhian view-point falls in with the recent findings of Western social thinkers and psychologists and as such has to be accepted without any further scrutiny. This appears more like that of an advocate who is already sure of his case, but has to quote recent authorities.

However, the book has the shining merit of being a learned and serious introduction to Gandhian political philosophy as a whole. One may not find the book rise to the full height of a profound and comprehensive work; but that being not the author's claim either, it can safely be recommended as a conscientious text-book, written with commendable lucidity and precision of exposition of the subject-matter.

MAKHANLAL MUKHERJI.

WONDERS OF THE TIME-SPACE. By SWAMI MADHAVATIRTHA. *Published by Vedanta Ashrama, Post Valad, Station Medra (Ahmedabad Prantiya Ry.). Pages 320. Price Rs. 3.*

This is an intriguing book. The author has sought to support an idealistic philosophy of the extreme sort, the *māyā-vāda,* from the new physical theories of Relativity and Quantum Theory. Milder and more cautious attempts in this direction on the part of Eddington and Jeans have met with virulent attacks from both pure physicists and from pure philosophers who have pointed out that natural science, either modern or old, has certain presuppositions, categories of thought like space, time, matter, and causality, which it cannot transcend or change. It cannot experimentally prove false the very pre-conditions of experiment. New physics has not altered the fundamental concepts which operate under ordinary conditions. Thus, in case of observations taken at an observer's neighbourhood, when his relative velocity is small compared to that of light, the ordinary concepts of simultaneity, succession, space, and time remain intact. It is only for astronomical distances and velocities comparable to light velocity that certain differences appear. Similarly for ordinary particles the causal laws hold, but for electrons and others there is some uncertainty. So the author should have first shown how new physical theories affect our views of things we deal with in ordinary life. Again, the new physics points out that the observer's position, velocity, and apparatus affect his observations which are thus relative. But it does not say that the observations are relative to the observer's mind; and it cannot say so for it is not psychology or epistemology. The idealistic theory could be maintained in spite of the new physical theories. The author has given many illustrations of space and time being felt as subjective, but has not shown how this is a consequence of Relativity physics which postulates an objective space-time. One's separate space and time measurements are relative, but not space-time or what is called 'interval'. Again, the new physics may have new patterns (or forms of organization) of events; but how can it show the events to be subjective or illusory? Measurement conditions the internal relations of the brute given, not the given themselves, which are the pre-conditions of every scientific venture.

These and other difficulties must be overcome before new physics can be shown to support *māyā-vāda,* which may be said to be the ultimate philosophical standpoint. The author is an acute thinker and his exposition of the *māyā-vāda* doctrine and its good ethical consequences is very revealing, marked by intuitive flashes. But his exposition of Relativity and Quantum theories and their philosophical applications is rather stiff for the layman. However, the book will be highly interesting for a large section of intelligent readers. There are many novel points of view which provide food for thought and imagination.

P. J. CHAUDHURY

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1937-1951

The Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium, ideally situated in a dry and salubrious climate and in quiet surroundings, about 10 miles from Ranchi town, to the east of the Ranchi-Chaibassa road, marks a great achievement in the sphere of medical relief work conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission. As early as 1937 a scheme for establishing a full-fledged modern T.B. sanatorium was formulated. And in 1939 the necessary plot of land was taken on permanent lease. Though, along with the procurement of the land, some money was collected and preliminary arrangements made for the erection of buildings, the actual constructions could not be taken up until 1948 owing to the obvious difficulties during and immediately after the war. Even then work could not be speeded up for various reasons. Financial difficulties stood and are still standing in the way of the full implementation of the original scheme which under present-day conditions costs nearly four times the original estimate. After the completion of some of the essential buildings, the Sanatorium was formally declared open by Dr. Anugraha Narayan Sinha, Finance Minister, Government of Bihar, on 27th January 1951.

Accommodation: During 1951 there was accommodation for 40 patients in the Sanatorium. Of these, 28 beds were in the General Ward, 7 in the Special Ward, and 5 in Cottages. 10 patients were maintained free, 5 by the Government of Bihar, and 5 by the management of the Sanatorium. 6 patients enjoyed considerable concessions. One double-bedded cottage was completed during the year and one single-bedded cottage was nearing completion at the end of the year. A ten-bedded ward also was under construction in 1951. (This has been recently declared open).

During 1951 the maximum number of patients undergoing treatment in the Sanatorium at a time was 41. 57 patients were admitted during the year, and at the end of the year, after 16 had been discharged and one had taken leave, there were 40 patients. The total number of applicants for admission during the year was 248.

Classified according to the stages of the disease, 18 patients were in the second stage and the rest in the third.

Surgical Aid, X-ray, and Clinical Laboratory: During 1951, 8 Phrenic Crushes and one Intrapleural Pneumolysis were performed. Facilities for handling all types of surgical cases were not available in the beginning. But the position will considerably improve when the new operation theatre, under construction at the end of the period under report, is completed. There were 314 Artificial Pneumothorax and 299 Pneumoperitonium injections.

In the X-ray department, more than 150 skiagrams were taken and 252 Fluoroscopic exminations were carried out.

The total number of routine examinations of blood, urine, sputum, etc., carried out in the Clinical Laboratory, was 805.

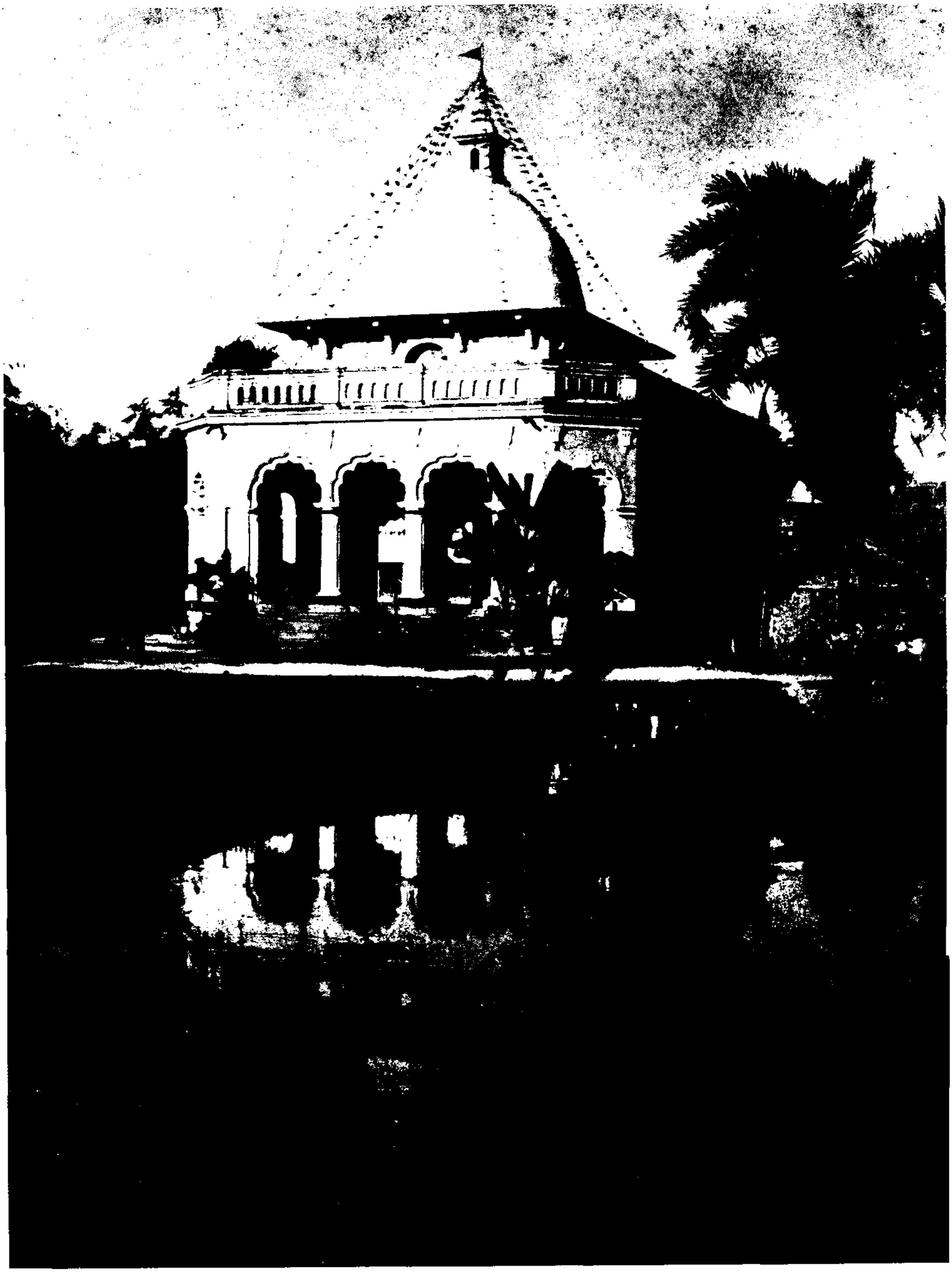
Out-patients' Department: During the year some outpatients suffering from tuberculosis came for consultation and also for their A.P. and P.P. refills, etc.

An outdoor Homoeopathic Dispensary was maintained for the benefit of the local villagers, the majority of whom were poor Adivasis. The number of patients treated during the years 1948-1951 was 14,666, of whom 10,301 were new cases. Modern anti-malarial drugs were also distributed.

Needs: The aim of the Sanatorium is to provide treatment free of charge to as many people as possible, maintaining at least 50 per cent of the General Ward beds free of all charges. For the realization of this aim, the management of the Sanatorium have to depend entirely on public help and co-operation. The management have plans also for the maintenance of dairy, poultry, and agricultural farms, and also an ex-patients' colony which will provide suitable occupation for cured and discharged patients who would like to stay in the Sanatorium. 6 ex-patients discharged from different sanatoria found shelter here—3 being absorbed in the activities of the Sanatorium and 3 convalescing at the end of 1951 (2 of whom were maintained free by the Sanatorium).

There is also the proposal for the construction of a masonry dam on the adjoining rivulet to ensure adequate water supply to the Sanatorium and the agricultural farm, at an estimated cost of Rs. 12,000. The project, after considerable progress, still remains unfinished, due to paucity of funds.

Funds are also required by the Sanatorium for the maintenance of a general library, for radio sets and microphone, and for the purchase of a portable projector, for the entertainment of the patients.



Matri-Mandir at Holy Mother's Place of Nativity