

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LVIII

MAY 1953

No. 5



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य चरान्निबोधत ।”

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

SARADA SANCTIFIED

BY HENRIETTE GIRRE

In its rapid whirlpool the strong spiritual flow
Drags Sārādā¹ onward, to where she does not know,
In the wake of her lord. Just as a violin
In a virtuoso's hands, she too quivers akin,
Moved to a tremolo of sheer jubilation
Which at times is nearing exultation.

Does she ever suspect that as the *Ṣoḍaśī*²
Soon she will be adored? Many a devotee
Has already entered Kālī's³ own sanctuary
With the animation and deep expectancy
Which usually precedes the coming of twilight.
The Master, in his room, has, at the fall of night,
Bidden his wife to a Pūjā he will celebrate.
Earnest and expectant, unaware of the fate
That awaits her, she comes; he then asks her
To take the very place reserved to the Mother.

¹ Sri Sarada Devi, the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna, well known among his followers as the Holy Mother.

² See *To Our Readers*.

³ The Divine Mother of the Universe.

Wondering, she obeys to suit his own fancy.
 Her face is reflecting the evening's glory.
 A semi-ecstasy is affecting her eye.
 She is with water sprinkled, and by and by
 She has the notion of a confused whisper
 Of an invocation to the Divine Mother
 In her name: 'O Supreme Refuge, Eternal Deity,
 Granter of all Powers and source of all Beauty,
 May you open to me the doors of perfection
 And may this creature be, through your Compassion
 Sanctified in body and spirit, and become
 An image of Thyself to whom all men may come
 In all humility and fervent devotion
 For advise and for help and benediction.
 Through the sacred Nyāsa,⁴ pray identify her,
 To yourself; most gracious and Divine Mother,
 Most infinite Virgin and consort of Śiva'.

They unite as Ganges unites with Jamuna
 At waters' confluence. Extreme exaltation!
 Most wonderful moment of intense devotion
 Where the Master's fervour integrates Sārādā
 To ultimate consciousness, to *Saccidānanda*.⁵

In this spiritual peace, for many hours they stay,
 And when the worshipper returns at dawn of day
 To a more formal world, in supreme excitement,
 And hesitating not for a single moment,
 He abandons himself, everything that he is,
 His rosary, the fruit of his austerities
 To the sweet lotus feet of Kāli the Mother.
 With a sacred Mantra he then magnifies her:
 'O three-eyed Deity, Lady of golden hue
 In whom all creatures live, I prostrate before you
 In pious earnestness and deep veneration.
 You, worthier than any of adoration,
 Pour numerous blessings upon the devotees
 Who come to worship you and plead for your bounties'.

⁴ *Nyāsa* is a form of ritual which consists in touching the different parts of the body with appropriate Mantras and identifying them in mind with the different parts of the Deity.

⁵ *Sat-cit-ānanda*: A name of the Ultimate Reality, meaning Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.

The Pūjā is over, Sārādā sanctified
 As the Holy Mother; even so dignified
 She bows to the Master and humbly finds her way
 Back to the Nahabat.⁶ On this auspicious day
 In the book of her life opens a new chapter
 Where Spirit is foremost. Between her lord and her
 There is no barrier left, and all his excellence
 Has been to her granted. In divine effulgence
 She has merged for ever and is now branded
 With the sign of the One who by grace divided
 In them both, with a view that devoted Jivas⁷
 May unite with their God through numerous Bhāvas.⁸

⁶ The name of the small building near the Kāli Temple wherein the Holy Mother used to reside while at Dakshineswar.

⁷ Embodied beings.

⁸ Emotional attitudes a worshipper may assume towards God.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

BY KUMUD BANDHU SEN

The Holy Mother came to Calcutta from her native village in March 1898, and was staying in a rented house at Bosepara Lane, quite close to the residence of Girish Chandra Ghosh.¹ The house, a south-facing two-storied building of recent construction, was not far from the river Ganges. The Holy Mother had always, even from her childhood, cherished a special reverential liking for the Ganges and whenever she happened to stay in Calcutta she used to bathe in the river often. Swami Yogananda² also stayed in this house and used to live in one of the rooms on the ground floor overlooking the road. There was a room on either side of the front entrance of the house, one of which the Swami used as his drawing-room. Visitors calling on the Swami and devotees coming for the Holy Mother's *darśan* could wait in either of these rooms. The Mother's room was on the

first floor. Brahmachari K. used to attend to the household duties in general, under the supervision of Swami Yogananda, and also render special services to the Mother by way of shopping, etc. Golāp-Mā³ was also staying there as the constant companion and attendant of the Mother. Yogin-Mā,⁴ who lived close by, used to visit the Mother frequently and spend most of her time in her company. Streams of women devotees, from far and near, kept continuously flowing into the house. The Holy Mother was easily approachable to all who sought her *darśan* and most of the devotees looked upon her as a saint, goddess, or incarnation of the Divine Mother. Mother's affectionate and amiable nature and her solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the devotees deeply impressed and influenced many women, who started coming to her regularly not only for her *darśan* but also to obtain guidance from her in the solu-

¹ The great actor-dramatist of Bengal and a staunch devotee of Sri Ramakrishna.

² A Sannyasin disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

³ A woman disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

⁴ Another woman disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

tion of their various spiritual and secular problems.

I used to go to the Mother's place quite often to have her *darśan* and holy company. I was present on an occasion when the Holy Mother, addressing a woman devotee, said: 'Don't be afraid. Human birth is full of suffering and one has to endure everything patiently by taking the name of God. Rely on Thākūr (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) and he will save you from your misery and bestow on you peace of mind. None, not even God in human form, can avoid the sufferings of the body and mind. This is the inexorable law of Nature and applies to all creatures. Even Avataras, saints, and sages have to undergo this ordeal of suffering, for they take upon themselves the burden of the sins of omission and commission of ordinary beings and thereby sacrifice themselves for the good of humanity. The unselfish love and compassion of these great souls for suffering mankind is such that they realize that their own happiness lies in working for the happiness of and giving solace to the millions who are stricken with grief and repentance. Take the name of the Lord and contemplate the great sufferings that Thakur had to undergo for taking upon himself the results of the bad Karma of others and then you will find that your body and mind are purified. Your grief and misery will pale into insignificance if you only remember how he (meaning Sri Ramakrishna), though absolutely pure and of divine origin, suffered for the sake of others and yet did not miss even for a moment his ecstatic joy and blissful contemplation of the Divine Mother.

'Look at Naren,⁵ who is also of divine origin and full of purity from his infancy and about whom Thakur mentioned that he was a Rishi, a great sage! Though fully imbued with the spirit of renunciation and an all-embracing love and immersed in the eternal joy of communion with the Infinite, he has been suffering for the good of others. Think

⁵ Shortened form of 'Narendra', the pre-monastic name of Swami Vivekananda.

of them and then your misery will vanish and your mind will be illumined with divine light. The easiest and best way of solving the problems of life is to take the name of God, of Thakur, in silence. Thinking of him alone and contemplating on the great sufferings he underwent for the welfare of all creatures, you will easily be able to appreciate the glory of suffering and also get strength enough to face all misfortunes and crises. With the grace of Thakur, sufferings, though seeming terrible outwardly, contribute ultimately to the purification of the body and mind'.

The woman devotee, to whom the Holy Mother had addressed these words, stood speechless with joy unspeakable at heart and her face brightened up with the glow of hope and cheerfulness.

Looking graciously at me, the Mother said: 'Think of Thakur constantly. He is your hope and refuge. While performing Japa, take the name of God with the utmost love, sincerity, and spirit of self-surrender. Before commencing your meditation, daily, first think of your utter helplessness in this world and then slowly begin the practice of Sādhanā as directed by your Guru'.

Numerous were the visitors to the Mother's house,—men, women, and children came to pay their respects to and get inspiration from holy association with the Mother and the Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who used to come there very often. Gopāler-Mā⁶ came there occasionally and every time she came she would stay on for a few days. Many persons from various parts of Calcutta, who attended the weekly meetings of the recently started Ramakrishna Mission, usually on Sunday afternoons, were amongst the frequent callers at the Mother's place. People were no less attracted by the inspiring presence of Swami Vivekananda in such meetings. Swami Yogananda, who was looking after the Holy Mother, would carefully regulate new visitors who sought interviews with the Mother. Only a select few, whom he thought

⁶ 'Gopal's Mother' or Aghoremani Devi, a deeply devoted woman disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

were sincerely earnest about the spiritual life, were allowed by him to approach the Mother. He himself would speak to and satisfy all the others.

Swami Brahmananda⁷ too used to come to the Mother's place often and was seen to remain closeted with Swami Yogananda, the two discussing various matters between them for long hours. I remember one occasion in particular when I was present at the Mother's place and Swami Brahmananda came on one of his visits there. He and Swami Yogananda were sitting together in the latter's room. I was called by Swami Brahmananda and asked to bring writing materials and write out a letter in Bengali which he dictated to me. The purport of that letter is still fresh in my memory. It was addressed to Swami A., then in America, and written as from the Holy Mother to him. Mother desired, in the letter, that he should go to a quiet retreat, preferably a health resort, in that country, in order to take some rest and also to devote himself more exclusively to silent meditation for a brief period before recommencing his strenuous preaching work. She also advised him not to continue to stay too long at a stretch in the West, but to visit India once in a few years and renew his contacts with and

⁷ One of the leading Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

enjoy the company of his brother disciples (Gurubhāis). She suggested that he should willingly take the kind of food that is easily and commonly available in that country and that would at the same time be conducive to the local climate and to the fatiguing intellectual work he was called upon to do. In conclusion, Mother again insisted that he should go on a holiday for a time, to some solitary place, and engage himself in meditation. When I had completed writing the letter, the Swamis asked me to take it upstairs to the Mother, read it out to her carefully, and get her approval. As I read the letter in her presence, Mother was seen to be in a serious mood, calmly listening to every word. At the end she seemed happy and said to me, 'Tell Yogen⁸ and Rākhāl⁹ that the letter is well written and that my wishes have been correctly conveyed. It has my full approval'.

It struck me then as something very remarkable that the work of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission everywhere and the activities of the great Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, even in far off countries, were lovingly guided and blessed by the Holy Mother. Her advice and decisions were sought and gladly accepted by even these spiritual giants headed by Swami Vivekananda.

⁸ Swami Yogananda's pre-monastic name.

⁹ Swami Brahmananda's pre-monastic name.

"YE SUFFER FROM YOURSELVES, NONE ELSE COMPELS"

BY THE EDITOR

Simple though it may seem, it would be true to say that man is the architect of his own destiny. Individuals and communities striving after progress and perfection make sure of their distinctive ideals and proceed to work along the line of least resistance and greatest advantage. The aims and values of

life determine for every person what he must be and what he ought to do in order to be worthy of his human heritage. The ethical tenet, implicit in human action, that each doer is and should be ultimately responsible for everything he does gives meaning and significance to character and conduct and

relates the individual to the universal and the eternal. In all creative activity—moral, artistic, and cultural—men seek comfort in the realization of perfect identity, as active, efficient agents, between the creator and the things created. But not commonly so where conflict, discord, and destruction are concerned. Man is the creator of as much chaos as concord, though he is commonly seen to take credit for the latter and blame everybody except himself for the former. A dispassionate analysis of the joys and sorrows in life can reveal the truth, not often understood, that they are more or less equally balanced and alternately allotted by a divine direction which is almost always present in the affairs of men. Yet, scarcely do we come across persons who rightly discern this palpable actuality of relative existence and who do not exaggerate or minimize the one or the other.

All work is by nature composed of good and evil. One cannot do any work which will not be of some good somewhere and at the same time cause some harm elsewhere. The general principle that good action will entail upon us good effect and bad action bad is not an unverified assumption. Karma is a hydra-headed monster which spreads endlessly, creating sorrow and suffering, unless held in check by the weapon of Karma Yoga. Our Karma determines what we deserve, either happiness or sorrow. We are responsible for what we are, because, by the law of causation it is apparent that everything happens as a result of a previous cause, in an endless chain of cause and effect. 'Who sows must reap and cause must bring the sure effect: good good, bad bad; and none escape the law'. The root-causes or Samskāras being there, they manifest and form the effects. The cause gathers momentum and becomes gross and tangible when it is seen as the effect, and again the effect wears down and grows subtle and becomes the cause of the next effect. Even as a tree bears a seed which becomes the cause of another tree, our present thoughts and actions have sprung from our past ones, and these, becoming Samskaras in their turn,

will give rise to our future thoughts and actions.

In the *Yoga Sūtra*, Patanjali says that the cause being there, the fruit must come, and this fruition comes in the form of species of beings, length of life, and experience of pleasure and pain. The first, viz. species (*jāti*), explains how one is born as an angel, another as man, and a third as an animal or one of the lower forms of life. The second, viz. length of life (*āyuh*) accounts for obvious variations in the period of sojourn on earth of mortals and of residence in other worlds of heavenly beings. Then comes the third and most significant fruit of past Karma, viz. experiences of innumerable variety, differing from man to man, which may broadly be divided into two groups—pleasurable and painful. 'They bear fruit as pleasure or pain, caused by virtue or vice', says Patanjali. Virtuous actions bring pleasure and the opposite bring pain and suffering. One who indulges in wicked deeds reaps their fruits in the form of misery. Man enjoys or suffers as a result of his own past deeds. Born a slave to Nature, to wealth, and sense-enjoyment, man goes through an innumerable round of lives and repeatedly falls into misery without obtaining the ephemeral joy he seeks. His goal is unmixed happiness, not mere cessation of misery, and he continues to run headlong after his goal, little realizing that happiness and misery are the obverse and reverse of the same coin and that if he wants the former he must perforce expect and accept the latter.

The man of good sense and with discriminating powers sees through this infatuating and perplexing riddle of alternating pleasure and pain and does not permit himself to be deluded by it. He observes how men of secular urges and animal instincts follow an *ignis fatuus* all their lives and are not growing wise even after repeated failures and disappointments. When their desires are not fulfilled they are naturally frustrated and they wrongly attribute their consequent sufferings to extraneous causes, unwilling to

own responsibility for their earlier misdeeds that may have caused them. In blaming others for their own miseries, persons of little understanding lose sight of the need to correct and improve themselves. From extreme optimism, in other words, inordinate pleasure-seeking, they are driven, after repeated failures, to extreme pessimism. Deprived of all zest for a full and integrally satisfying life, these unhappy and helpless souls become problems to themselves as well as to others. 'Few men know that with pleasure there is pain,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'and with pain pleasure; and as pain is disgusting, so is pleasure, as it is the twin brother of pain. It is derogatory to the glory of man that he should be going after pain, and equally derogatory that he should be going after pleasure. Both should be turned aside by men whose reason is balanced'.

According to Patanjali, the discriminating Yogi finds that all is as it were painful on account of everything bringing pain, either as consequence (*pariṇāma*), or as anticipation of loss of happiness (*tāpa*), or as fresh craving arising from impressions of happiness (*samskāra*), and also as counter-action of qualities (*guṇa-vṛtti-virodha*). Thus even what we relatively term and experience as pleasure is in reality pain, for every enjoyment that arises from the contact of the senses with the sense-objects is subject to delusive ignorance of the real nature of the Self, which ignorance is at the root of all misery. The first of the four great Truths preached by Buddha proclaimed that misery, in other words, pain and suffering (*dukkha*), is associated with all stages and conditions of conscious life. As it is said in the *Viśuddhi-Magga*,

'The man who lives for sensual joys,
And findeth his delight therein,
When joys of sense have taken flight,
Doth smart as if with arrows pierced'.

On ignorance depends Karma and its fruition. Hence one who is assailed by ignorance of the ultimate Truth has to suffer from grief and despair. Sorrow springs from sensual

pleasures. Painful experiences include not only birth, old age, illness, and death, but also not obtaining what we desire, obtaining what we do not desire, and being separated from that which we love.

'A round of Karma and of fruit;
The fruit from Karma doth arise,
From Karma then rebirth doth spring;
And thus the world rolls on and on'.

This round of Karma followed by the fruit of Karma keeps the unenlightened soul bound to the Wheel of Existence. That men suffer due to their own fault and not because they are compelled by others to suffer was boldly proclaimed to the world by Buddha. To quote from *The Light of Asia* (Book VIII):

'Ho! Ye who suffer! know,
Ye suffer from yourselves. None else
compels,
None other holds you that ye live and die,
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and
kiss

Its spokes of agony,
Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness'.

The *Gita* states that all actions ordinarily bind the doers, who identify themselves as 'agents' with the work and its fruits, by creating attachment and bondage. It is not action but the attachment to the result of the action that brings suffering. The more a man is attached to the fruits of his actions the more is he swayed by selfish motives. Transmigration and rebirth are inevitable so long a man has desires. All selfish craving arises from want and unless this want is removed to one's complete satisfaction, one knows no end of his sorrow. And even where satisfactory fulfilment of desires is possible, the absence of suffering is shortlived. This unquenchable thirst (*trṣṇā*) creates conflicts between man and man and man and Nature and gives rise to much avoidable suffering. The noble path leading to the cessation of suffering has been the theme of every great religious and philosophical system. If a person is convinced that he alone is responsible for the joys and sorrows he derives from the world, if he knows that what he is today is the result of what he was

before, it stands to reason that he would do well to control and fashion his present life in such a way as not to create any wrong causation for his future. If every action of ours, done with selfish motive, brings misery and forges one more link in the chain of our bondage, we may sooner or later learn the lesson and train ourselves to know and practise the artless art of being perfectly unattached and unselfish in whatever we do. And this way lies hope for suffering humanity.

To the man of Vedantic realization, who subscribes to neither optimism nor pessimism, the problems of evil and suffering in the phenomenal world assume an innocuous form and present no serious difficulty. Man is essentially Spirit and the Divinity of which he forms an integral part, nay, from which he is ever non-different, is the essence of Bliss Absolute. 'All living beings have come from Bliss, they are sustained by Bliss, and in the end they become one with Bliss', declares the Upanishad. Therefore, the *real* man never suffers. The Self is beyond all duality, free, blissful and perfect. It is Pure Consciousness, and is unaffected by such changes as birth, old age, decay, and death to which the body is subject. There is no sin, grief, or misery which can taint the divine nature of man. Time, space, and the law of causation relate to the perceptual world that lies within the realm of Māyā. From the standpoint of the non-dual, ultimate Reality such ideas as bondage and suffering and the idea of striving for liberation from them are unreal. The teaching of the Vedanta, while admitting the empirical reality of the individual ego and the manifold universe—with all secular and moral values, has never failed to stress the Absolute Truth that 'All that exists is Brahman' (*sarvam khalvidam Brahma*), on the realization of which all duality disappears. It is needless to point out the baselessness of the criticism that Advaita Vedanta has sought illogically to ignore or explain away the problem of suffering by denying the reality of the created experiential universe. There is neither life-affirmation nor life-negation in the modern

sense of the terms. Evil and suffering are there in every part of the world, and none could say they are totally unreal. At the same time they are not absolutely real or permanent.

Philosophers and mystics have variously interpreted the interrelationship of the trinity—God, Man, and Nature. To remain eternally condemned as helpless victims of suffering, accepting it as an inevitable and ubiquitous phenomenon, and dree one's weird is certainly no desirable solution to the problem of suffering in the world. For, man is responsible for his own action and its consequence and no inscrutable fate or inexorable providence can completely deprive him of his freedom and independence in the matter of self-effort. But the acceptance of suffering as a palpable universal fact and the simultaneous nihilistic denial of the unity and permanence of ultimate Reality offers no satisfactory solution either. Freedom from suffering is attained when our inveterate idea of plurality and manifoldness to which all misery is due, is eliminated and the unity of existence is realized. 'From death to death he goes who sees any difference here, . . . who sees multiplicity in It' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*).

No effectively practical system of philosophy, least of all Vedanta, could point the way to freedom from suffering by advocating the shunning or balking, ostrich-like, of the practical implications of this world-old question of good and evil. As individuals and as unit members of the community men have to treat the problem of suffering as a problem of personal life, of emotional and psychological adjustment between one personality and another. Influenced by the emotional imbalance, resulting from the frustrations that are caused by the sufferings of an uncontrolled mind, man fails to refrain from acts of hatred, strife, and fanaticism. The greed for acquisition and lust for power are at the root of much of the suffering that men are afflicted with.

If the problem of suffering is not smoothly resolved, it is bound to create, for the individual, a first-rate personality problem. Of

course, like all human problems, even personality problems are at bottom spiritual. Lack of spiritual sustenance and emphasis on the external, perceptual forces of matter to the exclusion of the internal strength and purity of the soul have tended to make man more a destroyer than a creator. 'The whole vast problem of humanity, of the world,' observes a modern writer of the West, 'is in the last resort the problem, the close intimate problem of the individual. If that can ever be solved, if once man can learn to live by love and mutual trust, instead of in a self-created hell of hatred and fear, we shall at last know the blessing of a world at peace (Dallas Kenmare: *World Invisible*). No mere scientific or materialistic method can solve successfully the serious psychological problems that suffering creates for man. The enjoyments that cater for sensuous desires enhance and not retard the unappeasable thirst for further enjoyment, notwithstanding the consequent pain and misery.

Gauḍapāda, the great exponent of Vedānta, urges the process of the control of the mind and its withdrawal from desires as the best method of overcoming sorrow and suffering. In his *Kārikā* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, he says: 'Turn back the mind from the enjoyment of desires, remembering that they beget only misery. Do not see the created objects,

remembering that all this is the unborn Atman'.

The Vedantic ideal of the divinity of the soul, that every being is in essence non-different from other beings as they all are manifestations of the One, deathless and birthless Brahman, pure and ever perfect can alone provide a sound philosophical basis for the injunction that requires to love and not hate, to serve and not exploit, and to work for peace and not for war. Swami Vivekananda's clarion call to banish all weakening thoughts of sin and suffering and to remove the lid of desire and superstition that is covering the source of Bliss Eternal present in each and every soul is best expressed in his own words. He says: 'In this embodied existence you will be tossed again and again on the waves of happiness and misery, prosperity and adversity. But know them all to be of momentary duration; never care for them. Drive out the superstition that has covered your minds. Say, "I am the birthless, deathless Atman (Self), whose nature is intelligence". Implanting this idea firmly in your heart you should pass the days of your life. Say to your minds, "I am He, I am He". Lose yourself completely in this thought. If once you can become one with this idea, then in the hour of sorrow and tribulation it will rise of itself in your mind, and you will not have to strive to bring it up'.

BUDDHA'S PATH TO PERFECTION

BY BRAHMACHARI RAMACHAITANYA

Shuddhodana, father of Siddhartha or Gautama Buddha, was a Kshatriya chief of the Shakya clan, ruling over a stretch of territory in and around Kapilavastu, near the borders of modern Nepal, one hundred miles to the north of holy Banaras. Siddhartha was born of Queen Maya on the full moon day of Vaishakha, in the sixth century B.C. So

great was the personality ushered into the world—the Buddhist scriptures tell us—that all Nature wore a festive look and peace and amity reigned throughout the world, while the gods in the heavens were in high rejoicing. Queen Maya passed away a week after Siddhartha's birth, and he was fondly brought up by his maternal aunt Prajapati Gautami.

No pains were spared to make the course of the young prince's life smooth. Shuddhodana arranged for his son an education befitting his noble lineage. But a cloud of sorrow hung over Shuddhodana's mind, for the soothsayers had prophesied that his son was likely to embrace the life of renunciation. They had also predicted that he would become a supreme ruler (Chakravarti) if he adopted the life of the world or the Enlightened One (Buddha) if he embraced the life of renunciation. The royal chieftain, therefore, sought to veil the terrible facts of mortal life—old age, sickness, and death—from the young prince by surrounding him with all the luxuries at his command. At the age of sixteen Siddhartha was happily married to his cousin Yashodhara. Till the time of his great renunciation the prince saw nothing but the beautiful and the pleasant, in the artificial surroundings in which his fond father had placed him.

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

But Siddhartha had occasions for deeply pondering over the nature and meaning of life. Perhaps the ease and luxury in which he was brought up, to the exclusion of the sorrow and suffering that are at the root of life, served to accentuate by contrast the very contradictions which Shuddhodana tried in vain to hide from his son. On a certain day Siddhartha wished to go to the park and told his charioteer to make the chariot ready. As he mounted the chariot and proceeded towards the park, on his way, the prince chanced to see a decrepit old man, all skin and bone, his hair turned grey, leaning on a staff and trembling. Siddhartha asked his charioteer, in complete innocence, 'Friend, pray, who is this man? Even his hair is not like that of other men'. And when he heard that that indeed was the fate of all mortal men, the utter triviality of man's life on earth flashed on him as a shocking revelation and he exclaimed, 'Shame on birth, since to everyone that is born old age must come'. Agitated at heart, he thereupon returned to his palace. In like manner

Siddhartha happened to see other aspects of life, so long hidden from him, such as disease and death that close a man's career on earth, however grand. These experiences turned his thoughts away from pleasure to life's fundamental problems and its meaning.

The feeling of dissatisfaction with the world, assumed, in course of time, a definite form in the shape of his resolve to become an ascetic. Life in the palace appeared to him to be more and more an oppressive routine of aimless existence without meaning. At the age of twenty-nine, in the prime of youth, Siddhartha renounced all worldly ties and adopted the life of a wandering monk, seeking and questioning every ascetic he came across, sometimes adopting their disciplines even to the extent of undergoing extreme mortification of the flesh by severe physical and mental austerities. He had only one goal in view—to discover the means whereby man could outgrow the mere creature of circumstances that he is and become the master of his own destiny. In later days, after his Enlightenment and as the head of a vast and influential order of monks, Siddhartha recollected his renunciation of worldly life in the following moving words:

'Now I, brethren, before my enlightenment, when I was not yet a perfected Buddha, but was a Bodhisattva, being myself still of nature to be born again,—I sought after things that are of nature to be reborn. Being myself of nature to decay, being subject to disease and death, being myself subject to sorrow, to the impurities, I sought after things of like nature.

'Then there came to me the thought: "Why do I . . . thus search after things of like nature? . . . What if I were to search after the untainted, unsurpassed, perfect security, which is Nibbāna?"

'Then I, brethren, some time after this, when I was a young lad, a black-haired stripling, endowed with happy youth, in the first flush of manhood, against my mother's and my father's wish, who lamented with tearful eyes, I had the hair of head and face shaved off, I donned the saffron robes, and I went forth from my home to the homeless life.'¹

¹ *Some Sayings of the Buddha*. Translated by F. L. Woodward.

THE GREAT ILLUMINATION

When Siddhartha stepped out of the palace and adopted the life of the humblest of men, the society that confronted him was agitated by doubts and perplexities similar to his own. The spiritual discoveries of the Aryans, coming down from the age of the Aranyakas and the Upanishads, had left an indelible impression on the Indian mind, giving the Aryan society in and around the Gangetic valley a solid background of spiritual idealism. Yet, the people, forgetting the life-giving truths of their spiritual legacy, had turned to mere speculation and formal ritualism for the satisfaction of their spiritual cravings. At the same time, the general trend of opinion in society was slowly veering away from the complicated ritualism of the popular religion, towards a search for a comprehensive philosophy of life which would satisfy the deepest needs of man's heart and intellect. The enlightened section of the population was taking a keen and preponderant interest in speculations concerning the hereafter. The caste system was playing a dominant role in the affairs of men.

When Siddhartha sought the help of the various wandering ascetics of the time for a lasting solution of the riddle of life, he perceived that most of them could not be of much help to him, as he thought they lacked a clear idea of the goal of spiritual endeavour. While some asked him to accept a set of doctrines as a sure condition for salvation, others invited him to a life of austerities, pursued as an end in itself.

"Then I, brethren, in my search for what is good, searching after the unsurpassed state of peace most excellent, while roaming about among the folk of Magadha, came to Uruvelā, . . . There I beheld a lovely spot, a pleasant forest grove and a river of clear water flowing by, easy of access and delightful, and hard by was a village where I could beg my food. Then, brethren, I thought thus:

' "Delightful in truth is this spot, pleasant this forest grove . . . Truly a proper place is this for a clansman bent on striving for his welfare, to strive therein!" '2

² *Ibid.*

In this retreat Siddhartha continued his supreme quest, for six long years. In the beginning he lived in the company of five ascetics headed by Kaundinya, adopting their disciplines and practising austerities. After some time the goal seemed to him to be as far away as when he had embarked on his quest. Siddhartha ultimately abandoned spiritual tutelage under the ascetics, perceiving that asceticism, instead of leading him to illumination, brought about only an enfeeblement of both body and mind. Henceforth he would venture upon the search all alone, trusting to his own reason, the light that lighteth the understanding of every individual. On the day of his great illumination, Siddhartha took his seat under a Bodhi tree in the forest grove, making a mighty resolution, 'Let my skin, and sinews, and bones become dry, and let all the flesh and blood in my body dry up! But never from this seat will I stir, until I have attained the supreme and absolute wisdom'. Seated in that unconquerable position, 'from which not even the descent of a hundred thunderbolts could have dislodged him', he plunged into the depths of meditation. Scene after scene of his previous births through aeons of time passed before his mental eye, revealing that mortal life is but one link in an infinite chain of causation. The life of enjoyment that would have been his, had he remained in worldly life, rose and faded away from his mind, as in a dream. In the first watch of the night he attained the knowledge of his previous births; in the middle watch, his wisdom blossomed; in the last watch of the night rose the Supreme Knowledge and his purified intellect fathomed the endless chain of flux that life is. It was a moment of tremendous significance to man and all sentient beings: for Siddhartha had become Buddha, the Enlightened One. He had discerned the source whence earthly suffering flowed and the way that led to its annihilation; he had discovered that the cause of suffering lay in a selfish craving for life, and that the way of deliverance from the cycle of rebirth lay in rooting out this craving for life, in releasing

the mind from the network of worldly sensations. How many years of austere living he had to undergo for this moment of illumination! His ecstasy at his self-conquest burst forth in an exclamation of joy:

'Thro' many a round of birth and death I ran,
Nor found the builder that I sought. Life's stream
Is birth and death and birth, with sorrow filled.
Now, house-builder, thou'rt seen! No more shalt
build!

Broken are all thy rafters, split thy beam!
No more compounded, mind hath cravings slain!³
(*Dhammapada*, 153-4).

SERMON AT BANARAS

The Enlightenment had conferred on Buddha an unshakable conviction in his self-mastery and understanding: he was no longer a struggling creature, drifting about in the river of life. He had now the power either to enter into or withdraw from the stage of life—he had become the master of his own destiny. Life had lost its sting. He was now a dispassionate witness of the world process. This detached outlook on life opened the flood-gates of his boundless compassion. Twenty-one days after his enlightenment, the Blessed One resolved, 'The doors to Enlightenment are open; let them that have ears to hear show faith', and started on his ministry. Wandering from place to place, he came to the Deer Park at Sarnath, near Banaras, where he met the five ascetics with whom he had practised austerities in the Uruvelā grove. His majestic and joyful mien and indrawn look, 'mindful and conscious like a lion', deeply impressed them, though their first impulse was to treat him lightly, as one who had swerved from the ascetic path. These five ascetics were Buddha's first monastic disciples to whom he preached the Middle Path, the Path that would release man from suffering, through a life of right thinking and right living, without any extraneous aid. This first sermon of Buddha was the starting point of a wave of spiritual renaissance in society which set the Wheel of Dharma in motion:

'These two extremes, brethren, should not be followed by one who has gone forth as a wanderer:

³ *Ibid.*

'Devotion to the pleasures of sense—a low and pagan practice, unworthy, unprofitable, the way of the world, and on the other hand devotion to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, unprofitable.

'By avoiding these two extremes . . . the Buddha has gained knowledge of that Middle Path which giveth Vision, which giveth Knowledge, which causeth Calm, Insight, Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

'And what, brethren, is that Middle Path . . . ?

'Verily it is this Aryan Eightfold Path, that is to say:

'Right View, Right Aim, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Contemplation. . . .

'Now this, brethren, is the Aryan Truth about Suffering:

'Birth is Suffering, Decay is Suffering, Sickness is Suffering, Death is Suffering, likewise Sorrow and Grief, Woe, Lamentation, and Despair. To be conjoined with things which we dislike, to be separated from things which we like—that also is Suffering. Not to get what one wants—that also is Suffering. . . .

'Now this, brethren, is the Aryan Truth about the Origin of Suffering:

'It is the Craving that leads downwards to birth, along with the Lure and the Lust that lingers longingly now here, now there; namely, the Craving for Sensation, the Craving to be born again, the Craving to have done with rebirth, . . .

'And this, brethren, is the Aryan Truth about the Ceasing of Suffering:

'Verily it is the utter passionless cessation of, the giving up, the forsaking, the release from, the absence of longing for, this Craving.

'Now this, brethren, is the Aryan Truth about the Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering. Verily it is this Aryan Eightfold Path, . . .'⁴

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

The existence of suffering in all stages of conscious life is the first of the Four Noble Truths in which is summed up the message of Buddha. The recognition of suffering is accorded the primary place because it is a truth which none could think of questioning: it calls for no act of faith, since it is seen and experienced by everyone in the world. Buddha made no attempts to explain it away, nor to make light of it, nor to neutralize it by offering a happier life in some future birth. He accepted it as what it indeed is, as an evil that

⁴ *Ibid.*

enters into and vitiates every aspect of life on earth. The aspirations of man for happiness, peace, and plenty, so deeply ingrained in him, have as their natural concomitant, a tremendous attachment to life. When man's hopes and aspirations come to naught, the reaction of pain sets in; then only he awakens to the awareness of his limitations and perceives that good and evil, the pleasant and the unpleasant, are inseparable companions. The remedy for this suffering in life is not in striving harder or cherishing greater hopes for enjoyment, but in fighting the evil of suffering to the very end, here and everywhere. Suffering implies much more than the sensation of physical and mental pain: the impulse to self-conscious activity is at the root of suffering. This leads to the second of the Four Noble Truths—Craving or attachment as the cause of the Origin of Suffering.

Craving or attachment describes the immediate cause which gives rise to suffering. But craving itself is the outcome of a false philosophy of life deeply entrenched in our nature. It is this false perspective that drags beings into endless rebirth and involves them in trials and tribulations. Man is no exception to this. Being born, he gets entangled in a round of activities for his own self, his family, and his country. And before the end in view is achieved, he finds that his grand aspirations are suddenly rendered futile by the cruel hand of death. He, therefore, lives as a plaything of circumstances, as 'pebbles ground against one another under the poundings and buffetings of the eternal tide'. A discerning individual, who has understood life in its true setting, would detach himself from this mistaken notion of permanence in a changing world. When a man understands that the link between himself and the world at large, including society and its refinements, is the tremendous thirst for self-conscious activity and identification with sensations, he is already on the Path of Enlightenment, even as Buddha's discerning vision saw the utter futility of life in the world, when this great truth dawned on him. Craving, which is a link in

the chain of life, having been broken, the binding power of life on man is lost. Then man attains freedom. Hence the third of the Four Noble Truths points out that the cessation of suffering consists in 'the passionless cessation of, the giving up, the forsaking, the release from, the absence of longing for, this Craving'.

Buddha's teaching about the unsubstantiality of the world is not a loose system of philosophy. He has also indicated the concrete means whereby the three preceding Noble Truths can be made a fact of consciousness. The Noble Eightfold Path elaborates the fourth of the Four Noble Truths, the Way to the Cessation of Suffering. The discipline aims at nothing less than transforming man's entire being and then leading him on to a state beyond the pale of sorrow and suffering. When the correct perspective of life dawns, through insight, then suffering ceases to be.

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

The first step in the Path, Right View, is the starting point as well as the culmination of the Path. Though Right View is ultimately the aim of spiritual practice, it is also, in a sense, the starting point, for, without a little at least of the Right View at the outset, there would not be even the incentive to embark on the Eightfold Path. Right View is the fruit of a discerning and penetrating analysis of things as they are. As we ascend the ladder of the Path to perfection by climbing its various rungs, our views on life ripen, lower views grow into higher ones of a more universal character, leading to the 'refuge of Nirvāna'. The philosophy of life acquired through Right View has to express itself in actual practice in and through Right Aim, the second step of the Path. For, owing to the lack of a definite idea of the goal, one may lose oneself in the blind alley of useless strivings. The next four steps of the Path, viz. Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, and Right Effort, give us the ethical basis of the Right View. As we learn to define clearly our relation to all sentient and insentient existence, our conduct also becomes more and more appro-

priate and enlightened. The more successful we are in the practice of Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, and Right Effort, the more we grow in the highest social virtues of selfless love, mercy, non-violence, gentleness, and reverence.

Our thoughts and actions stem from our personality and hence have power over us for good or for evil. A will that is not yet integrated and that is moved more by feeling than by reason does not conduce to Right Living and Right Effort. The will, therefore, should be strengthened into a constant awareness so that it can keep a strict vigilance over every shade of thought and action. The strengthened will is Right Mindfulness, which would weigh well every idea and motive before putting them into effect; this harmony of thought and deed paves the way for Right Contemplation, the last step of the Eightfold Path. Right Contemplation aims at the cultivation of calmness and harmony towards oneself and all existence and concentration of the mind. Right Contemplation alone is the door to Enlightenment, for without it mental equanimity and the resulting mastery over self cannot be achieved.

The inclusion of this last and vital step in the Path indicates that Buddha was not a mere humanist, calling upon mankind to live as good citizens. He demanded something more. The preparatory stage of ethical striving, important though it is, is not an end in itself. The goal of life, according to Buddha, is Nirvāna, the transcendence of all suffering and the transformation of the personality, and not improvement of the world. If we want inward peace, we must transform ourselves and not set about reforming the world. Nor is

Nirvāna the result of a high degree of intellectual prowess. While the intellect may help man in weeding out false philosophies from the mind, it cannot be a substitute for intuition which alone can reveal to us truths beyond our normal understanding. While Buddha gave reason its due place under Right View in the Path, he took care to emphasize the need for Right Contemplation as the prerequisite for Enlightenment. What higher virtue could give man 'the untainted, unsurpassed, perfect security, which is Nibbāna' if not Right Contemplation on the Four Noble Truths?

Buddha preached what he had deeply felt in his heart. The Path proclaimed by him is the Path he himself had traversed. His perception of suffering and his belief in the possibility of extinguishing suffering afforded him the Right View. His resolve on renunciation, on non-retaliation, and on gentleness, gave him the Right Aim. His years of strenuous practice in Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living and Right Effort endowed him with Right Mindfulness to dwell 'ardent, self-possessed, recollected, by controlling the covetousness and dejection in the world'. Through Right Contemplation on the transitoriness of life he entered into that state of Perfection 'which is free from pain and free from pleasure, a state of perfect purity of balance and equanimity'.

'By faith and virtue, energy and mind
In perfect balance, searching of the Norm,
Perfect in knowledge and good practices,
Perfect in concentration of your thoughts,
Ye shall strike off this multitude of woes'.⁵
(*Dhammapada*, 144).

⁵ *Ibid.*

'The life of Buddha has an especial appeal. . . . I have more veneration for that character than for any other. That boldness, that fearlessness and that tremendous love! He was born for the good of men. Others may seek God, others may seek truth for themselves; he did not even care to know truth for himself. He sought truth because people were in misery. How to help them, that was his only concern. Throughout his life he never had a thought for himself.'

—Swami Vivekananda

THE PROBLEM OF PROBLEMS

By M. S. DESHPANDE

Problems are an eternal feature of humanity. Every age and country have had their own problems facing them and mankind is seen ever struggling to find solutions for them. Great men in all times and climes have seriously applied themselves to the task of offering their best remedies in order to remove the disturbances in individual and social life arising from a variety of problems. Some of these remedies are seen to be of a temporary character, calculated to bring about partial or unenduring relief, while some others are capable of producing lasting results. The temporary solutions became instrumental in creating other problems, while the more permanent ones worked for some time satisfactorily and when their spirit was lost sight of by the people, they too brought into existence fresh problems. Thus humanity is ever face to face with a number of problems demanding solutions from its best master minds. How well and efficiently to solve all problems has been the problem of problems.

BASIC PROBLEMS

If we try to analyse the various problems confronting the world today, we will find that each one of them is basically an individual problem, largely psychological in its origin. Hence it stands to reason that if we know the original individual problems and solve them satisfactorily, all other group problems will be seen to disappear automatically. What, then, are the basic problems of the individual, the common man, throughout the world? What are his primary urges which, when allowed to run riot, create various complex problems?

It is a well-known fact that every individual is made up of body, mind, and spirit. Each of these has its special urges and needs. The body is in need of preservation and nourishment, the mind freedom and know-

ledge, and the spirit union, power, and bliss. The will to live, to dominate, to know, and to be happy, have been recognized as the primary motives of man. Every individual, being essentially a part of the Infinite Spirit, desires all these to a maximum degree. Hence there occur clashes between one urge and another. The urge that happens to be more powerful at a particular time dominates over the other urges, thereby disturbing the balance and harmony of life. When such internal conflicts take place between the urges of different individuals, social units, or nations, the general harmony of life in both the community and world at large is disturbed. Thus it is seen that the common problems of food and shelter, power and aggression, and education and religion are the products of the primary human urges of self-preservation, self-assertion, and self-satisfaction.

INADEQUATE SOLUTIONS

Great personalities in all ages and countries have offered their own solutions and tried in their own way to re-establish the lost harmony. Solutions offered by politicians, philosophers, and spiritual seers are by far the most important ones. The different 'isms' advocated and popularized by political leaders—from the earliest feudalism to modern Communism—have undoubtedly one ultimate object in view, viz. the alleviation of the sufferings of man and the establishment of peace and prosperity on earth. That most of these 'isms' have failed to succeed in their effort was and is due partly to the inherent defects in them and partly to those in man himself. Philosophers, too, put forward ways of life and codes of conduct with a view to lifting mankind from the morass of deeper misery—physical as well as psychological, and introducing harmony in life. The spiritual teachers of the world have always tackled the problems of man from a

broader and more fundamental world view, viz. the divinity of man and the unity of all existence.

If we examine these solutions closely, we shall find that the solutions offered by politicians and social philosophers are based mainly on the principle of either Liberty or Equality or both, while those offered by seers and saints are based on universal Fraternity, underlying Liberty and Equality. The French Revolution, which had first raised the standard of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity and which was apparently brought about for establishing all of them, ultimately succeeded in establishing Liberty alone. It hailed and worshipped Liberty in preference to the other two, reaping thereby the bitter fruits of its wrong choice. 'There are two freedoms: the false, where one is free to do what one likes, and the true, where he is free to do what he ought to'. By caring more for their likes than for their duties, those that have fought for unbridled liberty have not unoften created dictators who proved a menace not only to Equality and Fraternity but also to universal Liberty.

In modern times democracy is looked upon as the champion of individual freedom. But at least one leading thinker seems to have held the view that it 'substituted election by the incompetent many for the appointment by the corrupt few'. The lot of the common man did not sufficiently improve under its aegis and mass-discontent sought other means of redress and relief. Hence Socialism, Communism, and such other socio-economic or politico-economic systems, pinning their faith on the principle of equality—often interested more in 'levelling down' of the higher to the lower than in 'levelling up' the lower to the higher—and demanding equality of opportunity for the economic man, have held the field. Merely overthrowing the existing order of society by any means cannot become an end or a goal in itself. 'No doubt we must live before we can live well. But mere life does not account for the higher values of life!', said a man of wisdom. At the same time we

must remember that there is no complete equality in Nature. As pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi, 'All have not the same capacity. . . . Therefore in the nature of things some will have ability to earn more and others less. Equality is of souls, not of bodies. It is a mental state. So we have to realize equality in the midst of inequality'.

Hence this solution has not been able to bring all-round happiness or to contribute to the growth of the individual, though it has succeeded in giving some extra privileges to the democratic citizen. On the other hand, dictatorship, which has ruthlessly put down the higher values of life and reduced man to the position of an animal, has caused no end of suffering to all classes of persons in society. It has been seen to destroy Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity completely. In the name of establishing unity of action and purpose, it has set at naught individual freedom and the universal basis for the brotherhood of man. Just as solutions based on Liberty failed to uphold simultaneously Equality and Fraternity, even so solutions based on Equality lost sight of the equal importance of Liberty and Fraternity.

The solutions offered by saints and seers were primarily based on the principle of Fraternity. The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man were preached and sought to be inculcated by them. Not the good of the few, not even of the many, but the good of all was their lofty ideal. Almost every major religion of the world has tried to place this ideal before its followers. All religions in the main have been working for the realization of this great ideal, directly or indirectly, though some misguided followers have occasionally displayed an insular tendency towards problems that affect the whole of humanity.

THE SOLUTION OF THE SEERS OF ANCIENT INDIA

It is now a generally accepted fact that our far-sighted seers made it their life's purpose to solve this problem of problems on a

permanent basis. As they had access to the higher reaches of God-realization, they could always take a grand synthetic view of life—from 'the smaller than the smallest' to 'the greater than the greatest'. Thus every problem, and so its solution, lay in the ken of their comprehension and they left no aspect of life untouched. They could therefore determine what the ultimate Goal of Life should be and formulate a sound Scale of Values. By judiciously applying this scale of ultimate human values, they made sure that the individual, and in and through him society, secured first things first and enjoyed peace and prosperity.

ENDS AND MEANS

The twin goals or ends of Abhyudaya or prosperity and Nihshreyasa or spiritual bliss here and hereafter, in other words, the four Purushārthas, viz. Dharma, Artha, Kāma, and Moksha, were placed before everyone by our seers of old. They enjoined upon all to seek Artha and Kama on the one hand and Moksha on the other in and through Dharma. Thus Dharma was the means and Abhyudaya (Artha and Kama) and Nihshreyasa (Moksha) were the ends. There were the Ashrama-Dharmas and the Varna-Dharmas, comprising individual and social duties, designed to evolve a stable society enjoying perfect harmony and bliss. History testifies, though in a meagre way, to the peaceful and progressive character of the social life of communities in the India of the past, who adhered to the ends and the means formulated by the spiritual seers of the land. Times have altered, as they must, but unfortunately for the worse, it seems, and we know not how and when we lost our moorings and drifted from our cultural heritage. Should we not now aspire to revivify our national life on the lines of our great ideals and obtain light and guidance from them in our attempt to formulate our ends and means?

THE SCALE OF VALUES

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna,

*Indriyāṇi parānyāhuḥ, indriyebhyaḥ
param manah,
Manasastu parā buddhiḥ, yo buddheḥ
paratastu sah.*

'The senses are said to be superior (to the body); the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind; and That which is superior to the intellect is He (the Atman)'.

This gives us the individual's scale of values.

The social scale of values is broadly indicated by the great poet-sage Vyasa when he says:

*Tyajedekam kulasyārthe, grāmasyārthe
kulam tyajet,
Grāmam janapadasyārthe, ātmārthe pṛthi-
vīm tyajet.*

'One should renounce one's own (self-interest) for the sake of the family, the family for the community, the community for the nation, and the whole world for the sake of the Atman (the Supreme Self)'.

In the light of this Scale of Values—which may be regarded as universally valid and which brings home to everyone the relative importance of the various problems in life and enables him to arrive at correct solutions—we should try to devise our plans for the present and the future. The values and purposes of life, both individual and social, should find their proper place in our plans for the reconstruction of society. Workers in the various fields of national regeneration will do well to carry on their activities in such manner that a sense of moderation and due proportion is always maintained.

With the implementation of this golden Scale of Values, enunciated by the wise and far-sighted spiritual men of ancient India, it is possible to expect, before long, that the politician will no more think of employing questionable means; that the man of wealth and position will not attempt to grow more prosperous at the cost of the poorer millions; that the social worker will not fail to serve the interests of the community with more stress on what benefits others than his self; that the

scientist will direct his genius and effort to the collective welfare of mankind and not to the purpose of mutual destruction; that the educationist will look more to the contents than merely to the methods of instruction and try to bring about the full flowering of the whole personality; that the artist will no longer be content to worship sense-beauty alone, but will continuously devote himself to the crea-

tion and interpretation of the divine essence of Beauty; that the poet will rise beyond the sensuous to the supra-sensuous reality and express himself in melodies laden with the fragrance of Divine Love; and that the common man of whatever caste, creed, or colour will realize his full responsibilities and privileges and strive more earnestly to attain his destined goal.

THE CONVERSION OF SARIPUTRA AND MAUDGALYAYANA

BY DR. RADHAGOVINDA BASAK

The *Mahāvastu-avadāna* is a Buddhist work belonging to the Vinayapīṭaka according to the text of the Lokottaravādins of the Mahāsāṅghikas of Madhyadesha. The Lokottaravadins of the Mahāsāṅghikas were the earliest schismatics of the Buddhist Council of the fourth century B.C. and the *Mahāvastu-avadāna* was compiled, according to oriental scholars, in the third or second century B. C. It was written in a mixed language—a conglomeration of Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Pali. This work is almost a biography of the Buddha and it is here that we find the story of his two foremost disciples, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, told in greater detail than in the stories in the Pali books, from which it differs somewhat. In view of the recent re-enshrinement of the holy relics of these two disciples in a newly-built Vihāra at Sanchi, it is fitting that we should today re-read this story. In these days of world-wide fear and turmoil we may gain mental peace and tranquillity by studying and discussing the religious and serene conduct of these two saintly disciples of the Buddha, who was the supreme physician.

This, then, is the story as given in the *Mahāvastu-avadāna*:

Sariputra and Maudgalyayana (in Pali, Sāriputta and Moggallāna) belonged to two separate, rich Brahmin families of Magadha. Sariputra was born in a prosperous village called

Nālanda-grāmaka, while Maudgalyayana was born in a village, equally prosperous, called Kolita-grāmaka; both villages were near the capital, Rajagriha. Their surnames were respectively Upatishya and Kolita. They both received their first education in Vedic lore residing in the same Gurukula, preceptor's residence.

The time came when the two friends went together to see the festival called the Giryagra-samāja at Rajagriha (this is the modern Rajgir in Bihar). Both of them had by then acquired all the attributes entitling them to initiation into the doctrines of all the previous Samyak-sambuddhas and they were fit for the performance of all the Aryadharmā injunctions in this their last birth. They therefore became disgusted with the scenes created at the festival and with the demonstrations shown by all sorts of fickle-minded people who attended it. Hence, by watching the festival, there arose in the mind of Sariputra the conception of the impermanence of all things (*anitya-sañjñā*); while in the mind of Maudgalyayana there arose the conception of all things being nothing but bones (*asthi-sañjñā*).

Maudgalyayana remarked to his intimate friend, Sariputra, that he should not be so sad by looking at these scenes; whereupon Sariputra replied that those foolish people who were making themselves so merry in the festi-

val were simply attached to worldly objects of enjoyment which were very fleeting. These people forgot that they would very soon depart from the world without their desires being satiated. So, said Sariputra, he thought that that was the time for performing Dharma by being unaffected by pleasure and pain, attachment and detachment. Hence he wanted to resort to *pravrajyā*, renunciation. His dear associate, Maudgalyayana, promised to adopt the same path as was to be traversed by Sariputra, for without him his life would be desolate.

They, together, then approached the *parivrajaka*, wandering mendicant, Vairāṭiputra Sañjayin, who then resided at Parivrajaka-grove at Rajagriha, and received from him the vow of renunciation, and within a few days they learnt from him all the lore of that sect. But they very soon discovered the futility of the *parivrajaka-dharma* which could not, according to them, lead to final beatitude and therefore they wanted to acquire independently *dharma-vinaya*, disciplinary rules for performing Dharma, whereby all miseries could be totally destroyed. So they then stipulated between themselves that whoever would be the first to attain *dharma-vinaya* would communicate it to the other. They then parted and each went to the capital city by different ways.

At that time Lord Gautama was residing with his followers at Kalandaka-nivāpa in the bamboo-grove. One of the Buddha's followers, Upasena by name, was seen in his yellow robe with the begging bowl in his hand by Sariputra who thought of this monk's renunciation as a blessed thing and greeted him by enquiring about his Master's doctrine and the way of his exhortation. Upasena told him that his Master taught people of all Dharmas or phenomena as depending on a law of causation, and instructed them in the abandonment of all desired objects. Sariputra, on hearing this, felt highly delighted and he attained true insight into Dharma that would lead to the eternal state of Nirvāṇa. Upasena directed Sariputra to Kalandaka-nivāpa where

the Buddha was living. Maudgalyayana, seeing Sariputra coming in a calm and serene mood, cried out that he must have attained *amṛta*, the eternal state of bliss, and that he must have discovered also the path that leads to it. Sariputra replied in the affirmative and referred to the doctrine taught by the Buddha, the great Light of the world. He then uttered the famous formula:

*Ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetūn teṣām
Tathāgato āha,
Teṣām ca yo nirodha evamvādi Mahā-
Śramaṇaḥ.*

'All those phenomena which are born of causes, Tathagata has preached of those causes, and he has also preached of their cessation. The Great Śramaṇa is the holder of such a doctrine'.

On hearing this Maudgalyayana also attained his spiritual eye and became fit to realize Nirvāṇa. They both went back to take farewell of their former preceptor, Sañjayin, who, according to their present views, had taught them a false doctrine, and then they proceeded towards the Lord Buddha for permission to be ordained by him. The Lord intuitively knew of their approach towards his camp and asked his followers to prepare seats in advance not only for Sariputra and Maudgalyayana but also for their followers, five hundred in number. The Lord also declared before his other disciples that Sariputra would become the leading monk among the great intellectuals, and Maudgalyayana the leading monk among those who possess supernatural powers.

The two new comers, having arrived with their followers, approached the Lord, touched his feet, and stood aside. Then Sariputra, addressing the Master, said that those wise and faithful persons who receded from the wrong path and came over to his, by crossing over the wilderness of worldly life had become unattached to it. They both wanted to renounce the world and they had come to receive ordination from him. Thereupon the Buddha granted it to them by uttering the formal call, 'Come ye, O Bhikshus'. At once

all the marks of their former sect disappeared and there appeared before them the three robes of the Buddhist monks and their bowls; they adopted the ascetic's hair and wandering method of life. This was the story of their *pravrajyā*, renunciation, *upasampadā*, ordination, and entry into *bhikṣubhāva*, the monk's status.

After this formal ordination Sariputra put forward some metaphysical queries in reply to which the Master said that four Dhātus, constituent parts of a being, are predicated about; they exist, disappear, and reappear by a new birth. In reply to further queries the Lord said that *avidyā*, ignorance, *trṣṇā*, desire or craving, and *karma*, action, are the causes of birth; *āyus*, time, *karma*, work, and *āhāra*, food, are the causes of existence. Disappearance or death is caused by the termination of time, the end of actions, and the elimination of food; a being's rebirth is caused by non-escape from ignorance, and by domination exercised by desire which leads actions to ripen. The cessation of rebirths takes place only when a being escapes from nescience, and succeeds in totally annihilating his desires.

The Master also explained to Sariputra how pleasurable sensations are produced in the

sense-organs by the so-called attractive appearance of object-forms. He again referred to the law of causation as producing all phenomena which cause mental pleasure and happiness and which are then said to be born, to exist, to develop, and to become cognizable. But they are, according to him, all non-soul, nor do they partake of anything belonging to any soul; rather they are bereft of any soul, or anything belonging to any soul.

On hearing this discourse by the Master, the two great converts and their followers became absolutely free from all miseries, i.e. sins, passions, and desires. Maudgalyayana acquired within a week of his ordination all supernatural powers and the four *pratisamvidā*, the four kinds of logical dexterities, i.e. expertness in the Buddhist theory and practice, etymology, and dialectics. Sariputra also acquired, within a fortnight of his ordination, the power of intuitive knowledge and perfection of wisdom, and the four logical dexterities. Thus the two saints and their followers, after ordination by the Buddha, succeeded in crossing over the deep forest of birth, decay, death, and rebirth.

THE "DEEPENING OF THE SENSE OF DURATION" IN HENRY BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHY

BY DR. ALBERT DE MENDONCA, S.J.

(Continued from the April issue)

What strikes us first when we follow him attentively is that Bergsonian 'intuition' admits of degrees as it is the result of a continual 'deepening of our sense of duration'.

In his essay 'Les données immédiates de la conscience', Bergson's first book, he does not seem to have grasped all the content of his

'intuition'.²³ The essay is a preliminary work, and consequently many of its conclusions were disowned, partially at least, by the

²³ With all the intuition of psychic duration . . . he (Bergson) did not himself grasp all the ontological content with which it was and, in spite of all, would continue to be pregnant; 'he did not express to himself that actuality and that generosity of being,

author in his following brilliant exposition 'Matière et Memoire'. In 1907 appeared his famous book *L'Evolution Creatrice*, which elicited from William James an exquisite letter of congratulations.²⁴ Here 'intuition' changes its significance. It is no more an absorption in the individual 'duration', rather it is a participation in the tremendous 'Élan-Vital', the infinite act of an Absolute whose time is Eternity, no longer a conceptual Eternity which is an Eternity of death, but an Eternity of life; a living and therefore still moving Eternity in which our own particular duration would be included as the vibrations are included in light; an Eternity which would be the concentration of all durations.

The notion of 'Élan-Vital', a perpetually creative urge, proceeding from a centre, was put forward by Bergson as an alternative to modern evolutionary theories, which in his view did not explain the appearance of the intellect. This unbounded urge cannot create absolutely, for it is opposed by 'matter'. What is 'matter'? It is a relaxation of the 'Élan', a degradation of its intensity, an exhaustion in the very act of creation. ' "Matter" conceived in this sense has nothing mysterious in it', writes Bergson.

and that creative abundance which permeates action, change, and movement—in short, everything ontological which his intuition in fact contained. On the contrary, he at once conceptualized his intuition in the notion in the idea (to my mind equivocal and misleading) of duration . . . ' Jacques Maritain: *The Metaphysics of Bergson*, p. 51, London, 1941.

²⁴ 'O my Bergson,' writes James in his letter, 'you are a magician . . . to me at present the vital achievement of the book is that it inflicts an irremediable death-wound upon Intellectualism. It can never resuscitate . . . I feel that at bottom you and I are fighting the same fight, you are a commander and I in the ranks . . . I am so enthusiastic as to have said only two days ago . . . I thank heaven that I have lived to this date . . . that I have witnessed the Russo-Japanese War, and seen Bergson's new book appear . . . The two great modern turning-points in history and thought'. (*Letters*, Vol. 2, pp. 290-294). The views Bergson expressed in this his extraordinary work had a profound influence on biological studies and were corroborated by later developments in the study of psychology.

We can experience its process in ourselves. We know how the very act, by which we assert our liberty, tends to destroy it by becoming habit; our most vivid idea runs the risk of being frozen by the concept which expresses it. Even a most consistent system of thought, when put in practice, tends to destroy itself; and our most ardent efforts in view of peace, freedom, and tolerance may sink us to the level of the most violent and obstinate despots. Considered in this sense, 'matter' appears to us as a creative act that breaks down by the weight of its own tension, it scatters itself, precipitates itself towards the opposite direction of the 'Élan,' and tends to become necessity, determinism, pure exteriority, and repetition. 'The Absolute is the centre of the rocket, whose extinguished fragments fall back as "matter"', writes Bergson.²⁵ Each one of these fragments will constitute a new world. 'Life' is the name for that which survives in that fragment from the initial impetus. 'Life' has its mission: it is to graft upon 'matter' the greatest possible indetermination and freedom. The history of Evolution may be conceived as a continual struggle of 'life' to overcome the determination of 'matter'. The succession of living forms are vestiges where this dynamic struggle is crystallized. In the lowest stages the downward tendency of matter has in a sense conquered 'life' and it seems that the upward push is completely nullified. Yet, from the lowest step the upward tendency is slowly progressing. From the conflict of these two opposite tendencies—one ascending and the other descending—results a *modus vivendi* which we call organization.

Throwing ourselves into the ascending current of 'life' by 'deepening our sense of duration',²⁶ and advancing with it, we can realize how evolution is an efflorescence of the initial impetus, expressed in the endless series of living forms. It reminds us of our inward time in which our past melts into the present and presses forward towards the unforeseen future.

²⁵ *L'Evolution Creatrice*, pp. 259-271.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

Everywhere in the long procession of plants and animals, 'life' has tried to triumph over 'matter' by means of 'matter'. For this reason it has set up organisms of 'matter' more and more complex, on which it can step for its ascent. But everywhere it has been held in captivity by 'matter' through the very instruments 'life' had constructed for its liberation. It has tried to find an outlet through vegetative torpor and animal instinct, but its efforts have ended in a blind alley. Only through intelligence, by an abrupt leap from the animal to man, has it succeeded in its endeavours. Hence, we may say that man is the *raison d'être* of the whole evolution of life in this world, its aim and its end.²⁷ In man 'life' begins to reflect upon itself. Through him the 'Élan-Vital' enters consciously into the world. This explains man's power of creation and invention. Here we find the specific characteristic of humanity, that which puts man above the animal in the scale of creation.

Since man is the most perfect expression of 'life', his duty is to favour the development and progress of 'life'. His maxim must be: 'Detachment for the sake of attachment'—detachment from every particular form of 'life' in order to be attached to life itself. He must forget what has been done in order to apply himself to what is to be done. 'If in every "domain" the triumph of "life" expresses itself in creation, should we not suppose that human "life" also manifests itself in creation, which, unlike that of an artist, proceeds uninterruptedly at every moment and within every man, the creation of the self by the self, the progress of personality by an effort which draws much from little, something from nothing, and in this way unceasingly increases the wealth of the world?', asks Bergson in the course of his lecture delivered in Birmingham in 1911. 'A profound morality is contained in these words', writes Emile Rideau,²⁸ a morality which is beyond all exterior conformity, a morality which reaches the very

root of human action; a cutting and painful morality which introduces a negation in the very joy of action and denies satisfaction in the acquired result or the repose of success; finally a morality which is not the traditional moralizing, but a morality which involves a spirit of progress, an ever new initiative which has its origin in an immense freedom. But where and how to find this exalted kind of morality...? The morality which flows from 'Creative Evolution' lacks the foundation which is necessary to make it worthy of human efforts. This need is fulfilled in *Les Deux sources de la morale et de la Religion*, Bergson's last and the most important book. Here 'intuition' reaches its greatest profundity and depth. The 'Élan-Vital', the supreme urge, is now apprehended inwardly as being of the nature of 'love'—man's highest and deepest urge. Since the 'deepening of the sense of duration' makes us see in the 'Élan' an impulse of 'love', we are forced to see its source in Him who is infinite love, God, for love is pure subjectivity, and subjectivity supposes a centre. To say that the universe is created is to affirm that a manifestation of love necessarily postulates a being who loves, distinct from the object of love. Hence, here it is no more a question of a God that evolves or becomes. Here God is the Infinite, Self-subsisting, and Self-conscious Love. In a letter (of 20th May 1908) addressed to Dr. De Tonquedec and published in the French magazine *Études*, Bergson writes, 'I speak of God as the source whence issue successively, by an effort of His freedom and love the currents and the impulses, each of which will make a world; He, therefore, remains distinct from them'.

In 'Creative Evolution' the transcendence of God seemed to be ignored. God seemed to be organic with creation and consequently evolving with the cosmic order; a perfect process, which never is, but is always becoming; an ascending movement from splendour to splendour, as Sir Henri Jones explained. In *Les Deux sources*, however, Bergson not only proposes a new doctrine but also reacts against

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

²⁸ E. Rideau: *Le Dieu de Bergson*, p. 104.

the interpretation given to his previous views.

Bergson corroborates all his assertions with the testimony of the mystics. 'What the testimony of the mystics clearly tells us', writes the great French philosopher, 'is that love is not something of God, it is God Himself'. In this sense 'love' is God's name above all names.²⁹ The mystics have taught Bergson this name, causing him at one bound to outstrip his whole philosophy. It is therefore under this aspect of 'love' that ultimately the whole philosophy of Bergson should be considered and explained. 'We shall never be tired of repeating', writes Bergson, 'that the philosophical certitude admits of degrees. It speaks both to reason and to intuition, and if this intuition is progressive and susceptible of being deepened, as it really is, this deepening can only be done through mystical experience.'³⁰ In fact the conclusions at which I have arrived now complete naturally, though not necessarily, what I said in my previous work'. Consequently the Reality which Bergson postulates from the very beginning of his philosophy and tries to attain by deepening the sense of duration is no other than the Self-subsisting Love, God.

According to Bergson Intuition, being the most subjective act, reveals to us the nature of the self as being of the nature of love. Now, the nature of love is to give itself freely to others. Hence the question why something exists rather than nothing has no place here. Here creation appears as if God had freely undertaken to create creators³¹ that He might have besides Himself, beings worthy of His love. Why to create freely?—someone might ask. Bergson's answer is very simple: 'It is because love supposes freedom'. 'Love bloweth when it listeth' says Augustine. Love is its own law. If man occupies a privileged place in creation, if he is its centre, it is because he alone among all

creatures is capable of returning freely God's love for them. Again, it is by revealing Himself as love, the foremost manifestation of 'life' that God reveals to us the secret of the whole Life. The law of life is identical with the law of love: it is to die in order to live. Hence to live truly is to live a life of love. The mystic who realizes this participates in the rhythm of the universe. Shaken to its very depth by the creative urge which is about to sweep him forward, the mystic ceases to revolve around himself and escapes for a moment the bonds which tied him to himself and to the society in which he lived. He stops as though to listen to a voice calling. Then he lets himself go straight onward. He does not directly perceive the force that moves him, but he feels an undefinable presence or divines it through a symbolic vision.³² Then comes a boundless joy, an all-absorbing ecstasy or an enthralling rapture. The soul feels, as she lets herself be penetrated, without her personality being thereby absorbed, by a Being who is immeasurably more powerful than she is, like iron by the fire.³³ God is there and the soul is in God. Mystery is no more. Problems vanish, darkness is dispelled; everything is flooded with light. God is there, and joy is boundless. But though the mystic becomes, in thought and feeling, absorbed in God, something of him remains outside; that something is his free will, whence his actions proceed. His life then is not yet divine. He is aware of this, hence his agitation in repose, which is the striking feature of what we call complete mysticism.³⁴

How can free will which remains outside find its way to God? This can only be done by a free action which continues consciously in the world the love of God for his creatures. Hence the love which consumes the mystic now is no longer simply the love of man for God, it is the love of God for all men. Through God, in the strength of God, the mystic loves

²⁹ *Les Deux sources de la morale et de la Religion*, p. 240, 20th edition.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 245.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

all mankind with a Divine Love.³⁵ 'Indeed in our eyes', Bergson writes, 'the ultimate end of mysticism is the establishment of a contact, consequently, of a partial coincidence, with the creative effort of which Life is the manifestation'. This is not the result of that idea of 'fraternity' enjoined on us by the philosophers in the name of reason, on the principle that all men share by birth in one rational essence. Nor is it the intensification of an innate sympathy of man for man. 'It is said', Bergson writes, 'that family, country, and humanity may be considered as wider and wider circles of men; that from the love of family we ascend to the love of our country, and that this love disposes us to love humanity; that by the exercise of our sympathy within the family group and the social group, by a continual progress our love tends to extend beyond their frontiers and compels us to embrace humanity'.³⁶ This is a theory which is far from being verified, declares Bergson. The difficulty of educators in their task of instilling altruism as a concrete sentiment into the minds of their young pupils, exhorting them to love their companions, is enough to disprove such a statement.³⁷ The object proposed is too vast. The effort is too scattered and diffuse. If it were by steps that we ascend to the love of humanity, like the famous arrow of Zenus that had to cross an infinite number of points intermingled with an infinite number of intervals, to reach its target, we would be soon discouraged. The family group and the social group are the only ones corresponding to natural instinct. In fact, the social instinct would be far more likely to prompt societies to struggle against one another than to unite to make up humanity. Neither the love of our family nor the love of our country can lead us to love humanity. The love of humanity is a very different thing. It is not the extension of an instinct, it does not originate in an idea. It is neither of the sense nor of

the mind. It is of both, implicitly, and much more, effectively. The distinction between social love and the Love of humanity is not one of degree but of kind. Social love does not exclude hatred as we see in time of war. Let a war start and murder, pillage, perfidy, cheating, and lying become not only lawful but actually praiseworthy. The warring nations can say with Macbeth's witches: 'Fair is foul and foul is fair'.

The love of humanity is a very different thing. It is nothing but love. In order to attain to it we need a stronger urge which will carry us far beyond humanity, for the love of humanity, not being elicited by any particular object, is rather a state of the soul which would persist in the lover even if there were no human beings to love.³⁸ In fact the love of humanity is charity—the love of God.

From what we have said, we may conclude that the love of humanity is an adventure beyond human expectation. For such a love lies at the very root of feeling and reason, as of all other things. Coinciding with God's love for His creatures, a love which has been the source of everything, it would yield up the secret of creation to anyone who knew how to question it. In its essence it is even more metaphysical than moral. When it reveals itself in man, its purpose is to complete the creation of the human species. 'In reality,' Bergson writes, 'the task of the mystic is to effect a radical transformation of humanity by means of love; not by changing the state of the world, but by deepening in men the sense of love. For "to love men is to make them capable of loving".'³⁹

I have tried to give here a synopsis of what may be called the great lines of Bergsonian thought which flow from his 'deepening of the sense of duration'. The famous French philosopher did not wish to build any gigantic and complete system of metaphysics. Bergson is very modest in describing his philosophy as a 'method' of knowing Reality. Truly, it is one of the most profound, most

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, ch. 3.

penetrating, and most audacious methods of our time—a method based on principles whose sincerity and genuine ring are not derived from a mere logical inference, but from the very understanding of the secrets of life, and consequently capable of indefinite progress.

Twelve years have elapsed since the great French philosopher died in Paris; and still the flood of books and articles about him continues unabated. Already out of his weighty considerations a new philosophy has arisen. Bergson had exposed the two opposing forces of the Universe—matter and life—but he did not realize that the field of their conscious conflict was the heart of man. It is the stress upon this fact, that constitutes the originality of Existentialism. For Bergson the inexhaustible potentialities of the 'Elan-Vital' could never be defeated because love was stronger than death. The splendid perspective which Bergson develops in his 'Creative Evolution' invites men to a heroic optimism rather than to a dark pessimism. Indeed matter was an obstacle to life but life could triumph over that obstacle by means of a creative leap. The tragic leap of Kierkegaard was for Bergson a leap of joy. Hence the depth of his intuition could never be the 'Absurd' of Heidegger, nor the spontaneity of his free act an expression of the Sartrean anguish and

despair. On the contrary, suffused with love, it was rather a glorious dawn of an immense hope. Bergson believed in the transfiguration of humanity. However, the agent of this transfiguration was neither the scientist nor the philosopher but the mystic. 'Let a mystic genius but appear', Bergson writes in his *Deux sources*, 'and he will liberate the groaning and half crushed humanity beneath the weight of its own progress, for only the mystic possesses that Reality which can impart reality to men'. This Reality is love itself, the fullness of Bergson's intuition. Consequently, for Bergson, to deny the existence of mystics in the world was to deny the very quintessence of humanity.

William James used to say that he had never experienced mystic states, but he added immediately that if he heard them spoken of by a man who had experienced them 'something within him echoed the reality of the call'.⁴⁰ A similar phenomenon is reported from those who read Bergson's books. Though they do not fully grasp Bergson's concept of duration in all its details, yet, when they meditate upon it, something whispers within them that the deepening of its sense will surely be the starting point of the philosophy of the future.

(Concluded)

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

BY SWAMI APURVANANDA

(Continued from the April issue)

IN THE ABODE OF THE LORD OF KEDAR

The temple of Kedarnath looked majestically inspiring, with an all-white background formed by the snow mountains rising like a sheet almost immediately behind it. On either side of the main stone-paved road were situated the shops, Dharmashalas and the liv-

ing-quarters of the Pandas, most of them decent-looking stone-built structures. There were hundreds of pilgrims waiting outside the temple, eager, like us, to enter the shrine as soon as it would open in the evening. Since there was still plenty of time to wait, we followed our Panda into a Dharmashala, and

with his help managed to keep warm by lighting a fire and wrapping ourselves up in blankets.

Time passed quickly. Suddenly we heard bells ringing, which signified the opening of the temple doors. We saw hundreds of pilgrims making a dash towards the temple from all directions. The whole place echoed and re-echoed with shouts of 'Jai! Kedarnath ki Jai!' and 'Hara, Hara! Vyom, Vyom!' We too hurried to the temple. By the time we reached it a big crowd had already assembled. We stood on the fringe of the crowd in the outer shrine and watched in silent wonder the zeal and devotion of the people streaming in and battling forward for nothing else than to approach and touch the Lord of Kedar. Many pilgrims experienced ecstatic joy on nearing the deity in the innermost shrine and embraced and kissed it and bathed it in tears as they passionately prayed and offered worship. Everyone present was visibly moved at seeing the depth of feeling and devotion of one particular old lady, hailing from far away Maharashtra, bowed down under the weight of years. With tears rolling down her cheeks, she clung to the deity and uttered her only prayer in loud tones, saying, 'Lord, give me shelter at Thy feet'. Blessed indeed was she, I thought within myself, as she could sincerely shed tears for God.

GLORY OF KEDARNATH

Kedarnath is a very ancient shrine. Being almost on the snow-line, the site, including the temple, lies buried in snow for half the year, during which period no pilgrim ever thinks of visiting it. So the Great God of the mountains then remains undisturbed, merged in His own glory. The tower of the temple though not imposing in any sense, 'stood out like a white nimbus' against the background of the setting sun's golden rays that had already lit up the massive peaks not far behind. The temple itself consists of three shrines, one behind the other. In the first are the images of the five Pāṇḍavas, the epic heroes of the *Mahābhārata*. In the second is

the image of Parvati, the consort of Shiva and the daughter of the Himalayas. The third and innermost shrine contains the chief deity of the temple, the image of Kedarnath, though it cannot exactly be described as an image, either.

As the evening advanced and the time for *ārati* approached, the inner shrine was cleared of the crowd. Now, with the place almost empty, we had our chance to offer worship at close quarters all by ourselves. Our hearts were filled with joy unspeakable. Truly Kedarnath is the Shrine of the Sadhus. For, is not Shiva the Sannyasin of Sannyasins, the embodiment of renunciation? And why do hundreds of people, young and old, from far and near, undergo so much hardship and spend their precious time and money in visiting Kedarnath? They would never do so if the deity in the temple meant nothing more to them than an image. All the divine auspicious qualities of a Personal God seemed vividly manifest to them in Kedarnath Shiva. None can realize this lofty ideal of image-worship unless the mind is fully prepared for such realization through spiritual practices. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'.

We returned to our Dharmashala before the *ārati*, with the intention of re-visiting the temple the next morning, in view of our Panda's suggestion that the morning hours were less crowded and we might find more solitude then for worship. The sublime stillness of the night, notwithstanding the bitter cold, with the solitary temple building silhouetted against the shining glow of the snow, left a deep impression of an ethereal experience on the mind. It seemed as though the whole region was absorbed in deep meditation. I sat quietly looking through a window till late into the night.

The sunrise next morning was incredibly beautiful. We noticed that most of the pilgrims who had arrived with us the previous day were leaving. They could not stand the severe cold of Kedarnath and so were in no mood to stay for more than a night. But we were determined to spend

three nights at least. We went to the river Mandakini for taking a dip in its holy icy waters. While the enthusiasm of our Pahāḍi companions to take a holy dip in the sacred river left them in no time when they just touched the terribly cold waters, I and Mahatma successfully accomplished this great feat and took the customary 'three dips'. When we arrived at the temple we were slightly disappointed to find that it was by no means free from the crowd of pilgrims, as we had expected it to be in the morning. Hundreds of pilgrims were pouring in, in a regular stream, from Rāmbāra—the previous halt, a little over two thousand feet below Kedarnath. Wishing to avoid the crowd at the moment and offer worship later, we took a walk round the place.

During the pilgrim season, Kedarnath is like a small modern town. Besides Dharmashalas and rest-houses with accommodation for a thousand persons at a time, there are the dwelling-houses of the priests and the Pandas, the quarters of the Mahant, or Rāwal, a quaint bazar, and the seasonal post office and police station. There was no other hospital or dispensary than the free medical centre, of humble means, situated at the Kalikambliwala Dharmashala. There have been cases of sickness and death at Kedarnath and the high altitude and the severity of the cold make it extremely difficult for old and infirm persons. The previous night a pilgrim from Bombay State had died and his companions had left Kedarnath that very morning on their outward journey, after arranging with a Panda for the cremation of the dead body.

As we were preparing to return to the temple we saw the sky was overcast and it threatened to rain, nay, snow. Being alarmed at this gloomy prospect, many pilgrims made haste to offer their worship and start off on their return journey. We too hurried to the temple, carrying flowers, Bilva leaves, etc. needed for Shiva's worship. The crowd had melted and the head-priest permitted us to sit near him, quite close to the deity. The sanctum sanctorum was no doubt cold and dark,

but also sublime and solemn. We spent a long time in worship and meditation, and scarcely aware of the small batches of pilgrims that kept coming and going except when their loud and ecstatically devoted prayers and chanting broke in upon our meditation. It was noon when we came out of the temple, to find it raining. The midday offerings to the deity, of sacramental food were about to be made.

We took our noon meal at the eating-house where we had previously made arrangements for the duration of our stay. In the afternoon, our Panda read out to us from the *Skanda Purāna* the description of the glory and greatness of Kedarnath. Tradition has it that after the battle of Kurukshetra the Pandava heroes came on a pilgrimage to Kedarnath for self-purification through Lord Shiva's grace. But Shiva would not reveal His true self to them and was moving about in the guise of a huge buffalo. On coming to know this, the Pandavas began to run after the buffalo. In the chase, Bhima, the strongest of them, caught hold of its tail. Arrested thus in its movement, the buffalo sat down at the spot. Its head formed Pashupatinath, the famous Shaiva shrine in Nepal, where the deity is shaped like the head of a buffalo. The body, that is, the back of the buffalo, formed Kedarnath, which explains why the image here resembles the back of a seated buffalo, shaped from a block of rough grey stone some three feet high. Ultimately Shiva blessed the Pandavas at Kedarnath, as He has ever since been blessing millions of devotees who visit this ancient shrine.

To me, the three memorable days and nights at Kedarnath offered a unique experience in life and were a period of unprecedented spiritual exaltation, the memory of which still arouses a thrill of excited joy within. I kept an all-night vigil of meditation and prayer during the last night of our stay. Looking out into the vast expanse of darkness I sang repeatedly,

*'Yogāsane mahādhyāne magna yogīvara,
Ananta tuṣāre jeno ananta śekhara, . . .'*

I felt completely translated, transported as it were, from earth to heaven. But even this night of nights had to end. Day broke, and soon we were getting ready to leave Kedarnath.

But the happy memories have never left me. One who has visited Kedarnath cannot help feeling that of the innumerable hoary places of pilgrimage in India, which one may or may not have visited, Kedarnath forms the apex or crown of them all, apart from the fact that the natural beauty and grandeur of the spot afford the pilgrim of aesthetic interest one of the experiences of a lifetime. Though I am no longer in Kedarnath, I constantly live in Him and He lives in me. The reality of the obvious physical distance can no more separate me from Lord Kedarnath.

We made preparations to resume our

journey, now from Kedarnath to the other great and ancient Himalayan shrine—Badrinārāyaṇ. As I moved on I constantly looked back at the temple of Kedarnath till it could be seen no longer. While I was keenly missing this spiritual treat of the past three days, the Pahadi companions felt elated at the prospect of seeing new places. Evidently they had felt bored at the three-day stay in a cold and, to them, 'uninteresting' place like Kedarnath! This was but natural, for, no place is by itself absolutely sacred or secular. It all depends on the individual's attitude of mind, his spiritual preparedness and responsiveness. However, we were on the road again—now an easy descent,—for a few miles the same road by which we had ascended to Kedarnath.

(To be continued)

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE COMMENTARIES ON THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from the April issue)

THE STATE OF RELEASE AND THE MEANS TO IT

All the commentators agree that meditation on the Supreme Brahman is the means to release, and that this meditation is to be repeated till the rise of knowledge (IV. i. 1). Bhaskara, Ramanuja, and Nimbarka further state that the meditation is to be continued till death (12). Shankara, however, takes this Sutra as referring to meditations which are practised for attaining certain results by way of prosperity. 'With whatever thought he passes away from this world', etc., says *Sat. Br.* 10. 6. 3. 1. Such a thought, which fixes the course of life hereafter cannot be had at the moment of death without lifelong practice. Hence such meditations should be practised

till death. But Bhaskara, Ramanuja, and Nimbarka connect the Sutra with the meditation on Brahman; for according to them even after the rise of knowledge one has to go after death by the path of the gods, at the end of which path one gets disembodied completely and attains Brahman, while Shankara holds that on death he becomes one with Brahman. Madhva says that meditation is to be practised till the close of life, i.e. till release. In this meditation on Brahman, according to Shankara, one is to identify oneself with Brahman. Bhaskara also prescribes the same process; for identity between the two is the real fact, and the difference is only due to Upādhis. This difference is destroyed by the meditation

on identity, just as dross is removed from gold by contact with heat. According to Ramanuja one has to regard the Supreme Brahman as the Self of the soul even as the soul is the self of the body; for all souls constitute the body of the Lord. There is non-difference between them in so far as the 'I' is of the nature of Brahman, and there is difference between them even as there is difference between the soul and body. Nimbarka prescribes meditation on Brahman as the Self of the meditating person, i.e. as non-different from him; for the difference is experienced, while the non-difference is not experienced at present by all, and that is the cause of bondage. By such meditation the soul realizes its non-difference from Brahman and gets released. Madhva prescribes that Brahman is to be meditated upon as the Lord, while Vallabha says that those who follow the path of knowledge (Maryādā Mārga) meditate on It as their Self and become one with It.

All the commentators agree that on realization or rise of knowledge all works except those that have begun to take effect in that life (Prārabdha Karma) are destroyed. The Prārabdha Karmas are exhausted by being worked out, when this body falls off and one attains perfection, becoming one with Brahman, as declared by *Ch. Up.*, VI. xiv. 2 (IV. i. 15, 19). Ramanuja and Nimbarka, however, think that the Prārabdha Karma may not get exhausted in the life in which knowledge has been gained, and that the man of realization may have to go through several more lives to exhaust them.

Śaṅkara makes a twofold distinction among those who have attained knowledge, viz. those who have attained knowledge of the Nirguṇa (Supreme) Brahman and those who have attained knowledge of the Saguṇa (Conditioned) Brahman. The organs of a knower of the Supreme or Nirguṇa Brahman do not depart, but get merged in It at death. Though the Mādhyandina recension of *Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 6 reads, 'From him the Prāṇas do not depart', yet it is made clear by the Kāṇva recension of *Bṛh. Up.*, III. ii. 11 that the Prāṇas do not

depart from the body, but get merged in him only. In other words, there is no going by the path of the gods for such a knower. He becomes one with Brahman at death. His organs also get merged in Brahman and attain absolute non-distinction, according to the *Praśna Up.*, VI. 5, without any chance of cropping up again. *Mund. Up.*, III. ii. 7 describes the end from a relative standpoint, according to which the body disintegrates and goes back to the cause, the elements (IV. ii. 12-16). On release the soul does not attain anything new, but manifests its true nature (*Ch. Up.*, VIII. iii. 4 and xii. 3), which was covered by ignorance (IV. iv. 1). The relation of the released soul with Brahman is that of identity as it is given by texts like *Ch. Up.*, VI. viii. 7 and *Bṛh. Up.*, I. iv. 10 and IV. iv. 6 (4). In the state of release the soul exists, according to Jaimini, as possessed of the attributes of Brahman, while Auḍulomi thinks it exists as Pure Intelligence. According to Bādarāyaṇa, however, both are true; the former from the relative aspect and the latter from the transcendental aspect, even as Brahman is so viewed from the two standpoints as Saguṇa and Nirguṇa (5-7).

The soul of a knower of Saguna Brahman goes by the path of the gods to Brahmaloḳa (the region of Brahmā), i.e. it attains the Conditioned Brahman—which is the view of Bādari and is also endorsed by Badarayana. On the dissolution of Brahmaloḳa the soul along with the ruler of that world attains the Supreme Brahman (IV. iii. 7-11). The view upheld by Jaimini, viz. that the soul attains the Supreme Brahman cannot be supported, for with respect to It there can be no going or attaining, for the realization of the Supreme Brahman consists in nothing but the destruction of ignorance (12-14). Those alone who have worshipped the Saguna Brahman without a symbol attain Brahmaloḳa (15). The soul which has attained Brahmaloḳa effects its desires by mere volition (IV. iv. 8). It can exist with or without a body according to its liking (10-14). It attains all the lordly powers except the power of creation, etc. (17). There

is no return to this mundane existence from Brahmaloaka (22).

Rāmānuja does not make a twofold distinction among the knowers of Brahman as Shankara does. According to him the Prāṇas (organs) of a knower of Brahman do not depart from him (the soul) at death while his soul does depart from the body. This is made clear in the Mādhyandina recension of *Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 6, which reads, 'From him the Prāṇas do not depart' while the Kāṇva text reads, 'His Prāṇas do not depart'. So the soul of the knower of Brahman departs from the body and goes by the path of the gods. *Bṛh. Up.*, IV. iv. 7 refers not to absolute immortality by the destruction of the embodied state, but to the destruction of past sins and the non-clinging of those committed after the rise of knowledge, and the reaching of Brahman in the text means only intuitive knowledge of Brahman, and not actual attainment of Brahman. The embodied state (Samsāra) lasts till the end of the path of the gods, when it completely casts off its embodiment and attains Brahman (IV. ii. 7, 12, 13). The worshippers of the Conditioned Brahman (Hiraṇyagarbha) and the Supreme Brahman go by the path of the gods, but not those who worship Brahman in symbols (IV. iii. 15).

The soul on release manifests its own nature (*Ch. Up.*, VIII. xii. 3) and does not attain anything new. This true nature which is freedom from sin is obscured in the state of bondage by Karma (past works) (IV. ii. 1). In the released state the soul experiences that it is non-different from the Supreme Brahman which is its Self and that it is the body, and hence a mode, of that Brahman (4). The released soul is not only mere intelligence but also has qualities like freedom from sin, etc. for they are not contradictory; and since the Śruti mentions both, they are equally true of the soul (7). The released soul effects its desire by mere will (8). It can exist with or without a body according to its sweet will (12). The released soul acquires equality with Brahman as regards its qualities but it does not obtain the power of creating, etc. (17).

There is no return for the released soul to this mundane world (22).

Bhāskara, who preceded Ramanuja, also interprets the Sutras referred to above from IV. ii. 12 more or less like him except the Sutra IV. iv. 4 which he interprets as follows: The released soul attains identity with Brahman as is conveyed by texts like 'I am Brahman'. Just as when a pot is broken the space inside becomes one with the infinite space,—so also the soul becomes one with Brahman. By nature they are identical and it is the Upādhis that create the difference. So the Upādhi being destroyed the difference is destroyed and the soul becomes one with Brahman.

Nimbārka, who came after Ramanuja, follows him closely in these Sutras except in IV. iv. 4 where he states that the released soul experiences itself as both different and non-different from the Brahman.

In Sutras IV. ii. 7-14 *Madhva* does not find anything connected with the knower of Brahman, but finds quite a different topic, viz. whether Lakṣmī (Prakṛti) is also merged like the organs at death, and says that she is not merged in Viṣṇu, but ever remains separate. In Sutras IV. iii. 7-14 he first gives the views of Badari and Jaimini, and says finally in Sutra 15 that of those who go by the path of the gods, only those who worship the Supreme Brahman as all-pervading attain It while those who see It in the symbol, i.e. in one's own body go to the Conditioned Brahman. In the last Section of the work *Madhva* discusses the enjoyment of the released soul. Those who have entered into the Lord (Sāyujya Mukti) enjoy the same pleasures as the Lord, though not in the same degree and experience nothing but bliss (IV. iv. 1-4). Jaimini thinks the released souls enjoy bliss through the Lord's body, as they themselves have no body, either gross or subtle (5). Audulomi thinks that the released have a body of their own consisting of pure intelligence through which they enjoy pleasures. The casting of all material bodies and existing as pure intelligence is what is

called the state of release (6). Badarayana says it is both ways, for the Scriptures say that on release souls give up their material bodies and possess a form of the essence of intelligence, with which they enter into the Lord and enjoy all bliss in and through Him (7). The released soul issues forth from the Lord and takes up either a form of intelligence or a material body according to its liking (12), and it then experiences only bliss and pleasure (15). The released attain all desires but they do not have the power of creation, etc. which belongs only to the Lord. They have no control over the world order (17-20). They do not return any more to this mundane world (22).

In Sutras IV. ii. 7-16 *Vallabha* describes the nature of souls that have attained release through the Puṣṭi Mārga or the path of divine grace, as contrasted with the Maryādā Mārga or the path of knowledge and meditation. The manifestation of the Lord as love and the experience of the highest bliss by attaining the Lord as the Puruṣottama (the Supreme Being) are possible only in Gokula. Souls that have reached this world and have become united with the Puruṣottama are never again separated from Him. The knower who goes by the path of the gods attains not the Conditioned Brahman but the Supreme Brahman. Those

who understand all things to be nothing but Brahman go to the Supreme Brahman, while those who worship through symbols do not attain It (7-14). But the devotees of the Puruṣottama attain Him direct as soon as they have a desire for Him (15). There is a difference between the two aspirants, and each goes to his object of worship (16).

The soul on attaining Brahman, gets a special kind (Aprākṛta) of body, through which it enjoys pleasures (IV.i.1). Through this body the released enjoy pleasures with Brahman, says Jaimini, while Audulomi holds that they enjoy pleasures as pure intelligence; for to enjoy with Brahman, which is Pure Intelligence, they must also be of the same kind. Finally, however, Badarayana decides that the released have Aprākṛta bodies which enable them all the same to enjoy with Brahman, which is Pure Intelligence (5-7). Only those whom the Lord elects attain Him (8). The enjoyment in the company of the Lord is free from the functions of the body, speech, etc. (*jagad-vyāpāra varjam*). This meaning is quite different from what the other commentators attach to these terms. Those who attain release, whether through the Puṣṭi Mārga or through the Maryādā Mārga, do not return to this mundane world any more (22).

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

It was on the night of the *Phalahāriṇī Kālī Pūjā*, the new moon of May 1872 or 1873, auspicious for the worship of Kālī, that Sri Ramakrishna ceremonially worshipped Sārādā Devi (the Holy Mother), installing her in the place of the Deity. With this sacred ceremony, called in the Tantras *Ṣoḍaśī Pūjā*—the worship of the Woman, in the form of the Divine Mother *Ṣoḍaśī*, the third of the ten *Mahāvidyās*,

—was finished the long series of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual practices. It was the consummation of his *Sādhanā* in which he dedicated his all to the Mother of the universe, manifested through the living symbol of Sarada Devi. This remarkable form of worship is described in *Sārādā Sanctified*, which forms part of a poetical composition on the life of the Holy Mother, originally written in French and translated by the writer herself. . . .

The valuable *Reminiscences of the Holy Mother* by Sri Kumud Bandhu Sen, which appeared last in our issue for December 1952, are being resumed from the current number. . . .

The account of *The Conversion of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana*, the two foremost disciples of Buddha, by Dr. Radhagovinda Basak, M.A., Ph.D., is the substance of a lecture delivered by him at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, and is reproduced from the monthly *Bulletin* (for February 1953) of the Institute.

GOOD LIFE IS GODLY LIFE

In these days when secular humanism is assuming the role of religion and the tendency to glorify 'good life without God' is growing, it was most appropriate that the distinguished speakers at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda birthday anniversary celebrations, held not long ago at Lucknow and organized by the local Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, emphasized the essentials of a good and complete life based on spirituality and godliness as exemplified in the lives and teachings of India's saints and seers. Sri K. M. Munshi, Governor of Uttar Pradesh, in the course of his illuminating presidential address, said: 'In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna has given His word that whenever Adharma prevails He comes back to earth in every age. From every aspect this word has been kept. When our fortunes were at their lowest, Chaitanya preached the gospel of love and the Bhakti movement saved the soul of India, giving it inspiration and strength. In a similar way, after the great revolt of 1857, when our fortunes were again at their lowest, Swami Dayananda rose from Mathura and Sri Ramakrishna from Bengal.

'They gave validity to the great Truth that true religion is not a matter of belief, not a matter of profession, but is a matter of how to live, how to attain nearness to God and how to bring down the Spirit into the daily life of men. Sri Ramakrishna, an obscure temple-priest, had realized it. His

words, as they come to us almost after a century, give us new life. His vision not only embraced all aspects of life and all aspects of the Spirit, but he wanted that men should be uplifted in the light which was vouchsafed to him.

'That is why he would not permit Vivekananda to have Nirvikalpa Samādhi. He told him that true God-mindedness was to go to men and to raise them; not to spend energy in saving his own soul, but in transforming the life around him. And true to the word he had pledged to the Master, Vivekananda spent his life in creating a living faith by saving men morally and spiritually.

'We had had great masters during the last hundred years—Dayananda, Ramakrishna, Gandhiji, and Aurobindo. We had men through whom as through windows we caught a glimpse of God. They also taught us the historic mission of India.

'India through the ages has lived, in spite of vicissitudes, a godly life. In our villages, in spite of their poverty and ignorance, you see the faith, the devotion, and the aspiration of a godly life. It is this strength which has stood us in good stead and it is that faith which, purified and enlightened, has to be lived by India as a free nation. Then only will she live not for her own selfish interests but for the uplift of the world'.

Sri Munshi, in calling upon the youth of India to study and understand religion and strengthen their faith in godly life, has once again laid stress on the importance of the cultural and spiritual heritage of India to the country itself as well as to the world at large.

Speaking more directly on the message of Sri Ramakrishna and pleading for a proper evaluation of the unique role played by him as one of the makers of modern India, Dr. Nandalal Chatterji of the Lucknow University, observed:

'Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was one of the makers of modern India. He was the first cosmic humanist in the history not only of India, but of the world. His humanism is a new phase in the modern Indian culture. Jiva is Shiva—this equation of man with God is his greatest contribution to

modern thought. He rediscovered the soul of India's spirituality. In him one finds the consummation of the spiritual quest of India.

'He was not a founder of any religion. He lived every religion in a synthetic manner. He did not want anybody to change his religion. He wanted a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Christian a better Christian—because in his eyes the artificialities of religious barriers had no meaning. To him all religions were paths to the same house of God. This ideal which he placed before the world makes a living parliament of religions.

'He prepared the ground for a higher secularism—in which there is no division between man and man, community and community, religion and religion. He preached and practised spiritual democracy . . . based on a synthesis of all the four Yogas. He was man in God and God in man—whom modern India cannot forget'.

SISTER NIVEDITA'S LOVE OF INDIA

'Of all persons who truly loved India, Sister Nivedita was the foremost'—thus observed Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, the celebrated artist. 'Lo! India touched her with her magic wand'—said another admirer of Sister Nivedita. We reproduce below, from the *Vedanta for East and West*—the bimonthly journal published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London—a remarkable letter written by Earl Sandwich to Swami Ghanananda, President of the Centre, mentioning an incident which brought out Sister Nivedita's deep love of India which amounted to adoration. The occasion was the commemoration meeting held in London, in honour of Sister Nivedita.

Dear Swami,

In response to your request for a message regarding such contact as I had with Sister Nivedita years ago, I am afraid there is not a

great deal that I can say to add to other tributes that you may have received regarding her remarkable work for education in India.

I have, however, one very vivid recollection of meeting her in London when one side of her character, which may not be known, was shown. This was an occasion when Mrs. Leggett, my mother-in-law, and Miss Josephine MacLeod, who among Europeans was perhaps more intimate with Nivedita than anyone, were present as well as my wife and I. She had expressed a wish to meet Professor Cramb, of University College, London, a distinguished psychological scholar and historian who had also very deeply studied Hindu religious literature in the Sanskrit and was familiar with Vedanta philosophy.

We all met at dinner at Mrs. Leggett's house at 12 Bruton Street. This must have been about the year 1910, I think, or possibly a year or two earlier.

The proceedings that followed were characteristic of Nivedita. She started a discussion claiming that at that time India was ripe for democracy. She stoutly maintained that it was, in spite of the attitude of Professor Cramb, who would not admit that even understanding of the word 'democracy' could be claimed by any nation excepting Greece and the English-speaking races. The argument became heated on neither giving way, and ended, we were sorry to witness, by Nivedita bursting into tears, and the withdrawal from the table and soon after from the house, of the Professor.

Yours sincerely,
SANDWICH

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GAUDAPADA: A STUDY IN EARLY ADVAITA. BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN. Published by the University of Madras, Chempauk, Madras. Pages 292. Price. Rs. 9.

Amongst the pre-Shankara Advaitins the most

celebrated figures are Yājñavalkya and Gauḍapāda. Coming in the illustrious tradition of Yajnavalkya, Gaudapada has offered his system in the Kārikas which have the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* as their basis. But critics there have been in all times to accuse

Gaudapada of being a Buddhist, or of plagiarizing the Buddhist texts. Unfortunately we know nothing definite about the dates of our great poets and philosophers of the ancient times; and yet certain Occidental pundits began telling us that in all cases of doubt it was the Buddhist poet or philosopher that preceded the other. Thus we are told that Kālidāsa imitated Ashvaghosha, and that Gaudapada imitated Nāgārjuna. The basis for this conclusion is a mere hypothesis. What prevents us from saying that Ashvaghosha imitated Kalidasa, and that Nagarjuna imitated Gaudapada? Now, we know pretty well that it is impossible to assign any definite date to these personalities and that objections can be mustered against any date arrived at. But, in the philosophical history of India, we know the date of Vāchaspati fairly well; and to be ranked as the leader of an Advaitic School which differs from the *Pañcapādikā*, supposed to be written by Shankara's own disciple, he ought to have lived at least a couple of centuries after Shankara. This would put Shankara's date before 700 A.D. Shankara was the disciple of Gaudapada's disciple. The traditional account makes Gaudapada a contemporary of Appollonius of Tyana, the Pythagorean mystic who lived in the first century A.D. (see pages 8 to 15). And the earliest Buddhist writer to quote Gaudapada was Bhāvaviveka (500-550 A.D.). Gaudapada, then, must have flourished between the first century and the sixth; and the traditional date would take him to the first century.

Another line of argument adopted by the critics refers to the terminology. Some of the technical expressions appearing in Gaudapada are said to be frequently employed by the Buddhist writers. In the ninth chapter of the book under review, the learned author, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, has given the lie direct to such a baseless contention by showing the Upanishadic origin of almost all such expressions. One might add that there is no impossibility in arguing that the terminology of Gaudapada was freely borrowed by the Buddhists.

And there are critics—some of them well-known scholars—who do recognize that Gaudapada was an Advaitin, but who declare that he has incorporated into his system most of the teaching of Vijñāna-vāda and Shūnya-vāda. And when such critics find some of the expressions of the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* going against their preconceived conclusions, they do not hesitate to amend the text. But we have no right to amend the text as we like and call it Gaudapada's, in so far as all commentators from Shankara onwards accept a different version. Dr. Mahadevan has done valuable service in this volume in putting an end to all such theories.

The Āgama-prakarana begins with a summary

of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* and proceeds to enunciate the various states of the Self. After establishing the real nature of the Self as that corresponding to the *turiya*, Gaudapada draws the logical conclusion that the Self is the only Reality. As such the Vaitathya-prakarana discusses the nature of the world. This is a logical development of the argument presented in the first chapter. And it leads us directly to the Advaita-prakarana. The last chapter reveals the mutual contradictions found in the non-Advaitic systems and it establishes non-duality through a process of negative reasoning. This logical sequence binds all the four chapters together; and Shankara was the first exponent of the Karikas to point out this unity in the text. Dr. Mahadevan has offered a brilliant analysis of the four chapters and answered the critics satisfactorily in arriving at the unity of the text.

Next, Dr. Mahadevan has shown clearly the Upanishadic basis of the text. Gaudapada is, so to say, a lineal descendant of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*. These Upanishads constitute the very foundation of Absolute Idealism. And what Gaudapada does is not merely to erect his system on the foundation of the Shruti. His aim was to establish a logically coherent system. There have been many attempts before and after Gaudapada to establish the system of Advaita purely with the aid of logical reasoning. One such attempt is embodied in the Karikas known as *Paramārthasāra*. These Karikas are traditionally known as Ādhāra-karikas, since they lay the logical foundations of the system. Dr. Mahadevan is inclined to hold that they are later than Gaudapada. But there are others who have reason to believe that they are older and that the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* was modelled after them. All these attempts at synthesizing reason and revelation consider experience to be the final criterion.

Brahman, says Gaudapada, is the ultimate Reality which can be comprehended either positively or negatively. The negative approach should not be mistaken to be nihilism or agnosticism; for it is only intended to focus our attention on the intense positive aspect of Reality. The Real, considered in terms of Consciousness, is the greatest affirmation. But this affirmation does not render the objective universe real, in so far as the external universe is considered popularly to be independent of the Spirit. This Reality is eternal, all-light, pure consciousness, and infinite bliss. This Reality is non-dual, whence all theories of creation or origination are self-contradictory. To show the self-contradictory nature of all such views, Gaudapada propounds the Ajāti-vāda. If the non-dual Brahman is the sole reality, the world of plurality must be an appearance. It is an appearance

because it is riddled with contradictions; and this is the meaning of the concept of Māyā taken up by the Upanishads and by Gaudapada. Maya is generally taken to be a principle that makes the 'many' illusory; and this is a very unfortunate meaning given to a very good word. Maya is that principle which makes the appearances and the knowledge of these appearances possible. In other words, it is that which apparently renders the supra-relational Reality relational. Gaudapada, therefore, propounds the Vivarta-vāda in the Vaitathya-prakarana. This theory is based on the recognition of the degrees of truth and reality in the world of appearances. Almost all the classical illustrations of error have been employed to purpose.

One feature which distinguishes the Objective Idealism of India from that of the West is its methodological approach. The Western thinkers tried to understand the nature of Reality from an examination of truth. But in India the main approach has been through the examination of error; and this is a more fruitful method. For, error necessarily involves degrees of truth and reality, a foundational Consciousness, and the importance of Immediacy. The erroneous cognition is an immediate experience, and it is sublated only by another immediate experience. It is taken to be real during the experience. And the appearance of an object as something other than itself is possible only when the ultimate ground of the appearances is a principle of Consciousness. This is the major tenet of Advaita; and a definite movement in this direction has been finally given by Gaudapada.

This method would render the individuality of the individual soul also to be an appearance. The finite self is a contradiction in terms. When I know that my self is finite, I have comprehended myself as transcending this finitude; for, the knowledge of limit suppresses the limit. Each self is a finite-infinite entity, its infinity being its real nature. But this is not a quantitative infinity. The apparent finitude is only adjectival. It is merely the product of that which conditions the Real. Herein Gaudapada brings the analogy of the ether to show that all finitude is an appearance and that the self is not other than Brahman. All distinctions that are imported into Brahman are the products of our meddling intellect which is conceived in terms of Avidyā. From the transcendental standpoint, then, no self is ever born; and there is neither destruction nor origination, there are neither bound souls nor those who seek the freedom of the Spirit. But from the empirical point of view, all activity is directed to the realization of the freedom of the Spirit. This Self-realization is the culmination of knowledge.

In view of this logical position, Advaita can have no quarrel with any other system. It admits that Truth is whole and that non-contradiction is the criterion of Truth. As Dr. Mahadevan puts it, 'While the pluralistic world-views are in conflict with one another, Advaita is not opposed to any of them. It recognizes that there is truth in each of them, but only that that truth is not the whole'. Hostility arises out of partial vision. When the whole truth is known there could be no hostility. Gaudapada pleads for a philosophical peace when he says, '*avivādam nibodhata*'. Here we get an answer to Dr. Schiller's question: Must philosophers differ?

In the first three chapters, Dr. Mahadevan explains the underlying unity of the text, its Upanishadic basis, and its logical foundations. The next four chapters are devoted to an exposition of the text; and here he has answered those who would like to interpret Gaudapada to suit their own preconceived notions. Starting with the triple stream of experience, he arrives at the foundational Consciousness which alone is the non-dual Reality. This puts an end to all theories of origination and presents the real nature of the Self. There is one chapter on 'The Way and the Goal', followed by 'Gaudapada and Buddhism', and 'An Estimate'. The book is well written and the traditional interpretation has been restored, largely because of the chaos introduced by the critics of Gaudapada. We hear so much of Shankara and of the post-Shankara thinkers in the present day; and we hear so little of the pre-Shankara thinkers. The book is an attempt at bridging this gap. To quote the concluding words of Dr. Mahadevan: 'For the most part the appeal that Gaudapada makes is to reason, and, what is more, to experience. He speaks with a voice of authority derived from the intuitive experience of the Absolute; and he utilizes his logical discipline in expounding the truth of Vedanta. . . . In the history of Advaita his name will ever remain as that of a great pioneer who combined in himself a deep mysticism with a penetrating philosophy, and a poetic vision with a logical mind'.

It is needless to add that this learned work, coming as it does from the scholarly pen of Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, forms an important and very valuable contribution to the study of Advaita Vedanta through a detailed examination and just interpretation of one of its classic source-books, viz. Gaudapada's *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*.

The printing and get-up of the volume are well done and the readers are provided the benefit of an exhaustive bibliography, a helpful glossary, and a useful index.

SANSKRIT COMIC CHARACTERS. By J. T. PARIKH. Published by The Popular Book Store, Tower Road, Surat (Bombay State). Pages 80. Price Rs. 2.

Sanskritists and Indologists, both Indian and foreign, are mostly preoccupied with the baffling problems of the history and chronology of ancient Indian literature. Literary and aesthetic appreciation of the treasures of Sanskrit literature has not so far received the share of attention it so eminently deserves. The bibliography of literary criticism on Sanskrit *belles-lettres* of the modern times is, to say the least, lamentably poor. *Prācīna Sāhitya* of Rabindranath Tagore is a masterly appraisal of some of the aspects of Sanskrit literature. Attempts in this direction would mean definite adornment of our regional literatures and would stimulate balanced aesthetic evaluation. It is really gratifying that the author of the brochure under review has chosen a very interesting aspect of the Sanskrit drama for specialized treatment.

The author's critical appreciation of the comic characters of the Sanskrit drama has admittedly been modelled on J. B. Priestley's *English Comic Characters*. This is as it should be. Although our celebrated ancient masters, i.e. the theorists of Sanskrit poetry, had their own inimitable technique of literary criticism, there is need for a reassessment of old values with the methodology perfected by the modern doyens of literary criticism.

It is almost derisively believed that the characters of the Sanskrit drama lack the stamp of individuality and that they are stereotyped and stock-types, as if they are made to order in slavish conformity with the set rules of dramaturgy. This is held all the more scoffingly in regard to the character of the Vidūṣaka. The author has brought to bear upon the subject a refreshingly critical acumen in meeting this sweeping generalization. The Vidūṣaka does not merely take away the tedium of the seriousness of the drama; he has entered into the very texture of the meandering course of the plot and not inconsiderably contributes to its development. He is *in* the drama and not an adventitious, unattached buffoon. True, Sanskrit drama has not given us a Falstaff whose rollicking laughter is almost devastating. But such excessive revelry does not fit in with the lyrical cadence of the Sanskrit drama. The basic outlook of the Indian philosophy of life has always called for healthy moderation even where the situation may provoke such boistrous hilarity.

The author has pointed to the marked individuality of the Vidūṣakas of different dramas. Their distinctive modes of reaction have also been set forth with profundity. Their good-humoured witticisms should not be confused with the pungent raillery or trenchant cynicism of a Touchstone. The

author has elaborated his thesis with reference to the representative Sanskrit dramas.

We commend this illuminating study to all lovers of Sanskrit literature. The author's attempt is worthy of emulation inasmuch as young ambition may find for itself 'fresh fields and pastures new' from our priceless heritage for specialized intensive research.

J. C. DATTA

THE DOCTRINE OF AWAKENING. By J. EVOLA. Published by Luzac and Company, Ltd., 46, Great Russell Street, London W.C.1, U.K. Pages 320. Price 21 s.

The book under review is an English rendering of a work in Italian, entitled *La Dottrina del Risveglio*, by J. Evola. The original work was published at Bari, Italy, in 1943. The present English rendering is from the pen of H. E. Musson.

This book is a systematic study of the principles and practice followed by the disciples of Buddha in their training in life. The title of the book, 'The Doctrine of Awakening', is otherwise called Buddhism. The term 'Buddhism' is derived from Buddha, which comes from \sqrt{budh} —to know, to awaken. The author has, therefore, chosen this title instead of Buddhism, as it is usually called. He has also observed that 'the "Doctrine of Awakening" is the real signification of what is commonly known as Buddhism'. The sub-title of the book reads, 'A Study on the Buddhist Ascesis'. The book, containing nineteen chapters, is divided into two parts. It offers a clear exposition of the abstruse conceptions of *kamma*, *samsāra*, *paṭicca-samuppāda*, *samatha*, *vipassanā*, *trikāya*, *nibbāna*, *sūññatā*, and the like. The system of 'ascesis' or self-training, and the historical place, significance, and function of the Doctrine of Awakening have also been studied and discussed. Much emphasis has been laid on the practice of 'ascesis' in life and has also been highly recommended. Even the relation between the Hinayana and the Mahayana has not escaped the notice of the author. Besides, a short note on the Zen form of Buddhism, so popular in Japan, has been added. The word 'Zen' is an abbreviation of 'Zenna', a transcription of the Sanskrit word *dhyāna* (or Pāli *jhāna*) which means contemplation. This sect, therefore, insists on meditation for spiritual attainments. For a fuller and more detailed knowledge of Zen Buddhism D. T. Suzuki is, of course, a reliable guide. The author's presentation of the intricate problems and the solutions thereof shows that he has made a deep study of the subject. By making the translations very faithful, Mr. Musson has rendered a useful service and afforded the English-reading public access to this valuable work.

Buddhism has of late become an important subject of study in India and abroad. As such the publication of this book, dealing with the various aspects of Buddhism and Buddhist culture is doubtless welcome.

A. C. BANERJI

BENGALI

PREMANANDA JIVAN-CHARIT. BY SWAMI OMKARESWARANANDA. *Published by Ramakrishna Sadhan Mandir, P.O. Kunda, Deoghar, S.P., Bihar. Pages 312. Price: Cheaper Edition Rs. 3-4; Better Edition Rs. 4.*

The author is already known to Bengali readers for his earlier works entitled *Premānanda*—Parts I and II, being collections of the inspiring Conversations of Swami Premananda, noted down by the author himself at various times and places. He now presents the complete biography of Swami Premananda, in the book under review, in his characteristically lucid and charming style. It has in all twenty-three chapters and carries an illuminating Foreword by the well-known leader and educationist Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji.

One of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Premananda, more familiarly known as Baburam Maharaj, was a cherubic soul of great spiritual attainments. He was for a long time at the Belur Math and acted as the loving guide of and moving spirit behind the young inmates of the head monastery of the Order. His limitless love and care of the monks and devotees had earned for him, even from the Holy Mother, the worthy appellation 'mother of the Belur Math'. Students and elders alike were attracted to him and his lofty spiritual life made a deep and unforgettable impression on their minds. He imparted spiritual training to the Brahmacharins and Sannyasins with considerable tenderness and consideration and set before them, by his living example, the highest ideals of renunciation, discipline, and service as enunciated by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He was 'love (*prema*) personified', so aptly true to his own name.

Above all, Swami Premananda's devotion to Sri Ramakrishna was remarkably intense and one-pointed. He lived, moved, and had his being in Sri Ramakrishna and always spoke highly of Sri Ramakrishna's purity and renunciation and unique method of training his disciples. Sri Ramakrishna had mentioned Swami Premananda as one

of the Ishvarakotis (perfected souls), pure to his very bones. Even as a boy of eight Swami Premananda had thought of leading a life of renunciation, in the company of a monk, in a secluded spot. He never assumed the position of a Guru and lived a simple and austere life throughout. Swami Premananda passed away in 1918.

The biographical account contained herein is not only interesting and instructive, but also replete with graphic descriptions of situations and events in the illustrious life of Swami Premananda. There is a chapter on Balaram Bose, one of the well-known householder disciples and 'Rasaddārs' of Sri Ramakrishna, who had married the sister of Baburam Maharaj. Everyone earnestly engaged in spiritual practice and seriously striving for self-improvement would do well to read and re-read this great life of one who had walked with God and exemplified the ideas and ideals preached by Sri Ramakrishna. Young men, in particular, can derive immense inspiration and benefit from this book and thereby learn to place unselfish service before self-interest in everything they are called upon to do.

KUMUD BANDHU SEN

KANNADA

AMRITAVANI. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore 4. Pages 48. Price 5 As.*

In the Kannada-speaking areas, as in many other parts of the country, people are well acquainted with the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda. But of Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother, and the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, naturally much less is known to the general public. Each one of them was a mighty dynamo of spiritual power, having come under the divine touch of Sri Ramakrishna. The influence of their impeccable lives and inspiring utterances has transformed and is transforming many a weary but aspiring soul. In this brochure are collected together, in Kannada translation, some select sayings of the Holy Mother and the leading direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, culled from their valuable spiritual talks and teachings. It goes without saying that the contents of this nicely printed pocket-size book will act like tonic to the soul and restore one's moral and spiritual tissues.

S.A.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (CEYLON BRANCH)

REPORT FOR JULY 1940—DECEMBER 1951

The following is a brief report of the activities of the various centres of work under the Ramakrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch) for the period from 1st July 1940 to 31st December 1951:

The celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the First Landing of Swami Vivekananda in Colombo (in 1897) was observed in 1947.

The Silver Jubilee of the Educational Activities of the Mission in Ceylon was celebrated in 1950.

The Mission collected about Rs. 37,000 in 1943 for the Bengal Famine Relief Fund. The Mission conducted Flood Relief work in 1947 in the affected areas of Hanwella, Hewagam Korale.

Colombo Centre: The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Colombo, the chief centre of the Mission in the Island, carried on its usual religious and cultural activities by conducting daily Puja, holding weekly classes, and arranging special lectures. The Swamis of the Mission delivered lectures in and around Colombo and in Kandy, Ratnapura, Anuradhapura, and other places in the Island. The Birthday Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and some other saints and seers, were observed.

In 1946 and 1947 the Mission purchased a plot of land, measuring about 3½ acres, for the extension of its activities in Colombo.

The new building of the Public Library and Free Reading-room was declared open in April 1948. There were 1,700 books and 38 periodicals were received at the end of 1951.

Service at Kataragama: The Mission has been rendering service to the pilgrims to Kataragama, a famous pilgrim-centre in Ceylon, during the festival months of July and August every year since 1943. Every day about 30,000 persons were supplied with cool drinks and cooked food was supplied to about 2,000 people. In 1951, the Ramakrishna Mission Kataragama Committee was constituted, and a small plot of land was purchased at Kataragama in December 1951. (In June 1952 was laid the foundation-stone of a Ramakrishna Math on this plot of land).

Educational Activities: The Mission (in Ceylon) provided for the education of more than 6,500 children with the assistance of 236 teachers in 22 institutions. It maintained a Students' Home for Boys and two Homes for Girls with 85 and 45 destitute orphan children in each section.

Of these institutions, two were Collegiate, one was Mixed Senior Secondary English, one Girls' Senior Secondary English, eight were Mixed Senior Secondary Tamil, one was Boy's Senior Secondary Tamil, four were Mixed Junior Secondary Tamil, and three Primary Schools—spread over the districts of Batticaloa, Trincomalie, Jaffna, and Badulla.

In *Batticaloa* there were one Residential English and 14 Tamil Schools. The Shivananda Vidyalaya, raised by the Government to the status of First Grade College in 1948, is the premier educational institution in the district. The work expanded on various lines during the period under review. Special mention may be made of the following: A new Temple and Prayer Hall (in 1945) dedicated to the Holy Mother and donated to the Sarada Vidyalaya, the Girls' School at Karativu; Gift of land and buildings, worth Rs. 25,000, for founding the Chitravel Vidyalaya in Sittandi village; Gift of building worth Rs. 20,000, to the Girls' English School, Batticaloa.

In *Trincomalie*, the Hindu College, the leading English educational institution, resumed its normal activities in its own premises after the war emergency in 1946. It was recognized as a First Grade College in 1951, and it had, towards the end of the period under review, 650 students and 25 teachers.

In *Jaffna*, the Vaidyeshwara Vidyalaya showed phenomenal progress during the period under review, and had 800 students and 32 teachers. A new building, worth Rs. 30,000, was declared open in September 1948.

In *Badulla*, the Junior Tamil Mixed School continued to serve the educational needs of estate children in Lunugala.

The following statistics show the progress of the educational institutions conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch) during the period under review:

Year	No. of Schools	No. of Students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1940-41	17	2,050	1,041	3,091
1941-42	17	2,069	1,102	3,171
1942-43	17	1,850	1,214	3,064
1943-44	17	1,922	1,298	3,220
1944-45	18	2,269	1,429	3,698
1945-46	19	2,522	1,522	4,044
1946-47	22	3,125	1,991	5,116
1947-48	22	3,471	1,994	5,465
1948-49	22	3,570	2,384	5,954
1949-50	22	3,894	2,463	6,357
1950-51	22	3,991	2,551	6,542

Some of the needs of the Mission are:

(1) For land and building fund of Colombo Centre—Rs. 3,00,000. (2) Permanent Fund for maintenance of Temple and Ashrama at Colombo—Rs. 50,000. (3) Permanent Fund for orphanage at Batticaloa—Rs. 50,000. (4) Permanent Fund for educational activities—Rs. 1,00,000. (5) For Kataragama Math work—Rs. 2,50,000.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, PATNA REPORT FOR 1951

The following is a brief report of the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Bankipore, Patna, for the year 1951:

Bhuvaneshwar Charitable Dispensary: This Homoeopathic Dispensary treated 68,854 cases during the year.

First Aid and Surgical Section: In this section 9,227 cases were treated.

Distress Relief Work: The Mission Ashrama conducted distress relief work at two places in the scarcity-affected areas of Bihar during the year. The relief centre at Madhubani (Dt. Darbhanga) working for seven weeks, distributed 40 tons of wheat, gifted by the Indian citizens of the U.S.A. to the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, among 5,600 people in 27 villages. Another relief centre at Biruli (Dt. Purnea) distributed 63 tons of wheat, secured by the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission from the Indian Chamber of Commerce of Suva in Fiji Islands.

Swami Adbhutananda Upper Primary Pāṭhsālā: This school has been imparting free education to poor boys of backward communities. 151 students attended the school during the year and there were 4 teachers on the staff.

Students' Home: There were 4 students in the Home, 2 of whom appeared for the I.Sc. examination of the Patna University and passed.

Swami Turiyananda Library and Reading-room: There were 1,091 books in the Library, and 14 periodicals were received for the Reading-room.

Religious and Cultural Activities: 368 scriptural classes and 36 lectures and discourses in English, Hindi, and Bengali were held during the year in and outside the Ashrama premises. Birthdays of saints and religious festivals were observed with due solemnity.

The Ashrama needs funds for the maintenance and expansion of its various activities,—in particular, the First Aid and Surgical Section, the Library and Reading-room, and the U. P. School. Any contribution in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary.

INSTALLATION OF IMAGE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The marble image of Sri Ramakrishna was installed in the recently-built Temple of the Rama-

krishna Mission Ashrama, Patna, on 16th March 1953, by Swami Sankaranandaji, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The previous day learned Pandits from Banaras performed Vedic Havana. On the day of installation, special Puja, including Kāli Puja, Homa, and Bhajan, including Kali-kīrtan, were held. The function was largely attended by the public and a number of monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order were also present. The occasion coincided with the week-long celebrations in connection with the birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. Illuminating speeches were delivered by many distinguished persons, on different days, among whom were Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Sri Justice S. K. Das, Sri Justice S. C. Mishra, Sri V. P. Varma, Speaker, Bihar Legislative Assembly, Sri A. N. Sinha, Minister, Government of Bihar, and Sri S. Sahay, Vice-Chancellor of Bihar University. The installation ceremony, together with the anniversary functions, aroused unique interest among the people and it appeared more like a religious convention than an ordinary celebration.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL (HARDWAR)

REPORT FOR 1951

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal (Hardwar), (Dt. Saharanpur, U.P.), started in 1901, is a full-fledged hospital with 50 beds, with all up to date arrangements. The following is a brief report of its various activities during the year 1951:

Hospital: The total numbers of cases treated during the year in the indoor and outdoor sections of the hospital were 1,483 and 57,242 (of which 17,697 were new) respectively. Diet, medicine, nursing, and treatment under qualified doctors were provided free of charge for the patients, without any distinction of caste, creed, or community.

Temporary Free Milk Canteen: Seven barrels (each 225 lbs.) of skimmed milk, one barrel (96 lbs.) of cod-liver oil, and 25,000 multi-vitamin tablets—all gifts from the Indian Red Cross Society—were distributed among ill-nourished mothers and children of the locality, numbering about 300, for three months beginning from December 1951.

Library: There were 4,102 books in the Ashrama and the patients' libraries. 1,287 books were issued during the year. 15 magazines and 3 newspapers were received for the reading-room.

Feeding of Davidranarayanus: More than 2,000 persons, mostly Harijans and displaced persons, were served with food during the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

Finance: Income for the year under General Fund was Rs. 47,419-1-9 and expenditure Rs. 50,182-5-9, leaving a net deficit of Rs. 2,763-4-0.

Needs: Funds for the following items of urgent importance and necessity are required:

1. For underground drainage, with improved sanitary arrangements to complete the scheme ... Rs. 62,000
2. To meet the deficit incurred in constructing a cow-shed (Gaushala) ... Rs. 5,000
3. For the construction of Doctors' Quarters ... Rs. 25,000
4. For constructing a kitchen block, with store-room and dining-hall ... Rs. 25,000
5. For the addition of 20 beds, with necessary equipments ... Rs. 6,000
6. For Pantry, Bedding, and Linen-room for patients ... Rs. 5,000
7. Endowment of 33 beds in the Indoor Hospital at Rs. 8,000 per bed (Beds may be endowed in memory of near and dear ones) ... Rs. 2,64,000

In addition, a sum of Rs. 50,000 is needed annually to meet the recurring expenditure in carrying on the normal activities of the Sevashrama.

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BANKURA

REPORT FOR 1951

The Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Bankura, West Bengal, has been conducting religious, medical, and educational work. The following is a brief report of its activities during the year 1951:

Math: Birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and other great saints and seers, and important religious festivals were observed. 122 indoor religious classes were conducted and 8 public lectures were arranged.

The library and reading-room contained 1,744 books and received 33 periodicals.

Mission: The Mission conducted 3 charitable dispensaries. The Bankura Main Charitable Dispensary treated a total of 57,807 cases, of which 16,540 were new. The Branch Dispensary at Ramharipur treated 7,996 cases, of which 3,103 were new. The Doltola Branch Dispensary treated 2,616 cases of which 937 were new. The number of new indoor cases, in all the dispensaries, was 101 and that of new surgical cases was 132.

There were 8 students in the Vivekananda Homœopathic Medical School; of these, 4 were

resident students, 2 of whom received free board and lodging.

The Saradananda Students' Home had 12 students, of whom 3 were partly free boarders. 2 students passed the Matriculation Examination, one in the First Division.

The Ramharipur Extended M. E. School had 240 students (boys and girls) on its rolls.

Antimalarial drugs were distributed free among 74 persons and pecuniary help was given to 29 persons. The Mission also undertook minor relief work, viz. fire relief and smallpox relief.

RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, RAJKOT

REPORT FOR 1951

The Ashrama was started in 1924. during the year under report its activities were in brief as follows:

Preaching: On Sundays lectures were delivered on religious and spiritual topics, which were open to the public. Daily prayers, with chanting and *bhajan*, were also conducted in the Ashrama prayer-hall. Besides, the birthday celebrations of the great religious leaders were observed and special lectures were arranged on such important occasions.

Library and Reading-room: The Library contained altogether 4,840 books and 12,411 books were issued to the public. The Reading-room was provided with 54 papers and periodicals and the average daily attendance was 125.

Publication: Books on religion and culture were published by the Ashrama, mostly in Gujarati. 'Sri Ramakrishna Lilā-prasanga—Sādhaka Bhāva' was under preparation during the year.

Medical and Other Relief: The Ayurvedic and Homœopathic sections of the Ashrama Dispensary treated altogether 23,777 cases during the year, of which 8,067 were new cases. The Ashrama undertook free distribution of milk, received from the UNICEF, among nursing mothers and children. The average number of daily recipients of milk was 148.

Educational and Cultural: The Ashrama conducted a Students' Home for the benefit of deserving students, who resided in the Ashrama under the supervision of the Swamis and thus got all possible facilities for character-building, along with their usual studies. Physical training, games, excursions, etc. were organized for the benefit of the students. There were 40 boys on the rolls during the year under review, of whom 9 were free and 2 half-free.