PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LVIII *JUNE 1953* No. 6

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

RAMAKRISHNA-CHARANA-SAROJE*

Dwell enraptured, O bee of my mind!
At Ramakrishna's lotus feet.
Circled with thorns is the blossom of worldliness;
Dwell there no longer, drunk with delight.

With this affliction of living and dying
How long, O mind, will you constantly bear?
Drink, at his feet, of devotion's nectar,
Freed from the torment of worldly care.

None of the pairs can assure you salvation:
Virtue and vice, joy and grief, peace and pain.
Diligently, with the axe of discernment,
Cleave, then, Karma's fetters in twain.

Chant the sweet name of Ramakrishna
And night's delusion will break into dawn;
Nightmares no more will return to distress you;
The stupor of sleep will for ever have gone.

Dwell enraptured, O bee of my mind!
At Ramakrishna's lotus feet.

* Translated from the original Bengali by Brahmachari Yogatma Chaitanya.

LETTERS OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA*

U.S.A.

Dear A—,

I have had all the news from your letter. Why are you suffering from mental and physical troubles? Come over to this country; allow your self to expand and don't let it remain confined to one body. Worry no more about yourself alone. You have done enough of that; now worry about others—that will be much more beneficial. Can anybody build up a character according to his liking? Character gets built up of itself. The Divine Mother builds it up. Don't put forward vain excuses, but agree to it . . . Courage comes gradually. Didn't you see me, though there were many reasons for my not having such courage? As for you, you are a 'finished product'—so come along.

Ramachandra, while travelling in the South, once took up residence on a hill to pass the four months of the rainy season (*cāturmāsya*). There was only a temple of Shiva there. Rama sent Lakshmana to Shiva for getting Shiva's permission. Lakshmana went to the Shiva temple and conveyed Rama's request. Without saying anything, Shiva assumed a different and strange pose—it was a dancing pose . . . When Lakshmana conveyed this to Ramachandra, the latter expressed his joy. Lakshmana asked, 'Lord, I did not understand anything'. Rama said, 'Lakshmana, Shiva has granted permission. The idea (implied in that strange pose of Shiva) is this—Controlling the sex instinct and the palate, dwell wherever you please, and you will live happily'. I had heard the story from a Sādhu in my boyhood. Now I am realizing it directly. . . .

TURIYANANDA

* * *

U.S.A.

Dearest S—,

What is the matter with you? Why so much weeping? What has happened? Why so much desire to sleep? *'Śete sukham kastu?—Samādhiniṣṭhaḥ'*,[1] *'Nidrā samādhisthitiḥ'*.[2] Can there be sleep if there is so much harping on 'me' and 'mine'? If the mind becomes restless, let it do so; it will quiet down of itself. Pay no attention to the rascal; that is the best means. What have you known about your own worthlessness? Why are you so very anxious about yourself? . . . What nonsense is it that you are thus sitting and thinking of your own self? . . . When there is no work, then only does one worry about oneself, and by worrying thus cannot achieve anything. How much longer will you go on worrying about your own self? Let it all go; there has been enough. Now worry a little about others. . . .

HARI MAHARAJ[3]

* Translated from the original Bengali.

[1] 'Who sleeps happily?—One who is established in Samādhi' (Shankaracharya's *Maṇiratna-mālā*, 4).

[2] '(My) sleep is the state of being in Samādhi' (Shankaracharya's *Śiva-mānasa-pūjā Stotra*, 4).

[3] Swami Turiyananda was familiarly known thus.

THE HUMAN SITUATION IN THE ATOMIC AGE

By the Editor

It is a long way from the savages and the troglodytes of old to the *soi-disant* worthies of modern civilization. Yet it is so very true that the latter feel much more frustrated and insecure than the former. In a world of terrifying manifestations of power, man—whether scientist or philosopher—is ill at ease, witnessing the growing top-heaviness and lopsidedness of the human situation. The atomic age is no longer in the offing. We are already in it. The striking record of the few titanic achievements resulting from the knowledge and use of atomic energy has overawed the major part of thinking humanity. Even those who are not unencumbered by traditional prejudices, inhibitions, and limitations find themselves unconsciously swept off their feet by this new and powerful feature of scientific adventure. Within a short period of less than two decades, atomic research has released powers of a revolutionary character which have in turn effected equally revolutionary changes in the techniques of economics, industry, and warfare. Such spread of the scientific outlook has brought about corresponding changes of profound significance in the social, political, and educational ideals and institutions of mankind. Atomic science has been a dominant factor in determining human relations and bids fair to transform our hitherto cherished conceptions of mind, life, and matter.

Evolution has resulted in the world as we know it today. At least that is the view of the biologists, to whom 'natural selection' and 'evolutionary progress' are interrelated topics of fundamental importance. Freedom and progress form the watch-word of evolutionary processes, as of all scientific trends. Men of science are unanimous that it is possible for progress to be achieved, though a progressive evolutionary advance may eventually come to a dead end, having become arrested or limited in proportion to what may be conceived and termed as 'unlimited progress'. But the dismal prospect that human progress may stop at a stage and the race become extinct cannot inspire hope or confidence in the efficacy of a mechanism of progressive movement which sets much store by purely biological characters that distinguish dominant from non-dominant and earlier from later dominant groups. Is biological or evolutionary progress all-sufficient to explain and understand the greatness and uniqueness of man? If man represented the latest dominant type to be evolved, one cannot remain satisfied by sticking to and applying pre-human objective standards alone in considering human progress and its essential criteria, viz. spiritual values. The biological aspect of progress can at best visualize all-round biological improvement of a particular and limited nature believed to be engendered by inter-specific and intra-specific competitions and struggles. But human progress, on the other hand, has connotations of value as well as efficiency and requires that subjective criteria be never ignored and that human values and feelings be taken into account in deciding on the future aims for advance of mankind.

Intelligence, which involves true speech and conceptual thought, is to be found exclusively in man. Of all the millions of species that exist and have existed, only one, viz. man, has resisted the proclivity to 'specialization', thereby not becoming incapable of further development. Thus it is open to man alone to achieve general, all-round progress in preference to one-sided progress in a particular direction which obviously limits efficiency to performance of one sort of task in one sort of environment. With a highly developed set of sense-organs and a well co-

ordinated nervous system, man is in many respects unique among animals. Progress and its future possibility of being continued are not shut out in the case of *Homo sapiens,* the most perfect representative of evolutionary achievement. Man, made in the image of God, is in a position to go on progressing in the direction of greater awareness, greater intelligence, and greater control over environment. Hence has it been truly said, 'There is nothing greater than man' (*na mānuṣāt śreṣṭhataram hi kiñcit*).

The future of progressive evolution is in no way apart from the future of man himself and therefore must take account of human values and purposes as much as human needs and limitations. Any one-sided specialized advance is incompatible with a genuine human situation which is expected to call forth the best in every individual and society through a total integral experience of life and reality. No earnest seeker after truth, least of all a true scientist,—however radical and destructive of existing beliefs his views may be,—can ignore the metaphysical foundations of values and purposes and of ideals and aspirations, without which no progress beyond the flesh could be considered practicable. Pragmatic science almost always puts the cart before the horse by failing to appreciate the sublime depths of the human personality out of which flow the sap of life and the substance of science. The pretensions of any science, physical or other, to an absolutely objective status, apparently divorced from the subjective individual himself, can only be illusory. In the words of a modern Western author, 'Greater comprehension of the "outer world", will be possible to the degree that deeper insight is obtained into the "inner world", the world of mind and of meaning. It is suggested indeed that the fuller realization of this fact is what will determine the future trend in physical thought, a trend which will eventually bring about a revolution in all the sciences'.

If the world is torn today by conflicts and tensions, big and small, it can be no fault of any individual or even any community as such. Nor could the whole of humanity be blamed for this lamentable lack of peace and security, notwithstanding the enormously precious acquisitions of freedom and power on the part of every major and most minor nations. The atom bomb, starting from which one could designate the age we are living in as the atomic age, is undoubtedly a powerful instrument of mass destruction. But a hundred thousand such weapons, kept ready for use when needed, cannot negate the meaning and purpose of life. Nor do they deter us from understanding and appreciating the role of science in modern life. But one noticeable feature of the atomic age is a kind of mass neurosis, with its paralysing effect on every side. The prospects are grim and most people are tempted to agree with the English bishop's pertinent though impracticable suggestion that science should take a holiday for half a century while men of science consolidated their gains and made sure of their foundations. Notwithstanding the threat of imminent and extensive destruction of life and property that atomic weapons hold out, the human situation demands not the suicidal cessation of scientific research but the applying of the discoveries of science to the best of man's ability and wisdom.

The new world of twentieth century science holds forth immense prospect of success in achieving progress of humanity and reaching greater unity and stability at which it is aiming. What lovers of science are worried over is the growing apprehension regarding the wrong motives that inspire the use of scientific knowledge for destructive purposes. In other words, they are not sure whether man is wantonly and deliberately pursuing a course of conduct which he has reasons to think may prove disastrous to him as well as to others. In the atomic age, men appear to have specialized in the art of killing one another. Owing to the purely non-spiritual approach to all matters of human concern, man's mind is not integrated and serious mental conflict has become inevitable. He finds it difficult to con-

trol and regulate his emotional and other mental urges. When the unscientific temper puts on a scientific mask and corrupts individuals and through them communities, it is no small wonder that whole populations are brutalized and perverted in the arts of bestiality. The proponents of unscrupulous power politics, who place the scientist on a higher pedestal than the poet or the philosopher or the mystic so long as it serves their purpose, would wish to see society educated in the ethics of sensual indulgence and militarism which go hand in hand. Young people who wish to think out scientific problems find it well-nigh impossible to shake off the subtly compelling demands of crudely perverted group antagonisms and national vanities which hinder the pursuit of pure science. Every fresh and sincere seeker after truth is unwittingly led to cultivate a technical-military training and type of thinking, and ultimately persuaded to sacrifice every human value for the sake of irrational lust for power and for fanatical group-interest.

The powers gained by man through control over and independence of natural environment can be best utilized for the good of the larger and ethical whole when he is capable of rising from the sub-personal and personal levels to the super-personal. The majority of people even in this atomic age are on the sub-personal level, thongh they do possess a vast amount of theoretical knowledge and a multitude of comforts and conveniences. 'We are living now,' writes Aldous Huxley, 'not in the delicious intoxication induced by the early successes of science, but in a rather grisly morning-after, when it has become apparent that what triumphant science has done hitherto is to improve the means for achieving unimproved and actually deteriorated ends. In this condition of apprehensive sobriety we are able to see that the contents of literature, art, music,—even in some measure of divinity and school metaphysics—are not sophistry and illusion, but simply those elements of experience which scientists chose to leave out of account, for the good reason that they had no intellectual methods for dealing with them' (*Ends and Means*). The idealistic trend in education and enlightenment is as important as the technical 'know-how', if not more so, for without doubt a broader understanding of the inner spirit of science will help achieve spiritual harmony between the apparently opposing forces of external Nature and man's internal nature. Cold-blooded factual analyses cannot make men more sober and more altruistically selfless, though they do reinforce a habit of mind which goes by the name of scientific and secular realism. The fact that the atomic weapon can destroy a large number of human beings at one stroke does not make it more valuable than human life. A Frankenstein's monster may become formidable to the person who has created it; yet it could never satisfactorily prove that man, the creator of science, is in any way inferior to his own creation. However, science after science oblivious of the eminence of man as a spiritual being, declares him to be a product of blind forces, powerless and helpless in the face of his connate instinctual appetites. Even the minimum restraint, much less true renunciation, is looked upon as an inhibition of an undesirable kind. One immediate and far-reaching consequence of this repeated repudiation of personal integrity and spiritual interrelation is world chaos. It is more than evident today that discontent breeds hatred and hatred leads to violence, revolution, and war.

If values are illusory, ideals superstitions, and animal pleasures alone worth striving for, there is no reason why one should care to cherish and reciprocally respond to such universally valid virtues as non-injury (*ahimsā*), truth (*satya*), non-stealing (*asteya*), chastity and continence (*brahmacarya*), and non-coveting (*aparigraha*). These basic foundations of social life and private morality would be without meaning to the utilitarian who discards the relevancy of the ideals, values, and goals of spirituality. For, cannot robbery and murder be considered legitimate biological

activities in so far as they conform to the very natural laws of evolutionary struggle?

Why has man pursued scientific adventure? How far has he got and how far yet is he likely to get? The scientists themselves are either not unanimous or are unable to offer satisfactory answers. Meanwhile scientific research proceeds apace, as it rightly should, and the other question that arises simultaneously is: How can mankind be saved and its priceless spiritual acquisitions preserved from impending disaster or gradual decay? To this, the spiritual leaders of mankind give effective answers and point out the surest way to achieve the great task that lies outside the scope of physical science. 'The self-existent supreme Lord inflicted an injury upon the sense-organs in creating them with outgoing tendencies; therefore a man perceives only outer objects with them, and not the inner Self. But a man of balanced wisdom, wishing for Immortality, beholds the inner Self with his eyes closed' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*). The profound religious experience, gained by turning away the senses from external physical objects and experiences through the discipline of renunciation and self-control, is indispensable to a fuller and better life. While science gives us the tools and the technique to conquer external Nature, religion teaches us the method of mastering the more subtle motive powers that control the passions, feelings, and will of mankind. Without the conquest of the inner man, none could be sure of making full and proper use of the vast potentialities of Nature. Both religion and science are devoted to depth of insight and grasp of truth ; but the former goes deeper and touches the inner being of man, enabling him to manifest his spiritual vitality in and through love, service, and brotherhood.

The human situation in the atomic age is not without perils. But it is a happy sign that it is not without hopes. Modern India, like ancient India, is once more revealing to the world the fact that material achievements and spiritual culture can go hand in hand and that the integration of the values of religion and the achievements of science can act not merely as a bulwark of peace but as a positive focus of limitless creative activity in the interests of world understanding. Failing such integration, creative science could at best remain feeble and before long be outstripped by destructive science, with obvious consequences for mankind.

RELIGION IN THE NEW INDIA

By Dr. Kurt F. Leidecker

Wherever there is faith, hope, trust, devotion, and loyalty to ideals, there is religion. But where is there no faith, hope, trust, devotion, and loyalty? These attitudes permeate the whole of man's life in all its phases, personal and social, economic and political, aesthetic and scientific. Hence, there is a constant religious orientation going on in society which, as such, is never obvious to anyone until religion is practised in a church or typically religious environment. Yet, if the objects of religious devotion represent the highest human values, then all values by which man places store must become religiously tinted. Art has been acknowledged as divine, so has philosophy and music, even mathematics. Men can be devoted to national and social ideals as if they were the embodiment of religious values. If these observations hold true, then religion and social change are interdependent and the one not only reflects the other but *is* the other, just as the medical

student recognizes the somatic *as* the psychic and the psychic *as* the somatic.

India is a perfect illustration of this. In her long history events from the beginning of creation down to the last act of man, are interpreted religiously, while religion has been consistently made the architectonic force, individually and socio-politically. Even today this has not changed. India is engaged in a tremendous struggle to become and maintain herself as a modern nation. After five years of independence she has already become the leading nation of Asia. Such developments, of course, do not take place without the most thorough-going shifts in loyalties occasioned by the impact of new problems which the inevitable industrialization and involvement in political and social progress along Western patterns have brought with them. According to the thesis stated at the beginning, such new spiritual alignments and the hopes and ideals they engender, must be felt in the religious life of India. They are, indeed, felt, not universally throughout India as yet, but in the communities, largely urban and metropolitan, in which the impact of modern living is most pronounced. Elsewhere religion pursues its habitual course and exhibits its age-old features.

Like the United States, India is a secular State. It gives full guarantee to the free exercise of conscience and religious practice in so far as they do not infringe upon those basic virtues and values which made such guarantees possible in the first place. India, thus, has fallen in line with the most enlightened opinion in statesmanship. The theocratic State is an anachronism in the twentieth century, for no matter how persuasive its character is put forth, it cannot be denied that where practical human problems are solved on the basis of a concept of God dictated by factional theology, the concepts of right and justice must remain subject to the acceptance of a creed about the nature of God and the world which is wholly speculative or rests completely on authority to which rational faculty and logic must be sacrificed.

The modern State cannot allow right and justice to be interpreted except in terms of socially accepted standards whereby human meets human on a purely man-to-man basis which allows correction of behaviour without reference to revelation,—revelation, moreover, which occurred in the remote past and seldom if ever repeats itself in modern times. Society must be allowed the privilege of self-correction of values in view of changes in the body politic. A State cannot survive if it orients its policies on values derived from either a desert or any other primitive community which is innocent of such complications in human relationships as we are witnessing in the modern world.

The formulation which the discussion between traditional religion and modern statecraft has taken in India in the matter of social relationships is that of anticommunalism. In this anticommunal attitude of the Indian government lies its strength and much of its moral stamina is also concentrated there. No longer the dictates of a religiously organized majority or minority is to be the pattern for human relationships. The emphasis is to be on Man. It matters not what religion a man professes, which divine power he believes in, be it Shiva, Vishnu, Allah, or Jehovah: What matters is how he lives together with his fellowmen. Herein also lies the test of any and all religion: Does your God permit you friendly relationships with your neighbours, or does he look upon all those not calling on his name as pagans or godless, and is man under the necessity of regarding the disbeliever with suspicion? No matter how much the theocratic State professes tolerance for those 'following after strange gods', it can only be a sufferance. In the secular State, tolerance is a positive attitude in that it recognizes the right of everyone to worship in his own way. Hence, the theocratic State is looking back, the secular State is forward-looking. But India is, in addition, in a peculiarly leading position because her own traditional philosophy is—unlike that of other countries—anticommunal, in the above, Indian sense.

Her old Vedic saying: 'Truth is one, men approach it in various ways', is one of the greatest utterances in religious and social history. A theocratic State is built on exclusiveness and must be discriminatory, while the anticommunal State, as the Indian leaders again and again have insisted, is inclusive and welcomes the variety of religious expressions.

In the secular State, theology does not determine political action and does not rule economic and social change. Anticommunalism sees to it that no religion or religious group segregates itself from the main body of the people. The power of India has always been Hinduism, no matter how much maligned, because it was and is the most tolerant community that has ever been evolved in history. In its existence to be reckoned in many centuries, Hinduism developed a style of life which made it possible for different religions to live together peaceably and absorb even those that came to conquer with the sword. The emphasis was placed on Man. Likewise in the modern democratic State, such as India is, each person has a voice. He may be a Brahmin, a priest, a minister of the Gospel: He has only one voice as a man.

In the past when India was not in any real sense in competition with the Western nations, her problems could be plotted on eternal patterns. Time did not matter. The Indian secretly still clings to this philosophy of eternal reality. Yet, he has to act in the modern world. No one knows this better than India's Prime Minister. India's leaders may not be in sympathy with the pragmatic way; still they have to adopt it in a world which calls for the solution of momentary issues. The conflict, thus, becomes immediately apparent. The eternal recedes, the momentary looms large. Do the traditional Indian religions provide for such exigencies?

It is a personal belief that they do, but it is by no means apparent. Neither does the average man realize the diversity of point of view inherent in the major religions, nor do the Indian leaders realize that at all events. There is much cajoling and ridiculing by some of the political leaders who heap sarcasm upon the man who is proud of his cord or his tuft of hair, symbolic as they are of conservative points of view and practices. Perhaps re-education would be better than cynicism, and more effective. The new loyalties of which we spoke above could be made consistent with some of the universalistic features in the major Indian religions. But the conflict does exist, also mainly because some of the orthodox religious leaders of India have, indeed, fallen into the error of narrow perspectives. The fate of the Hindu Code Bill is very instructive in this respect.

The adoption of the Hindu Code is an absolute necessity for India in her unification as a nation. For there must be a civil code applicable throughout the Indian Republic to prevent separatism and facilitate the administration of civil and criminal law in a republic which is, perhaps, the most variegated of any in the world as far as social and religious customs are concerned. This Hindu Code has been brilliantly conceived and should eventually be so modified as to be adopted in essence as now formulated. In the meantime it is running into tremendous difficulties on the part of Indian orthodox thinkers who confuse form with substance, who reason rightly that the form is an expression of spirit, but assume wrongly that the form must become ossified and spirit is no longer productive. This latter assumption is, of course, directly opposed to the concept of an eternally creative God who manifests Himself in the greatest variety of forms. The neo-orthodoxy which is rearing its head in India is dangerous not only to the modern republic but, strangely, to the values which it is or seems to be defending. Like all orthodoxy it will die, but its death will not be graceful. It possesses most valuable aspects, but lacks not so much foresight as insight, which would reveal the very vitality of the philosophy, metaphysics, and ethics which underlie orthodox religion. Thus, the neo-orthodoxy does a distinct disservice to the nation as well as to itself in the shape of the guardian of those

principles upon which the original, anticommunalistic Hindu society was founded. We will not say and thus lend emphasis to the general Western criticism that religious leaders in India have exploited their own by interpreting their religion in a way to suit their own economic ends. We will give them the benefit of the doubt, for to err even in matters of religion is human, and their motives may be above reproach even if they wish to perpetuate age-old customs which are anachronistic, be they in connection with marriage, family relations, property, the legal status of women, and the like. India will march forward, as is proven by the recent elections in which more people went to the polls than in any other country in the world. Orthodoxy would do well to reassess the basic philosophy of its own creed in the light of the inevitability of spirit to forge its own stage, characters, and tools, even if all is a *māyā*.

But there are other phases to the changes in religious attitudes in India which parallel particularly the urban and metropolitan evolution. India is not alone in passing through these labours in which a new civilization is being born. They attend any and all processes of so-called enlightenment and intellectualization which are the consequences of rationalization in all departments of life and thought. Modern life is infinitely more complicated than life in a primitive community. In India the village community comprises still a vastly greater number of people than does the urban or metropolitan community, but the influence in the modern world is not wielded by this majority. Be that as it may, the continued progress of India along the lines of a modern nation depends on the city population, while city and international life demand new and more difficult loyalties.

When these loyalties are not yet clearly formulated, the religious life and thinking are also confused. Symptomatic of this situation is the rise of agnosticism. Those professing it have not given up entirely their belief in the religious attitudes of the past; they struggle with uncertainty, they straddle the fence, mostly in all sincerity and not from cynical and political motives. They represent the lost souls who are Indian and Hindu primarily but have not succeeded in squaring themselves with the new loyalties. They do not clearly perceive the course of Indian spiritual life in a sea of new demands upon man's deeper resources in a world that is to a large extent denuded of spiritual values. They are honest with themselves and others, but do acknowledge the potency of forces that shake religion in its foundation. They do not wish to relinquish their hold on values dimly conceived, yet are not strong enough to reintegrate religious, social, economic, and political forces. They are not hopelessly lost to religion—this is one thing that must be said in favour of the Indians that the religious consciousness will probably never die out in the land of the Ganges—but as far as religion is concerned they do not represent a religious force and their attitude is religiously valueless.

From what has just been stated it would also appear that the religious scepticism, a metropolitan and academic phenomenon, is not so dangerous as it might seem at first. It must be reckoned with wherever a class of intelligentzia is being reared. They will not deny religious values outright, but their attitude is sufficiently discouraging to any endeavour to follow the path of religion. Ostentatiously they have broken with what they call the superstitions of religion, and will have no part in religious practices.

That this attitude, like agnosticism, may also to a large extent be superficial so far as India is concerned, may be illustrated by a little incident that happened at the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges rivers near Allahabad, a very sacred spot. The writer had been taken there by students at the University of Allahabad, two of whom had joined him in casting flowers and milk on the waters and making their ablutions. The third student remained sitting in the boat and called these acts of ours superstitions of which he would not be guilty. Before departing, however, the Brahmin came around with cere-

monial gestures and prayers and daubed our ear-lobes and foreheads with sandal-paste. The sceptic not only did not refuse to submit to the ceremony being performed on himself but seemed more anxious than the rest of us, and we all returned to the city carrying the symbol of devotion most prominently on our foreheads. No one would have suspected a sceptic amongst us.

Scepticism is reared particularly in academic circles and among the growing number of persons who are intensely interested in science and technology. They easily become infected with the attitudes of some of our Western writers who have turned apostles and, as scientists, have arrogated to themselves the right to go beyond their test-tubes, weights, figures, and measures to speculate—the very thing they are so vocal in condemning in other people, such as the philosophers who have specialized in the art of thinking.

The next step after scientism and scepticism is atheism. Some Indians have taken this step; more will take it, no doubt, especially in continuance and furtherance of political ends and political creeds in which dialectical materialism plays a decisive role. Atheism may be a personal doctrine with little of the boisterous about it; but it is usually a vigorous doctrine with tremendous missionary force and persuasion. It is a fighting creed and destructive, setting nothing in its place on the spiritual level. It replaces spiritual values with economic reforms about whose rationale no speculation is offered. The economic reality is, for atheism, a sufficient substitute for the so-called supernatural and abstract about which every thinking person must sometime render himself account. If these things are allowed to come to the fore in the dialectic, they are treated as unreal and imaginary, and if advanced in the interest of this or that objective, as opiates.

That Indians will never subscribe to such doctrines *en masse,* must be obvious to anyone who knows not only the Indian's temper but his fundamental character and grounding in Hinduism. That India has adopted the principle of secularism and is anticommunal must not mislead us in our judgement. The implication is not at all anti-religious and atheistic, just as the United States are not anti-religious and atheistic when they protect all religions but have none taught in the public schools. In India, too, religion is taboo at college and university, not entirely because scientism, agnosticism, scepticism, and atheism have taken hold, but because no religion should be preferred over the other, nor one denomination (if we can speak about denominations in India) over another. The Indian feels strongly about religion even if he ridicules and condemns its forms. The greatest scoffer can be made to yield in an argument when his sentiment is roused with a story of love and devotion from the *Rāmāyaṇa,* or he can be moved to tears at the song of a Chaitanya or Tagore. This sort of sentiment can never be eradicated by substituting for it an enthusiasm for economic well-being. The Hindu sooner will give up everything in life, his possessions, comfort, and food itself than forgo the ancient sentiments. I say this even in the face of ruthless exploitation which some Indians practise upon their fellowmen. These same Indians, given to making economic and financial gains their first concern, are not at all atheistic and hence would never subscribe to dialectical materialism, no matter how 'materialistic' their concern.

Here again in India the parallelism between East and West is not perfect, for the presuppositions on which the life of the Indian community is based are different. Indians may fall prey to the grand promises of a society that has rejected the reality of the divine and spiritual; but they will revolt against the implications if once they are pointed out to them. Hence it may not be inexpedient for the Indian republic, instead of neglecting the teaching of logic, metaphysics, and ethics, in short philosophy, to reconsider their teaching on all levels of education on a non-religious basis. India must not be misled by false analogies with the West whose tradition is totally different.

Just as in ancient India the *cārvāka* or man on the street, who has his only concern with physical well-being and gives no thought to spiritual matters, was non-existent as a respected member of the community, so the dialectical materialist with his continual and exclusive emphasis on economic reality will become a rarity providing that, with the vigour and rigour of Indian logical schools, the total implication of this doctrine has been pointed out to the people. That atheism may make its way in the meantime is quite probable and that grave dangers for religion do exist in the immediate futnre cannot be denied by the thoughtful analyst.

While we have thus arrived at the negativistic side of religious development in India, let us take a look at the positive side. There are a number of religions, indigenous to India yet obscure until the recent past which are staging a come-back. Notable among these is Jainism, the religion having a hoary antiquity. Its ethical code with strict emphasis on *ahimsā* or non-injury to any living creature, its non-ostentatious piety, sane and hygienic living, cleanliness and cultural integrity have much to recommend it to anyone in India and abroad. Its philosophic doctrine of *syādvāda* or 'may be' is capable of adaptation to modern moods in science and elsewhere.

Buddhism with its noble eightfold path, universal compassion for suffering creatures be they man or beast, the discouragement it holds out to all efforts to make distinctions of race and caste, has found many supporters of late in eminent persons in Indian affairs who even crusade in its behalf. In that it places ethical virtues above speculation it becomes a potent moral force, along with Jainism. Both doctrines, in that they are non-committal with respect to the nature of the ultimate reality and the soul, are favoured by the agnostic, although the atheist, who may look for supporting features in them, will surely turn away disappointed.

There is the Arya Samāj, a religious society with traditional views but not lacking appeal for the intelligentzia, which is very popular in certain sections of India. In that it underlines its Vedic character it should fall in line with both nationalistic and religious thinking, provided the emphasis is not too narrowly on the society of the Aryas. In the slowly growing Brāhma Samaj the universalistic element is more pronounced and a syncretism is effected which finds wide sympathy and support. Its tolerance is typically Indian and real, its cleansing action upon the body politic and religious is well known. Its ability to adapt Hindu ways to Western habits is very encouraging.

Above all, the Ramakrishna Missions throughout India have done their part in reorienting religious attitudes to modern aspirations in that they are keenly alive to the cultural issues of the day which they are not afraid to bring to the attention of their devotees, no matter how controversial.

The religions that have not adapted themselves perfectly to the saving broadness of the Hindu community, are Christianity and Islam. They will probably never do so. Whether their unbending attitude, founded upon dogmatism, is the reason or something that is incompatible with the anticommunalism and secularism which modern India professes, is for the followers of these religions to determine. Western imperialism has largely contributed to the rise of Christianity in India, while imperialism lasted; but with its downfall its stock has also fallen considerably. It seems to be lacking that vital force, so far as the Indian is concerned, who cannot subscribe to the implications of a doctrine of faith which must categorically reject and seek to uproot every other religion and stigmatize it as pagan and false. The same holds good of Islam, of course.

Through partition, India may have separated herself from a large sector of population which professed an exclusive religion; but she came out of the great catastrophe in a morally and religiously much stronger position than did Pakistan. Pakistan can attract and will attract only Moslems; India can and will

attract Moslems and believers in any other religion. The fact remains that forty million Moslems still are within the Hindu fold, purged of fanaticism and now more than ever tending in the direction of a mysticism or, perhaps, a protestant reformation within Islam. As a missionary religion, Islam is dying a slow death in India, but as a spiritual force it will remain in India for a very long time to come because even with its uncompromising features it surpasses Christianity in tolerance and appreciation of real democracy.

The indigenous and popular religions of Shaivism, Shāktism, Vaishnavism, and what their names may be, are as vigorous as ever, especially in the tens of thousands of rural communities throughout the length and breadth of India. These, especially with their tremendous appeal to the human emotions of love and devotion no less than their aesthetic appeal through image, song, and ritual, will continue to enthral the humble and inspire the intellectual who, in the new India, is increasingly becoming conscious of the artistic heritage of his own land. Bhakti or devotion, is an ineradicable element of the Indian soul, and no matter how sophisticated, yet light, the attitude of the city dweller may be at *pūjā* or religious festival time, the spiritual element steals through the carnival and tugs at the heart-strings of young and old alike. This is the positive limit to which cynical or sneering scepticism can go: Before the *namaskār* or devotion of the humble the whole tradition of India with its fierce and tender loves, its deities of terror or transcendent goodness, its million-fold images and the unimaginable unmanifest, capitulates, despite the rationalistic onslaught of the West.

No longer may the West expect some Indians to leave the Hindu fold because a better world beyond is promised or temporary relief is offered here below. India has become a free nation, proud to tackle its own tasks, towering though they may be. Temples are opening to all castes; all creeds are tolerated; the books are open and libraries are being stocked; quietly vast schemes of rural reconstruction are getting under way. None of these ventures have strings attached to them, strings that might pull families and communities apart because the death of ancient divinities is asked in return for favours rendered. It is India's India. Her gods are bound to change, there is no doubt. But they will change because Indians, Hindus, endow them with new qualities glimpsed in the great commingling of factors from different civilizations. One thing is certain, they will look kindly upon man's endeavour to reach out into the fulness that is theirs, that is God's, for every divinity is liberal to aspiring man.

THOUGHTS ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S POETRY

By C. T. K. Chari

It is perhaps not always remembered that Swami Vivekananda was a poet. To be sure, he was not an outstanding Bengali poet. It is certainly not for his poetry that he is widely read and studied today. He was too sensitive a religious thinker to need devices and too gifted to use them. None the less, he had a flair for poetry and sometimes spontaneously expressed his thoughts in verse. Could these have been occasions when his trenchant prose did not quite suit his purposes? It is not without significance that he made an attempt to embody his supreme experience of *samādhi* in a poem rather than in a reasoned discourse. I wish to suggest here that his complex and many-sided philo-

sophy found a not unnatural vehicle in his poetry and that neglect of these possibly elusive aspects of his personality may give a misleadingly abstract turn to the expositions of his philosophy.

Let me preface my contention with some general remarks. To attempt any large and extended discussion of the issues and implications of poetry would be too ambitious a task for me. I content myself with the observation that, after much learned talking, no definition of poetry has been forthcoming; perhaps no definition is really worth while. Charles Williams in his *Poetry at Present* spoke of those 'three dimensions of Nature, humanity, and thought and that "fourth dimension" which we can only rather helplessly call poetry'. Our helplessness is emphasized by the elusiveness of the poet himself. Who indeed are the genuine poets? Max Eastman provided a description as comfortable as it was vague when he said that 'Poets are the lovers of the qualities of things'. The very appreciation of poetry can set tantalizing problems. All that Croce, a philosopher who assiduously applied himself to the problem of the aesthetic, could say was, 'Is this enjoyment of poetry, this delight in beauty, rare or common? It is both; as a settled habit, it is rare . . .; it is common, as the native tendency of all ingenuous minds'.

It would be more relevant to my theme to ask what poetry, at any rate in its deeper and more sustained moods, *is not*. Not 'clearing the mind of purple' or writing 'vermilion lines'. That would be vulgar claptrap. Wordsworth, in his Introduction to 'Lyrical Ballads', made a pointed reference to those 'readers accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers. . . .'. Much later, Alfred Noyes, in his *Some Aspects of Modern Poetry,* spoke disdainfully of 'the hunter of the scarlet word'. He pointed out that 'preoccupation with a desire for novelty defeats its own end. . . . Nothing is so superficial as mere literary sophistication'. He commented also on the vagaries of so-called 'criticism'. 'Today the very word *cliché* has become a *cliché* for use on all occasions'.

To understand a poet, I submit, is not merely to recapture *his* mood or sentiment. All truth must be *lived* before it is *possessed*. The truths of great poetry must be lived if we want to possess them. In this sense, I can accept the dictum of H. P. Collins in his *Modern Poetry* that 'Literature deals *au fond* with human nature'; with its insistent problems and their attempted solutions. It may be urged that a didactic or hortatory purpose often mars the beauty of poetry. A great deal of so-called 'metaphysical and moral poetry', it will be said, misses the mark. Edith Sitwell pronounced in her *Aspects of Modern Poetry* that 'The most solid observations on human life, expressed with the utmost eloquence and brevity, are morality but not poetry'. Very true; for eloquence and brevity are compatible with mediocrity; and mediocrity is something we shun in poetry. Did not Horace discover that long ago?

> In certain subjects be assured
> Tame mediocrity may be endured.
> But God and man and books all dispute
> A poet's right to mediocrity.

Masefield summed up the critics:

> They mark the height achieved; the main result
> The power of boredom in the dead man's words.

Serious poetry is not concerned with the snperficies of human nature. Exquisiteness is not the only quality we expect from it. Adapting the Wordsworthian phraseology to my purposes, I shall say that poetry is the 'impassioned expression' which is the 'countenance' of all philosophy. Shelley's 'Defence of Poetry' cannot be staled by repetition or criticism. 'What were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship—what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave—and what were our aspirations beyond it if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar'

Even apart from the 'Poet of Light', my remarks have, as may be guessed, a special bearing on the mystical poets. One thinks at once of Crashaw, Traherne, Blake, Vaughan, and Francis Thompson. To read Vaughan, however cursorily, is to become aware that moonlight can be so pure and cloudless that the Mystery is nigh unto us. Edmund Blunden, in his Hogarth Lectures *Nature in Poetry*, dwelt on the 'note of familiar kinship' struck by Vaughan:

I saw Eternity *the other night.*

Intimacy—with a Strange World. The contours of ordinary consciousness, the sharp lines separating Life and Death, Time and Eternity, Man and God, fade away in much mystical poetry. Speaking of the Indian poets, Dr. J. H. Cousins made the acute remark in his *Modern English Poetry*: 'Certain philosophical fundamentals which are yet in the stage of conscious thought or speculation with English poets, are the natural accepted bases from which the poetry of these Indian singers arises'. The remark would pre-eminently fit Tagore. I suggest that it would not be altogether inappropriate even in the case of the lesser poets of India.

Great truths of philosophy, like those of poetry, must be lived before they are possessed. W. B. Yeats's remark that 'Whatever of philosophy has been made poetry is alone permanent' does not mean that philosophy should lower its standards. Rather must poetry raise its standards and realize the wisdom of the veiled alchemical symbolism.

> Miracle, ecstasy, the impossible hope,
> The flagstone under all, the fire of fires,
> The roots of the world.

Elsewhere[1] I have instituted a comparison between the classical Indian and the classical Russian philosophical traditions. Simon Frank has claimed for Russian religious philosophy that it presupposes not merely a *knowing* of the object, but a mystical *living* in it. I think that Indian philosophers can stake a not dissimilar claim for their great traditions.

[1] *Philosophy East and West,* October 1952.

Coming to Swami Vivekananda, I maintain that the truths he uttered, in the comparatively few Bengali and English poems that he composed, sprang from an intense and significant *living* in the things about which he spoke. He gave the quintessence of the Vedanta in a single poetic image to Dhirāmātā: 'Each soul is a star, and all stars are set in that infinite azure, that eternal sky, the Lord'.[2] We may, if we choose, try to chisel and sharpen the image with our philosophical tools; but I am sure that the effect in the end will be cruder; it will have none of those infinities dancing in Swamiji's image which came from the crucible of his living experience.

Critics who find that the Vedanta lacks reverence for Human Personality, the Power of Sanctifying Love, could not have read the lines that Swamiji wrote to a friend:

> Formulas of worship, control of breath,
> Science, philosophy, systems varied,
> Relinquishment, possession, and the like,
> All these are but delusions of the mind;—
> Love, Love,—that's the one thing, the sole treasure.[3]

A poignant truth—not tawdry phraseology.

The playful turn or twist that Swamiji gave to the haunting cadences[4] of Shelley's *Ode to the Skylark* may not rank as high English poetry; but it should make us ponder on those 'natural accepted bases'—as Dr. Cousins called them—of Indian philosophy.

> I look behind and after
> And find that all is right.
> In my deepest sorrows
> There is a soul of light.[5]

[2] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Mayavati Memorial Edition, Part V (Mayavati, 1919), 'Epistles', First Series, p. 55.

[3] *Complete Works,* Part IV (Mayavati, 1919), p. 427.

[4] We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell
Of saddest thought.

[5] *Complete Works,* Part VI (Mayavati, 1921), 'Epistles', Second Series, p. 397.

The Hymn of Samādhi[6] is memorable for its images of Distance, Emptiness, Darkness, and Silence. Pascal,[7] Kierkegaard,[8] and Dostoevsky[9] were fascinated and at the same time terrified by Infinite Emptiness and Silence. The metaphysical atmospherics were integral to Swami Vivekananda's poetry.

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,
All light extinct; in the great void of space
Floats shadow-like the image-universe.

In the void of mind involute, there floats
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current 'I'.

Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude
Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless,
The only current, the 'I am', 'I am'.

Lo! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,
Void merged into void,—beyond speech and mind!
Whose heart understands, he verily does.

We can attempt to translate all this into metaphysical dialectics; but we are apt to forget that the transcendent, consolidated oneness with the Deity simply cannot admit of the monopolistic claims of the warring 'schools' of philosophy. It is curious, in this connection, to reflect on the fact that Narayana Vaman Tilak, notwithstanding his Christian persuasions, could not disengage himself from the 'natural accepted bases' of Indian thought. It was of 'Love's Samādhi' that he sang:

Ah, Love, I sink in the timeless sleep,
Sink in the timeless sleep.
. . . . . .
My soul fares forth; no fetters now
Chain me to this world's shore.

Swami Vivekananda, in all his moods, was concerned with a Great Shining Peace in which he saw the fulfilment of human destinies. It was characteristic of him that, when the *Prabuddha Bharata* was transferred from Madras to Almora, in August 1898, he bequeathed its Vision to his successors in a poem:

Awake, arise, and dream no more!
This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts,
Of flowers sweet or noxious,—and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness . . .
. . . Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.[10]

Are the 'truer dreams' that Swamiji would have us dream so very different from the first few letters of the Eternal Alphabet that Longfellow would have us learn?

Bears not each Human Figure the Godlike
Stamp on his forehead?
Readest thou not in his face thine origin?
. . . . . .
Hateth he thee?—Forgive! For 'tis sweet to stammer
One letter
Of the Eternal's language;—.

Dante said that the function of the great poet is to be the scribe of Eternal Love. From Swami Vivekananda we may learn that to be the scribe of Eternal Love is to be pledged to Eternal Wisdom.

[6] *Complete Works*, Part IV. *op. cit.*, p. 431.

[7] 'Le silence éternal de ces espaces infinis m'effraie' (*Pensées*).

[8] 'The whole of existence frigbtens me ... everything is unintelligible, most of all myself'. See *The Journals of Kierkegaard*, edited by Alexander Dru (Oxford University Press, London, 1938), entry of 1839, 275.

[9] Svidrigailoff's representation of Eternity as 'a small room—blackened by smoke' (*Crime and Punishment*, Everyman's edition, Dent, London, 1911, p. 220) is indicative of a repressed horror of wide and empty spaces. Similar indications can be found in *The Brothers Karamazov* and Dostoevsky's own letters to his wife. He had nightmares of children falling head over heels into empty space.

[10] *Complete Works*, Part IV, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-324.

THE IDEA OF CREATION

By Pravas Jivan Chaudhury

The idea of creation implies that the creator must be absolutely responsible for the created and must absolutely know it. A potter does not create a pot, he only fashions it out of a substance, clay, which he neither creates nor knows thoroughly. Similarly a chemist does not create water out of hydrogen and oxygen when he produces some in the laboratory by the chemical action of the two gases. Nor do the gases create water, nor fire heat and smoke; they only cause their products, that is, they are antecedent occurrences in the succession of phenomena which succession follows some order, causal law. They have no control over the course of phenomena, they themselves being blindly and mechanically driven by law. Again, an architect's plan or idea incorporated in a building does not create the latter nor does the purpose for which the building is built. The purpose, like the plan or idea, is a psychological antecedent occurrence or cause of the building. So that causation in none of its forms, material, efficient, formal, or final, is creation.

But, then, is creation an empty idea having no concrete illustration or instance to warrant it, a mere abstraction? It is not. For we have instances of it in our imaging and dreaming. We create our images and dream-objects. Though I may not be very much conscious of my imaging forth every detail of my images formed in imagination and, certainly, I am not conscious of my projecting the dream-objects, I do own them as mine own creations. And I know every bit of them such that I cannot sensibly say that there were parts in them which I overlooked. What I did not see in my imagination and dreams did not exist. Now I create these objects out of my 'mind', so I say. But what is this mind? Do I know it as an empirical object? No, it is simply my self or consciousness that knows the empirical objects and can project imaginary ones. It is not any substance, either physical, vital, psychological, or spiritual (whatever the last may mean), for a substance implies properties inhering to it and appearing as phenomena under space,[1] time, quantity, causality, and other categories of empirical knowledge, and since these presuppose consciousness which is their ground and knower, they cannot determine it.[2] So the mind cannot be conceived as a thing or confused with mental states. Rather it may be realized as a subject of knowledge of empirical objects and as a creator or projector of the images in imagination and dreams. It may be spoken of in such negative terms as no-thing, no-cause, infinite, and timeless (eternal). We have seen how it is a no-thing, and since only a thing can be a cause, it is no cause but a creator. It is infinite in the sense that it is beyond the category of space but not in the sense that nothing other than this stands over against it to limit it. The dream or phantasy world that it creates and faces cannot limit it as the latter is created by the former and known as unreal, also as an expression of the former's exuberance. The separate reality that these projected worlds have are given to them by the mind, which in various degrees of self-consciousness (from full self-consciousness as in the case of deliberately fancied projections to un-self-consciousness as in dream projections) enjoys these creations. The empirical world of waking consciousness, however, seems to limit the mind that does not know this world as its creation like the dream-world, but rather

[1] The psychological and spiritual phenomena do not appear under this category, but they do under time and other categories.

[2] Categorized phenomena cannot be the properties of consciousness which is the ground of the categories, for the relation between ground and consequence is quite different from that between substance and properties.

knows it as an object standing over against it with a separate rival reality, so that the individual mind is iufinite with respect to its phantasy world but limited with respect to the world of waking consciousness. Then the individual mind is eternal or timeless because it is beyond the category of time which presupposes it and also because it knows the temporal succession of phenomena which involves its being simultaneous with every phenomenon in the temporal series. While the sense-organs and the mental states or processes of sensation, recognition, association, and conceptualization (i.e. synthesis of the sensuous manifold under some concept) are in time and so the cognitive processes associated with knowing are temporal, the knowing consciousness itself is timeless. But then this consciousness is limited by the psycho-physical adjuncts which it knows, as otherwise it would have known everything at the same time.

So the individual mind is no-thing and no-cause. It is a creator that creates or images forth out of nothing. Causation is change from something or for something and since change from no-thing or for no-thing is meaningless, the mind cannot be a cause. It is above space and time and all empirical psycho-physical processes associated with knowledge and all the empirical objects known. The creator individual mind or self is not limited by the dream-world which is freely created for self-beguilement and play, but it is limited by the empirical world and the psycho-physical processes it knows as objects confronting it as a rival reality. The individual mind does not know the empirical world, both internal and external, as its own creation. But this leads to certain philosophical difficulties. For, the problem arises as to how an alien or independent reality is known by the individual mind. Some think that this reality imprints itself or casts reflections on the mind. But then the mind or consciousness that knows the unconscious reality has to be conceived as of the nature of this reality. This would be self-contradictory. If to avoid this contradiction we conceive the mind as an unconscious passive receptor of reflections or impressions of the material substance, then knowing cannot be explained. For, reflections on a mirror or impressions on a slate do not constitute knowledge but are themselves known as objects. Any empirical physiological explanation of knowledge is no explanation but begging the question, for these processes such as nerve stimulation or movement of brain-cells are themselves knowable. So is any supposed explanation of knowledge in terms of psychological processes such as sensation, recognition, association, synthesis, etc. which only describe the concomitants of knowledge and are themselves known by internal perception or introspection. So the hypothesis of an independent reality as a psychological substance (i.e. as made of sensations, thoughts, etc.) is also untenable.

Thus the empirical world, including the internal psychological states and physiological processes, cannot be regarded as an alien reality to mind if knowledge of it, which is a fundamental fact, is to be explained. Knowledge cannot be explained in any known terms without begging the question and to explain it in unknown terms is absurd. Thus there is no other way out for us than to treat the empirical reality as not alien or independent with respect to the mind but somehow grounded on the latter. But the individual mind does not know it to be so grounded, rather it knows it (empirical reality) as the other. What to do about it? Certainly there is no other way but to question the validity or ultimateness of this 'knowing as the other', and so of the individuality of the individual mind. We may ask, Is this sense of an independent reality facing us ultimate and unsublatable and is this sense of individuality similarly absolute? The two questions are correlative. For, if I can possibly know the empirical world as my creation, I cannot remain this little individual because the world thus known as my creation is really the integrated sum of all the actual and possible perceptions of all individual minds. It is not known as my private or exclusive one.

Now to the question of the independence of

the empirically known world: Can it be like the independence of the dream-objects, one that is bestowed and can be withdrawn along with the contents of the dreams that appears to be the other? Can the individual mind rise to a higher level of awareness from where the empirical world with its independence appears to be a dream? We can at least imagine that level which gives it some *prima facie* plausibility. But what is plausible may not be true. We have to verify the plausible, or confirm the hypothetical (in this case) by means of an experience of a higher awareness that regards the empirical one as a self-adopted one and so the empirical world as created just as we ordinarily regard our dreams.

This metaphysically crucial experience is claimed to have been undergone by some mystics. We cannot downright reject their testimony, particularly in the face of such supernatural powers shown by them as prophesying and miracle-working. Only a creator can have foreknowledge of his creation and only he can work miracles. It would be sheer dogmatism to disbelieve the records of such activities. Even in our age of reason there have been such instances of supernatural power and modern researches in parapsychology prove their possibility beyond doubt. Now such a possibility implies the possibility of one's attaining a higher level of consciousness which may be called creative and omniscient. Since this higher consciousness transcends time, which is a creation of it, it creates in no time and so knows its creation in one sweep,—past, present, and future—in an eternal timeless now. The supernatural powers exhibited by the mystics give us a faith that such an ideal is not an impossible one. This absolutely creative and omniscient consciousness is the ideal limit to such superhuman powers and is extrapolated from them. But though reached through these they are logically prior to these, that is, the higher order consciousness is the presupposition of these approaches to it and of the ordinary mode of consciousness that treats the world as an independent reality.

The transcension of the ordinary consciousness involves transcension of individuality. For, as noted before, the world that appears to be created in the higher consciousness is but an integration of all the world perspectives of individual minds. So this higher consciousness is a collective or universal one. This is also partly verified in some mystics by such powers as those of thought-reading, thought-transference, and hypnotism.

This universal mode of consciousness is approached, though distantly, by us in our cognitive, aesthetic, and ehical attitudes. We are more or less impersonal and disinterested when we know something, appreciate beauty, or perform some good act. It is when we are in our pragmatic mode that we are our egos, we treat the world as our environment to be exploited for our physical well-being. This bio-physical aspect of our nature vitiates our cognitive, aesthetic, and ethical activities by mixing with them self-interest, and thus we have such knowledge as seeks to be practical, such beauty as is pleasing and useful, and such virtue as enhances our personal gain. However, we do have glimpses of pure knowledge, beauty, and truth behind their adulterated forms, and this proves the reality of a universal consciousness or self behind its individual and fragmentary forms.

Now this higher consciousness may be regarded as the foundation or essence of the ordinary one. So this creative, timeless, omniscient, and universal consciousness may be treated as our real consciousness while our ordinary one as its self-deluded mode just as the dream-consciousness is regarded as the self-deluded mode of the latter. This means that there is really one creator who creates by projecting images. This creator is consciousness which, not being an empirical, object but a ground of all objects, is not to be numerically quantified as the latter are, but must be treated as a logical identity of type. In this sense it is one. It is one in another sense also. The world perspectives of all individuals show a continuity and similarity of content and also an identity of design. These imply unity in

the creative consciousness that creates the world, which consciousness thus is not an aggregate or plurality of any individual creative consciousnesses, each being supposed to create a world of its own, but a higher unified whole that transcends, while including, the individual consciousness as instances of its deluded mode. It is thus one appearing as many or one in many. The creator self is thus the inner self of all individual selves which are held together and controlled by it. It is the real-Self that appears as many individual ones, each with its psycho-physical adjuncts, and so with separate location, world perspective, thoughts, feelings, and doings.

So there is but one creator, our real Self or Consciousness. We as individual selves, can also create, our creations being dreams and phantasies. But, as noted before, we are not always quite aware how certain images are formed though we do not disown them for that reason as our creation. Thus we are surprised how we created certain queer dream-objects, suffused with strange feelings; and the poets also ascribe some of their deepest expressions to 'inspiration', regarding them as apparently unrelated to their conscious will and thought. Hence dreams and phantasies are to be ultimately accounted for with reference to our higher self, the one creator. If we realize the former in us then we can fully explain the latter, as fully as we do our self-consciously projected objects of imagination. And if we realize this higher self we can also fully explain this empirical world. This explanation, it may be noted, is to be done in terms of the playful will of the creator. We, by realizing it, shall be simply aware of this creative will. The way to realize this higher consciousness and will is through culture of the mind which involves, above all, detachment and meditation.

Onr search for a true idea of creation has led us to this idea of cosmic creation and to one cosmic creator who creates by projecting objects in imagination and dream out of exuberance for the sake of self-beguilement. It takes, in a self-deluded mood, these objects for reality and then it appears to be an individual consciousness in which form it creates individual worlds of fancy and dreams to delight in them. Imaginary projection (*māyā*), playfulness (*līlā*), and aesthetic delight (*rasa*) are then the basic ideas behind creation, which is not to be confused with any serious job of making or effecting in which the maker or effector is on the same plane of reality as his objects made or effected. The latter are not completely derived from and known and controlled by the former and there is no element of play and aesthetic delight in this activity. Artistic creation is real creation in so far as it involves imagination or intuition, called internal expression. It is mere making in so far as it imitates an idea or an original idea by giving it naturalistic expression through some medium. To the extent an artist is truly creative he is *like* the universal creator, and the contemplative joy that he gets out of his activity and also that the beholders of his art get out of it through their re-creation of this activity in imagination is akin to the original joy of creation experienced by the cosmic creator. Thus the aesthetic delight is called *Brahmāsvāda-sahodara* (a twin of the delight of Brahma, the cosmic creator) in Indian aesthetics. Artistic activity is regarded as *akin* to the cosmic creative activity and not the *same as* that for the obvious reason that the artist creates out of his individual consciousness while the cosmic creator does out of the universal and foundational one. But as noted before, the artist also attains some universality and much of his imagination is un-self-conscious, controlled by some higher consciousness and so ascribed to inspiration. So even in artistic activity cosmic creativity has its direct share which of course is ultimately the basis of all creativity and all making.

SUNDARA DASA ON ADVAITA

By Dr. Yog Dhyan Ahuja

Sundara Dasa[1] is essentially a believer in Advaita (Non-Dualism). He has made most valuable contributions as a poet of the Hindi Nirguna School. Amongst the Nirguna saints, Dadu's disciple Sundara Dasa stands as a solitary example of one who was the most well-read of all.

He has an unflinching faith in monism. It is in the spirit of Advaita that he sees things and speaks of things. Advaita is the very light of his eyes, the very breath of his life. In no way has Dvaita (Dualism) any existence for him. He has expounded the doctrine of Advaita in various ways. In his compositions his monistic views have found expression everywhere.

Sundara Dasa is a voluminous writer and has a very large number of books to his credit. All that he writes is, of course, saturated with the spirit of Advaita. There are however, places where he has been more explicit and clear in the manifestation of his views on this point.

His words give expression to his innermost feelings. He speaks out his mind in his verses. While he writes on Advaita his language has that spontaneity and flow which come of the very depth of spiritual experiences. He has a thorough and intimate knowledge of the Vedas and other sacred books. While he gives expression to his views, he does so in the light of the Vedas and other Shastras. Quite often does he support his statements with the testimony of the sacred word. On the evidence of the Vedas, Sundara Dasa asserts that he finds no trace whatever of Dvaita anywhere. He says:

'Think not of Dvaita at all, O Sundara. The Veda tells of only one "the Omnipresent".[2]

The world and Divinity are one and the same thing:

'There is no difference between the Soul and the Universe as the Vedas clearly proclaim'.[3]

'Hari (God) is in the Universe and the Universe in Hari, the Veda says'.[4]

'Brahman fills the Universe and the Universe fills Brahman, so the Veda tells'.[5]

'All this is Brahman, according to the oft-quoted aphorism of the Vedanta, *"Khalvidam Brahma"*.' [6]

'Without Him there is naught.[7] Whatever one hears of or sees is nothing but He.[8] It is He alone in everything that takes a form or a name'.

In the words of the poet:

'Whatever takes a name is sentient, O Sundara, and sentient the Indivisible Brahman'.[9]

It is the Creator Himself that appears in the form of creation. The poet elucidates his theme with the help of a number of illustrations. It is the juice of the sugar-cane that takes the shape of various sweets and still remains, in essence, the same juice. It is water that becomes apparently condensed into a stone but dissolves into water again.[10] Also, from iron different sorts of instruments may be prepared but, essentially, it does remain the same metal. And so is the case with gold. It may be transformed into one ornament or the other. After all it is the same gold.[11] The saint draws his conclusions in each of these cases and asserts that there is no difference between the world and God.[12]

[1] 1596-1689 A.D.

[2] *Sundara Granthāvalī*: Edited by Purohita Hari Narayana Sharma. Published by Rajasthan Research Society. Vol. II, p. 646/8.

[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 111/22.

[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 841/24.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 649/15.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 649/14.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 632/9.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 645/3.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 646/7.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 649/15.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 650/17.

[12] *Loc. Cit.*

'God is the Universe, the Universe God. They are identical'.[13]

'If you say it is the Universe, O Sundara, it is Universe in various forms.

'If you say it is Brahman, it is Brahman. When you think of reality it is One'.[14]

'The world—how can it be anything other than the same One, Indivisible?' [15]

Again the poet makes use of some illustrations. Many pots are made of earth. Their shapes are diverse and their names different. Anyhow, they are, with all their varying forms and names, essentially the same earth. The wave, the foam, and the bubble all rise from water and remain the same in essence.[16] Appear as it may, in truth the world is not what it seems to be. Its outward appearance passes away. The thin veil disappears. Then shines the light of Divine Essence which is Ever Existent.[17] The physical world has lost its existence for the saint. He sees Divinity and Divinity alone. It is He Himself who is witnessing His own show. Brahman is the seer and Brahman, the seen. The poet says:

'Think of nothing else, O Sundara. It is Brahman who is seeing the sport of Brahman'.[18]

The worshipper and the worshipped are one. Dvaita is an illusion. Under the heading 'Svarūpa Vismaraṇ ko Aṅga', the poet illustrates vividly the illusion of Dvaita. The seeker and the sought are the same Brahman. Having forgotten the Reality of Self, Brahman is yearning for a union with Itself. It is like the sun searching for the sun in order to warm itself. It is like the moon looking for the moon so that it may cool itself. It is, again, like a delirious person, who, although at home, is still crying to run home.[19]

It is only the Ajñāni (the ignorant) who falls into the snare of Dvaita. A Jñāni (the knower) is free from such deception. The ignorant and the learned are likened by the poet to two different pairs of dicers. The former pair takes the game as if it were real. They consider the victories and the losses actual. They laugh when they win. They weep when they lose. On the contrary, the latter pair knows the dice as it actually is—a source of mere recreation and nothing more. For them all this is just fun. They are unmoved by the gains. They are indifferent at the losses. It is with the knowledge of Brahman that all doubts of Dvaita are got rid of.[20]

A disciple is delivered of the illusion of Dvaita by his Guru. The poet depicts in a detailed manner as to how, through the good graces of the teacher, one achieves the knowledge and realization of Advaita. The way to light is shown by the spiritual guide. From without he turns the mental faculties within. The objective wanderings end. Doubts are dispelled and, in the glow of Advaita, the spiritual aspirant recognizes the same Brahman everywhere.[21] Sundara Dasa, after defining Advaita at length, closes his composition saying that in Advaita there is neither the knower, nor knowledge, nor the object known, neither the thinker, nor thinking, nor the object thought. Even Sundara, the speaker, is not there. Such is Advaita.[22]

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 669/40.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 805/43.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 801/29/1.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 649/14.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 831/4/1.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 651/20.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 586/21.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 651/21.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 648/11.
[22] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 115/50.

'The dualists obstinately cling to the conclusions arrived at by their own enquiries (as being the truth). So they contradict one another; whereas the Advaitin finds no conflict with them.'

—*Gauḍapāda*

A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

By Swami Apurvananda

(Continued from the May issue)

Gupta Kāshi

It was the last week of July. Having concluded our visit to Kedarnath and thereby fulfilled a long-cherished desire to worship Shiva at this age-old and well-known shrine in the Himalayas, we were on the road once again. Our next objective was, needless to mention, the equally ancient and far-famed Himalayan shrine of Badrinath. Leaving Kedarnath behind and proceeding towards Badrinath, we passed Gauri Kuṇḍ again and reached Rāmpur Chati, after a swift walk in the pouring rain that had overtaken us. Part of the way we literally ran, in order to reach shelter as early as we could. Without stopping for more than a few minutes at Rampur Chati, however, we decided to push on to Phaṭa Chati, which we reached at sundown, after passing Badalpur Chati on the way. On this road we met a big party of pilgrims, about a hundred persons, all moving together, mostly belonging to Bombay State. They greeted us with the usual shouts of 'Jai! Kedarnath ki Jai!' and we heartily reciprocated. Many of the women and old men in the party were being carried in dandies. I felt happy when I saw some of them sitting in their dandies deeply absorbed in prayer, rosary in hand, as they were being carried along. It again reminded me of the fact that the heart of every true Hindu was essentially a chapel in itself, wherever he or she may be.

Phata Chati, or the 'village of ruins', where we passed the night, was a fairly large and very lovely place, with varied though simple mud- and timber-built houses, of an architectural beauty common enough in these Himalayan villages. Gupta Kashi, which we had planned to visit, though not lying directly on our route, was about seven miles away. After spending a comfortable night at Phata Chati, during which we were delighted to hear a local Brahmin recite the text of the 'Glory (*māhātmya*) of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan', we started off in the morning for Gupta Kashi. Passing Maikhaṇḍa and Biung Chatis, we arrived at Bheta Chati, popularly known as Nārāyan Koṭhi, because of the numerous temples here, big and small, dedicated to the deity Narayana. It was a fairly large place, having many shops and houses, and also a post office and Ayurvedic medical stores.

Bheta Chati, or Narayan Kothi, gave clear evidences of having been an important place in ancient times, a part and parcel of a glorious chapter in the religious history of India. Of the many temples here, two standing together on one side of the road and perhaps the oldest of the group are dedicated to Satya-nārāyana and Virabhadra Mahādeva (Shiva), respectively. The third important temple, though smaller in size, is dedicated to Lakshmi-Narayana. It lies on the opposite side of the road, with an adjoining tank. Dotted about in the vicinity of this main temple of Lakshmi-narayana are many smaller temples or shrines. Archaeological research has brought to light ruins of many more buried temples. Tradition says that at one time in the remote past a crore of Narayana-Shilas[1] used to be worshipped here in a hundred temples. Situated on a big plateau, on the cool heights of the Himalayas, Narayan Kothi appeared quite a suitable place for a large settlement of seasonal visitors or permanent residents. The architecture of the temples and shrines excavated is typical of Hindu architecture probably of the fifth or

[1] *Śālagrāma* or sacred stone, typically emblematic of Vishnu.

sixth century. It seemed to me not a little amazing that this out-of-the-way spot, with its many deserted shrines and buildings, must once have been the centre of great religious and monastic history.

The road, after leaving Bheta Chati, passes through Jamuna and Nala Chatis. From Nala Chati, pilgrims bound for Badrinath go straight to Ukhi Math on the opposite side of the valley, while those returning from Kedarnath to the plains take the road to Gupta Kashi, only a short distance from the road-junction. The scenery at this point was very fine. The severity of cold had gradually disappeared. We were feeling exhilarated, as if it were spring—such was the effect of the clear blue sky and bright sunshine, and the sweet odour of wild flowers. The unobstructed view of the snow-ranges above and the smiling valleys below, with their murmuring springs and streams, offers the traveller the indescribable joy of Nature at its best.

We reached Gupta Kashi after passing through one of the most wild and charming regions that the world can contain. Gupta Kashi, an important pilgrim and trade centre, had arrays of shops, temples, and dwelling-houses, and an abundance of water from a large spring. One could obtain from the bazaar here almost anything available at one of the bigger towns in the plains. But it had its special spiritual attraction for us, and we had therefore made a detour in order to visit the place. At Gupta Kashi there were temples of both Shaivite and Vaishnavite origin—temples to Vishvanath, Pārvarti and Annapurna, and to Badrinath and Lakshmi, and many smaller shrines to other gods and goddesses as well. Its very name and the flags on the temples remind one of Banaras. Just across the big valley lies Ukhi Math, the winter seat of the monks and Pandas attached to Kedarnath. To join the main road to Badrinath, one has to go to Ukhi Math from Gupta Kashi.

The Householder and the Sannyasin

On arriving at Gupta Kashi I was unlucky enough to fall ill with fever. As I lay on my bed, Mahatma got busy consulting a medical book in English, hoping to administer to me the proper medicine from out of our meagre stock. The elderly Panda in whose home we were staying noticed Mahatma thumbing through the pages of a book whose script he did not seem to recognize. Curiosity prompted him to ask about it. On being told the subject-matter of the book, the old Panda gave a look of surprise and said, with rustic humility, 'You are Sadhus. But I see you know English. How far did you study?' When he was informed that some of us had had a university education before taking to the monastic life, the Panda's amazement was unbounded. 'You could be a doctor, or lawyer, or Tahsildar, or Peshkar', he said. 'What, then, made you become a Fakir, a Sannyasin?'

'Does it mean, Panditji', I put in, 'that in your opinion educated persons should not become Sannyasins?'

His answer was typical of the view held by many. He said: 'They only become Sadhus who cannot earn their bread through their intelligence or skilled labour. You have really made a mistake in embracing the monastic life, when you could easily have secured employment and enjoyed a comfortable life as householders. I have met hundreds of Sadhus and Sannyasins, and I know how people take to monastic life and put on the ochre robe, only to make an easy living by begging from the charitable public'.

I cut him short by saying, 'What do you mean, Panditji! Evidently you have not come across Sadhus who have renounced the world for the sake of attaining Self-realization, and not because they failed to earn their bread as householders'.

'No, no, Bābā,' said the old man emphatically, 'Don't say so. I know all that. You are still young, and even now you would do well to return home and take up some employment. Even as a family man yon can devote yourself to God-realization. The ancient Shāstras proclaim the greatness of the Grihastha Ashrama (householder's life), don't

they?' I kept silent, realizing that it would serve no purpose to pursue the effort to convince a dogmatically prejudiced person like him.

Ukhi Math

As my fever persisted, we thought it best to leave for Ukhi Math, where there was a hospital. Instead of taking the regular road via Nala Chati, we proceeded by a short cut. The ascent was hard, and I soon felt completely exhausted. Finding it impossible to walk further, I lay down on the road-side and told my companions to go ahead. By and by I regained my mental strength, started walking slowly on, and finally arrived at Ukhi Math, where my companions were anxiously waiting for me with medicine from the hospital. I was unable to go round the place that day and the next day I decided, against the entreaties of my companions to continue our journey. So Mahatma related to me the important features of Ukhi Math.

For the six months from Dipāli day during which the Kedarnath temple remains closed for the winter, the formal worship of the deity of Kedarnath is conducted at Ukhi Math. The Rāwal in charge of Kedarnath temple has his large Math here. The priests and Pandas of Kedarnath also have their winter dwellings at Ukhi Math, which, according to tradition, is 'Ushā Math'. Usha, the daughter of the Asura king, Bāṇa, of mythological fame, performed hard austerities for attaining the grace of Lord Shiva and Parvati. The main Math, which is almost a whole village, is named after Usha. The big central temple is dedicated to Shiva. The Math and the temple bear carvings and sculptures of great artistic merit. The site is evidently very old, and the Math an ancient establishment occupied by a succession of monastic orders.

There are many smaller shrines here, of which special mention may be made of those for the worship of Usha herself, her husband Aniruddha, Pradyumna (father of Aniruddha), and Chitralekha (Usha's girl friend, who helped her to marry Aniruddha).

Gradually I began to feel better, as we proceeded on our way. I remembered the ancient maxim that for a sick person who has surrendered himself completely to God, 'Ganges water is the medicine and Lord Narayana is the physician'.[2] I made up my mind not to crave any further medical treatment, and resolutely held fast to this decision throughout the rest of the pilgrimage.

Passing such minor places as Juya Chati and Ganesh Chati, we reached Pakhībāsa Chati at noon. After a rest here, we left again, and arrived at a fairly significant place called Chopta about dusk. At this place pilgrims wishing to visit Tunganath branch off from the main road, to return to it again at a point further on. Those who do not desire to do the stiff extra climb to Tunganath proceed along the main road from Chopta towards Chamoli. We had made up our minds to visit Tunganath, and the steep ascent really held no terror for us, as we had negotiated steeper and more difficult ascents than this.

At Chopta we had an experience which is by no means uncommon in India. A shopkeeper approached us in all sincerity and with much devotion, and begged of us to give him a talisman having some occult powers which might enable him to overcome his household difficulties. He was one among thousands of people who go in search of Sadhus and Sannyasins with the sole objective of gratifying worldly desires or obtaining material advantages through the help of the latter's supposed supernatural powers. We, however, could not but disappoint him, as we knew nothing of such occult talismans. It is common knowledge that while there are scores of genuine cases of the beneficial use of supernatural powers by Sadhus, there are perhaps tens of scores of fraudulent cases, where gullible people, literate or illiterate, are imposed upon by swindlers appearing in the guise of Sadhus.

[2] *'Auṣadham Jāhnavī-toyam, vaidyo Nārāyaṇo Hariḥ'.*

TUNGANATH

Early next morning we started climbing the hill on which Tunganath temple is situated. Hardly had we covered a mile when we were caught in a heavy downpour. The ascent from Chopta to the top of the Tunganath hill was about three miles, and it took us as many hours to accomplish it. As we reached the high altitude, once again the cold was severe, but when we arrived at the main temple of Tunganath, the rain fortunately ceased. We offered worship to Shiva, the temple deity, in comparative quiet and solitude. There were few pilgrims and a solemn spiritual atmosphere reigned all over the place. The special beauty of Tunganath is that from here, the highest spot in the region, probably higher even than Kedarnath temple, one can see the snow-ranges for hundreds of miles. We feasted our eyes on the surpassing beauty of this proverbial snow-view from Tunganath. We could hardly take our eyes away from the limitless snows, and the play of sunshine on the vast sheets of glaciers.

With great reluctance we left and began rapidly to descend the Tunganath hill. Once more we regained the main road, and at dusk reached Mandal Chati, where we halted for the night. The next morning we passed several Chatis of minor importance, and then arrived at a big place known as Gopeshvar, almost a small town in size. Paying our respects to Gopeshvara (Shiva as the lord of cows) in the centuries-old main temple and to the Divine Mother (Parvati) in a smaller temple hard by, we pushed on towards Chamoli, which we reached shortly after noon.

(To be continued)

GURU, THE SPIRITUAL PRECEPTOR

BY DR. MOHAN LAL SETHI

Biologists are of the opinion that man (*Homo sapiens*) evolved on this globe about one million years ago. His nearest cousins are the apes—the chimpanzee, the gorilla, and the orang-outang. Because man has a much larger brain in proportion to the size of the body and a much larger number of folds or convolutions in the brain than all the other animals including his nearest cousins, he has more intelligence than all other animals. Superior intelligence and the power of speech have given man supremacy over the rest of creation.

Early men lived in caves and similar retreats. Fruits, roots, and nuts being easy to procure, it is surmised that early men must have been vegetarian in their diet. When eggs and meat came to be added to human fare cannot be decided with certainty. From the heaps of bones which accumulated year after year about the caves in which men lived, it has been inferred that the flesh of many different animals was eaten. Sharp-edged pieces of rock were picked up by prehistoric men and were used as cutting and chopping instruments. Later such stone implements were shaped by human hands. This was the stone age in human prehistory. Stone age men spent whatever little leisure they had in carving figures of animals on the walls of their caves or on pieces of bones. There was no division of labour in those far off days.

Erect gait, articulate speech, power of reasoning and rationalizing distinguish men from all other animals. The scientific name for the human species is *Homo sapiens*. *Homo* is the Latin for man and *sapiens* is the Latin for wise. Thus *Homo sapiens* literally

means wise man. According to scientists the faculty of conscious and conceptual thought is man's chief characteristic. He is always trying to find out the how, why, and wherefore of every thing. He is working from effects back to their causes. He is baffled in this activity ultimately when he tries to find a cause for the vast and diverse universe in which he has his being. His reasoning recoils from the Cause of causes or the Final Cause. All acute thinkers of the race in the past have taken a hand in this difficult problem and all similar thinkers of the present generation are busy at it. Almost all the thinking few who have solved this mysterious problem and their unthinking followers postulate an Ultimate Reality behind the phenomenal universe. Such people are called the believers or theists. Those who throw up the sponge without admitting it and deny the existence of the Ultimate Reality are styled the atheists. There is still another class of thinkers who are not satisfied with the explanation of the theists and yet are not despaired and dogmatic as the atheists. They are the agnostics who are open-minded and are willing to continue the quest for the Ultimate Cause.

During the last two or three centuries man has made wonderful progress in harnessing the forces of Nature. Civilization has taken very long strides. Mass production has brought some of those things within the reach of ordinary mortals which were the pride of kings and emperors not very long ago. If the Empress Nur Jehan were to come to life with a memory of her past glamour and glory, she would be intrigued and feel envious on seeing the colourful silk clothes and fine jewellery of middle-class women.

Intoxicated with power which man has begun to wield over Nature, he has become more exacting than ever in demanding proofs for the existence of God. Today the atheists and agnostics are more atheistic and agnostic than their compeers of a few generations back. Civilization has advanced while culture—by which is meant the progress of the spirit—has declined.

Division of labour increases *pari passu* with the advancement of civilization. Specialization and still more specialization is the rule of the day. Not many generations ago the division of labour ended with the bakers, butchers, bricklayers, blacksmiths, carpenters, clergymen, doctors, lawyers, tailors, teachers, and weavers. Not very long ago a practitioner of the healing art was an all-rounder. He treated all diseases to which the human body is subject and he plied the lancet too when called upon to do so. Nowadays besides the general practitioner, there are the eye specialists, the heart specialists, the fever specialists, and surgeons who restrict themselves to particular parts and organs of the human body. In the profession of law, we have the civil lawyers, the criminal lawyers, and the finger-print and handwriting experts. When somebody is ill at home, the family doctor is sent for. He is generally an all-rounder of the old type. If he fails to set the patient on his legs soon enough, he advises that a specialist should be consulted. When the husband needs a suit of clothes he goes to a gentlemen's tailor and if the wife needs a skirt or blouse she has to go to a ladies' dressmaker. If one has the money and wants the best education for one's children, one must go to a high-class boarding school where the teachers have had training in kindergarten and Montessori system with some child psychology thrown in.

It is obvious that for many things in modern life we have to seek the help of specialists. Generally a specialist has the last say in matters pertaining to his speciality. Sensible people do not go counter to the advice tendered by a specialist. Similarly in regard to the soul and God we would be well advised to seek the help of specialists. Just as a general practitioner is not competent to treat a case of heart disease and the patient must go to a heart specialist and abide by his advice and undergo the treatment he prescribes if he cares for a speedy recovery, in like manner, every seeker of God must go to a man of God who has made a special study of the

Spirit, accept his advice, and act accordingly. Every man is not able to make a well fitting jacket for himself. He must go to a good gentlemen's tailor. Are the soul and God so simple affairs after all—simpler than the making of a jacket—that every Tom, Dick, and Harry requires proofs for them which must be intelligible to his grade of intelligence, howsoever low it may be? Let us take another example. In the realm of science, the theory of relativity is accepted on the authority of the physicists. Very few masters of science in physics understand all the reasoning on which the theory of relativity is based. Have the men of science and the rest of the public denied and thrown overboard the theory of relativity on that account? Just as we have not denied and denounced the theory of relativity because all the reasoning leading to it is not within our comprehension, similarly it is not reasonable or logical for us to deny the existence of God and the soul if the discipline and training laid down by those who have seen Him are beyond us or because we are not willing to devote the time and attention which are required to attain proficiency in spirituality.

Having made it clear that it is men of God who can be of help to seekers of God, the next point is, who are these men of God? To revert to the analogy of specialists, a heart specialist qualifies from an institute of repute and obtains a certificate for having done so. He puts up a sign-board detailing his qualifications when he sets up practice. Where do men of God take their training and what are their qualifications? Where to find them and how to recognize them? There is a fundamental difference between men of God and other specialists. The men of God do not declare themselves. It is stated in the Shruti that he who knows Him does not say so and he who says so does not know Him. No qualified doctor, apart from putting up a sign-board bearing his qualifications, dare advertise himself, because doing so is not in the tradition of the profession and any doctor who does so may be excommunicated by the fraternity. In this respect the men of God—the knowers of Brahman—go a step further than the medical practitioners. They do not put up sign-boards even. So the task before a seeker of God in search of God is rendered doubly difficult. The great Âchārya Shankara comes to our help in this difficulty. He has laid down certain qualifications of a man of God who should be accepted as a Guru or spiritual preceptor in his famous book *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (33rd verse) for the guidance of the seekers: 'Who is versed in the Vedas, sinless, unsmitten by desire, and a knower of Brahman *par excellence,* who has withdrawn himself into Brahman, is calm, like fire that has consumed its fuel, who is a boundless reservoir of mercy that knows no reason, and a friend of all good people who prostrate themselves before him'.

It may be argued that the ochre robe of the Hindu Sannyasin is a 'sign-board'. It is true that the colour of the Sannyasin's robe was meant to signify renunciation. It was an indication that the wearer of the flame-coloured robe had made an oblation of all his desires into the sacred fire at the time of his initiation into Sannyasa. The Sannyasins of yore were indeed men of light and leading who had reached the stage of desirelessness and came up to the standard laid down by Shankara. This is not always so in the Kali Yuga. Some credulous people may accept the first man with the ochre robe they come across as their Guru and think that all that they should do for their salvation has been done. It is a case of the blind leading the blind. The more circumspect, however, exercise great caution and discriminate before accepting a person as their Guru. Bearing in mind Shankara's verse (from *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*) quoted above, it is advisable for every aspirant to wait, watch, and continue the quest till he meets the best Guru. If a seeker has the patience and the requisite discrimination, he will succeed finally and his salvation in this very life will be assured.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE COMMENTARIES ON THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

By Swami Vireswarananda

(*Continued from the May issue*)

A Brief Review of the Various Commentaries

From the previous sections we find that all the Vedantic Schools more or less agree on certain points, especially in their attacks against the non-Vedantic Schools. All agree that Brahman, the ultimate reality, is the cause of the world; that a knowledge of It leads to release, which is the *summum bonum* of life; that Brahman can be known only through the Scriptures and not through mere reasoning or other means of knowledge, the Scriptures being the sole authority with respect to It. But they differ among themselves as to the nature of Brahman, Its causality in respect of the world, the nature of the soul and its relation to Brahman, and the condition of the soul in release.

According to *Śaṅkara* the ultimate reality is the one non-dual Brahman. It is Existence, Knowledge, Infinity. It is mere existence and Pure Consciousness, i.e. It is homogeneous, without attributes. Existence etc. are not Its attributes but Its very essence, and they are convertible terms. It is immutable and eternal. The one immutable Brahman appears as this diverse universe through Māyā (ignorance), which is indefinable (*anirvacanīya*). It is formless; the various forms are but Its reflections, like the reflections of the one sun in sheets of water and are therefore unreal. Even Iśvara (the Conditioned Brahman) is in a way the product of this Māyā, being the highest reading of the attributeless Brahman by the individualized soul—which serves the purpose of devotion and worship (Upāsanā) for man. Brahman is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. The world is a Vivarta, an apparent—not real—modification of Brahman through Māyā, even as a snake is seen in a rope, and therefore it is non-different from Brahman. Brahman, though immutable, yet produces this diverse universe. The Śruti declares it and it is not unreasonable either, for the soul in its dream state conjures up diverse creation without marring its individuality. The soul is in reality eternal, uncreated, all-pervading, and identical with Brahman, thongh as individualized by its Upādhi, the inner organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*), it is an effect, atomic, an agent and part of Brahman. The soul on release attains identity with Brahman and exists as Pure Consciousness, though from the relative standpoint attributes like omniscience are spoken of it. A knower of Nirguṇa Brahman attains It direct at death without having to go by the 'path of the gods', while a knower of the Saguṇa Brahman goes by that path and attains Brahmaloka, whence he does not return to this mundane world, but attains the Supreme Brahman at the end of the cycle, along with Brahmā, the ruler of Brahmaloka.

To *Bhāskara* and the other commentators Brahman is not attributeless, but an essentially Personal God possessing qualities. According to them personality need not necessarily be limited so as to contradict infinity. They do not accept the Māyā doctrine, for to them the universe of sentient and insentient beings is real and an effect of Brahman through Pariṇāma or actual modification and not through Vivarta, as Shankara holds. Brahman manifests the world through Its powers (Śakti) and yet remains unchanged in Its true essence. The effect, the world, is non-different

from the cause, Brahman, which is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. *Madhva* alone holds that it is only the efficient cause, while Prakriti, which is dependent on the Lord, is the material cause. The soul according to them is really atomic, an agent and a part of Brahman. On release it attains its true nature which was obscured in the state of Samsāra (bondage) by Avidyā (ignorance) and Karma. The knower of Brahman goes by 'the path of the gods', at the end of which he gets completely disembodied, attains Brahman and does no more return to the mortal world. They do not make any distinction of higher and lower knowledge like Shankara. According to them devotion (Bhakti) and divine grace are the chief means to release, and not knowledge (Jñāna). Though these are some of the common features of their philosophies, yet there are subtle differences amongst them as we shall presently see.

According to *Bhāskara,* Brahman is differentiated and also non-differentiated. The non-differentiated, formless aspect, which is merely existence and consciousness, is the causal state, and Brahman manifested as the world is the differentiated state. The former aspect is Its true nature, while the latter is adventitious. Brahman, which is one, appears as many owing to Upādhis, like the reflections of the one sun in different sheets of water. Brahman and the world are both different and non-different, but for that reason the world is not unreal (Mithyā). From the standpoint of the cause, Brahman, the reality is one, and the world is not experienced as anything different, while from another standpoint it is experienced as distinct from It. Unity is the natural state; the distinctions are adventitious. Brahman of Its own will actually transforms Itself and at the same time remains unchanged in Its essence, even as in the dream state there appears diversity in the indivisible soul. The soul in its true nature is identical with Brahman, but in the state of bondage, when it is limited by the Upādhis, it appears to be different. It is matter, which is also a power of Brahman, that brings about this difference between Brahman and souls. So the soul is non-different and different from Brahman. The Upādhi is not unreal (Mithyā), but real so long as it lasts. In the state of release, when the Upādhi is destroyed the soul attains its true nature, which is identity with Brahman. Thus Brahman actually experiences the sufferings and imperfections of the soul. It is Brahman which appears as the soul and finally attains release.

Rāmānuja refutes Bhaskara's view of unity and variety, for the two, being contradictory, cannot exist in the same thing. Moreover, the difference is not experienced by itself. Again if Brahman exists as the world, then It would be affected by its imperfections; so Ramanuja does not accept this view of Bhaskara. He also denies Bhaskara's formless, non-differentiated Brahman, which is mere existence and consciousness; for according to him Brahman has always auspicious qualities and is free at all times from all kinds of imperfections. He postulates a Brahman which is qualified by the world of sentient and insentient beings as Its body under all conditions, viz. in both the causal and effected states. At creation all the changes and imperfections are therefore limited to Its body alone, while It remains unchanged in Its true essence. At the time of creation It only takes on a new condition as the manifest world, but remains the same in substance; hence the world is non-different from its cause. Souls are really effects of Brahman and form Its body, but they are said to be not created because at creation there is no essential change in them as in the elements. The soul is a knower, atomic, an agent and a part of Brahman in the sense that the body is a part of an embodied being, or a quality a part of the substance qualified. As qualities are not different from the substance, so also souls are not different from Brahman. The soul on release manifests its true nature, which consists in freedom from sin etc., which was obscured in the state of bondage by ignorance and Karma. It attains all the auspicious qualities of Brahman, but not identity

with It, for It continues to have a separate existence. In the released state it experiences itself as non-different from Brahman, being but Its mode—that Brahman is its self, and that it is the body of Brahman.

Unlike Ramanuja, *Nimbārka* sees no need to regard matter and soul as the body of God and therefore as Its qualities. For qualities generally help us to distinguish a thing from others of its kind. But in this case, besides Brahman there is nothing else from which It requires to be distinguished. He does not also agree with Bhaskara when he says that the differences are due to Upādhis—that the souls are Brahman limited by Upādhis—as that would mean that the perfect Brahman actually gets limited which is inconceivable. Again souls' identity with Brahman on release would mean their destruction which is as good as accepting Māyā-vāda. On this view the world process would have no meaning for it is started by God in the interest of the souls, so that they may attain perfection. If souls are Brahman Itself, the world process would lose all significance. For all these reasons he differs from Bhaskara's Bhedābheda-vāda or unity and difference, according to which the unity aspect is natural and the difference adventitious. Though Ramanuja also recognizes difference and non-difference, yet he stresses non-difference. Brahman according to him is non-dual, but qualified by matter and souls, which are Its body. Nimbarka, however, proclaims that both unity and difference are natural and equally real and eternal. Matter and soul are different from Brahman, for they have different characteristics; and they are non-different as they are not experienced apart from Brahman. The relation is as between the snake and its coils or an orb and its lustre. Both are equally real. In the state of release the soul realizes its non-difference from Brahman, which was not patent in the state of bondage, being obscured by ignorance and Karma, and so it had to suffer.

Vallabha holds that Brahman is attributeless and yet possesses all auspicious qualities which are non-material (*aprākṛta*) for It is of a different category from this world. In It all contradictions are resolved. It is essentially Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss and has no connection with Māyā. At creation it becomes an effect and is perceived and at dissolution it ceases to be such an object of perception and is absorbed. The world is therefore neither illusory nor different from It. It is real and hence its Brahmatva. The relation between the two, the world and Brahman, is one of identity and the text, 'All this is Brahman', is literally true. Both sentient and insentient beings are in essence Brahman but in the former the bliss aspect is withheld and in the latter the knowledge and bliss aspects are withheld. The soul is identical with Brahman, as a part is with the whole. In the state of bondage the soul is under ignorance and is but a semblance of Brahman, but when it attains release it recovers its true nature, i.e. the bliss aspect also is manifested, and it becomes one with Brahman. Though the world is real and is Brahman in truth, yet through ignorance we see diversity, which is the cause of our bondage. A man of realization sees the world as but Brahman; one who has mere scriptural knowledge understands both Its aspects, i.e. as Brahman and Māyā or as reality and unreality, and the ignorant mix up the two, Brahman and Māyā, and regard both aspects as true. The world is not unreal, but what is unreal in it is our viewpoint of it, which is removed when one attains realization and is released.

Madhva is a thorough-going dualist. He declares three eternally distinct and entirely separate entities, viz. Brahman, matter (Prakriti), and souls, though the last two are dependent on Brahman, who is their ruler. Brahman is the only absolute independent existence and everything else is finite, being conditioned by Brahman. It is essentially Knowledge and Bliss. When Brahman is said to be unknowable and indescribable, it only means that It cannot be known completely nor described fully, for otherwise It is known and also described by the Scriptures. Though

Its infinite personality is beyond our conception, yet out of grace for the devotee It takes on limited forms, which, however, are neither material nor finite. Matter (Prakriti) is also eternal, but dependent on Brahman and capable of undergoing modification. At creation it undergoes modification at the will of the Lord in accordance with the Karma of particular souls. Thus the Lord is only the efficient cause. It does not appeal to Madhva that an insentient world should be produced from the sentient Brahman. Souls, though eternal, are limited in intelligence, etc. and dependent on Brahman, which guides them to their goal. On release they are not only free from this bondage and suffering but also enjoy positive bliss. Release is not a mere negation of suffering, but a positive blissful state. In release the soul does not attain identity or even equality with Brahman, nor are the released souls all equal among themselves.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The popular Bengali song on Sri Ramakrishna, beginning with the words '*Rāmakṛṣṇa-caraṇa-saroje*' ('At the lotus-feet of Ramakrishna') was composed by Devendranath Majumdar, a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and brother of the famous Bengali poet Surendranath Majumdar. . . .

Religion in the New India, from the forceful and scholarly pen of Dr. Kurt F. Leidecker, M.A., Ph.D., well-known Orientalist, lecturer, and author, is a critically analytical survey of the modern trends perceptible in the fields of religion and culture in independent India. Dr. Leidecker spent several months in India as a Fulbright scholar, doing research in Indian philosophy. He has travelled extensively, taught at varions institutions, and has to his credit many contributions, including books on philosophy and education, studies in Indian thought, and translations from Sanskrit and German. . . .

Poets and philosophers are fellow-travellers. Writing on a somewhat unusual and yet vital theme, *Thoughts on Swami Vivekananda's Poetry,* Sri C. T. K. Chari, M.A., rightly observes that the great truths of philosophy, like those of poetry, must be *lived* before they are *possessed,* and shows that the truths expressed in the poems of Swami Vivekananda came from the depths of his intense and intuitive living experience. . . .

The Vedantic view of *The Idea of Creation* is discussed with much convincing logic, by our valued contributor Sri Pravas Jivan Chaudhury, M.SC., P.R.S., D.Phil. . . .

When Sri Ramakrishna was asked by one of his disciples 'Who is a Guru?', he replied, 'He is an intermediary; he brings about the meeting of the devotee with God'. Dr. Mohan Lal Sethi, D.SC., briefly explains the need for and importance of *Guru, the Spiritual Preceptor.*

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

The world we are living in today is characterized by a spirit of co-operation between the peoples of different countries. The steady process of nnification of the nations of the world, the ease and rapidity with which distances are covered by modern transport, the achievements of science and technology, the gradual realization of international obligations and responsibilities by individuals and groups in every land, and the forces of good and evil released from this unprecedented intermingling of cultures, have drawn men's attention to the need ever more of a rapprochement between the East and the

West on the cultural, philosophical, and religious levels. The dichotomy of East and West, as two rigid divisions of humanity is the outcome of a very limited perspective. The march of events throughout the world is only confirming the fallacy of such a dichotomy. Given the necessary standpoint, people should soon learn to see in the apparently conflicting philosophies of life only surface differences and variations of emphasis and interpretation rather than any inherent contradiction.

World views, cultural patterns, and individual life-courses of civilizations stem from philosophical and religious principles which are the 'unseen foundation on which civilization rests'. Philosophy, as an eminent thinker has pointed out, should divest itself of all personal and individual characteristics in order to give rise to universal conceptions valid for all cultural patterns and for all levels of human experience. But philosophy, as man's reaction to the mystery of life, can never lose its distinct individual turn and flavour due to the temper of mind of the people who give birth to it. If the leaders of nations aim at finding a common basis of understanding between Eastern and Western conceptions of life, they have to rise above mere abstract logic to the level of insight, where they can freely recognize the *svadharma* of each nation, as of every individual, and learn to tolerate and accommodate different schemes of life and thought. One can surely hope to do this from a broad and universal perspective, at the same time maintaining one's own particular standpoint. Any comparative study of philosophy or religion has to take account of this fundamental criterion.

It is in such a spirit that Professor Edgar Sheffield Brightman, of Boston University, addresses himself to the task of evaluating the goals of philosophy and religion in the East and the West in the course of a lengthy and thought-provoking article in the *Philosophy East and West*. With admirable clarity of perspective, Prof. Brightman, who is one of the most liberal thinkers of the present day, points out the fivefold 'traps'—as he calls it—into which Occidentals have often fallen, viz.

'(1) The trap of complete condemnation, into which one falls by comparing the worst features of the East with the best features of the West or vice versa. (2) The trap of complete differentiation, which is an assertion that the East is wholly unintelligible to the West because of radical difference in thought forms and because of the language barrier. . . . (3) The trap of complete parallelism, which is the product of over-enthusiastic appreciation, in which all differences disappear and such words as God, love, person, consciousness, and incarnation are taken to mean the same to East and West on their highest levels, whereas the real flavour of each is actually wiped out by erasing all differences. (4) The trap of the unity of the East, which is the assumption that all Eastern (particularly Indian) thought is one consistent system. . . . (5) The trap of supposing that the noblest philosophy and religion of either East or West actually control the culture, the politics, or the economics of society or of most individuals. Failure to escape this trap causes error, misunderstanding, and friction'.

Taking India and specifically Hinduism as representative of Eastern thought and Anglo-Saxon (and German) philosophy and Christianity as representative of the thought of the West, he briefly recalls the many instances of East-West contact through the great efforts of eminent savants like Hegel, Schopenhauer, Emerson, Max Muller, and Paul Deussen of the West and Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Rabindranath Tagore of the East. The 'emphatic goals' of Western philosophy, he enumerates, are truth, rational necessity, and the good. In eastern philosophies the primary goal is 'the experience of realization or *darśana* (perceived truth) rather than any merely rationalistic description of reality or theoretical truth about it. As secondary goals may be mentioned the transcending of the distinction between the subjective and the objective, a pragmatic attitude, a recognition of the contingent (and a subordination of it to the eternal), and the subordination of the individual to the whole'.

Indian thought, in his view, is more interested in furnishing a personal world view for the individual than in the mere construc-

tion of a system. Indian philosophy does not see any radical contradiction between intellect and intuition. Reason systematizes the knowledge gained by insight. Varieties of philosophical systems came into existence in India as a result of differences in premises and not because of any fundamental difference with respect to the goal. Elaborating this point Prof. Brightman writes:

'The goals of realization and of transcendence of the subject-object relation are closely intertwined with the pragmatic evaluation of experience. . . . Thus theory is measured in India by its pragmatic utility in producing realization rather than by its abstractly intrinsic truth. . . . Basic importance is attached to the end, not to the means; to the final result, not to the starting-point. Both sensory evidence and logical necessity, then, are relatively discounted in favour of actual realization of the divine. Most theoretical differences between Shankara and Ramanuja—roughly analogous to those between Spinoza and Leibniz—fade in comparison with the fact that both find God in experience'.

In the sphere of religion, the contrast between the East and the West is more striking. The purely mystical aspect, in both the East and the West, has been evidenced by instances of individual absorption and ecstasy in a cosmic Being. In the organizational aspect, that is, in the aspect in which the truths of religion related themselves to society, there are great differences. For, religions, like other things, take on the nature of the organisms which assimilate them. Krishna, Buddha, and Christ, have emphasized the laws of spiritual life, which call for the subordination of personal and egotistic predispositions to the inner call of a Higher Being. Studying Christianity as a religion, in relation to Hinduism and Buddhism, one finds many sharp contrasts, illustrative of the difference between the Eastern and the Western attitudes to religion. Enumerating the main goals of Western religion, he observes:

'. . . what are the main goals of Western religion —that is, of Judaeo-Christianity? They may be listed tentatively as: obedience to God, experience of God, love of God, co-operative service, and personal development. Underlying all of these goals is the teleological conception of the will of God as setting the norms for human conduct and as controlling the course, or at least as governing the direction, of history'.

The Western religious attitude is dominated by time-consciousness. Human civilization is as it were a testing-ground for the soul and God's hand is at work in every epoch of history, the grand movements of which have the unseen influence of the Supreme Spirit behind them. But institutional religion in the West has concerned itself more with doctrinal exposition and propagation of divine revelation than with intuitive experience or awareness of the ever present Divinity in man. There is the common aim of ushering in the Kingdom of God on earth by a transformation of individuals and through them society. Emphasis on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man has given rise to the humanistic philosophies of the West, characterized by a passion for maximum social justice. But the lack of inwardness has deprived the West of the solid weight of the experience of God which alone can defend religion from the attacks of materialism.

Summing up the attitude of the East, especially India, to religion, Prof. Brightman rightly says:

'. . . The chief goals of Indian religion may be tentatively listed as "realization", liberation from sense and self, tolerance, "intellectual" interpretation, and acknowledgment of incarnation. . . .'

'. . . The oneness of truth amid a variety of names and the oneness of the goal with a variety of approaches to it—such oneness is characteristic of Indian religion. . . . But the goal is always realization of Brahman. Shankara, India's greatest philosopher—her Parmenides, Plotinus, Eckhart, and Spinoza in one—is famous for his journeys to the four corners of India, to form one monastery in the North, one in the South, one in the East, and one in the West. In fact, he is almost as famous for this religious achievement as he is for his greatest philosophical insights. India seeks God first (as indeed Jesus also taught) and then sees man and the world in

relation to God, while the Western mind tends to find God, if at all, through man and the world'.

The learned writer states that these contrasts are not absolute differences, that they are largely matters of emphasis, and that they are gradually being broken down by a spiritual and cultural osmosis. The crusaders for 'Western values' would do well to take into serious consideration Prof. Brightman's dictum that 'both the philosophical and the religious aspirations of East and West are socially relevant' and that 'there is no place for smug superiority on either side'.

Professor Brightman however thinks that the goal of Eastern thought is the 'subordination' of the individual, thereby disabling him from distinctively affirming 'his rights and his value'. But the Vedantic identity of Atman with Brahman does not deny or negate the relatively objective function of the individual. It elevates him to his highest Right, and enables him to realize the highest Value. Man has to use language and that in a way most suited to describe what is indescribable. Hence Hindu thinkers have had to bring out the sense of the Divine by the use of negatives. The 'individual' is not to be treated as outside the universal nor does 'unity' or 'wholeness' mean the belittling of the individual. By knowing oneself one knows the universe, as the two are *essentially* non-different. Vedanta insists on the discovery and reaffirmation of the individual's Right, though giving objective rights and values their relative place of validity.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE WISDOM OF THE TALMUD. By Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser. *Published by Philosophical Library. 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, U. S. A. Pages 200. Price $ 3.75.*

The broad division of scriptural religion into Shruti and Smriti, Revelation and Tradition, is to be found not only in the Aryan religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, but also in the Semitic religions like Judaism and Islam. Jewish religious thought is not restricted to the canonical books of the Old Testament. It comprehends the Biblical suppliments and exegetical lore such as the Talmud, Midrash, Mishnah, and other apocryphal literature, which though not included in the recognized Biblical canon, formed part of the general religious literature of the Jews. The 'Book of Wisdom' is one such book, which the Jews consider apocryphal, but because of its religious significance and veneration it was included in the very Bible by Catholics as 'deutero-canonical' books.

Talmud proper is not only the authoritative Biblical exegesis, but it is also the Jewish civil and canonical code, incorporating the Mishnah, the text, and Gemara or commentary. There are two distinct Talmuds, one called Talmud *Yerushalmi* which was completed by the fourth century A.D., and the Talmud *Babli*, which was completed two centuries later. The Babylonian Talmud is more authoritative and, from philosophical and theological points of view, is of greater significance. The present book deals with the Talmud, its origin, historic development, theological content, ethical laws, and, its significance as a world literature.

In the informative introduction to the book, Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser gives a critical and historical survey of the Talmud from the earliest beginnings when, after the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish exiles, under the leadership of Ezra, laid the foundation of the second Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and with it the foundation-stone of the Talmudic literature.

A critical and historical perspective of how the Jewish thinkers and legislators grappled with the problems of man and his destiny,—relating to his social and individual ethics, to God, immortality, and the soul, and to his political philosophy—is lucidly and tersely brought about in this book in the first chapter entitled 'The Talmud as Literature'. The popular divulgation of the Law—Torah—was largely achieved by the Talmudic literature with its general appeal. As the author says: 'The authors of the Talmud did not look upon their teaching as an esoteric doctrine, suited only for the few. They

relation to God, while the Western mind tends to find God, if at all, through man and the world'.

The learned writer states that these contrasts are not absolute differences, that they are largely matters of emphasis, and that they are gradually being broken down by a spiritual and cultural osmosis. The crusaders for 'Western values' would do well to take into serious consideration Prof. Brightman's dictum that 'both the philosophical and the religious aspirations of East and West are socially relevant' and that 'there is no place for smug superiority on either side'.

Professor Brightman however thinks that the goal of Eastern thought is the 'subordination' of the individual, thereby disabling him from distinctively affirming 'his rights and his value'. But the Vedantic identity of Atman with Brahman does not deny or negate the relatively objective function of the individual. It elevates him to his highest Right, and enables him to realize the highest Value. Man has to use language and that in a way most suited to describe what is indescribable. Hence Hindu thinkers have had to bring out the sense of the Divine by the use of negatives. The 'individual' is not to be treated as outside the universal nor does 'unity' or 'wholeness' mean the belittling of the individual. By knowing oneself one knows the universe, as the two are *essentially* non-different. Vedanta insists on the discovery and reaffirmation of the individual's Right, though giving objective rights and values their relative place of validity.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE WISDOM OF THE TALMUD. By Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser. *Published by Philosophical Library. 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, U. S. A. Pages 200. Price $ 3.75.*

The broad division of scriptural religion into Shruti and Smriti, Revelation and Tradition, is to be found not only in the Aryan religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, but also in the Semitic religions like Judaism and Islam. Jewish religious thought is not restricted to the canonical books of the Old Testament. It comprehends the Biblical suppliments and exegetical lore such as the Talmud, Midrash, Mishnah, and other apocryphal literature, which though not included in the recognized Biblical canon, formed part of the general religious literature of the Jews. The 'Book of Wisdom' is one such book, which the Jews consider apocryphal, but because of its religious significance and veneration it was included in the very Bible by Catholics as 'deutero-canonical' books.

Talmud proper is not only the authoritative Biblical exegesis, but it is also the Jewish civil and canonical code, incorporating the Mishnah, the text, and Gemara or commentary. There are two distinct Talmuds, one called Talmud *Yerushalmi* which was completed by the fourth century A.D., and the Talmud *Babli*, which was completed two centuries later. The Babylonian Talmud is more authoritative and, from philosophical and theological points of view, is of greater significance. The present book deals with the Talmud, its origin, historic development, theological content, ethical laws, and, its significance as a world literature.

In the informative introduction to the book, Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser gives a critical and historical survey of the Talmud from the earliest beginnings when, after the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish exiles, under the leadership of Ezra, laid the foundation of the second Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and with it the foundation-stone of the Talmudic literature.

A critical and historical perspective of how the Jewish thinkers and legislators grappled with the problems of man and his destiny,—relating to his social and individual ethics, to God, immortality, and the soul, and to his political philosophy—is lucidly and tersely brought about in this book in the first chapter entitled 'The Talmud as Literature'. The popular divulgation of the Law—Torah—was largely achieved by the Talmudic literature with its general appeal. As the author says: 'The authors of the Talmud did not look upon their teaching as an esoteric doctrine, suited only for the few. They

co-operation in the war, in the interests of their strategy.

The spread of the war to the Pacific theatre forced the issue and compelled the politicians in England to seek conciliatory avenues. The Cripps Mission to India, its proposals, and its failure,—as Gandhiji had anticipated,—are pointedly dealt with by the author. The session of the Congress Working Committee in Bombay, in the first week of August 1942, passed the famous 'Quit India' resolution. We are enabled to relive, in these pages, the grim but politically unprecedented situations that led to and resulted from this 'Quit India' campaign, of which Gandhiji was the architect. Events, still green in our memory, following the arrest and imprisonment of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders, viz. repressive measures, shootings and collective fines, and autocratic rule by ordinances, etc. are vividly narrated. Gandhiji's epic fast and the death of Mahadev Desai, his able secretary, and of Kasturba, his partner in life, in the detention camp at the Aga Khan Palace, the indictment of the Congress by the then Government and Gandhiji's reply to it, and ultimately Gandhiji's release in May 1944 which brought hope and courage to the millions of the country—these, along with many minor contemporary occurrences, form some of the most readable chapters of this volume.

A lengthy chapter towards the close of the book is devoted to the protracted Gandhi-Jinnah talks, the breakdown of which caused wide-spread disappointment and left the political situation in a dead-lock. Gandhiji's active life at Sevagram towards the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945 is recorded in a brief but illuminating manner, revealing him as a far-sighted statesman, a soldier of peace, and above all a passionate lover of his motherland. His life and personality inspired the whole of the Indian sub-continent, awakening Indians to the consciousness of their inherent dignity and legitimate rights.

The great lead given by Gandhiji in the heroic struggle of the Indian people for the attainment of Independence forms by itself a glorious saga of universal historical significance. The volume under review also contains Gandhiji's soul-stirring writings and speeches during the most critical period of the second world war and his appeal to the British, the Americans, and the Japanese. Throughout these pages the learned biographer has successfully portrayed Gandhiji as the inspired leader that he was, possessing a dynamic and dominant will, and pressing forward his programme irrespective of triumphs and reverses. In commemoration of Gandhiji's seventy-fifth birthday (on 2nd October 1944), a memorial volume was presented to him.

The large number of illustrations in and the attractive get-up of the volume fully maintain the excellent standard set by the preceding volumes of the series

OF GOD, THE DEVIL, AND THE JEWS. By Dagobert D. Runes. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40 Street, New York 16, N.Y., U.S.A. Pages 192. Price $3.00.*

This is a scathing criticism, delivered with epigrammatic pungency, of the cruelties and hypocrisies which nestle under the shade of Christianity and besmirch Western civilization and particularly of the sanguinary anti-Semitism which was in evidence in certain parts of Europe during the last world war. Racial and religious prejudice is the hinge on which turns the phase of struggle on which the world has just entered. It is perhaps the last stiff hurdle that mankind has to clear in its striving for a juster, saner, and happier order. The charges which Dr. Runes frames and urges with corrosive logic and biting rhetoric may be laid against depraved human *ethos*, whatever the denomination it passes under. One has the feeling, however, that the vigour and sharpness with which the writer argues his indictment may not be conducive to the mental climate needed for the elimination of the failings and preversities he attacks. The lapses of religion are due to disregard of its cardinal teachings and its baseness are chargeable to the spirit of corporate dominion as William James has remarked. In assailing the abuses of religion, the writer fails to see the good in a life of voluntary continence—a cult which, apart from its use for spirits of a certain type and for all men in certain stages and conditions, and the enhanced opportunities of social service it affords, may have to be revived in a world in which over-population follows starvation and multiplies human misery. The chapters on 'Glands and the Heavens' and 'Sin, Sex, and Sanity' are the outcome of the too common philosophy of good living and passes by other human values such as are needed to keep in check the multiple desires which master man when the wholesome restraint that religion is meant to exercise are inoperative.

Batuknath Bhattacharya

YOGA EXPLAINED. By F. Yeats-Brown. *Published by Susil Gupta (India) Ltd., 35, Central Avenue, Calcutta 12. Pages 152. Price Rs. 3.*

In recent times a considerable amount of interest in Yoga is being taken by many in the West and in the East as well, and almost regularly books by various authors are being published explaining and interpreting Yoga from different points of view. The publication of the volume under review, the second edition of Yeats-Brown's

book is indicative of the popular demand for such works. In embarking upon the task of explaining Yoga mainly for the Western world, Francis Yeats-Brown, an Englishman, formerly of the Indian Army and well-known as the author of *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, approaches his study of the subject not as a path to metaphysical perfection, but as a purely physical discipline to be lived and practised. His exposition is no doubt commendable.

Of the six main systems of Hindu philosophy, Yoga occupies a position of a special significance. Basing itself largely on the Sānkhya doctrine, it delineates, with amazing psychological insight, a process of exercise involving both mind and body, which leads the Yogi to a state of perfect poise and bliss and wider consciousness. This practical aspect of Yoga is emphasized by Yeats-Brown in this book. Being himself an ardent follower of Yogic discipline, the author writes necessarily from a direct personal experience and with conviction. This has naturally afforded additional force and charm to what he writes. He is brief, and therefore somewhat categorical, but nevertheless clear and lucid. The author sketches the history of Yogic practices and their physiological foundations. He explains, for instance, what is meant by Prāṇa, Chakras, Nāḍis, Iḍā, Piñgalā, etc. Some of the Yogic Āsanas, too have been explained in detail, with illustrations. This will be of much help to the beginners. It may be mentioned here that Figure 7, illustrating the different Chakras ('wheels' or 'lotuses', as he calls them), along with the explanation of each, on pages 57-58 seems to have no direct reference to or connection with the main subject-matter that *immediately* precedes or follows it, as it is interposed between the third line on page 57 and page 59. This is doubtless confusing to the readers.

In Appendix III, nnder the heading 'Ramakrishna's Trance', the author has reproduced relevant extracts from the description of the state of divine ecstasy of Sri Ramakrishna, witnessed and recorded by Nagendranath Gupta, who was the Editor of the *Tribune* for a long time. Yeats-Brown takes the quotation, as he says, from the extracts that appeared in the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Number of *Prabuddha Bharata* (February 1936).

ANIL KUMAR BANERJI

INDIA—THE PEACEMAKER. BY PAUL RICHARD. *Published by Ganesh & Co., Ltd., Madras—17. Pages 35. Price 8 As.*

India—the Peacemaker, with the sub-title 'A Solution of the Kashmir Problem', is a collection of penetrating essays, suggesting a way to achieve world peace. The book is divided into three sections: The first section, 'India—the Peacemaker', is devoted to a study of the Kashmir problem in the light of recent events and also a short study of 'The Message of India', mainly dealing with the spiritual import of the *Gita*. Mr. Paul Richard suggests that Kashmir be converted into an international area where the three great Asiatic cultures,—Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim—meet and strive for mutual synthesis. The second section of the book, 'Kashmir—the Ideal Centre', is devoted to a plan for erecting in Kashmir an All-Asian University for the study of the great Asian cultures. In the last section, 'World Culture', Paul Richard makes a passionate plea for a world culture and appeals to the common man in all lands and climes to rise equal to the occasion. The book is stimulating and thought-provoking.

B. S. MATHUR

BENGALI-ENGLISH.

VIDYAMANDIR PATRIKA. *Published by the Principal, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal. Pages* 164.

The annual number for 1953 of *Vidyāmandir Patrikā*, the illustrious Organ of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, a residential college at Belur (Howrah), carries a large number of excellently written articles and poems, on varied topics, together with as many as 32 illustrations on art paper. Most of the articles are contributed by the youthful and enthusiastic students and bear ample testimony to their admirable literary abilities. While the major portion of the contents is in Bengali, there are at least five articles and a sonnet in English, and what is distinctly commendable, there is an article in Sanskrit by an ex-student. This bumper number, which fully maintains the high traditional standards of the Vidyamandira, reveals the delightful fact that the students of the Institution have, in addition to their normal studies, been evincing keen interest in a variety of extra-curricular activities. We wish the *Vidyāmandir Patrikā* greater success in the years to follow.

SANSKRIT

SRI SRI-RAMAKRISHNA KATHĀMRITA (OF SRI MA.). BY SWAMI JAGANNATHANANDA. *Published by Cuttack Trading Co., Cuttack, Orissa. Pages 174. Price Rs. 2.*

It is a very happy idea to translate into easy Sanskrit prose some of the spiritual and philosophic discourses of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa Deva, as recorded and presented by Mahendra Nath Gupta or Master Mahāshaya (known by the pen-name of 'Sri Ma.' or 'M.'), in his immortal classic—*Śrī Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāmṛta* in Bengali. For spiritually inclined persons desirous of delving deep into the

ocean of mystic realizations, the Kathamrita is an excellent help. Its contents are equalled by few and surpassed by none in the domain of similar practically edifying religious and spiritual literature of the world. It expounds the erudite doctrines and truths of practical spiritual life in a manner at once original, simple, and sincere. Sri Ramakrishna, in his discourses even with the most learned men of his day, used to explain difficult metaphysical problems in a homely way, with the aid of familiar anecdotes and stories. Master Mahashaya (Sri Ma.) has done immense benefit to posterity by preserving and publishing these words of the Master in their original form. The result is a unique work (in five parts, in Bengali) indispensable for the spiritual elevation and illumination of aspirants of any school of thought, to all of whom it brings home the difficult metaphysical tenets in the most natural way conceivable.

Swami Jagannathananda of the Ramakrishna Order, himself an erudite Sanskrit scholar, has done a laudable task by translating into easy and lucid Sanskrit prose seven well-chosen important discourses taken from the Kathamrita (Parts I to IV). Sanskrit, even in the present context of political events, can well become an all-India language for intercultural contacts. The reviewer has no doubt that this Sanskrit translation of selections from the Kathamrita will be appreciated by our learned Pandits, to whom it would have a greater appeal than the Bengali or Hindi version. The learned translator has made a judicious selection of discourses and has chosen those that are of great philosophical import. The language is easily understandable by even those who possess a simple knowledge of Sanskrit. The Swami has also translated into Sanskrit poetry, in easy metrical form, some of the original Bengali songs which used to be sung by Sri Ramakrishna in the course of his conversations with devotees and which occur in their natural places in the passages chosen for translation here. On pages 105 ff. we come across a fine translation of a soulful song, beautiful in style and expression.

This Sanskrit rendering of Kathamrita, the first of its kind, deserves commendable praise, and every lover of Sanskrit would wish the Swami bring out further translations of other valuable material from the Kathamrita. The book may be usefully recommended for college students for further reading in Sanskrit.

BALADEVA UPADHYAYA

ŚAKTI-SĀDHANĀ. By Dr. Jatindra Bimal Chaudhuri. *Published by Prachyavani Mandir, 3, Federation Street, Calcutta 9. Pages 20. Price 8 As.*

Sanskrit has been labelled by some moderners as a 'dead' language. But they will be astonished to find that in it can still be produced such original works as the one under review and that even such current topics as the political division of the country, refugee rehabilitation, Sanskrit as the national language of India, and the progress of the country in all respects—physical, moral, and spiritual. Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri assures the refugees from East Bengal that they need not be disheartened or downcast in spirit as this has been the lot of this borderland of India in all ages. They should be sufficiently strong for fighting all evils and they will surely see better days before long. He rightly says in this work:

'Ittham sadā manyamānān udvāstūn deśa-vāsinaḥ,
Bravīmi śoka-vikalairbhāvyam nāsmābhirīdṛśam.
Yuge yuge duhkham-evam soḍham Bhārata-vāsibhiḥ,
Nāśanāyāsya duhkhasya kartavyam śakti-sādhanam'
(52-53).

Sanskrit, the mother of all Indian languages, is the only language fit for being the National Language of India. It is the only bond of fraternity among all the provinces, and should be learnt by our boys and girls from their infancy. Says Dr. Chaudhuri :

'Bālānām-īdṛśī ceṣtā saphalā dṛśyate sadā,
Tatra vyākaraṇa-Jñānasyāpekṣā na kiyatyapi.
Yadyevam tarhi yeṣāntu śravaṇe samskṛtam vacah,
Pravišatyanišam teṣām tad-artha-jñāna-sambhavaḥ'.
(164-65).

The work has been written in graceful style and in very simple Sanskrit that will be intelligible to all.

Indians all over the country will wonder how a Sanskrit work on current topics may be presented to them for ready reading. An Indian with average intelligence, even without the knowledge of Sanskrit, will easily grasp the view-points of the author. The author is a well-known advocate of Sanskrit as the National Language of India and the present work will amply serve his purpose. This work clearly demonstrates that Sanskrit is neither a dead nor a difficult language.

DR. AMARESWAR THAKUR

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1952

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras, has completed the forty-eighth year of its useful career at the end of 1952. The following is a brief report on the working of the Home for the year 1952.

The Home had under its management four distinct sections—the Collegiate, the Technical, the Secondary, and the Elementary. For the Collegiate section, the Home has always provided a hostel only; the Technical and the Secondary sections are being run as self-contained units, provided with both residential and instructional facilities; the Elementary section had two elementary schools for day-scholars—one in the city and another in the mofussil, the latter having a free hostel, attached to it, for Harijan boarders. Admissions are almost always restricted to the poorest among the best, merit being the chief guiding factor in the selection. At the end of the year, the boarders in the different sections numbered as follows: Collegiate (at Madras) 44, Technical (at Madras) 63, Secondary (at Athur) 162. Among these, 60 belonged to the scheduled castes. Nearly 60 per cent of the students were in receipt of scholarships and fee concessions.

The Seva-praveena Samiti, an organization of student leaders, was made responsible for the distribution of domestic duties and maintenance of general discipline among the boys. The Tamil Sangham, the Andhra Association, and the Automobile Engineering Association afforded the students the necessary opportunities for meeting and discussing topics of academic interest. The Automobile Engineering Association published a magazine. Special religious classes and discourses, Bhajans and Pujas, and the celebration of festivals served to maintain a spiritual atmosphere in the Home. Progress Registers of individual students and a character gallery exhibiting the names of boys who had distinguished themselves by exemplary conduct were maintained as usual. Four students of the Home distinguished themselves by their devoted service in the Rayalaseema Famine Relief operations conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission. The total number of volumes in the Library at the end of the year was 2,975. The Reading-room received many newspapers and periodicals.

University Education: Of the 44 students in the Collegiate section, 30 were in the Vivekananda College and the rest in other Colleges in the city. All the 20 students who appeared for the various University examinations came out successful, 16 of them securing first class. 41 students were in receipt of scholarships and fee concessions. Two boys of the Home distinguished themselves in the Madurai Tamil Sangham examination in Tamil, securing the first and third prizes.

Technical Education: The Ramakrishna Mission Technical Institute, with the fully equipped Jubilee Automobile Workshop attached to it, prepares students for the L. A. E. (Licentiate in Automobile Engineering) Diploma, the course extending over a period of three years. 14 students, out of the 20 who appeared for the L. A. E. Examination, passed. 14 students were in receipt of scholarships and fee concessions.

Secondary Education: The Residential High School, situated at Athur, had a strength of 168, including 6 day-scholars. 28 students appeared for the S. S. L. C. Public Examination and 26 were declared eligible for college courses. More than 60 per cent of the pupils were in receipt of scholarships and fee concessions. Spinning, weaving, carpentry, and gardening continued to serve as crafts and hobbies for all the pupils, outside school hours.

Elementary Education: The Home had under its management two elementary schools:

(*i*) *The Centenary Elementary School, Mylapore*: The school had a strength of 322 (210 boys and 112 girls) at the end of the year.

(*ii*) *The Ramakrishna Mission Higher Elementary School, Malliankaranai, Uttiramerur*: There were 143 boys and 27 girls on the rolls at the end of the year. The Harijan Hostel, attached to the School, had 25 boarders during the year.

Finance: The total expenditure in the running of all the sections amounted to Rs. 1,48,927-0-4, while the total receipts amounted to Rs. 1,40,450-2-11, resulting in a deficit of Rs. 8,476-13-5.

To meet the annually recurring deficit, arising from the all-round rise in the cost of food-stuffs and other materials, and to enable the institution to carry on its useful activities efficiently and on a sound financial basis, the Home needs liberal help in cash and kind from the generous public.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

Report for 1950 and 1951

The following is a brief report of the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre at Singapore (9, Norris Road) during the years 1950 and 1951:

Celebrations: Birthday anniversaries of saints and prophets and special festivals were observed with suitable programmes.

Library: The Mission maintained a library open to the general public, where about ten periodicals were received.

Boys' Home: The new Boys' Home—formally declared open by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, in June 1950—had 76 inmates in 1950 and 83 in 1951. All boys can study Tamil up to Standard VII. Some gain admission into English schools. In the Industrial School they study tailoring, carpentry, weaving, and toy-making.

Vivekananda Boys' School: In 1950 there were 150 students and 6 teachers and in 1951 there were 119 students with 5 teachers. Classes were held up to VII Standard inclusive. The pupils of the School did well at the annual examinations and achieved great success in sports.

Saradamani Girls' School: In 1950 the School had 115 students and 6 teachers and in 1951 it had 132 students with 6 teachers. There were classes up to Standard VI inclusive, and sewing and needlework were also taught.

Ramakrishna School: This School, specially meant for infants, had 26 and 25 students in 1950 and 1951 respectively.

Night School: In 1950 there were 106 students and in 1951 there were 110 students.

The main work of construction of the magnificent New Temple of Sri Ramakrishna, with Library and Lecture Hall, had been completed during the period under report. The Temple was dedicated and formally opened by Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, in October 1952.

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, KAMARPUKUR

Kamarpukur, the birthplace of Sri Ramakrishna, in Dt. Hooghly, West Bengal, is now well known to the public as one of the most sacred places of pilgrimage in India. The authorities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have taken up the responsible task of preserving its manifold sacred objects and sites that are closely associated with the early life and activities of Sri Ramakrishna. The Ramakrishna Temple, built on the spot of his birth, with his marble image, and the Shrine of Raghuvira built under the auspices of the Belur Math, have added to the beauty and serenity of the place, and the Guest House has been a useful addition. But there are still many things to do. Quarters for the accommodation of the monastic workers, a building for the Charitable Dispensary that is tending the sick people of the village, a house for the existing Primary School, which is to be converted into an ideal Basic School, a good Library, as also reclamation of the big old tank known as Haldarpukur and improvement of the sanitation of the malaria-stricken village—are some of the most pressing needs. A large sum of money is required to effect the above improvements. The Centre, too, requires substantial financial support for its stabilization. Contributions in cash and kind will be thankfully accepted by the President, Ramakrishna Math (or Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission), Kamarpukur.

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

At a meeting of the new Executive Committee of The Holy Mother Birth Centenary held in Calcutta on the 26th April 1953, the following undertakings were added to the Scheme already formulated (*vide Prabuddha Bharata*, December 1950):

(1) *Publication of*:

(a) A comprehensive life of the Holy Mother in Hindi; and

(b) *Māyer Kathā* (Conversations of the Holy Mother) in Hindi.

(2) *Organization of*:

(a) An All-India Women's Cultural Conference;

(b) An Exhibition of Arts and Crafts with special reference to women;

(c) A Religious Convention of the women devotes of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother; and

(d) A Women's Music Conference.