

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

VOL. LIX

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By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE MYSTIC BIRTH

*Mahe yat pitra im rasam dive kar
ava tsarat pṛṣanyaś cikitvān,
Sṛjad astā dhr̥ṣatā didyum asmai
svāyām devo duhitari tviṣim dhāt.*

When the Earth's yearning Heart
Forced the Sap of Life
To mount the vast refulgent Void
Of the Eternal Father's realm,

Down, down into the depths
In silence came the Thrill
That newly woke.

The dauntless Wielder then
With crushing might
Hurled the Lightning-Dart on him:

And so the Shining One
Instilled the seed of quickening Light
Into His own Daughter.

*Śāktya Parāśara (R̥g-Veda, I. 71. 5)
(Translated by Anirvan)*

MEMORIES OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

BY IDA ANSELL

... Swami Turiyananda was the direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna whom Swami Vivekananda requested to accompany him on his second visit to America and to assist him in work here. At first Turiyananda refused to leave India, but when Swamiji pleaded, 'Hari-bhai,¹ I am working so hard; *won't* you do a little?', he relented and agreed to come. He was helping Swami Abhedananda in New York when Swamiji² came to the Pacific Coast for the first time.

I was lame, frail, twenty-three in years, much younger in experience, having been deprived by various infirmities, of the usual activities of youth. In spite of these disqualifications, when I asked Swami Turiyananda for permission to go to the Ashrama,³ he looked at me for a long time, chanting softly, and then asked, 'Why do you want to go?' My reply, 'I want to become butter', pleased him and he said, 'Yes, you may go if your mother consents, and butter you will become if you try hard'. He had explained in one of his lectures that as there is butter in milk but it must be separated by churning before it is usable, so there is the Atman in man, but meditation is necessary to awaken him to that consciousness, and for the purpose of meditation, retirement from the distractions of the world for a time is essential.

'What you want you will get. Be sure of it. If you want entertainment, you will get entertainment. If you want Mother, you will get Mother. So be careful'.

Thus Swami Turiyananda warned the little group who accompanied him, early in August 1900, to the quarter section of government land in the San Antone Valley that had been

offered to Swami Vivekananda by Miss Minnie C. Booke for the purpose of establishing an Ashrama. ...

Swami gave some lectures and had morning meditations in San Francisco. There was considerable discussion as to which part of the work was of more importance, the building up of the society in the city where many would be helped, or the establishment of an Ashrama for the benefit of a few. Swami listened attentively to all the arguments and his decision was: 'We shall go to the Ashrama first. Mother is propitious'. So it was arranged that Miss Booke and a Miss Lydia Bell should go there a few days in advance and make the necessary arrangements. ...

Swami kept in close touch with everything, helping in every branch of the work, and inspiring everyone, chanting continuously. This chant was very different from the one he used in meditation. It was in a major key, vigorous and rhythmic. We used to call it his military chant. Everyone felt filled with energy and enthusiasm, and the work was carried on joyously.

In the little book *With the Swamis in America*,⁴ the author quotes Swami's own explanation of his method of work. When someone suggested that rules be made, he replied:

Why do you want rules? Is not everything going on nicely and orderly without formal rules? Don't you see how punctual everyone is, how regular we all are? No one ever is absent from the classes or meditations. Mother has made her own rules, let us be satisfied with that. Why should we make rules of our own? Let there be freedom, but no licence. That is Mother's way of ruling. We have no organization, but see how organized we are. This kind of organization is lasting but all other

¹ The pre-monastic name of Swami Turiyananda was Harinath.

² Swami Vivekananda.

³ Shanti Ashrama, California, U.S.A.

⁴ By A Western Disciple (Published by Advaita Ashrama).

kinds of organization break up in time. This kind of organization makes free, all other kinds are binding. This is the highest organization; it is based on spiritual laws'.

And again, when someone remarked, 'How wonderful it is, Swami, that men and women of such pronounced and different temperaments can live together peacefully', Swami replied:

'That is because I rule by love. You are all tied to me by the string of love. How else would it be possible? Don't you see how I trust everyone and I leave everyone free? That I can do because I know that you all love me. There is no hitch anywhere, all goes on smoothly. But remember, it is all of Mother's doing. I have nothing to do with it. She has given us that mutual love that her work may flourish. As long as we remain true to her there is no fear that anything will go wrong. But the moment we forget her there will be great danger. Therefore I always ask you to think of Mother'.

Swami Turiyananda encouraged voluntary self-discipline. He was keenly aware of the various needs and would give subtle suggestions in guidance. A period of retirement (never more than three days) would be approved by Swami, or a period of fasting, or one night spent in prayer and meditation, or long solitary walks to combat restlessness. One favourite and very beneficial discipline was a vow of silence for twenty-four hours. It was quite legitimate for the others to do their best, individually and collectively, to force the breaking of the vow. This brought out much ingenuity on the part of the tormentors and constant alertness for the one keeping silent.

The meditation classes were sources of instruction and inspiration, but much of the Swami's teaching was individual and was always informal and spontaneous. A lesson might come at any moment, often in a twilight walk down to the gate. Many were given in his early morning rounds, sitting on the platforms of the various tents.

One morning we were talking about the various reasons we had for coming to the Ashrama, when Swami happened to pass and asked what we were talking about. When we told him he said, 'If you fall into the

river, jump in, or are thrown in, the result is the same—you get wet. Whatever the reason, now there is no escape. You have been stung by the cobra and you must die'.

Another time, when there was talk of the possibility of someone leaving, he said, 'Where will they go? Vedanta is the essence of religion. When you have seen the full moon in all its glory, who cares to look at a candle?'

Swami asked me to take some notes of his class talks. Preparing to do so, I sharpened a pencil with a dull knife. The result was a jagged, unsymmetrical point. Just then he happened to come to my tent, picked up the pencil, and remarked, 'That is a sample of your work!' Then, with the same knife, he carefully whittled the jagged wood into a smooth, symmetrical point. Handing it back to me, he said: 'Make every act an act of worship. Whatever you do, do as an offering to Mother and do it as perfectly as you can.'

I had a bad habit of procrastinating. One morning he came early and sitting on the floor of the tent, quoted a Sanskrit or Bengali proverb, which he translated:

What you have to do tomorrow, do today;

What you have to do today, do this minute.

Then he added, 'If I know I have to go to see Swami Abhedananda, I go this minute', and he strode off in the direction of the tent of Swami Abhedananda who had come to visit. . . .

One morning I was sitting in my tent, reading, when Swami came and inquired, 'What are you reading?' 'Emerson's *Essays*', I replied. Then he said, 'Why do you take third-hand? Why don't you take direct? Force Mother to give you'.

Another time he came quoting Longfellow.

Art is long, and time is fleeting,

And our hearts, though stout and brave,

Still, like muffled drums, are beating

Funeral marches to the grave.

'Like muffled drums', he murmured, and then said, '“The Psalm of Life”'. Do you know “The Psalm of Life”?' At that time

every schoolgirl in America memorized 'The Psalm of Life', and when I recited the nine verses he was very much pleased. 'Good, Baby, good', he said.

One afternoon we just happened to meet, and he said, 'Ujjvala,⁵ are you deep or shallow? Do you live and die in words, or do you live and die in principles?' Before I could think how to answer him, he added: 'In matters of opinion, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand firm as a rock'. That was all, but he had given me in a moment guidance for a lifetime.

One very notable thing was the total absence of fear one experienced in Swami's presence. I was a city child, timid and nervous, and always afraid of everything in the country. There were snakes, scorpions, and tarantulas, yet in Swami's presence fear was unknown. One afternoon Swami, Dhira,⁶ and I wandered up a hill to get a better view of the Ashrama. After resting, talking, and enjoying the view, we started home. What had been a short walk now became astonishingly long, and we suddenly realized that we were lost. Not until the evening camp-fire was lighted were we able to find our way home, to the great relief of the anxious students who were not aware that we had left the Ashrama until we failed to appear at the supper table.

On another occasion Swami, Dhira, and I walked the six miles to the post office to get the mail. Swami often said: 'Mother can make impossible possible'. In the city just a few blocks would be exhausting. With Swami, the twelve-mile walk, with a few rest periods, had only good results. . . .

⁵ The name by which Swami Turiyananda used to call the writer.

⁶ Mrs. Bertha Petersen.

Once he explained to me his apparent anger at one of the students. 'I am not angry', he said, 'but I *use* anger for a purpose'. And he added, 'He is a fool who cannot get angry; he is a wise man who will not. Try to be one with all', he said. 'Never antagonize. In the degree that you do, you are not feeling oneness. If anyone says anything against you, never get angry or resist it. Analyse carefully and see if it is true. If it is true, correct it. If it is not true, then what is that to you?' And he added Buddha's saying, 'Whose is the gift if the one to whom it is offered does not accept it?'

Swami explained to me how a Sannyasin will enjoy everything as others do, but always at the will of another. He has no craving himself. He is dead. He has died consciously.

He quoted his favourite Tulsidas: 'O Tulsi, when you came into this world, you came weeping and the world laughed. Punish the world. Live in such a way that when you die, you will go laughing and the world will weep'. And again: 'O Tulsi, seek thou to live with all, for who knows where or in what guise the Lord himself will come to thee'.

Swami Turiyananda insisted upon the utmost sincerity. 'Make your heart and tongue one. But truthfulness and kindness must go together'. Then he would quote a Sanskrit proverb and translate it:

Say what is kind, but not what is untrue;

Say what is true, but not what is unkind.

Then he would chant a beautiful Sanskrit Shloka, telling us what it meant: 'Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood. The path by which the sages reach perfection is the path of truth. There is no other way to freedom—no other way'.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MODERN INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

India can justly be proud of being the cradle of the world's most ancient and enduring civilization. From time immemorial, away back when even the beginnings of history were unknown, India is known to have been the land of religion, of philosophy, and of spirituality. She was, at the same time no less well known for her material wealth and cultural advance. Onward, through trackless centuries, India came to be looked at as 'ancient', 'medieval', or 'modern' after history began to be recorded. Unlike some other parts of the earth, in India the transition from 'ancient' to 'modern' did not mean a coming up from savagery to civilization. The people of this great and ancient land are the inheritors of a rich cultural heritage, no less worthy than that of any of the modern advanced nations of the world, a heritage that can and does inspire and animate the entire nation even to this day. This heritage, though based on spiritual foundations, encompassed every aspect of life and every field of human endeavour and achievement. In its original form Indian civilization was decidedly all-comprehensive, combining enormous material progress and prosperity with the highest moral purity and spiritual perfection. But the vicissitudes of fortune have had to be reckoned with.

Times out of number the social, political, and material face of the country has undergone changes—for better or for worse, revealing the impermanent nature of temporal values and institutions, however advantageous and utilitarian. But the essential core of national life, the spiritual vitality of the race, remained unsullied and undiminished. It is this strength and vitality that has enabled India to withstand the shocks of centuries, of innumerable foreign invasions, and of repeated upheavals of manners and customs.

In modern times, as in ancient times, it is an undeniable fact that this spiritual core of the nation is sound and intact, notwithstanding the obviously less spectacular nature of the country's achievements in the fields of military conquest and material prosperity. Even today one can see, with not a little wonder, how both the most ancient and the most modern ideas and ideals are to be found side by side in India. Today when one thinks of modern India one visualizes modernized India, with new manners, new fashions, and new ideological institutions. At the same time, one cannot get away from the conviction that India is still spiritually and morally very much alive, strong, and vigorous. No greater proof of this fact is needed than to find that other nations, big and small, are looking to India for a definite lead in matters that concern freedom, peace, tolerance, and such other verities of coexistence.

Of the many distinguished names that adorn the pages of the cultural and religious history of India of the very recent past, those of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are well known today. Both are loved and revered in the East and the West alike, not only as rejuvenators of Hinduism but also as beacon-lights that illumine the spiritual path of human civilization everywhere. Born in 1836, Sri Ramakrishna, in whom Swami Vivekananda saw the highest expression of Divinity on the human plane and whose message he strove to interpret to the outside world, represented in his illustrious life and realizations the highest truths of humanity by touching the entire gamut of spiritual experience. Born in January 1863, almost twenty-seven years after his great Master, Swami Vivekananda, who came to fulfil Sri Ramakrishna's mission as his dynamic counterpart and whose inspiring voice roused his

motherland from end to end, became, in every sense of the term, the patriot-saint of modern India. Through the voice of the disciple the world was thrilled to listen to the voice of the Master. Since the advent of Swami Vivekananda the spiritual and cultural life of the Indian people has shown unmistakable signs of rehabilitation and resurgence.

It is impossible, at this short distance of time, even to visualize, much less assess, modern India's indebtedness to Swami Vivekananda for his unique patriotic fervour, his fearless pioneering venture, and his strength-giving and man-making message. Few, indeed, could love and work for India as he did. He awakened India's dormant national consciousness and instilled a freshness and vigour into it. He spoke of himself as a 'condensed India'. Modern India, the inheritor of the Swami's rich spiritual legacy, cannot afford to forget, some of the salient features of his mission and his plan of work for the regeneration of the country. Superficial observers may get lost in the welter of norms, creeds, and superstitious rituals and fail to notice the leaven of the Swami's universal gospel still working within the soil of the motherland and fertilizing it. But a closer survey of the spiritual and intellectual life of the nation, even at the highest levels, reveals the truth that the Swami's soul-stirring teachings are silently influencing and guiding the nation's destinies. Had he not himself declared, long before his passing away, that he would not cease to work even after casting off his body 'like worn-out garment' and that he would continue to inspire men everywhere until the world would know that it is one with God!

In the course of a short life of less than forty years, of which ten were devoted to public activities, Swami Vivekananda delivered innumerable lectures, wrote outstanding treatises on Hindu philosophy, composed poems, penned in his own hand some of his most inspiring letters to friends and disciples, and travelled extensively, acting as India's spiritual ambassador abroad and as

the puissant awakener of his own people at home. Within this brief period he gave serious thought to each and every aspect of the past glories, later decadence, and future resurgence of India. He spoke with conviction and authority and gave his message to his countrymen without fear or reserve. A mystic of the highest order and endowed with a prophet's vision, the Swami had distinctly seen the new India rising—a wonderful, glorious, future India, greater than ever. 'Rooted in the past and full of pride of India's heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present' (Jawaharlal Nehru: *The Discovery of India*).

The spectacle of prevailing misery, poverty, and ignorance touched the Swami to his core. He felt he could not rest until he had bettered the lot of the common toiling masses and given them back their lost individuality. He considered the neglect of and tyranny over the masses by the fortunate few a 'national sin' and raised his powerful voice in support of their cause. In his charge to the right type of national workers, Swami Vivekananda always insisted on their following the constructive method along the line of least resistance. It is true love and fellow-feeling that are most needed, not violent and destructive revolution. He said:

'Love opens the most impossible gates; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? . . . Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, and even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step'.

Enumerating some of the other causes of our national decadence, such as, disregard of

the unmistakable lessons of the past, narrow conservatism—bordering on isolation and cultural stagnation, perversion of religion—associating sectarian prejudices and ritualistic formalism with real religion, and neglect of the importance of woman's place in society, the Swami said: 'Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas. . . . After preaching spiritual knowledge, along with it will come that secular knowledge and every other knowledge that you want'. The Swami wanted that the unity of the nation should be based on a common cultural consciousness of the entire people whose hearts have to beat to the same spiritual tune. Towards this end he stressed the need for bringing about unification of our religious ideas by teaching the young and old the common bases of Hinduism. 'National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces', said the Swami. And throughout the active years of his life he sought to dispel the vastly numerous misconceptions that surrounded the concepts of true religion, Yoga, and spiritual realization. In his restatement and exposition of Hinduism his own people, as also those of other lands, found the key to the organizing and consolidating of the Hindu Faith, with its profound philosophy, multifarious mythology, and intricate ritual.

One of the most fundamental requisites essential for the regeneration of a nation, which had temporarily lost its moorings but by no means its innate driving force, was seen by the Swami to be the completest faith and self-confidence of the people in their own strength. He wanted Indians to rely on their own strength—which has ever lain in religion and spirituality—and help themselves forward, at the same time helping other nations too in no small measure. The Swami made himself heard in words that cannot but send a thrill through the body like an electric shock:

'Arise, awake! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak; the soul is

infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you, do not deny Him! Too much of inactivity, too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism, has been and is upon our race. O ye modern Hindus, de-hypnotize yourselves. Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes'.

The Swami was never tired of calling upon his countrymen to have faith in themselves, in their great past and in their glorious future. This meant no silent self-admiration or complacent inactivity on their part. He demanded of them hard and sincere work, nay, insisted on it, saying, 'Work, work the idea, my brave, noble good souls,—to the wheel, to the wheel put your shoulders'. He wished very much to see a band of fiery missionaries, not purely religious preachers, but 'a hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden', who will go over the length and breadth of the land bringing into every home and cottage the practical benefits of the gospel of love, equality, service, and salvation. Thus he placed emphasis on the right type of men who alone could strive for and be relied upon to safeguard the best interests of the nation. 'Men, men,' he declared, 'these are wanted: everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted'.

That men, good and honest men, are more valuable than all the power and wealth at our disposal is becoming increasingly evident today and will become more so in the years to follow as we climb up the ladder of progress and gain richer and greater experience as a free self-governing nation. The basis of all system, social or political, rests upon the quality of the individuals they are constituted of. The leaders of present-day India are constantly reminding the people of the latter's duties and responsibilities as citizens of an independent country. The need for more and more voluntary effort and self-

sacrificing spirit is being felt everywhere and in every field of public life. When a nation is on the march, there cannot but be some who may fall short of even the minimum requirements. But the large body of men and women, who have the country's interest at heart, cannot afford to tarry or flinch at the initial obstacles, nor can they succeed if they succumb themselves to the very foibles and frailties which characterize the few who are seen to be reactionary or revolutionary.

The problem of training sincere national workers, which modern India faces today, will become less difficult if we hearken to and follow what Swami Vivekananda has said over half a century ago. He said: 'When you have men who are ready to sacrifice their everything for their country, sincere to the backbone,—when such men arise India will become great in every respect. Then only will India awake when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance'. He advised his followers to concentrate their energies on silent and steady work, however inconsiderable. This has been the true Indian tradition of achieving great success in all efforts—sacred or secular. Advising his young but enthusiastic band of workers, he wrote, 'Infinite patience, infinite purity, and infinite perseverance are the secret of success in a good cause. . . . Be true, be honest, be pure. Do not figure out big plans at first, but begin slowly, feel your ground and proceed, up and up'.

Corruption and nepotism are great evils in the body politic of a nation. They are seen to raise their head wherever there are unrestrained selfishness and greed. The craze for assuming leadership even before acquiring the needed qualification and capability is at the bottom of much of the vociferous propaganda and chaotic indiscipline one finds today in all parts of the world, including India.

Hence the Swami warned his countrymen to take care of the dangers of love of power and jealousy which destroy mutual co-operation and hamper progress. 'Stop not to look back for name or fame or any such nonsense. Throw self overboard and work'. 'Kill self first if you want to succeed. Do not try to lead your brethren, but serve them. The brutal mania for leading has sunk many a great ship in the waters of life. Take care specially of that. . . . Be the servant of all. Do not try to be a ruler'.

Modern India is on the threshold of a new era of hope and promise for the common man, whose welfare, freedom, and destiny form the main aims of her constitutional and philanthropic activity. Long before the humanists and materialists of today, who are studiously championing the cause of the toiling masses under the banner of this ism or that, Swami Vivekananda reminded his countrymen of the new order of things, then in the offing, and drew their pointed attention to the deplorable condition of the masses. 'Believe, believe. . . . India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy'—was his oft-repeated refrain. The Swami's clarion call, addressed to the nation as a whole, was unambiguously clear: 'O India! . . . Forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers'. He was impatient of the unhelpful attitude of those of the upper classes who continued to exploit the helpless ignorant masses. So long as the millions lived in hunger and ignorance, he said he would consider everyone of the educated and so-called respectable, well-off classes as a 'traitor' or 'wretch' unless he bestirred himself and did whatever he could for the uplift of the masses. He was never in favour of the patronizing, demonstrative attitude of those who extended their sympathy and support to the masses for gaining their own selfish ends. He therefore held that three things were essential for every sincere worker: he should feel from the heart, feel that the people he is going to serve are no

other than his brothers; he should find the proper solution for each problem and decide upon the right course of action in the light of past experience (without ignoring even the most ancient ideas); he should make sure of his motive and see that he is not actuated by greed, power, or fame.

It was not mere social service but the service of Man as worship of God that the Swami preached. 'The poor, the illiterate, the downtrodden—let these be your God; . . . think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly'—such was the Swami's direction to his followers. It is now a patent fact that his famous phrase 'Daridra-Nārāyana', signifying the highest attitude of unselfish service, has seized upon the imagination of present-day India. Not charity or help to the 'have-nots', but active service done in the true spirit of worship was the Swami's great and original contribution to the making of modern India. And service to others could become unselfish and effective only when coupled with renunciation. So the Swami forcefully reminded Indians, 'The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself'. Renunciation of all finite limitations of the flesh and mind, renunciation of selfish preferences and privileges—not giving up or escaping from one's duties and responsibilities in relation to fellow men. Such harmonious blending of spiritual life and active life, of the quest after God-realization and the striving for the good and happiness of the many (*ātmano mokṣārtham, jagad-dhitāya ca*), was the most efficacious means of individual perfection as well as national regeneration.

Swami Vivekananda deprecated casteism, untouchability, and fissiparous tendencies among the Hindus. He asked reformers to temper their zeal with realistic vision and allegiance to India's true genius. He was for root-and-branch reform, but entirely on evolutionary and constructive lines: 'My ideal is growth, expansion, development on

national lines'. Social reform is always easy, though gradual, when preceded by spiritual reform. A strong, well enlightened, and equalitarian society will adjust itself smoothly to the healthy demands of the changing times. Force, fraud, or violence, when applied to reformation of peace-loving communities, can only do more harm than good. This was realized by the law-givers of ancient India. Therefore, the Swami's advice is to eschew thoughtless condemnation but gently educate and persuade the people along right lines so that they may reform themselves without bitterness and bloodshed.

He believed in the efficacy of the right type of education which he said would bring about miracles when spread among our masses. He was equally emphatic that the women of India, too, should get a fair deal, consistent with their own special problems. To him the caste-system was not an 'atrocious' or 'vile' thing—as some would have it,—and he advocated a calm and dispassionate assessment of the merits and defects of the system in its entirety. But he was definite that the unjust inequalities and exclusive privileges, apparent in the caste system of modern days, should go.

Swami Vivekananda was the great leader of Vedantic renaissance and he gave to India and the world a new gospel of the unity and universality of Religion Eternal. In his life and works Indians can find solution for almost every major social, cultural, or religious problem which they are confronted with today. He brought India closer to the modernized West and warned his countrymen neither to live in orthodox isolation nor to succumb to the lure of Western civilization. In him the national destiny fulfilled itself. In his utterances we possess the whole Veda of the future. The resurgence of modern Hinduism which Swami Vivekananda's advent has inspired in this ancient land of ours is pregnant with immense possibilities of evolving a mighty and glorious future for the Indian nation.

RENUNCIATION

BY SWAMI VIRAJANANDA

Oh, how sweet sounds that divine idea in the imaginations of man, that noble theme of sages, that divine voice which comes as a gentle tap to rouse the sleeping one from the doomed gloom, that inspiration of Renunciation! That healing balm which cures the deep sores of accumulated impurities of thousand incarnations, that blissful relief and ease,—the resultant of the end of the hard struggles of dualities, that one essence which pervades through all the truths, that one goal through which to reach to perfection, the key-note of all religious thought and life, what is that but perfect Renunciation? Renunciation is the foundation-rock on which to build the ground-edifice of spiritual realization; it is the fountain-head of peace and repose, the mighty power that keeps the universe up from falling.

The human soul takes its birth in this world to display and bring into action the accumulated tendencies of innumerable past lives. Actuated by the mighty power of ignorance he hankers for enjoyments and pleasures of the senses. On and on he goes satisfying them and what does he find?

*Na jātu kāmah kāmānām-upabhogena
sāmyati,*

*Haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva bhūya
evābhivardhate.*

‘There is no end of desires by going on indulging in them; on the other hand, by indulgence they only flame up like fire with libations of sacrificial butter’.

Such was the experience of the great King Yayāti whose story is related in the *Mahā-bhārata*. Yayāti enjoyed all the pleasures of life which lust and gold could afford, but became prematurely old through the curse of the great sage Shukra. His heart burned within him for the pleasures of life which his infirmity could not allow. So he begged each

of his sons to exchange his youth for his old age. His four sons declined but the fifth complied with his request and took his old age. The rejuvenated father enjoyed with renewed youth all the pleasures of the senses for the period of a thousand years. But at last came that awakening within him and he addressed his son thus: *Na jātu . . .*

*(Yat pṛthivyām vṛhiyavaṁ hiraṇyāṁ
paśavastriyāḥ,
Ekasyāpi na paryāptam tasmāt
tṛṣṇām parityajet.)*

If a single person be the owner of all the riches and all the charming damsels of the world and of the heavens, he will not still be content. My thirst for these, without abating, increases day by day. Therefore I shall cast it off and fix my mind on Brahman. This is renunciation.

Our eyes are projected outwards, and it is the nature of man to love outward objects of Nature. On, on he goes, laying his whole heart on them. Oh, man has become so powerless, he cannot withstand it! Down and down he dives, now raised to the top-most crest of the billows, sunk into the down-most deep the next, feeling intense pain and almost no pleasure. But such is the tremendous power of Maya that he cannot extricate himself from it! Suddenly comes a tremendous shock. The most loving wife and the affectionate children whom he loved more than his own life, with whom he identified himself, are suddenly snatched away from him by the merciless hand of death. He weeps and laments over them. Vacant days and nights pass away before him. Dark, dark lies all around before him, darker the future. Everything is misery and despair in his eyes. Will not that night dawn? A ray of light peeps through the darkness and flashes before his mind. Oh, to whom have

I dedicated my life and everything—to these fleeting and transient objects? Whom I was calling my own? Was it all a deceitful dream that I was dreaming? Enough of it—no more! This is renunciation.

Death, the leveller of everything comes to all—to the rich and the poor, to the wise and the ignorant, to the saint and the sinner, to the king and the beggar. Who knows when it will come? It will not wait for you and me. It may come even now. For whom will you spend your life and your energies in trying hard to hoard untold riches, to build huge towers and mighty mansions, to make name and fame, where everything is fleeting and transient, where everything is shifting, where the dead past buries its dead? The paths of glory lead but to the grave! The thoughts on death cannot have any attachment on anything of this world, but at last lead to the realization of the truth that vanity of vanities, all is vanity but to love God and serve Him only. This is renunciation.

We find in Nature the constant working of two forces—one drawing towards the centre and the other going away from it, the centripetal and the centrifugal. The one is the *pravṛtti*, the other is the *nivṛtti*, the one is the action and the other is the reaction. No mortal is there who is not influenced by them. Now, full of brilliant hopes and glorious future, now worn out and dejected, now glimpse of a bright kingdom before, now all dark and hollow gloom of a yawning abyss around, today wielding unquestionable power over all, tomorrow forlorn, deserted, and unrecognized; today rushing to catch the phenomenal shadow with all imaginations of deriving happiness from this apparent reality, tomorrow recognizing and realizing that vain was the attempt, that it was a mere shadow,—man is placed under this wheel of action and reaction which is almost grinding him out of his existence. How long could the soul be cheated and deceived in this way? How long could he suffer? Even suffering has a limit. What is the result of all this

suffering? Utter disgust comes. The human soul draws back. This is renunciation.

If we study mankind what do we find? What do they all seek? Surely it is happiness. It is the one end and aim of human existence. If you go through the busy streets of cities, the rush and turmoil of men of various denominations will present themselves before you. If you can read men in their faces, you will find that they are all rushing hither and thither projecting their ideal of happiness on different objects according to the dictates of their peculiar tendencies. Man loves another, mostly a woman, and why? He builds in his imagination a world of happiness where there is no parting, no want, no misery. He forgets death even. He embraces his beloved one not knowing that he has been already embraced by the chill cold hand of death. He gives up his whole heart and soul to her and wishes her to be his, which cannot be where selfishness reigns supreme in the heart of everyone. He is bitten in return for his love with all those venomous pangs which selfishness has selected for its own. Antony sought for happiness in love, Brutus in glory, Caesar in dominion. The first found disgrace, the second disgust, the last ingratitude, and each destruction. Oh, frailties of the human mind! Bondslave as you are, grasping another for freedom! Don't you know that happiness and misery of this world are synonymous terms? The variation is only in degree and not in kind. True happiness lies beyond the dualities. Take refuge in the Lord who is the fountain-head of happiness and joy absolute. This is renunciation.

Man's wants are not satisfied. If a few of your wants or if all are satisfied, it will give rise to newer and newer wants; so on and on it goes without end. It is like the blood of the Asura Raktabija, a drop of which falling on the ground gives rise to a thousand Raktabijas whose number becomes at last innumerable, so much so that it is impossible to conquer them. The more the wants the more the misery. The man who

is not content with a little is content with nothing. He is really rich who has little or no wants and the greatest beggar is he, be he the mighty monarch of all the worlds, who has wants. An emperor once chanced to come to the cave of a Sannyasin and asked him to beg something of him. The Yogi asked the emperor if he had any wants. The emperor replied in the affirmative; to which the sage at once exclaimed: 'Go away hence. I do not beg of beggars'. Wants are all imperfections, which cannot be in the soul which is perfected and full in its own essence. To know and realize that I am the Self is renunciation.

Man is born to work. No one can live a single moment of his life totally abstaining from any work whatever. But unfortunately he works with thousand and one motives, thinking, 'I will do this, I will do that, and by doing this I will have this or that'. The result is bondage and misery. He does not know the policy of doing work. It is egoism which brings attachment to the fruits of action. It is attachment which binds down the human heart, contracts and weakens the soul, as it were. It is non-attachment which purifies the soul. Work, but non-attached. This is the whole secret of Karma Yoga. Sri Krishna says in the *Gita*: 'To work you have the right and not to the fruits thereof'. This is renunciation.

This world is the root of all miseries, refuge of all dangers, the den of impurities. It is all but illusion of the mind, the kingdom of Maya. We are all dreaming this wonderful dream.

'Lo! as the wind is, so is mortal life,

A moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife!'

Indeed, it is a prison-house. Can the soul, the Spirit, which is infinite and eternal by its own nature, remain bound within the limited precincts of this so-called infinite universe, this gigantic mass of matter? Beyond and beyond we are to go. Beyond time, space, and causation, the soul must go. It must burst open time, space, and causation, as a single drop of water, if confined within,

shatters down huge mountains. This transcendentalism, this struggle to go beyond, daring to tear the veil off the face of Nature, is what is renunciation.

These are in short some of the salient aspects of renunciation. It is needless to add that they are all but the workings of the internal culture of the mind, for by renunciation is meant not the ochre-coloured garb, the shaven head, and the external pomp of the Sannyasin, but the whole-hearted refuge which the individual soul takes in the universal Spirit, the complete effacement of the self in the ever felt presence of the Divine effulgence. Even the abandonment of riches and the submission to the life of a beggar does not come up to the full height of renunciation if the self-consciousness of our former position in life yet lingers on in the mind. The perfection of the self is only possible through the entire annihilation of the ego.

It is only with renunciation that life, properly speaking, is said to begin. It is only with renunciation that real religion begins. It prepares the mind for the reception of the seed of spiritual knowledge by weeding it out of the rank growth of selfishness and greed. It is impossible to attain salvation unless it be through the portals of renunciation.

*Na prajayā, na dhanena, na cejyayā,
tyāgenaike amṛtatvam-ānaśuḥ.*

'Neither through progeny, nor through wealth, nor by performance of holy rites, but by renunciation alone that immortality is reached'.

*Sarvam vastu bhayānvitam bhuvi nṛṇām
vairāgyam-evābhayam.*

'Everything in this world is fraught with fear; it is renunciation alone that makes one fearless'.

The great seers of old divided the life of every Aryan into four Ashramas or stages. The first is that of the student—the Brahma-charin, the second is that of the householder—the Grihastha, the third is that of the forest recluse—the Vānaprastha, and the fourth and the last is that of the ascetic—the Sannyasin. One can clearly see from this scheme

of life that each of the lower stages is intended to serve as a preparation for the next higher one, and that the ideal in view is religious renunciation.

This doctrine of renunciation has all along been the key-note of Indian religious thought and life. It is the watchword of Indian religious books. The unique scheme of life laid out and practised with utmost rigour by the Aryan Rishis of yore has been productive of marvellous effects. It has raised India and the Indians to the uppermost platform among other countries and nations of the world. It has made the Indians first and foremost to proclaim to the world, with trumpet voice of peace and toleration, not only spirituality but every branch of the science of knowledge.

There was never a great work done in this world which had not this spirit of renunciation ingrained in it. All the great teachers of the world who have raised humanity to a higher platform,—each one of them—forsook the pleasures of the world, sacrificed personal happiness, underwent privations and sufferings at the hands of those who knew not what they did, and the names of those gods on earth have been immortalized and cherished in the loving shrine of mankind. History furnishes us with many striking and memorable instances of this fact. The ever-pure Shuka, Kapila—the father of philosophy, Jesus the Christ, Buddha of royal heritage, the great Shankaracharya, whose intellectual power is still looked upon with admiration by the astonishing gaze of the literary world, Chaitanya—the incarnation of Love, and the last though not the least, the one who eclipses all of them in brilliance and sweetness, who is the summation of them all,

and through whom we can better understand them all, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva—each one of these great teachers who rule the world was the greatest renouncer of the world. Christ sacrificed his life on the cross, but once think what a grand array of the followers of the Cross he has behind him! Who will not die now for his sake? Who will not sacrifice everything, his own happiness and prospects for his sake? Such is the marvellous power of renunciation! Give up, and you have everything! That is the great lesson which humanity has to learn, that is the ideal which humanity has to adopt and preach if it ever wishes to become great and good.

In conclusion, I cannot but bless this beloved motherland of ours, the land which gave birth to Shuka, to Kapila, to Buddha, to Shankaracharya, to Chaitanya, to Ramakrishna, this land of renunciation with the snow-capped Himalayas, rising tier after tier as if to reach the skies, the solemn calm of the lonely caves and dales within, the bold and majestic tenor of the whole aspect, standing from time immemorial as a grand and sublime picture of renunciation,—the external expression of the internal aspects of the heart of the true Tyāgin. Born in this holy land, with all these associations and examples before, behind, and in the midst of us, is it possible that we should be untrue to ourselves, untrue to the glorious names of our great fathers, and let go the hold of that banner, that emblem, of India victorious over the lower regions of human iniquities? Never! I do not think that day will ever come to pass. Always keep this noble ideal before your mind's eye and be perfect.

‘In enjoyment, there is the fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling-off; in wealth, the fear of (hostile) kings; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of foemen; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents; in virtue, the fear of traducers; in body, the fear of death. All the things of this world pertaining to man are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.’

—*Vairāgya-satakam*

THE RELIGION WE NEED

BY DR. P. S. SASTRI

Religious consciousness is essentially the positive feeling of the individual when he is face to face with the richest treasures or values of the universe. It is a state of experience when the individual is dominated by a sense of the Spirit as his own inmost being. It is man's experience of a divinity which is not different from his own self. The supreme religious experience is thus intensely individualistic. Within a group we find the individualistic religious feeling. This feeling gradually becomes institutional. As an institutional form it acquires a certain formalism which is steeped in ceremonial forms. With the passage of time this form gathers greater strength and meaning. Consequently the great barriers between one religion and another are often the barriers imposed by the formal side. They in turn breed all the conflicts and contradictions. Throughout these conflicts we are apt to ignore or even forget the essence of the spirit of religion. But it is also an undeniable fact that the historical religions cannot afford to be devoid of any formalism; for, a historical religion is always a revolt of one form against another. Wherever we see the form of a religion, we find the sensuous garb of the religion and this is its institutional character. And if the modern world is to be saved from all the ills to which the flesh is heir now, we need a religion that is at once individualistic and universalistic. Such a religion is bound to be thoroughly spiritualistic, moving to the logical conclusion of the denial of the reality of matter. It will tend to break up the distinction between things and thought by arriving at the concept of the degrees of manifestation of the Spirit in things and thought as well. In an ultimate analysis such a religious consciousness has to admit the transmutation of things into thought. Once this position is accepted, we have only very

little to fight for or to covet. A religion which seeks to retain the goods of the world as goods in their unalterable nature is no religion that can minister to the needs of man.

It is here that the Vedanta of Shankara offers a new field for the modern man. It is a religion of the individual; but it rejects the popular connotation of the word 'individual'. It takes the individual to mean the Concrete Universal. In this sense it offers a valuable clue to an ultimate life of peace for man here on this planet. The burden of Vedanta is to focus our attention on the principle of contradiction (Adhyāsa) which is inherent in the historic process, and to enable us to overcome it in a specific manner. The world-process is based upon contradiction which teems with all possible sources of conflict in all regions of life. There is a contradiction at the very heart of finite life; and this makes us mistake one object for another. Our mistaken notions of propriety, right, and the like are successful in dragging us all into mutual conflicts. Our notions of the life in society are not only mistaken; they have mischievous consequences. We cling to them as if they are absolutely correct; we tend to ignore any touch of truth in the counter-claims put forward by others. This can be called the human fallacy. Clinging to the human fallacy we mould the instinct of pugnacity and cultivate all allied forces of motivation. Thereby we move towards a form of egotism which rejects the lights of peace and love, and which believes in possessions. Vedanta, on the other hand, is a great disenchanter of all false values accepted by egotism which is controlling the modern world in various forms.

Vedanta accepts the individual as the centre of the system of Reality. This system is no other than the Absolute Spirit with which the individual in his concreteness is

absolutely identical. To be concrete, the individual has to energize a great deal, has to strive towards perfection. This striving is in the direction of transcending the finitized particular mode of consciousness so that the individual can ere long be the Universal Consciousness. This is achieved in and through knowledge; and knowledge alone is said to be the means and the end as well. Ignorance and moral evil are both forms of the same evil which has its roots in the despising of thought. And since knowledge is the nature of Reality, it can neither be denied consistently nor despised without harm to oneself. As knowledge advances, the individual realizes his oneness with the Universal. The identity of the individual with the Universal is already a fact, but it has to be made conscious. Hence I cannot will only myself. In willing myself I will the other also, because there is no other than myself, because the other is as much myself as anything else. Conflicts in the world are always the effects of the denial of the individual's rights. To respect the individual is to preserve the peace of the world.

In Vedanta, we are told of the importance of the individual whose position is in jeopardy today. The individual is free, and his freedom must needs be preserved. This freedom is not the same as licence. It is a freedom which accepts a certain order, and the order is imposed by a certain necessity. In other words the true freedom of the individual is operative within the framework of necessity and order. This framework in itself is the creation of the spirit of the individual and the individual has always the right to alter it if it ever thwarts the real development. All the evils of the world are to be remedied by the individual who is conscious of his nature. But the way out of the evil is not the path of war. War, like error and evil, is a form of contradiction. And the individual who has to put an end to contradiction, cannot take up one form of contradiction to fight another. It is in this light that Shankara prescribes spiritual disciplines (the '*sama-damādi sādhanā*

sampat'); they are a treasure which gives the individual absolute control over his mind and senses. This control is needed not merely to run away from a menacing world of brutality. It is needed to reform the world in the light of a principle which is the ground of the contradiction. That Principle is the Absolute Spirit which is ignored or misread by the people who are satisfied with the forms of contradiction (*Adhyasa*). Once these forms are overcome, the ground (*Adhiṣṭhāna*) is revealed; and in the light of this ideal we can establish the kingdom of the Spirit on earth.

To realize such a mission, Vedanta also prescribes the gospel of disinterested work. This is work not directed to a personal end. It is an altruistic form of work. Such a work is identical with worship or divine service. It is a form of fellow-service where the individual recognizes his obligations to humanity. These obligations carry the individual from his narrow orbit. The highest human embodiment of this concept is the state of *Jivanmukti*. Only the *Jivanmukta* can with authority speak of the Real with a convincing tone. And he alone can deliver the spiritual goods, whence the teacher is required to be one having the experience of the Absolute. The *Jivanmukta* has a clearer grasp of the nature of the contradiction engulfing the finite forms; and he knows from his own immediate experience the way out of the evils of a selfish world. The principle of disinterested work finds thus its consummation in the principle of a selfless service to humanity. Such a service rules out all competition from the field of trade and commerce. An economy infected by competition is an economy directed towards the betterment of a favoured few at the expense of the helpless. This is the direct consequence of the individual's false attachment to the things of the world. This attachment is the beginning of man's fall from Paradise.

Vedanta pleads for a special doctrine in economics. On the one hand it rejects all decentralization. On the other, it is equally

emphatic in its rejection of centralization. Centralization is another word for the accumulation of power, and power is often a necessary evil. It is the result of contradiction and it is sustained by contradiction in so far as it rejects the right of the individual to be free in his own right. The Vedantic emphasis on the individual points to a third alternative which has not been experimented so far. It is the free association of individuals. When the means of production are said to be social, it only means that they owe everything to the individuals. Then the individuals, who are responsible for them, alone have the right to control their distribution and proper utilization. It is to this end that power has to be transferred to the free associations of individuals, provided these individuals are wisely chosen. This reminds one of Plato's choice of the guardians and the Upanishadic insistence on the proper Guru. They will be able to look to the economic, moral, and spiritual needs of the community.

This question is closely related to many other problems which cannot be discussed in this short article. But the primary question refers to the ethics of human behaviour. Human behaviour, as it is revealed in the deliberations of the modern nations, is governed by suspicion, hatred, jealousy, and other Satanic forces. It is a behaviour which emphasizes the end, at all costs, peace even with the atom bomb, as we have seen at the close of the last war. A clear flouting of the means and a false sense of achieving the end are the two condemnable features of the present Western civilization. The Vedantic insistence on knowledge, both as means and as end, is a clear answer to this malady. The end is not separable from the means. They are one and the same, and we cannot choose the one and reject the other. One necessarily involves the other. It is an intellectual discipline which is also moral, religious, and spiritual, that leads the individual to the realization of Reality which is thought. To put it in the form of a paradox, it is through knowledge that one becomes knowledge.

This relationship between means and end can also be found in the relation of action to character. One leads to the other, one acts on the other. Vedanta pleads for a reorientation in our values from this standpoint also.

The foregoing account, brief though it is, is meant to show primarily that Vedanta is not a world-negating religion. A world-negating religion need not trouble itself about a social code of action. Nor has it anything to do with the state of Jivanmukti. But Vedanta speaks of 'Loka-saṅgraha' as the end towards which the wise should direct their lives. And a later-day branch of Vedanta began to insist on 'Sarva-mukti' which was intended to show that no one can have the Absolute Experience by himself and for himself; all will have that Experience together. It is something like a kingdom,—an end to be realized by a society of spiritual persons who have their being in their spiritual unity and identity.

Vedanta is a religion and a philosophy. It has a *weltanschauung* which includes in itself all forms of experience and which offers a consistent and convincing interpretation of our values. It is a religious philosophy which shows the modern world a way out of the dreadful ills that have crept into the soul of man. The evils of modern civilization are largely due to a false sense of values. It is only Vedanta that can enable us to arrive at a correct interpretation of the values, for Vedanta in practical life is a philosophy of the higher values. The higher values are values of and for the individual; and only an individualistic religion, like that of Vedanta, can offer a satisfactory picture of the values. Vedanta accepts certain values like Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Holiness precisely because these are our only clues to Reality. And these values play a great part in restoring the world to a sanity that it has lost for ages. And when that sanity comes, it will breathe a true spiritual atmosphere which is the ground of all human experience.

The challenge of Vedanta to the modern world is thus from many points of view. It opens new ways of approach from the economic, the ethical, and the social aspects. It pleads for values in a world ridden with disvalues. It rejects the idea of grouping amongst the free nations of the world. At the

same time it demands a free association of free individuals and free nations. It insists on the individuals accepting the great values, the higher spiritual values, towards the realization of which human life is to be moulded. The Vedantic way of life is a ceaseless striving towards the great values of the Spirit.

THE UNITED NATIONS

BY BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA

Civilization is a collective enterprise to rise above mere humanity to a freer and fuller life of the Spirit. The United Nations is the most ambitious enterprise in this direction so far known to history. It aims at welding humanity into a single family and making our globe truly One World. It is at once a fulfilment of the aspiration of the ages and a challenge of the future. It is both a trial and an opportunity. The ideals and principles which man has professed through the ages have to stand this trial and meet the challenge of Truth and Reality.

Two world wars within living memory and the discovery of the awful mysteries of Nature have convinced man of the inadequacy of his resources to face the problems which thicken round him. The success of the U.N. would be a guarantee of peace and prosperity. Its failure would mean a relapse of humanity into mutual isolation and the terrors of the jungle law. So much hangs by its success and failure and yet its recent proceedings have brought to light the tensions and disruptive trends in international relations which may at any time precipitate mankind and civilization alike into an abyss.

These tensions arise out of the basic ideas about the relations of States and nations, the status of individuals, the pattern of society, the direction of industries and food production and the organization of culture. The positive

achievement of the United Nations so far has been, with some exceptions, the substitution of conference for coercion as a means of resolving disputes between States and armed intervention by an International Force, when occasion demands, as in the Korean affair. The expert technical, material, and financial aids which it has provided to under-developed countries very largely out of the super-abundant resources of the U.S. are a record of service inconceivable in any previous epoch of history.

These positive manifestations of the collective goodwill and pacifism of the race are no doubt impressive. Placed beside the blueprints of its enormous undertakings and the work of the auxiliary bodies—the specialized agencies and systems—of trust which have stemmed from the main organization, they point to the vast undone in this venture of ensuring peace, justice, and progress throughout the world. The positive function assumed by the U.N. is the reordering of the entire economy of the human family and placing it on such enduring bases as would avert future disasters. The fear of war and the roots of malice, hatred, and cruelty are to be eliminated and the inner being of humanity is to be renovated by inculcating a new morality of hope and happiness.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the General Assembly

in 1948 rests upon and presupposes certain fundamental ideas as to the relations of men and nations—their duties and mutual dealings—which may be said to have won the largest measure of assent. Here is the text, in rubric, so to say, of the Charter of Freedom and Concord. The diversity of men's thoughts and interests and the character of the age in which we live, however, necessarily lead to differences in its interpretation and its application in practice. Our age has been called one of synthetic intolerance and on the basic issues systems of thought sharply opposed have been reared by intellectuals of different schools and are propagated through writings and speeches and the mechanical appliances of broadcasting. The solemn text, therefore, reads differently in the commentary of events.

The dissensions which divide people today turn broadly on population, race, creed, culture, and economic interests. Each of these factors gives rise to a sharp cleavage of opinions and conflict of activities which seem to baffle mediation. The rate of geometrical progression at which population is shooting up—80,000 hungry mouths added every day (and three crores a year)—is ever calculated to unsettle world economy. The weight of numbers presses most on the industrially undeveloped and agriculturally backward regions. The possibility of relief through emigration is barred by the laws of exclusion from the rich but sparsely-peopled areas which might accommodate the overflow. But there is little chance at present of Acharya Vinoba Bhave's Land-gift Movement spreading to the inadequately utilized parts of our otherwise plundered planet. Planned parenthood is the remedy generally prescribed, but the interests of individual nations are rarely brought into harmony with the destiny of mankind. In a world where the index of education is so low as at present, a general appreciation of the *optimum* limit or the ceiling figure which a given state of technique may support without a lowering of the standard of living is only a distant hope. The future of the family and marriage as

mankind's cherished institutions is uncertain where all loyalties yield to the paramount loyalty to the State.

Racialism is the stiff hurdle that lies across the path of the movement of equality that it is the glory of the United Nations to have initiated. While Equality of Races is the official creed, it counts as an anæmic and intellectualist doctrine with those who, with a natural love for their own standard of living and in their anxiety to maintain their own pattern of culture enact laws of apartheid and segregation. A cohesive feeling and a sense of oneness bred by propinquity and numerous points of contact is natural. It may be outgrown only from a vision of human destiny.

Next comes the paradox of Nationalism. It arises from the use of a double standard. In relation to one's own country it is felt to be noble and splendid, but in the case of the others it is pernicious. Nationalism is one of those shackles of the Spirit which at once join and disjoin men. One World can only be composed of races of equal stature and growth. But the national sentiment still works as a powerful instrument of social cohesion, making for the historical personality of races. At the same time it prevents a broader sense of homogeneity which internationalism connotes and demands.

There is no need to detail the formidable obstacles that beset the programme of United Nations as dictated by the collective goodwill and wisdom of mankind. But two threats that confront it and darken the prospects of this gathering of the Nations to be a super-Welfare-State cannot be passed by. These are the race of armaments and the ideological clash between Communism and Social Democracy which seems to divide the world into two power blocs which may at any time turn into two warring camps. Tragic and pathetic past words, beside the efforts to make the world safe for liberty, peace, justice, and the pursuit of happiness, is the expenditure that the Big Four incur on the wholesale organized crime of war. The Crime Bill in U.S. alone

is fifteen thousand million dollars which may not include the enormous outlay on the manufacturing of atomic weapons. It has been calculated that in the first world war twenty-five thousand dollars were paid to deliver a man to his tomb. In the second world war the amount was ten times larger.

In the train of the atom bomb has come the hydrogen bomb and then the cobalt bomb. But the destructive ingenuity of nuclear scientists and the spendthrift enthusiasm of the leviathan States to pile their products still proceed apace. The horrors of havoc which may be let loose by a collision between the Soviet Republic, with its Asiatic satellites, and the rest of Europe and America, should it happen, bewilder the imagination and benumb the heart. Civilization is truly on its trial and there can be no refuge in a hierarchy of comfortable beliefs. Professor Toynbee asks whether two separate political worlds could not be delimited and a time for peace won by a provisional recourse to insulation and non-violent non-cooperation practised between the two for half a century or a hundred years. But he feels little assured by his hypothesis and gloomily concludes that—man being as much a political as an economic animal—fear would make the two fall foul of each other. Acharya Bhava, with his eye of faith, has indeed read a salutary purpose in the war preparations of today. He considers they are directed towards ending fear and believes they will result in creating fearlessness in the minds of the people.

In this precarious posture of affairs a new approach to the tasks of peace politics rests with the agencies of culture and the adherents of the much belittled creeds. They are the disseminators of sweetness and light among the millions who are dazed and confused by the daily game of power politics, in which they have no interest. These instruments of culture have been pouring through the ages upon an existence limited to pleasure-pain dimensions, the salve of the homelier, not the heroic virtues—amity (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), the happy mind (*mudita*), and non-

attachment (*upekṣā*). It is to them that the world looks for the cure of the psychic insufficiency which generates many of the day, while, on the other hand, science implements progress and prosperity. It is this insufficiency which generates many of the chimeras of confused political thinking among the outstanding intellectuals of the races that are the holders of power.

This insufficiency accounts for the vetoes and counterweights provided in the constitution of the United Nations for the prevention of deadlocks, as over the admission, now held up, of fourteen new members. 'No U.N.O. and no Commissions on atomic energy', says Anna Maria O'Neill, in her *Ethics for the Atomic Age*, 'can function properly unless man grows universally to the required stature. Institutions grow, but man is often lost'. Freedom of information, according to the General Assembly, is the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated. Tendentious propaganda and totalitarian iron-curtains render this freedom an empty name.

We have a right to the fullest knowledge of the two systems in their actual working, which today claim the will and the power to confer on man the highest good and on society its perfect structure. Critics of the one question its capacity to ensure social justice and those of the other charge against it the repression of the free soul and the rights of the individual. 'Russia claims to have discovered the short cut in the devious and rugged and long and uphill road which the ego must travel before it will discard egotism. If anyone has the secret how we can be saved the gnawing pains of moral growth, the world has a right to use it', says Anna Maria. In the twilight and the dilemma in which man is groping on the zigzag rocky path which leads from the narrowness and suffering of the imperfect present to the sunlit peaks of achieved social order, he will have the utmost need of the ancient moral truths of religion and philosophy which all call upon man to *transcend* himself.

This was the pursuit of a few chosen souls in ages past, but in a world becoming daily more overcrowded, it must be the study of every single unit. A gospel not of synthetic intolerance but of the broadest tolerance and harmony, and unreserved acceptance of the fact of diversity and the most generous allowance of self-determination and regional autonomy,—in a word, the maxim 'live and let live', can alone check the aggressive militancy of power politics. Religion, in the words of Whitehead, is world-loyalty. 'It is only religiousness that can find the deeper-lying quality behind the screaming inequalities of size,

vigour, colour, sex, intelligence, and cunning'. On these essentials there is a symphony of voices, Eastern and Western. And the sheet-anchor of hope for the United Nations seems to be that the ancient moral truths of philosophy and religion may once again be vivified by its unrecognized auxiliary bodies. These have ever beckoned man to subdue the urges of an overgrown egotism—personal, racial, or national. These have taught him to check the motives of profit, pleasure, and privilege in meekness of spirit as his crowning distinction and the secret of his redemption and security for the race.

APPROACH TO PHILOSOPHY: PLEASURE

BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

Hindu philosophy is essentially a philosophy of values. A scheme of four values called *puruṣārthas* is recognized in it, including the secular and spiritual ends of man. The four values are: *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (pleasure), *dharma* (duty), and *mokṣa* (release). The first three are temporal or instrumental values; whereas the last one is the eternal or intrinsic value. Sometimes, it is true, people mistake the instrumental values for intrinsic ends. The miser, in his excessive attachment to wealth, may seek to acquire and preserve it, as if it were an end in itself. The old materialists of India, the Chārvākas, admitted of no other end for man except pleasure. Some of the ritualist-philosophers taught that religious duty was an end-in-itself. But in the clash of the ideals that took place very early in the history of Indian thought, these three goals found their rightful places as stages in the journey of the human spirit to its appointed destination, namely, release from finitude and imperfection.

The second of the human goals, *kāma*, which is the subject of this talk, means ordi-

narily sensuous pleasure. As I have already said, the Charvaka regards this as the only intelligible end for man. Pleasure that results from the attainment of the objects of one's desire is the aim of life; and by 'objects', the Charvaka means the contents of sense-enjoyment. It is not denied, of course, that there is no pleasure unmixed with pain. But because pain is mixed with pleasure, no sane person would reject pleasure. The part of wisdom lies in avoiding pain as much as possible and in acquiring the greatest amount of pleasure. 'Men do not refrain from sowing paddy-seeds', argues the Charvaka, 'because there are wild animals to devour them; nor do they refuse to set the cooking-pots on the fire, because there are beggars to pester them for a share of the contents'. The ethics of pleasure advocated by the Charvaka has for its basis his materialist philosophy. Nothing is real, according to him, which cannot be sense-perceived. There is no soul apart from the physical body, no God, no after-life. Therefore—

'While life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on ghee even though he runs into debt;

When once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return again?'

A crude egoistic hedonism such as the Charvaka's is self-stultifying. Pleasure in the sense of an agreeable feeling is not what is generally sought for. We seek objects of pleasure and not pleasure itself. The feeling of satisfaction which is pleasure is only an accompaniment or a consequent of the attainment of the desired object. Even granting that pleasure is desired by some people, it does not follow that pleasure is desirable. One may get all the pleasures imaginable, and yet one may not be happy. And, as has been pointed out by Western critics of hedonism, the chances of gaining pleasure are very slender if one consciously pursued it as the end to be attained. 'The "pursuit of pleasure" is a phrase which calls for a smile or a sigh', says a well-known British Idealist, Bradley, 'since the world has learnt that, if pleasure is the end, it is an end which must not be made one, and is found there most where it is not sought'.

The Charvaka and the hedonist believe that the greatest quantity of pleasure is the human goal. But how is it possible to add one pleasure to another, which are so disparate by nature? The pleasure of the table, for instance, cannot be added to the pleasure derived from contemplating a grand idea. Even at the cost of discontent and dissatisfaction, we prefer some pleasures to others. That is because we grade pleasures as higher and lower, and distinguish them qualitatively. Now, if one pleasure is better than another in spite of the fact that both are pleasures, then it is not pleasure as such that is valued but something in it which makes it good. Thus at the slightest touch of analysis, the naive philosophy of pleasure crumbles to dust. What has been called the 'music-hall theory of life' can please man only for a while. The Charvaka materialism is a passing mood of the human mind.

If the rule for man is 'eat, drink, and

multiply', what difference is there between him and the brute creation? In the matter of sense-gratification there seems to be no distinction between man and the animal. As Shankara says in his *Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya*, '*paśvādibhiścāviśeṣāt*'. The members of the animal species are attracted towards pleasant objects and repelled by unpleasant ones, even as the humans are. Yet, there is something distinctive of man; and that is a sense of value. He is able to discriminate one value from another, and rate them as higher and lower. He can pierce through the appearances and get at the abiding reality. In the words of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, 'The Ātman is expanded only in man. He, indeed, is most endowed with intelligence. He gives expression to what is known. He sees what is known. He knows what is to come. He knows the visible and the invisible worlds. He perceives the immortal through the mortal. Thus is he endowed. But with the other animals, eating and drinking alone constitute the sphere of their knowledge'. It is wrong to believe, therefore, that in taking his pleasures, man must imitate the brute. The author of the *Kāma-Sūtra*, Vātsyāyana, in spite of the fact that he adopts the positivistic attitude in the exposition of his theme, lays down at the outset that *artha*, *kāma*, and *dharma* should not clash with one another, and that they should find a harmony in a person's life. And, Sri Krishna, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, identifies himself with *kāma* that is not opposed to *dharma*: *dharma-viruddha kāmo'smi*.

The natural instincts and impulses are there to be trained, moulded, and sublimated, so that man may lead the good life and eventually gain perfection. The arts like poetry and painting are designed for this purpose. All the writers on Indian aesthetics are agreed that the aim of the fine arts is to afford pleasure (*prīti*). What affords pleasure in these arts is not a reproduction or copy of something found in Nature. The art object is the result of idealization; and its enjoyment demands not a simple sense-function but a

good deal of mental construction, imagination, and contemplation. The appeal that art objects have is impersonal, and does not take into consideration individual desire or aversion. The pleasure that is derived from the contemplation of art is profoundly different from sense-pleasure. It is disinterested and pure, and does not pamper to the egoistic self. It is not, probably, fair to call it pleasure. For, in appreciating art one rises above the duality of pain and pleasure and experiences pure joy without any vexation whatsoever. Aesthetic delight or *rasa* is a taste of the eternal, though for only a brief time. Hence it is that art has rightly been described as the layman's *yoga*.

The right-royal road to the realization of the eternal reality, however, lies through religious disciplines and philosophical meditations. The core of religion consists in the establishing of a living relation with God—a relation which is called *bhakti*. A verse of the *Sivānandalaharī* compares *bhakti* to the attraction of iron-filings to the magnet, the constancy of a devoted wife to her husband, the dependence of a creeper on a tree, and the flow of the river towards the sea. One may adopt any of the known love-attitudes towards God. These attitudes are referred to as *bhāvas*. The most important of these are: *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *sānta*, *kānta*, and *madhura*. They stand, respectively, for the attitude of a servant towards his master, that of friendship between two persons, that of a parent towards his or her child, that of a child towards its parent, that of a wife towards her husband, and that of the lover to the beloved. Tāyumanavar,¹ in one of his poems, makes the soul describe to her confidante a visit from her divine Lover thus:

'The Light which is the beginning and hath no beginning, which shineth in me as Bliss and Thought, appeared as the Silent One. He spake to me, sister, words not to be spoken.

¹ One of the greatest Tamil poets of the 16th-17th century.

'The words that were spoken, how shall I tell? Cunningly He seated me all alone, with nothing before me. He made me happy, beloved, he grasped me and clung to me'.

This is the language of love which the mystic uses. But it has nothing carnal about it. Prahlāda states clearly the nature and purpose of *bhakti* when he prays to the Lord:

*Yā prītir-avivekānām viṣayeṣvanapāyini,
Tvām anusmarataḥ sā me hṛdayān-māpasar-
patu.*

'That constant love which the ignorant have for the objects of sense—let not that sort of intense love for Thee desert my heart, as I contemplate Thee'.

The culmination of love is where distinctions disappear and differences dissolve. This is possible only in Brahman which is the Ātman. At the end of a long metaphysical journey, one of the Upanishadic enquirers, Bhrigu by name, discovered that Brahman is bliss (*ānanda*). The Self—not the low and despicable ego, but the highest Self—is the supreme felicity, the true seat of love. One of the greatest sages of yore, Yājñavalkya, tells his wife Maitreyi that the Self is dearer than the son, dearer than wealth, dearer than anything else, and is innermost. The love for the objects is secondary; the love for the Self alone is primary. Husband, wife, progeny, wealth, etc. have no intrinsic value in themselves. They are dear for the sake of the Self. 'Not for the sake of all is all dear', says the Sage, 'but for the sake of the Self is all dear'.

*Na vā arē sarvasya kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati,
Ātmanas-tu kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati.*

This, then, is the implication of the Hindu philosophy of pleasure. We may start with loving what is perishable and finite; but we may not end there. Nothing that is limited can give us lasting happiness. The pleasure that we find in the objects of sense is but a reflection of the bliss that is the Self. It is the discovery of the Self or Self-realization that is the goal of the search for pleasure.

WAS SHANKARA AN ILLUSIONIST?

BY S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

Was Shankara an illusionist? A discussion of this question and a clarification of the precise position of Shankara regarding the status of the external world has become a matter of paramount importance in view of the fact that some very eminent men in India and abroad have, of late, been accusing the great philosopher of sheerest illusionism and have made it the mission of their lives to carry on a relentless crusade against what they have considered to be his 'debasing' doctrine of *māyā-vāda*. The view has been gaining ground that Shankara's philosophy spirits away into nothingness the colourful pageant of the material universe and makes our life on earth a meaningless farce, 'a puzzling pilgrimage from the land of time to the abyss of eternity'.

Shankara's philosophy, it is often contended, leaves no room for ethics or religion, and holds out the most dismal prospect for the individual in so far as the one destined goal of the individual according to it is his complete undoing of himself or his self-losing in the differenceless Absolute. Whether Shankara's philosophy be the last word in philosophy or not, what appears regrettable to the present writer is that some at least of his critics do not care to acquaint themselves first-hand with the writings of Shankara and come to an understanding of the precise nature of his *weltanschauung* but are content to put their reliance on popular presentations and random phrases stripped bare of their true connotations. Not a few of his critics are those whose impatience with Shankara is due to the incompatibility of his philosophy with the *zeitgeist* of the twentieth century. Such critics can turn profitably to the latest developments in scientific thought which lend greater support to Shankara's conclusions

than to any of the characteristically twentieth-century philosophies.

I shall not consider here all the varied aspects of Shankara's philosophy but shall confine myself to a clarification and defence of Shankara's position regarding the status of the external world.

Shankara's position regarding the status of the external world properly understood is just this that the world is *Brahman itself* as it appears to the finite human consciousness infected with *avidyā*, the Absolute infinite Reality split up into a seeming multiplicity of infinitely varied finite objects. It is neither a pure illusion in the sense of *an absolute nothing appearing as the world*, 'the insubstantial fabric of a vision and a dream', nor a pure mental creation in the sense of being a projection of the individual mind into utter emptiness or void. It is all the time the abiding and inexpugnable Reality or Brahman in the form in which it must inevitably appear to rational human experience with its incorrigible tendency of dividing the indivisible and then trying helplessly to regain the unity by its mediate conceptual operations. Thus Shankara was neither an illusionist or a nihilist nor a subjective idealist or solipsist. To regard Shankara as any of these is to grossly misunderstand him.

My contention here is that a careful study of Shankara's writings gives us four strong points for dismissing the wide-spread view that Shankara was an illusionist: (1) His oft repeated insistence on Brahman being the ground and substance of the world and the impossibility of experiencing a mere nothingness; (2) His realist theory of knowledge, viz. his theory that knowledge properly so called, that is, as distinguished from a mere psychical presentation, is always revelatory of an existent object or entity and never of a nonentity;

(3) His elaborate and scathing criticism of *vijñāna-vāda*, evincing his abhorrence of that doctrine; (4) And lastly, his clear differentiation between the waking and dream experiences. We shall deal with these points, one by one.

(1)

Our experience of the world, according to Shankara, is not the perception of a sheer illusion, for a *sheer illusion* according to him can never be perceived or experienced. All perception, all knowledge or experience, is of an existent object and never of an utterly non-existent something. Even things which we are wont to call illusory in our everyday experience, such as a mirage etc. are not without realities as their bases, says Shankara. A rope is seen as a snake in dusk or darkness. We say when our error is detected that we perceived an illusory snake. But what we perceived, says Shankara, is not altogether illusory in so far as the perception of the snake is made possible by the really existent substratum of the rope. Perceptions like that of a snake in place of a rope and mirage etc. are not possible without there being existent realities. Whenever we have a perception at all, there invariably is *something*.¹ Again and again, Shankara writes in his commentaries and other works that Brahman is the *adhiṣṭāna, kāraṇa, upādāna, or āspada* of the world-appearance. Says he: 'Other than *Brahman* there is no other *upādāna* of this world-order. The entire world, therefore, is nothing else but *Brahman*'.²

The world confronts us as a reality because it is indeed the Reality or Brahman which is perceived by us as the world. A sheer void or a sheer illusion could never give us the consciousness of reality. Shankara is quite clear on this point. Yet there are not a few who are never tired of calling Shankara an illusionist. Brahman perceived as the world, says Shankara, is analogous to the rope

mistakenly perceived as the snake. The snake-perception could never arise, if there were not the underlying reality of the rope *and can only last till the rope is perceived as rope in its essential nature, similarly, the world-perception could never arise unless there were the underlying reality of Brahman and can only last till Brahman is perceived as Brahman in its essential absolute nature.* Till we have knowledge of the rope, the snake-form is real, but the snake-form is all the time the *rope itself* perceived as the snake and not 'the baseless fabric of a vision and a dream', an illusion floating in a sheer void.³

Exactly in the same manner, till we have knowledge of Brahman as Brahman, in Its essential and ultimate nature, the pure Brahman-consciousness, unsullied by *avidyā*, the world-appearance is real *as Brahman perceived in the world-form.* It is not a sheer illusion floating in the void. All the objections that are raised against Shankara on the question of the relation between Brahman and the world are based on the initial mistake of thinking that Brahman and the world are numerically two different entities. The world is false (*jagan-mithyā*) according to Shankara if taken as a self-sufficient, self-subsistent, and independent reality. It is not false as the perception of Brahman to the *avidyā*-ridden finite consciousness of man.

Adhering to his principle of cause and effect being identical (*ananya*), Shankara maintains that the world being an effect of Brahman is of the same nature as Brahman. It should be remembered here that Shankara speaks of Brahman as the cause of the world-order from the finite or relative standpoint only, and not from the ultimate or *pāramārthika* standpoint. Brahman, according to Shankara, projects the appearance of the world-order, not by actually transforming *Itself* into the world-process, for It is immutable and partless, but by Its inscrutable power of *māyā*.

Shankara's position, then, is this. When we have the Absolute Experience, *the world as*

¹ Vide Shankara's *bhāṣya* on the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, 1.6; and on the *Gīta*, XIII. 14.

² *Aparokṣānubhūti*, 45.

³ *Ibid.* 44.

the world is not experienced; and when we are world-conscious, we do not experience the Absolute as the Absolute. Brahman-consciousness and world-consciousness are two orders of consciousness or experience of the self-same Reality. The problem of synthesizing the Absolute and the appearances does not arise with Shankara. His Absolute is neither a simple aggregate of appearances, nor, as Bradley contends, their fused unity or harmony in which they have all transformed their individual natures. His Absolute is what the appearances are not; and his appearances are what the Absolute is not. Or, rather, we may say, from the standpoint of our levels of experience, that the Absolute is when the appearances are not; and the appearances are when the Absolute is not.

(2)

Shankara's theory of knowledge as necessitated by an existent object and his clear-cut distinction between knowledge properly so called and a mere psychical presentation as such, cannot be in consonance with an illusionist or solipsist view of the external world.

Shankara holds that there is a radical difference (*vailakṣanya*) between a mental operation (*mānasīkriyā*) like *dhyāna*, *cintana*, etc. and knowledge properly so called (*jñāna*). A merely mental activity, he says, is not determined by the external thing itself but is dependent on the individual mind of man or is psychically generated. When, for example, one thinks or contemplates of a ritualistic injunction, his mental operation is a mere mental operation, a mere psychical event in his individual mind, and not *knowledge* externally necessitated by an existent thing. It may be effected or not effected or effected in a different way by the individual person. But knowledge, says Shankara, arises from a valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇajanyam*) and a valid means of knowledge is that which has for its content an objectively existent object. In the case of knowledge, properly so called, there is no possibility of

its not being effected or effected in a different manner. Being necessitated by an objectively present object, it is not merely mental like the contemplation of a ritualistic injunction or the caprices of an individual mind. Shankara means to say that as distinguished from a psychically originated presentation which is wholly subjective, knowledge properly so called is *necessary* and revelatory of an existent object.⁴

(3)

Shankara gives an elaborate and scathing criticism of the *viññāna-vāda* (subjective idealism) of the Bauddhas which leaves no doubt in our minds that he did not regard the external world as a sheer mental projection or a dreamlike vision. The points of his criticism may be summarized as follows:

(1) External objects exist because we are conscious of them. We cannot be conscious of non-existent things. Nobody while perceiving a post or a wall is conscious of his perception only, but all men are conscious of posts and walls and the like *as objects* of their perceptions.⁵

(2) The *object* is different from our knowledge of it (*artha-jñānayorbhedah*) because 'when we are conscious first of a pot and then of a piece of cloth, consciousness remains the same in the two acts, while what vary are merely the distinctive attributes of consciousness; just as when we first see a black and then a white cow, the distinction between the two perceptions is due to the varying blackness and whiteness while the generic character of the cow remains the same'.⁶

(3) Ideas cannot know one another and presuppose the Self as their knower. The idea as *known* is realized in experience as different from the Self which is its knower. The Self as knower is self-evidenced in experience.⁷

⁴ Vide Shankara's *bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, II. ii. 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

(4) The diversity of ideas is alleged to originate from the diversity of impressions (*vāsanāni*), but impressions themselves cannot originate without external objects.⁸

(5) *Ālaya-vijñāna*, supposed by the Buddhists to be the locus (*āśraya*) of the impressions or *vāsanās* cannot really be the *āśraya* because it is momentary. 'Unless there exists one continuous principle,' says Shankara, 'equally connected with the past, the present, and the future, or an abiding unchangeable (Self) which cognizes everything, we are unable to account for remembrance, recognition, and so on which are subject to mental impressions dependent on place, time, and cause'.⁹

(4)

To Shankara is popularly attributed the view that the external world is a dreamlike mental projection and as such has no substantial reality. That Shankara was far from taking this view is amply evident from the clear distinction he draws between the Waking and the Dream. The two differ in the following respects:

(a) The thing experienced in the Dream is contradicted in the Waking and is realized as unreal.¹⁰

(b) The Dream experience is of the nature of remembrance (*smṛti*) while the Waking experience is an actual experience (*upalabdhi*). This distinction between *smṛti* and *upalabdhi* is evident to us in our own experience. We have *smṛti* in the absence of our contact with an actual object, and we have *upalabdhi* when we have contact with an actual object.¹¹

(c) The dream contents lack the attributes of real things in so far as they are flagrantly inconsistent with the conditions and laws of space, time, and causation.¹²

The world, then, that we experience, is not, according to Shankara, an *utter nothing-*

ness but the ever-abiding Reality or Brahman, not indeed *as It absolutely is*, but as *relative* to our finite and rational consciousness, our relational intellectual equipment. The experience of the Absolute *qua* Absolute requires a transcendence of this level of consciousness, the possibility of which has ever been affirmed by the mystic seers down the ages and all the world over.

What is the verdict of contemporary scientific thought on the nature of the external world? While new-fangled realisms of all sorts are brewing in the cauldron of contemporary philosophical thought, the scientific thought of today is sounding the message into our ears that *absolute* space, *absolute* time, and *absolute* motion are mere fictions. Einstein tells us today, what Leibnitz clearly said two centuries ago, that space is simply 'the order or relation of things among themselves'. Without things occupying it, space is nothing.

'Along with absolute space, Einstein discarded the concept of absolute time—of a steady, unvarying, inexorable universal time flow, streaming from the infinite past to the infinite future. Much of the obscurity that has surrounded the Theory of Relativity stems from man's reluctance to recognize that sense of time, like sense of colour, is a form of perception. Just as there is no such thing as colour without an eye to discern it, so an instant or an hour or a day is nothing without an event to mark it. And just as space is simply a possible order of material objects, so time is simply a possible order of events'.¹³

So about motion. 'If all the objects in the universe were removed save one, then no one could say whether that one remaining object was at rest or hurtling through the void at 100,000 miles a second. Motion is a relative state; unless there is one system of reference to which it may be compared, it is meaningless to speak of the motion of a single body'.¹⁴

⁸ *Ibid.* II. ii. 30.

⁹ *Ibid.* II. ii. 31.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* II. ii. 29.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.* III. ii. 3.

¹³ *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* by Lincoln Barnett, p. 39.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 63.

Space, time, motion, even the mass of objects, all that we are wont to take as absolute in our everyday life are *not absolute*. Nothing in the visible, sensible, thinkable world has *absolute* reality. This is what science tells us today and this is precisely what Shankara meant to convey when he said that our visible world has *vyāvahārika sattā* and not *pāramārthika sattā*. The world is *mithyā* (*jagan-mithyā*) from the standpoint of the latter, not that it is on a par with dreams and hallucinations. *Māyā*, in its philosophical import, is nothing but the admission of the relativity of the world-order, the admission that the Real is beyond the span of our visible, intelligible experience. Is not the scientist telling us today the same thing when he says that 'Whenever we state the properties of a body in terms of physical quantities, we are imparting knowledge as to the response of various metrical indicators to its presence, and nothing more'.¹⁵ All scientific knowledge is, in the last analysis, according to Eddington, simply a 'schedule of pointer-readings', 'a shadowgraph performance of the drama of familiar life', 'a number of symbols and a set of mathematical equations which they satisfy', and science, not knowing what these symbols stand for, 'has no means of probing beneath the symbolism'.

Let me close with some of the closing words in a recent work on Einstein, foreworded and commended by Einstein himself:

'But the irony of man's quest for reality is that as nature is stripped of its disguises, as order

¹⁵ Eddington: *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 257.

emerges from chaos and unity from diversity, as concepts merge and fundamental laws assume increasingly simpler form, *the evolving picture becomes ever more remote from experience*—far stranger indeed and less recognizable than the bone structure behind a familiar face. For where the geometry of a skull predestines the outlines of the tissue it supports, there is no likeness between the image of a tree transcribed by our senses and that propounded by wave mechanics, or between a glimpse of the starry sky on a summer night and the four-dimensional continuum that has replaced our perceptive Euclidean space. *In trying to distinguish appearance from reality and lay bare the fundamental structure of the universe, science has had to transcend the "rabble of the senses" . . .* And upon examination such concepts as gravitation, electromagnetism, energy, current, momentum, the atom, the neutron, all turn out to be theoretical substructures, inventions, metaphors which man's intellect has contrived to help him picture the true, the objective reality he apprehends beneath the surface of things. *So in place of the deceitful and chaotic representation of the senses science has substituted varying systems of symbolic representation. . .* In the evolution of scientific thought, one fact has become impressively clear: there is no mystery of the physical world which does not point to a mystery beyond itself. All high roads of the intellect, all by-ways of theory and conjecture lead ultimately to an abyss that human ingenuity can never span. For man is enchained by the very condition of his being, his finiteness and involvement in Nature'.¹⁶ (*Italics ours*).

The critics of Shankara, who lay so much store by the authenticity of sense-knowledge, would do well in pondering over this indictment of sense-knowledge by contemporary scientific thought.

¹⁶ *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* by Lincoln Barnett, pp. 99-103.

'All this universe known through speech and mind is nothing but Brahman; there is nothing besides Brahman, which exists beyond the utmost range of Prakriti. Are the pitcher, jug, and jar, etc., known to be distinct from the clay of which they are composed? It is the deluded man who talks of "thon" and "I", as an effect of the wine of Maya. . . . What is the use of dilating on this subject? The Jiva is no other than Brahman; this whole extended universe is Brahman Itself; the Shruti inculcates the Brahman without a second; and it is an indubitable fact that people of enlightened minds who know their identity with Brahman, and have given up their connection with the objective world, live palpably unified with Brahman as Eternal Knowledge and Bliss.'

—Shankaracharya

TWO MODERN THINKERS

BY DR. MOHAN SINGH

So far as American thinking is concerned, from Emerson to John Dewey, and from John Dewey to Lewis Mumford, are very great surprising strides. The reasons, historical and geographical, are quite obvious. A newly discovered, potentially rich, and wide world spoke through Emerson of things and thoughts transcendental, aloof, and easy, desiring to embrace the whole universe in joy. Dewey, who passed away not long ago, had seen two wars and imbibed European diplomacy, which, added to his practical wisdom—such wisdom as precedes and follows material prosperity in a world which is apparently meant for the common man, but which is really exploitable and exploited by only the clever, the far-sighted, the well equipped,—resulted in a body of thinking which may not, strictly speaking, be called philosophy, but which certainly brought philosophy near to everyday living and integrated it with political and social planning. It seems as if philosophy in the third and fourth decades of the present century divided itself into two camps, applied philosophy, represented by Dewey in America and Russell and Joad in Britain, and metaphysical thought, represented by George Santayana and Whitehead. There were other eminent thinkers who kept philosophy close to religion and surveyed the whole human situation as one problem demanding a basic solution. Amongst them may be mentioned Gerald Heard, Nicolas Berdyaev, Ouspensky, and Urban.

Mumford is, like Dewey, really an educationist and has come to philosophy via social psychology. In his recent book, *The Conduct of Life*, he has gone pretty deep, aided partly by a very wide reading, and has tried to answer such fundamental questions as what is the nature of man, what is man's role as interpreter and transformer of Nature, to what

purpose does the historic process tend, of what use are classic religions today, etc. It would be interesting to know what Mumford has to say of Dewey and Santayana, though in a rather casual manner. The central themes of Dewey's thought were democracy, education, logic, and value. In his book *Moral Principles in Education*, Dewey rejects teaching about morals in favour of situational moral decisions and hence takes for granted the validity of existing conventions and principles so applied. Mumford calls Santayana the philosophic equivalent of Proust and adds that Santayana's work *Realms of Being* is essentially a soliloquy that subsumes the past, tranquilly hovering over man and the cosmos, without ever wrestling with the present or moving towards the future. Books like this one of Mumford show that American thought has come of age and eminent writers in America have begun to see their thought-and-action patterns as other representatives of older civilizations and cultures see it, that is, in a severely critical attitude. It is certainly a sign of maturity to say that today what we need is neither this ism nor that, but a type of syncretism. The criticism of democracy, of Christianity, and of a way of life dominated by machinery and the motive of gain voiced by Mumford, is so thorough and so trenchant that it would bring delight to the followers of Gandhiji in India, who still stand for simple and honest standards of individual and national life.

Here is an example, pointing out the causes of the miscarriage of our civilization:

'Our development has not been as harmonious and as triumphant as the philosophers of progress proclaimed. We have now to pay the penalty for our one-sidedness and our externalism, for our devaluation of the personal, for our puerile overvaluation of the machine, for our failure to embrace the tragic sense of life and to make the sacrifices

that would if made in time have saved our civilization from its corpse-strewn Fifth Act. This miscarriage of our civilization has come about through an over-concentration of its energies, through an excess of zeal, through a fanaticism of scientific rationalism, so proud of its multiplying discoveries and inventions that it continued to run past the danger signals on the road, like a drunken engineer on a streamlined train unaware that his inordinate speed multiplies all the natural hazards'.

At more than one place the author has referred to Indian thinkers like Keshab Chandra Sen, with great approval.

The conclusions of Mumford, listed under the general title 'The Way and the Life', are not surprisingly new. But coming as the crest of a thorough analysis of human activity for the last ten thousand years, they come to us as irresistible. He rightly lays great emphasis on discipline in daily life, on love and integration in both personal and social spheres, and on constant national attempts at renewal of inherited culture. The advice he gives to the modern scientist-cum-politician deserves to be quoted. It is both an advice and a warning. He says: 'With the knowledge man now possesses he may control the knowledge that threatens to choke him; with the power he now commands he may control the power that would wipe him out; with the values he has created, he may replace a routine of life based upon a denial of values'.

The change from Mumford, the American thinker, to Alexis Carrel, the French winner of the Nobel Prize, who passed away about ten years ago, is a change from the newest to the oldest, from doubt to faith, from thoughts on life to life itself. Carrel's posthumous work, prepared for the press in 1949 by Anne Carrel and published in English translation year before last, consists of random reflections. Hence its title *Reflections on Life*. As a devout Catholic, Carrel believed that Christianity, in its older form, has once for all given us all the necessary rules of conduct, from rules for the preservation of life and

conservation of life to rules for the propagation of the race, for the propagation of life, and for the development of spirit in the individual and in the race.

According to him, 'to teach men how to conduct their lives, we need guides who combine a knowledge of the modern world with the science of the doctor, the wisdom of the philosopher, and the conscience of the priest: in other words, ascetics who have experience of life and are learned in the science of man. Perhaps a religious order, whose members possessed a character, at once scientific and sacerdotal, should be founded for this very end'. All this from Carrel comes very near the Indian conception and *such an order was actually visualized and founded by Swami Vivekananda, the founder of the Ramakrishna Order of Sannyasins.*

The stress which both these thinkers lay on the integration of knowledge is a very happy sign of the times. Both are hopeful about the future and for an exactly similar reason, which is that 'for the first time in the history of the world, a civilization which has arrived at the verge of its decline is able to diagnose its ills. Perhaps it would be able to use this knowledge and, thanks to the marvellous forces of science, to avoid the common fate of the great peoples of the past'. A cynic may be provoked by such statements to smile and say, while philosophy continues to hope for the best, man continues to invite his tragic fate by tilting the balance now in favour of the intellect, now in favour of the heart, and refusing to be more than a clever brute. Man's behaviour specially *en masse*, notwithstanding all his wisdom, is still a mystery, and until man learns to control his own emotions, he will continue to practise suicide of all kinds in all possible manners. All the same, if we cannot say how we *shall* behave, we must not cease to tell each other how we *should* behave. Let us still echo Socrates and pray that knowledge be virtue!

FREEDOM AND BONDAGE

BY ELIOT C. CLARK

Ideation as a mode of self-realization is evoked by the mental conception of the opposites. All ideas are relative. The extent of intellectual understanding cannot go beyond the extremes which the mind itself projects. Theoretically the idea exists within mentally created boundaries. In this conception the middle way is a balance between the two extremes. But it is apparent that this is an intellectual distinction quite divorced from the living consciousness, which brings to each act and state of being its unique distinction. The doctrine of the mean is based upon the plane of linear extension and division, the result of a too dimensional habit of thinking. But life in itself transcends this intellectualized conception of dimension founded on the opposites. Consciousness is without dimension. As the ever present witness it is apart from time, though it operates within self-created time; as likewise it is apart from space which is but the field of its cognition, without time there can be no becoming; without space there can be no dimension.

The attributes of Being are conceived within the relation of the opposites, but Being in Itself is without distinctive attribute and therefore transcends intellectual conception.

Freedom and bondage are two such mind-conceived opposites which are irreconcilable by the doctrine of the mean.

From this abstraction arises the ageless and never-ending speculation upon the significance and destiny of man. What is it that is free or is bound? What is the cause of bondage? Is there a separate independent soul apart from the generic principle by means of which it exists? This would be a contradiction. Is matter, or the gross manifestation, unrelated to the subtle or mental manifestation? Is the so-called individual the result of

past experience and incarnation, forming an endless regress? Is the will free, or but the result of previous action and causes? Is consciousness individual, or a part of a beginningless and homogeneous unity? Can the self arise from the non-self? Is nothingness conceivable? Is the 'I' or ego a reality or an auto-suggestion?

All similar postulation and speculation is ultimately but the conception or projection of the mind. Freedom and bondage are relative terms dependent upon a mental premise. Personalized consciousness is bound by the limitations of its own projection. Freedom and bondage are therefore related to mentalized conception and in consequence rise and fall together with it. Man is bound by his own conclusions.

Mind is not free or independent. It is in continuous fluctuation. It is inseparably related to the form or the mode of its awareness, which in turn rests upon the field of its cognition. There can be no idea without the word, but the word is derived from that which is wordless. Mind as such is bound by the terms of its own becoming. It is therefore dependent upon the senses and their objects in time and space. When, as in dreamless sleep, the world of appearance fades away, the fluctuation of the mind and its memories also disappear. Does it then cease to exist?

It is clear that we need some means of distinction between mind in its manifested state and its potential Source, the first being dependent and changeable, the second being eternal and changeless.

From the empirical rather than the metaphysical standpoint, much confusion has resulted in this lack of distinction; for the word 'mind' is used in a double category,

both as empirical awareness and metaphysical absolute.

It is more difficult to become free of mind than to be freed by mind.

The mental faculty is a functional mode intermediate between its Source and its manifestation, between Spirit and matter. If the ego is considered to be the mind, then it is bound by its own dictates and determinations.

The freedom of the ego would premise its possible independence, but the ego as personal consciousness is everywhere affected by time and circumstance or the conditions of its awareness. If the ego is free to will it is bound by the inevitable effects of its action.

The ego is but the projection of the mind. Consciousness becomes attached to its own image. This creates the delusion of its awareness. When the mind is stilled, the ego-consciousness is also stilled. The mind as subject is dependent upon its object, arising from the reaction to the phenomenal world and its relation to sense-contact. It is dualistic in its manifestation and is in consequence inseparable from its modifications.

When the ego loses itself in its Source then it becomes free of its illusions. The Source transcends the opposites and is not either free or bound. It is; unconditioned by concept or modification. Bondage relates to becoming, freedom to Being.

The metaphysical determination of the Absolute can never transcend its speculative premise which is involved in the limitations of the mind. But this very recognition of the limitations of the mind by means of the witness contemplating its activity has very profound and far reaching psychological significance bearing upon the activity and understanding of life in itself. The mental projection becomes the object of a contemplating subject.

Words have only the meaning that one can bring to them. We think of 'mind' only in relation to our thoughts or its apparent movement, but we give to it both an empirical and metaphysical meaning. The individual is aware of mind only in its becoming, by

means of symbolical recognition or the objects of its thought. Mind in its personal operation is simply functional. As such it is a mode of reaction and projection. It is therefore impressionable and changeful. It is not in this usage discriminative. As the ego-consciousness becomes attached to mental awareness, which is derived from sensory contact, it becomes bound to its own projection. Mind as such is therefore illusory, being dependent upon its mode of awareness, as word, sound, number, and image, operating relative to the centre or instrument of contact. If we distinguish the impressionable reaction from the cogitative reflection then we may say that the intellect is consciously selective and discriminative, but its activity is dependent upon an accepted premise or preconceived prelude. Like the 'mind' it is known only in its movement and is not self-generative. That which is aware of its movement is, as witness, itself unmoving. The modifications of the mind are illumined by that which is unmodified. This nameless Source cannot be known as object; but as the eternal Subject it is self-illumined.

There can be no true freedom for the individual as such because the very conception of individual independence implies separateness. The ego is bound by its own becomings, generated by mental obscuration and wilful determination. When, however, the conception of individual separateness and self-willing begins to fade then its true Self or Source becomes apparent. This spontaneous coming forth or inspiration is truly self-creation, the radiance of its own nature.

Egoism is the false identification of illusory awareness with its true Source, the mistaking of the modifications of the mind for its essence, due to the ignorance of Itself. It is caused by the superimposition of the fluctuation of the mind upon its generative Source, the impressionable reaction taken for Reality. With the realization of the true nature of its Source, the egoistic superimposition disappears in the effulgence of its innate and unchanging Self.

The means of liberation is therefore the dispersion of ignorance and the intuitive emergence of enlightenment. With the release of the egoistic urge of becoming, prompted by desire and its agent the will, the consciousness reflects its own pristine Self.

Becoming is involved in the three-time sequence. Being rests in Itself and is timeless. Fate is but the maturation of the past; free will the vision of the future. When the mind, which is the time creator, ceases its projection, then the past and the future vanish in the constancy of the present, and with it both free will and bondage. In the movement one reacts to effects and suffers consequences; in the Silence one is free. When the ego is seen to be but in the passing, only the Source remains. The opposites can never be harmonized because they are but the projections of the mind bound by the terms of its thinking. They cease only when mental imagery ceases. Enlightenment is thus the natural falling away of the elusive ego and the corresponding liberation of Reality.

The conception of both freedom and bondage is related to the 'I-consciousness', as the 'I' is related to will and desire. When desire disappears the opposites disappear with it and arise only with its recurrence or the desire of the will to be.

The 'I-consciousness' attaching itself to the impressionable mind becomes bound by its reaction. The 'I' then assumes the form and condition of its imagination and is in consequence in continuous change. Thus the 'I' becomes obsessed, and is drawn into the conflict of its contacts of action and reaction.

It is in this empirical sense that the control of the mind involves the very destiny and realization of the individual. If the 'I-consciousness' assumes the form of the mental emergence, then the ego is for ever bound to time and circumstance, the ceaseless change of its impressions. But if the agitation of the mind is controlled, then the 'I' reverts to its identity and reflects its limitless and inherent Source. The ego then becomes the Witness of effects and is uninfluenced by

reaction. This is direct vision, free from accumulated association and auto-suggestion, of past experience and future apprehension. The present then exists in its own reality, rather than future imagery or past reminiscence. This is not the withdrawal of the consciousness from external contact, or the withdrawal of the senses, but it is the withdrawal of the ego from its automatic contact with habitual projection and reaction. With mental quietude the 'I' reflects the vision of its Source or intuitive awareness.

Consciousness in itself is infinite and unfathomable. It is the illusionistic self-picture or ego-consciousness that assumes the limitations of its desires and antagonisms, the bondage of self-determination. When the 'I' becomes free of its self-restriction and -distinction, its identification with physical and mental obscuration and vacillation, then it extends its awareness and revels in the freedom of its infinite Self.

Consciousness in Itself is free from the attributes and projections of the mind, as it is not involved in the three-time sequence. In consequence it is not apprehensive or regretful. It does not look forward or backward but exists in an everlasting Present. It is the ego-consciousness which is bound by the becoming and is therefore tied to the past and the future, which gives the appearance of a fleeting present. It is the seeming ego which is fearful and regretful, which becomes excited and exhausted, which sins and suffers; is depressed or exalted. When the ego attaches itself to the body it suffers its reactions, when it attaches itself to the intellect it assumes its reflections, but when it merges itself in its true Source, when as 'I-consciousness' it loses itself, then it exists in its own innate effulgence, free from becoming.

The ego-consciousness lives in its own imaginings and corresponding self-awareness which is likened to the apparitions of the dream state, but its substrata live in the reality of its inexhaustible Self, which as a continuous present is both past and future. As 'I-consciousness' it assumes the fleeting

awareness of the inconstant present, an instantaneous and ceaseless becoming, a succession of dimensionless moments; as Consciousness in Itself it is an enduring continuity apart from the sum of its becomings, but the substance of all becomings. As ego-consciousness it assumes all forms; as Consciousness it is formless.

Can the ego know itself apart from its assuming, can it be aware of itself apart from its becoming, or the projections of its imagination? Only experience can answer. Who is the witness?

The ego-consciousness is the heritage of the unconscious, the continuity of its egoistic

past, the cumulative experience of action and reaction, the victim of its illusionistic becomings. Behind the 'I-consciousness' is the witness of its apparition, its movement measured by its unmoving Presence.

The elevation of consciousness is in the removal of illusion, or freedom from the bondage of egoistic hallucination and self-hypnotism. It is the transformation from sequential recurrence involved in the periodicity of becoming, to the downward plunge of depth, freed from the linear extension of time. The 'I' disappears in the dimensionless abyss of the egoless and reawakens in its transfigured Self.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

From this month commences the fifty-ninth year of publication of the *Prabuddha Bharata*. We offer our cordial greetings and good wishes to all our subscribers, contributors, and friends, in every part of the world, and are grateful to them for the sympathy and co-operation they have kindly been extending to the *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . .

It has been the practice since some years past to make the January issue a special illustrated and enlarged number. This year the January 1954 issue was to have been made a special extraordinary number in commemoration of the Holy Mother (Sri Sarada Devi) Birth Centenary. But as circumstances necessitated postponement of the special number, it has been decided that the March 1954 issue will come out instead as the Centenary Number. In view of this the present issue is not being made a special number. However, the practice of presenting a frontispiece in the January issue is kept up by publishing a rare picture of Swami Viveka-

nanda (in the centre) with Anagarika Dharmapala (to his left) and some other delegates to the World's Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in September 1893. . . .

Situated amidst beautiful mountain scenery in the San Antone Valley, U.S.A., about 100 miles from San Francisco, the Shānti Ashrama, or Peace Retreat, one of the first Ashramas in America, was started in 1900 by Swami Turiyananda. The extracts from the *Memories of Swami Turiyananda*, published in this number, are culled and reproduced from the first of two longer articles, with the same title, which originally appeared in the *Vedanta and the West* (September-October 1952), the bimonthly organ of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, U.S.A. Ida Ansell is one of the original members of this Peace Retreat and now the only available witness to its establishment by Swami Turiyananda. . . .

Renunciation, by Swami Virajananda, former President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, is reproduced from the *Vedanta Kesari* (for June 1953). . . .

Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., of the University of Saugar, draws pointed attention to the secular currents of modern thought and rightly stresses the salient features of the spiritual core of *The Religion we need*. . . .

Today *The United Nations* is the most well-known and widely influential human institution. 'Never before in history has so much hope for so many people been gathered together in a single organization'—thus observed President Eisenhower in the course of his illuminating address to the last U. N. General Assembly. As the learned writer points out, there is yet much to be done in the way of strengthening the U.N. and making it more representative of the peoples of the world. . . .

That Hindu philosophy did not fail to take due note of man's urge for pleasure and that it sought to impress upon man the fact that the goal of his search for pleasure should be nothing short of Self-realization—is made convincingly clear by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, in *Approach to Philosophy: Pleasure*—which is the script of a radio-talk broadcast by him from the Madras Station of the All-India Radio, by whose kind permission we are enabled to publish this talk. . . .

Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A., one of our old and valued contributors, has made a remarkably erudite and logically accurate survey of the main aspects of the philosophical position of the great Shankaracharya. '*Was Shankara an Illusionist?*', he asks of those who indulge in such patently baseless criticism against that paragon of philosophers, and admirably repulses some of their oft-repeated attacks. . . .

Dr. Mohan Singh, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., briefly but lucidly reviews the recently published works of *Two Modern Thinkers*—the late Dr. Alexis Carrel and Dr. Lewis Mumford. . . .

Freedom and Bondage, though not two distinctly different things in themselves, have yet a relatively contradictory significance. We feel we are free or want to be free; but at every step we find we are not. Either both are true or both are false, for they are interdependent and stand on the selfsame consciousness. Mr. Eliot C. Clark of New York, in his thought-provoking article, presents a subjective, psychological approach to the study of freedom and bondage.

SOCIAL PROGRESS AND THE CASTE SYSTEM

'Hinduism', wrote Sister Nivedita, 'is one of the finest and most coherent growths in the world. Its disadvantages arise out of the fact that it is a growth, not an organization; a tree, not a machine'. And precisely because Hinduism is not so much the 'end of a process' as it is the 'process' itself that its civic codes and sociological ideas are yet capable of adaptation and even modification. If stability of its culture and civilization is accepted as the criterion for judging the excellence of a social organization, ideal systems of polity like the Varna-Ashrama Dharma of Hinduism should find a legitimate place in the process of evolution or reconstruction of society. Whatever its merits and demerits, the caste system, originally based on division of labour according to individual temperament and aptitude, is still a powerful force in Hindu society. Though in its present degenerate form the caste system is no unmixed blessing, one cannot conveniently forget that the vicissitudes of history have largely impaired its intrinsic worth and that the principles its original founders had in view were sound and noble.

'Caste-ism', like many other 'isms', is decidedly harmful to social harmony. But the ideals underlying the caste system fall under a different category. That the Varna-Ashrama Dharma is not an exotic growth, and certainly not an engine of tyranny (as some people would have it) imposed from

above by the privileged few upon the handicapped many, but a natural response of wise Indian sociologists of old to the social conditions peculiar to India will become more than evident when one surveys the warp and woof of the teeming population, constituted of heterogeneous groups, with differing customs, manners, and beliefs. Out of this variety of racial and cultural types, it became imperative that a well-knit harmonious and flexible society had to be organized. The outcome of this endeavour was the caste system, which has ever since remained a potent social force. Caste is more a social than a religious institution, a genuine corporate attempt at ensuring coexistence and co-prosperity of all members of society from the highest to the lowest.

Writing on 'Caste and Social Revolution', in the *Modern Review*, Sri Lalit Sen examines the possibilities of social progress and economic advance in a society based on the caste system. He differentiates between progress through 'revolution' and progress through gradual transformation or 'evolution'. Herein he mentions the fact that the caste system, whatever be its shortcomings, successfully saved society from dictatorial domination by any one revolutionary group or community. He observes:

'How was the Indian caste system successful in preserving its entity for ages without bringing violent revolutions in its wake? It is true that before the rapid infiltration of Western socio-economic patterns, the caste system had tremendous force in India and no such revolution had threatened its existence. . . . Revolution involves group-movements, not the seizure of power by any individual. The emergence of Buddhism, as a classless, sectless order, however, can be cited as a revolutionary movement, but even this ultimately degenerated and the whole social structure again relapsed into the old Brahministic order. Moreover, the caste system based on the division of hereditary occupation groups was never non-existent during the Buddhist movement. In Bengal, the large number of converts among the lower castes to Islam, is cited as a revolutionary movement which was motivated by the attraction of Islam as a casteless, sectless order. But this also seems apocryphal, because it was calculated that there are at least fifty

groups based on occupations among the Mohammedans of Bengal, and these have very nearly the character of caste. But the main fact behind all these events is that neither of these movements were violent in nature'.

As Swami Vivekananda said, one of the fundamental characteristics of the caste system in India, as distinguished from similar patterns in other countries, was that the law of caste in every other country took the individual man or woman as the sufficient unit, while here the unit was all the members of a caste-community. What the learned writer calls *social mobility*,—that is, the capacity of any caste or sub-caste to move upward in the social scale,—accounts for the growth of each social unit and its gradual elevation to the highest status. Thus no social group was barred from progress. Social stratification did not mean, at least in ancient times, social immobility. Elucidating this, Sri Sen says:

'It is a truism that wherever there is a group of human beings, there is stratification. Stratification of society into different social orders is inherent in human psychology. Social mobility in the form of ceaseless class-movements is the fundamental fact behind the dynamic processes of society. These movements have a definite direction of their own. It is a fact that the upper classes have a tendency to degenerate, decay, and disappear. The void is filled up by new elements emerging from the people. Thus the direction of class-movements is always upwards. These movements take place through the gradual processes of acculturation and miscegenation. i.e. culture-fusions and blood-mixtures'.

Sri Sen aptly emphasizes the spiritual 'world view' that has inspired the spirit of co-operation, tolerance, and self-sacrifice, which has always characterized the caste system. He examines the incorrect opinions of certain persons to whom caste signified 'the enhancement and transformation of social distance into a religious or, more strictly, a magical principle', and shows that, on the contrary, whenever the relation between the castes was in a state of disharmony and the distance between castes threatened to widen into a breach, great religious preachers lost no time in reminding the people of the fact of spiritual unity in apparent diversity, present in all human institutions, and prevented

violent upheavals. Religion, writes Sri Lalit Sen, 'served as an outlet for social mobility. It acted as a safety-valve, so to say. Whenever the social structure was threatened by revolutions due to the rigidity of the caste system which barred social mobility, religion came to her (India's) rescue. Religious preachers like Buddha, Jina, Nanak, and Kabir preached equality of men irrespective of caste, creed, or class in the sense that birth alone does not confer any special distinction on any one. These movements gathered tremendous force and influenced social and political forces for a long time. And then the whole social system again relapsed into the old pattern which was always in the background. Thus religious movements in India did not try to stop social mobility. On the other hand, they helped social mobility acting as safety-valves in critical times when there was every chance of revolutions breaking out'.

The caste system, as it obtains today, in modern India, seems outmoded and antiquated, having lost much of its original realism and objective outlook. Social mobility is less and

less in evidence, while 'untouchability' and 'kitchen religion' of a strange type have taken root, wrongly seeking to derive sanction from religion. Fearing perpetuation of undue hereditary privilege and priority, many people would go to the length of forcibly abolishing the caste system as the pre-condition to social advancement. It is necessary and important that we should prevent the abuses of the caste system rather than vehemently condemn the system itself until and unless we are able to replace it by a better one. It is worth while to remember, in this connection, the pregnant words of Swami Vivekananda, uttered in the course of one of his lectures: 'Remember always that there is not in the world any other country whose institutions are really better in their aims and objects than the institutions of this land. I have seen castes in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan and purpose so glorious as here. If caste is thus unavoidable, I would rather have a caste of purity and culture and self-sacrifice than a caste of dollars. Therefore utter no words of condemnation'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MYSTICS AND MYSTICISM. BY P. N. SRINIVASACHARI. Published by Sri Krishna Library, Chittrakulam N. Street, Mylapore, Madras 4. Pages 477. Price Rs. 10.

If the philosophies of India have suffered at the hands of its exponents, the mysticism of India has received no attention at all in spite of the fact that a rich field awaits its historian and interpreter. It is sad to note that since the publication of the Harris Lectures (for 1926) of Dr. S. N. Dasgupta on *Hindu Mysticism*, no work, comprehensive or valuable, on this subject has appeared. Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari has undoubtedly presented an important work on mystics and mysticism.

One may doubt if the caption of this book is most suitable to denote its contents. Philosophy of religion, historical and comparative study of Eastern and Western mysticism, the threefold Vedanta of Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva, and

the views and experiences of other teachers—all come within the purview of the book.

Chapter I, on pseudo and false mysticism, is a vivacious study of misconceptions concerning mysticism. It is described how mysticism is falsely identified with mystery-mongering, drug intoxication, hysteria, occultism, and all sorts of Mumbo Jumbo. The second chapter is a preliminary exposition of the essentials of mysticism by the elimination of its non-essentials. No Sanskrit term seems to correspond to the word 'mysticism'. It is 'the attitude of the mind which consists in the spiritual quest of man for union with God culminating in unitive experience'. The author distinguishes the three stages of mysticism: self-purification or *karmayoga*, self-realization or *jñānayoga*, and unitive consciousness or *bhaktiyoga*. Chapter III, on historical and comparative study of mysticism, is a fascinating collection of materials. The history

of Western mysticism, from Plato to Blake, described in this chapter shows the blending of Platonism and Neo-Platonism with Vedantic leaven. The next chapter describes Hindu mysticism from the time of the Rishis to that of the Ālvārs, Nāyanamārs, and modern mystics. The author points out how Hinduism integrates philosophy and religion unlike in the West where intellectual speculation and religious faith have been at variance. In Chapter V the author describes 'bridal mystics' and expounds their mysticism; he discusses the place of sex in religion with great insight, unlike many modern writers. He liberates this unique form of mysticism from the charge of eroticism. In the last chapter the learned author sums up the experiences of the mystics and expounds their fundamental features embodied in the Vedic text, 'Sat is one, though Its seers describe It in various ways'. Mysticism is defined as the only true philosophy of religion which insists on the direct experience by the individual self of God as the adequate proof of His existence.

It is an interesting experience to read Prof. Srinivasachari, and the striking feature of his writing is the synthetic method which mediates between Advaita and Dvaita.

S. A.

FREEDOM AND CULTURE. BY JOHN DEWEY.
Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty, Bombay 7. Pages 160. Price Re. 1-12.

This is the ninth book of the Bhavan's Book University, the General Editors of which are Sri K. M. Munshi and Sri N. Chandrasekhara Aiyer.

John Dewey was the foremost thinker of the United States during the first half of this century; and in a sense he was typically American in his thought and outlook. Starting his career as a Hegelian he carried traffic with the pragmatists and later came to propound his Instrumentalism based on a working hypothesis. This doctrine is basically allied to a certain humanism which fails only because it is not carried through to its logical conclusion. A general insistence on the human values and an advocacy of the gospel of persuasion as against force characterize the social outlook of Dewey. It is this spirit that is represented by the present volume.

Dewey presents the problem of freedom as essentially a moral problem. He analyses it from all points of view and is rightly convinced of the need for a theory of values which alone can safeguard the right type of freedom. Next he analyses the situation as it exists in the democratic countries; and this is followed by an examination of the concept of freedom in Marxism. His examination of Marxism is brilliant and provoking. Herein

he comes out as an individualist though he is not happy with individualism. It is only in a democracy based on values that we can expect to have some freedom. This demands an intellectual and moral integration out of present disordered conditions. One has to struggle towards the realization and preservation of freedom. If freedom were to be an accomplished fact we must first cleanse ourselves and our institutions.

This analysis is followed by two chapters on 'Science and Free Culture' and 'Democracy and America'. Here we find Dewey pleading for the creation of new values which creation has not been achieved by modern science. A science which merely destroys traditional values is a culture which is destroying itself. This attitude makes Dewey long for the faith which Jefferson had in advocating for an anti-industrialized democracy. And like an individualist he asserts the value of means in unmistakable terms. What is won in a democracy is to be achieved and sustained by deliberate and intellectual endeavour. And 'democratic ends demand democratic methods for their realization'. This realization is possible only in and through the collective intelligence operating in co-operative action.

P. S. SASTRI

SRI AUROBINDO MANDIR ANNUAL (1953).
Published by Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, 15, College Square, Calcutta. Pages 142. Price: Cloth-bound Rs. 5-8; Paper-cover Rs. 4-8.

This Jayanti Number, published on the occasion of the eighty-first birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo, contains, as usual, many original and thought-provoking articles, including writings of Sri Aurobindo hitherto unpublished. Section I presents the following from the pen of Sri Aurobindo: Three Sonnets; Translation, with Notes, of Riks 1-5 (of *Madhucchandas*) of the first Sūkta of the first Maṇḍala of the *Rg-Veda*; 'The Great Aranyaka', being a short commentary on the symbolism of 'The Horse of the Worlds' in the opening chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*; A brief essay entitled 'On Original Thinking', in the course of which Sri Aurobindo calls upon modern India to recover her pristine intellectual freedom, independence, and elasticity; A short story, under the title 'The Door at Abelard'. Section II contains five contributions by different writers, directly or indirectly bearing on the various aspects of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, of which mention may be made of the following: 'Sri Aurobindo and the World of Science' by Nathaniel Pearson; 'The Principles of Integral Education' by Indra Sen, and 'The Two Dynamic Poises of Being' by Rishabhchand.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

ISHOPANISHAD. Pages 92. Price Rs. 3.

ISHOPANISHAD. Pages 92. Price Rs. 3.

STAVA OF PUSHPADANTA). Pages 80. Price Rs. 3.

Both published by Ganesh & Co., (Madras) Ltd., Madras-17.

Īśopaniṣad contains the original text of the Upanishad and the commentary on it, from the Shākta standpoint, by Satyananda, and carries a lucid English translation of both by Jnanendralal Majumdar. The translation, which is given first, is followed by the original texts of the Upanishad and the commentary in bold Sanskrit characters. The foot-notes accompanying the translation greatly contribute to a clear grasp of the commentary. The concise Foreword, by Arthur Avalon, to the book is succeeded by an elaborate Introduction (running to twenty-five pages) by the translator, setting forth the fundamental tenets of the Shakta philosophy, with special reference to the *Īśa Upaniṣad*. The book, being in its second edition, (originally published in 1918) is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the Upanishads.

The celebrated and ancient hymn called *Mahimnastava*, in glorification of God Shiva and attributed to Pushpadanta, is translated into English verse, with Notes, by Arthur Avalon in *The Greatness of Shiva*. Arthur Avalon's rendering of the hymn is exquisite and his elaborate foot-notes in explanation of difficult words and ideas are very helpful. The book also embodies the original texts of Jagannatha Chakravarti's commentary, as also the commentary known as *Sārārthadīpikā*, both on the hymn. The original text of the hymn and the commentaries are given separately at the end of the book in Sanskrit characters. The translation is throughout marked by the force of insight and understanding characteristic of Arthur Avalon's works.

GERMAN

WAS YOGA IST. BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA. Published by Rascher, Verlag, Zurich, Switzerland. Pages 88. Price Fr. 4-20.

The word 'Yoga' has exercised a great fascination on the minds of many from very early times. It was rightly used and understood in ancient India as the 'union with the Supreme Spirit' and the method by which that union can be attained. Later, Yoga came to be associated with all sorts of mystery-mongering, and revolting practices. Swami Vivekananda was the first great master of the modern age who treated of Yoga authoritatively in its fourfold aspect—Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, and Jnana Yoga—as a scientific system, without the least trace of mystery. Still, misconceptions prevail regarding the subject of Yoga,

which has well-nigh become an international term. The object of this book is to dispel these misconceptions and 'discuss the science of Yoga' in a simple and rational manner. It is the German translation, by Frank Dispeker, of Swami Pavitrananda's original English work entitled *Common-sense about Yoga*.

The author has traversed the whole field in a short compass without sacrificing clarity and vividness. The book is eminently readable.

The opening chapter clears the ground by effectively removing the false and queer associations which have gathered around the topic of Yoga. The real sense of the word, which is shown as being etymologically connected with the German 'joch', meaning 'union', is fully explained. The four main groups under which Yoga can be classified according 'to the dominant factors in our lives, —feeling, thought, action, and the mind', are briefly indicated.

The four chapters which follow give the essentials of the four Yogas,—Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Raja Yoga. It is indeed an extremely difficult task to summarize even one of these Yogas in a few pages. But the author has succeeded in delineating the characteristic features of all the Yogas and giving a vivid picture of each of them. Important details have not been omitted. For instance, in the chapter on Bhakti Yoga, prayer, worship, association with advanced souls, and Japa have all been succinctly described as means to get Bhakti or love of God. Thus the book is very helpful to spiritual aspirants also. Incidentally, the real significance of image worship has been pointed out.

In the third chapter, which treats of Karma Yoga, there is a significant statement on page 43 that 'there are no watertight compartments among the different Yogas' and that 'Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana may and often do commingle with one another in the course of spiritual practice'. This sound observation deserves to be specially borne in mind by partisans of each of the Yogas. Practical suggestions are also offered as to how Karma can be done in the spirit of a Bhakta or with the outlook of a Jnani.

It is interesting to find that in the chapter on Jnana Yoga not only the 'Neti, Neti' method but also the positive method of realizing the Self from the very start is explained (page 54). The difficulties in the path of Jnana Yoga have been rightly emphasized. From the qualifications mentioned (page 56) as necessary for the aspirant who wishes to tread this path, it will be clear that the qualified aspirants for Jnana Yoga are, indeed, extremely rare.

Raja Yoga is the subject of the fifth chapter and the essence of this much-misunderstood path, as nothing more nor less than the concentration of the mind, is prominently brought out. The mistake commonly committed of almost identifying Prāṇāyāma with Raja Yoga is pointed out and a wholesome warning is given of the danger of practising Pranayama *without a proper guide*. The folly of using the supernormal powers (Siddhis) of Yoga for secular purposes has been clearly shown. The essence of 'genuine spiritual life' is the 'cultivation and practice of ethical virtues'. Character is the sure foundation of spirituality. Hence, the importance of Yama, the indispensable preliminary

step to the practice of Yoga (page 75). These weighty remarks of the author deserve to be remembered by all sincere aspirants.

The translation is faithful and elegant. A few additions here and there have been made (to the text of the English original) to make the book more appealing to the German reader, e.g. references are made to Kant, Meister Eckhart and other philosophers of repute.

The book can safely be recommended as perhaps the best and most interesting handbook on Yoga in general and the four classical Yogas in particular.

P. SESHADRI

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BOMBAY

REPORT FOR 1951 AND 1952

The following is a brief report of the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission (at Khar), Bombay, during the two years 1951 and 1952:

Preaching: The Swamis of the Centre conducted 405 scriptural and religious classes in and outside the Mission premises in Bombay city. The Swami-in-charge of the Centre delivered 120 public lectures—62 in 1951 and 58 in 1952—in Bombay and several other important cities. In addition, many Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission and distinguished visitors spoke on different occasions under the auspices of the Mission.

The Centre observed the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, the Holy Mother, and other great religious teachers of the world. The Centre also celebrated the Durga Puja in 1951 and 1952. Religious conferences in 1951 and 1952 and an Inter-religious Convention in 1952 formed some of the special features of the programmes of the Durga Puja celebrations.

Reading-room and Shivananda Library: The Reading-room received 42 periodicals in 1951 and 53 in 1952. The Library contained 5,035 and 5,971 books respectively in 1951 and 1952. The number of books issued during the two years were 1,652 and 1,502 respectively.

Students' Home: The Students' Home admitted 22 students in 1951 and 58 in 1952. Out of those admitted, 10 and 33 students respectively passed in the examinations during the two years. Of the 1951 batch, one student took the M. Ed. Degree of the Bombay University in II class, securing the 1st rank in the University.

Charitable Dispensary and Hospital: The Charitable Dispensary consisting of Allopathic, Homoeopathic, and Ayurvedic departments started functioning in its new building from March 1951. During 1951 it treated a total of 1,79,020 cases, of whom 1,63,810 were treated in the Homoeopathic, 12,850 in the Allopathic, and 2,360 in the Ayurvedic departments. During 1952 the number of cases treated was 2,07,283—1,56,128, 46,762, and 4,393 cases being treated in the three departments respectively.

The Charitable Hospital treated a total of 144 cases—61 in the surgical, 1 in the medical, 69 in the pathological, and 13 in the X-ray departments.

Relief Works: During the period under review, the Centre took active part in the following relief operations:

1951: East Bengal Refugee Relief; Assam Earthquake Relief; Starvation Relief in East Bengal.

1952: Sundarban Famine Relief; Rayalaseema Famine Relief; Tamilnad Cyclone Relief; East Bengal Refugee Relief.

Important Events: Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, performed the opening ceremony of the new buildings of the Charitable Dispensary, Students' Home, and Shivananda Library and Vivekananda Hall on 4th March 1951.

Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission and Math, unveiled a marble statue of Swami Vivekananda at the Mission premises on 11th March 1951.

Needs: (i) Rs. 50,000—for bringing the newly constructed and equipped Charitable Dispensary into full working order.

(ii) Rs. 5,000—for the expansion and up to date maintenance of the Library.

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

GREETINGS AND MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BROADCASTED ON THE INAUGURATION DAY OF THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS ON 27TH DECEMBER 1953

Dear children of the Divine Mother,

It is indeed a matter for great rejoicing that we are privileged to participate in the celebration of Sri Sarada Devi's Birth Centenary, which commences today. On this sacred occasion we pray to Sri Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi to shower their blessings on us all.

At the present day the minds of most men and women all over the world are full of conflict and confusion about ideals, and they are adrift without proper moorings. What is wanted is a grasp of the meaning and purpose of life and the organizing of society with this ultimate objective. What that purpose of life is and how it can be easily achieved, has been well illustrated in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi, the divine couple, for whom God-realization was the one aim of life. To feel His presence and to serve His children was their sole occupation. Such an outlook on life can alone restore amity, peace and happiness in society and among nations. All other ideals, however good in themselves, are but half-way houses.

The advent of Sri Sarada Devi has been a unique phenomenon in the history of the world and a great blessing to mankind. Judged by ordinary standards, her life may appear commonplace and uneventful, but from the standpoint of the grand ideal it embodies, it carries a lofty message to the world at large. She is the last word on the ideal of Indian womanhood, nay she represents a universal type transcending all limitations of race and time.

In Sarada Devi we find a rare blending of the ideal wife, mother, and nun. She was a true partner of her saintly husband, his helpmate in fulfilling his mission in this world. No wonder that Sri Ramakrishna actually worshipped her as a Goddess. The noblest aspect of Sri Sarada Devi's life consisted in her being the perfect mother. Her utterly unselfish love embraced all humanity without any distinction whatsoever. The life of Sarada Devi is a call to the modern woman to manifest her essentially feminine greatness, the chief characteristic of which is spiritual motherhood. This precious heritage needs to be brought within the reach of all to inspire and guide them to perfection. Let us on this auspicious day offer our sincere prayers to Sri Sarada Devi, the universal Mother, for the peace and well-being of the world.

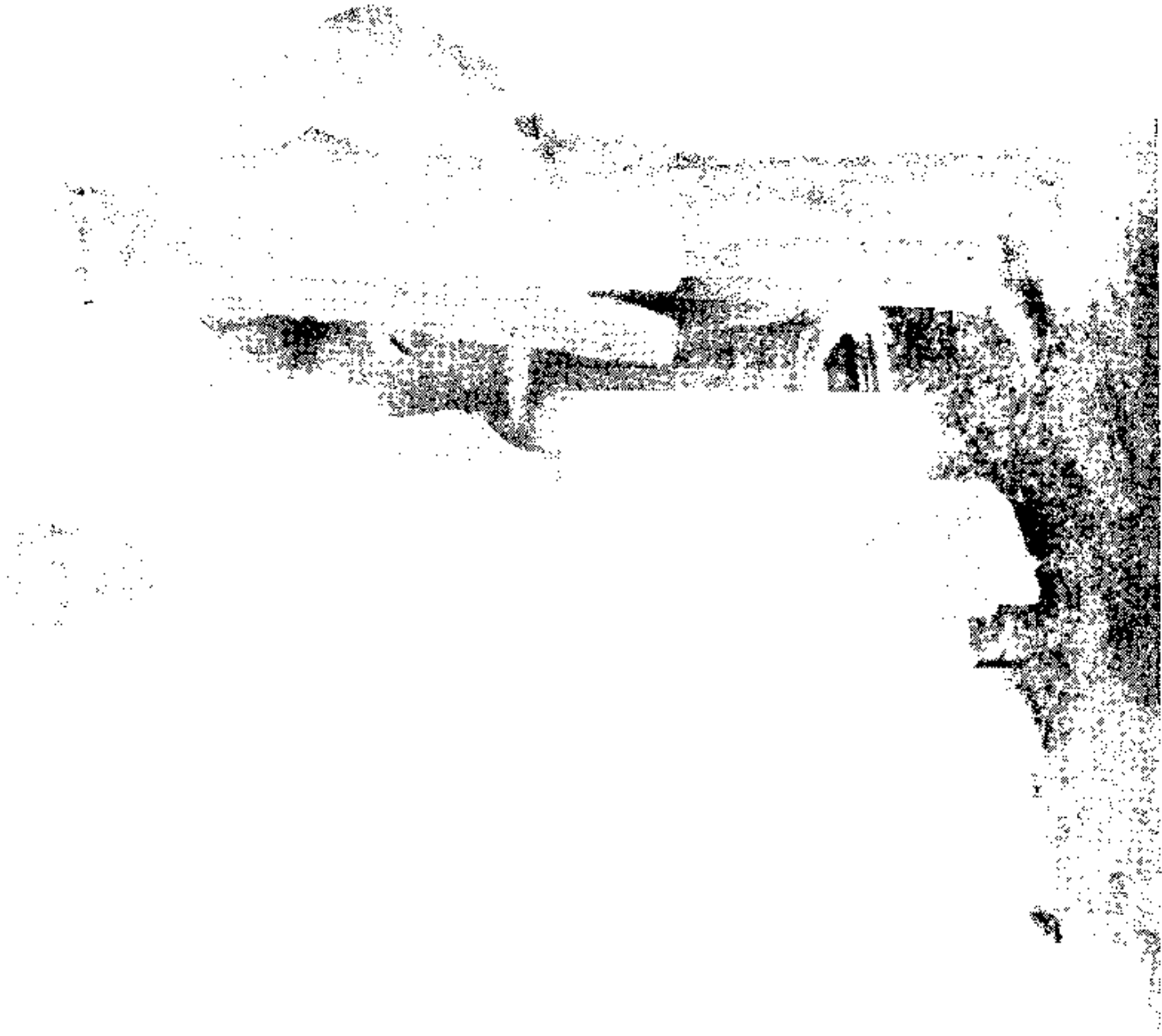
SWAMI SANKARANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls on the 26th January 1954



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (*centre*) WITH SOME OF THE DELEGATES TO THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS HELD AT CHICAGO IN SEPTEMBER 1893



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (*centre*) WITH SOME OF THE DELEGATES TO THE WORLD'S
PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS HELD AT CHICAGO IN SEPTEMBER 1893