PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

MEDITATION ON THE BOYHOOD OF THE YUGĀVATĀR*

BY CHANDICHARAN

When Godhead stoops to dwell with us
And share the common lot of men,
What heart can hope to understand
That benediction or divine
The measure of that sacrifice?

But yet, all powerless though we are
To plumb the mysteries of grace,
Wonderment cannot countermand
The call that Chandicharan hears
To hail the youthful Avatār.

And so once more he turns to you,
Blest village of Kāmārpukur,[1]
Prayerfully at your feet to bend,
That, if your blessing reassure,
He may rehearse the tale anew.

* * * *

Gadāi,[2] where are you? Everything is the same—
The level fields in the sun, the lakes and groves.
The low thatched houses grouped along the lanes:
You—only you—are missing! Here in the shade
Of Śiva's temple, just where the village road
Crosses the foot-path from the Hāldārpukur,[3]
I stand, calling your name; but you do not come.

*It refers to Sri Ramakrishna, the Prophet of the Age.

[1] Sri Ramakrishna's birth-place.

[2] Diminutive form of 'Gadādhar', an epithet of Vishnu, meaning the 'Bearer of the Mace'. This was the name given to Sri Ramakrishna, at birth, by his parents.

[3] A lake at Kamarpukur.

Why do you hide your charming face, O friend?
Show me that winsome smile, that flowing hair,
Those mischievous eyes! Can you not hear me calling?
Ah, they tell me you love all souls alike;
Why, then, why do you fail me now?
Come, I would hear, direct from yonr own dear lips,
How you disport yourself unceasingly
About the by-ways of Kamarpukur!

Do you still roam in the fields, beloved boy?
Do you still, with your carefree friends, absent yourself
From school in the Lahas'[4] shed, to dance and sing
In Mānik Raja's[5] mango grove?
Do you still return, at twilight's tranquil hour,
To talk at your ease, beneath the ancient tree
On the little village green, with the men and boys
After the bustle of the market has been hushed?
Do you still sing *bhajan*[6] for the neighbour women
That come at dusk to hear your tales and your songs?

Open my eyes, sweet friend! Let me behold
How you are playing still your *līlā* here.
Now and eternally, in Kamarpukur:
Let me observe you out in the paddy-fields
Watching the distant flock of snow-white cranes
Soaring before the dark blue thundercloud,
Rapt into ecstasy or, with the village girls
There on the road to Viśālākshi's[7] shrine,
Utterly lost to outward sense.
Let me behold you, dressed for the part of Śiva,
Enter the stage on Śivarātri night
Deep in communion with the God of gods;
Let me watch you serving the Sādhu folk
At the rest-house close to Chandrā Devi's[8] hut,
And coming home, your new cloth, torn in two,
Wrapped about your waist like a Sadhu's *kaupīn*;[9]
Or, having received the thread of Brahmanhood,
Accepting alms from Dhani, the blacksmith woman;
Or again, at the gathering in the Lahas' house.
Solving the problem that perplexed the pundits.
But more especially, let me gaze upon you
As, at the simple household shrine,
Daily you sit absorbed in Raghuvir's[10] worship.

[4] A well-to-do family of Kamarpukur, very friendly towards Sri Ramakrishna's family.
[5] Manik Chandra Banerji, who had dedicated a mamngo grove for public use.
[6] Religious music. [7] Name of the Divine Mother. [8] Mother of Sri Ramakrishna.
[9] A short loin-cloth. [10] Family deity of Sri Ramakrishna

Help me to see you! Cause my eyes to open!
Why is the sight of you so hard to win?
Ah, you are purity itself:
How can I hope to find you in my heart
Till it becomes itself immaculate?
Help me, then, adorable boy,
To cleanse the secret shrine of my heart,
That I may draw you there, within the core
Of my inmost self, may even prevail on you
To tarry there upon its throne!

* * * *

Now, before my life is utterly spent and gone,
I would come with Śrīnivās, the maker of shell-bracelets,
And there on the sheltered grassy green,
Where none may spy on us, would offer you fitting worship,
With water, fruits, and sweets, with fragrant jasmine garlands,
With incense for your nostrils and lighted ghee to enchant
Your eyes, and a fan to soothe your rest—
You who for our sake have come again to earth.

I would utter forth in prayer my heart's sincere devotion,
Imploring you, dearest, only friend,
To cancel, once for all, my faith's infirmity
With a single glance of your gracious eyes;
For I would make with you a covenant this day,
I would bind myself henceforth to you.
Only let the compassion that glows in your countenance
Work in my wretched heart, undo the wrongs I have done,
Set me upon the way of truth,
And keep me there, secure, even to my life's end!

* * * *

Help me, friend, and I will sing
Henceforth your deeds, and only yours,
That claim the heart from wandering
And overwhelm its sharp desires.

Too long enchanted with the world
I slept, though feigning to believe,
Trusting, like one condemned to die,
In fate's miraculous reprieve.

But fate will never heed, nor time
Assuage the inward emptiness,
Until the unruly heart abjure
Companionship of worldly bliss.

Now, now I penetrate the task
Before me! Now I see too well
The multitude of toilsome years
Pilgrim must pass before he dwell

One day with you in innocence
Upon creation's other shore,
Tasting of everlastingness,
Rapt in your presence more and more!

And so I set my timid prayer
Afloat upon the stream of time,
Trusting your love to strengthen me
For singing your most holy name.

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

By C. Ramanujachari

I have been asked to write my reminiscences of Swami Brahmananda. This is unquestionably a difficult task. Maharaj[1] very sparingly spoke, remained always indrawn, and administered a big organization for two decades, chiefly by quiet appeal than by insistent methods. His mere presence created such a great power of spiritual enthusiasm that all problems got automatically solved.

He was in Madras on three occasions, and I went up to Belur[2] once. These were the four occasions when I had contact with him. Though the number of days of meeting him and sitting at his feet were many, the words that passed between us were very few. The reminiscences must, therefore, be scrappy and disjointed.

In 1908, at the earnest request of Swami Ramakrishnananda—Swami Brahmananda's illustrious Gurubhāi (brother-disciple) and the then President of the Madras Math—he came down to Madras, for the first time. Madras had not known him, nor much heard of him. When the great Swami Vivekananda returned triumphantly, after his marvellous work in the West, in January 1897, the public were dazzled by his brilliance and had their attention riveted on him. Little was known, at Madras, about his great Master, and much less about his worthy disciples. It was not until Swami Ramakrishnananda was able to establish the Math here and give it a habitation—eleven years after his first advent—that he thought of inviting his Gurubhais to visit Madras. The first to be requested was the chief of them, the spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Ramakrishnananda had a loving veneration and profound reverence for Swami Brahmananda, surpassed only by his supreme devotion to Sri Ramakrishna. The stir that was created in the small monastery at Mylapore, the serious concern and thought that were spent upon the arrangements for his reception and provision for his comforts and conveniences, and the personal and meticulous attention paid by Sasi Maharaj,[3] led us into an insight, beforehand, of the great personality and of the high esteem which the Head of the Madras Math had for this august personage. Every little detail was given the best attention—where he would sit, where he would meditate, where he would sleep, where he would have his retiring place, the water to drink, the meals he should have, etc.

When Maharaj arrived, it was a day of quiet, joyous festivity in the small Math. When we met him at the railway station and at the Math, we felt we met a majestic prince among monks and had the benediction of his loving presence. Sasi Maharaj had already told us that to see Maharaj was to have a glimpse of the Paramahamsa himself. He settled down in his new place quietly, as if in a routine surrounding. On the evening, distinguished men of Madras dropped in one by one to see the Swami, as Maharaj would not care to face any public meeting. Prominent among those were the late V. Krishnaswamy Iyer and T. R. Sundaram Iyer. These two, who had their contact with Swami Vivekananda himself, had been evincing considerable interest in the Ramakrishna Movement. When these gentlemen were introduced by Sasi Maharaj to Maharaj, the former, with his characteristic forwardness, asked Sasi Maha-

[1] Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, used to be addressed and referred to more familiarly as 'Maharaj' or 'Raja Maharaj'.

[2] Belur Math, Dt. Howrah (near Calcutta).

[3] The familiar form of address referring to Swami Ramakrishnananda.

raj, 'Does Swamiji lecture?' The reply came from Sasi Maharaj. 'No. We who fight under his banner take one or two words that fall from his lips and spin them into lectures'. Anybody who wanted doubts to be cleared in spiritual matters were promptly referred to Sasi Maharaj, as he was a scholar and a great Sadhu.

In the evening, after *ārātrikam*,[4] Sasi Maharaj would go to Maharaj to prostrate. Maharaj would rush into his room and bolt the door to avoid Sasi Maharaj touching his feet. But Sasi Maharaj, undaunted, would lay his head at the threshold outside and carry out his resolve. Maharaj used to take regular walks and used to make jokes at Sasi Maharaj, saying, 'Your walk is all from bed to backyard and from backyard to bed'. Once, when he was observing a prominent adherent of the Math coming along the road slovenly jogging on, he remarked that 'a Sadhu need not be a fool'.

During the first Christmas after his advent, Sister Devamata set up a shrine in her house and invited Maharaj to join in the celebration ; and his participating in the function produced a thrilling atmosphere which was most impressive.

The Home (Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Madras) had been then in existence only for four years, with sixteen boarders and was in a small, rented house. . . . We invited Maharaj to visit it and bless it. He and Sasi Maharaj graciously condescended to do so. After visiting it, he very kindly stepped into my house which was opposite to the Home and accepted the reception offered to him in the Shāstric[5] manner.

It was well known that when he went on a pilgrimage to Rameswaram, he had a wonderful vision of Sri Minākshi at Madurai, and lost himself in ecstasy for more than an hour. At Rameswaram he desired to go straight to the temple from the station without getting into the quarters arranged for him. He said, 'We have come for worship. We must do that first before attending to our comforts'. He was then slightly indisposed and it was evening. He could not therefore have his bath in the sea. He took a little water in his fingers and sprinkled it over his tongue as the substitute for the bath, with closed eyes and indrawn mind.

* * *

In July 1916, Maharaj came for the second time to Madras. This time, he had not Sasi Maharaj in Madras. . . . On the 4th August he laid the foundation-stone for the new Math on the land purchased from the Kapāliswara temple. The plan for this had been prepared under Maharaj's instructions at Calcutta. But with the execution of the work he was not satisfied. He told me several times that the portion of the building just below the shrine was wasted. It should have been used as a very nice living place, cool and airy as it was and not wasted as a passage.

The land in front of the Math was still owned by a cantankerous gentleman who wanted to exploit the situation and make money. He even offered to sell it to a Christian missionary for a fabnlous price. I felt very much worried over it. Maharaj, seeing my concern, consoled me saying, 'Don't worry, Ramanuja! The man himself will offer it to us. Guru Maharaj will surely have it'. Strange to say, within a short time, the man died, his sons became bankrupt and offered the land to us at a very low price. I arranged for the purchase through the proceeds of a benefit drama.

He went on a pilgrimage to selected places. He had come with a plan to visit all places connected with Sri Ramanuja. He never divulged it to anybody. He went to Sriperumbudur, then to Kanchipuram. At the latter place he felt sorry for the neglected condition in which holy places connected with Ramanuja's spiritual life were kept and instructed the trustees to restore them to their sanctified state. He even offered a contribution to enclose those places in the temple to prevent being trod upon. He went to Melkote, Srirangam, and Tirukoshtiyur, from where

[4] Service at the shrine.

[5] In the orthodox traditional manner.

Sri Ramanuja had broadcast, out of love for humanity, the sacred *mantram* he had received from his Acharya under promise of secrecy. During this period Maharaj was full of Ramanuja and would be delighted to hear everything available about him.

One of these days, when I accompanied him to Kapaliswar temple in Mylapore for worship, after *darśan* of the *liṅgam,* he inquired of me where he could find a Bilva tree under which he could sit for some time and meditate. No doubt, there was a tree behind a small shrine, but it was in a neglected condition, the ground around being kept dirty. He was very sorry that provision for meditation by the worshippers had not been made in temples. He said that people who go to the temple to worship, after *darśan* of the Murti, should sit down in the premises of the temple itself and meditate upon the form they had had the *darśan* of. I was then reminded of the habit, which is even now kept alive by some ladies, of sitting on the threshold of the temple for a few seconds on their return from the shrine after *darśan.* Until Maharaj told me of the sacred tradition, I was not aware of the purpose why the ladies sit on the threshold before returning from the temple. The sitting on the threshold is a relic of the sacred purpose of sitting down for Dhyāna.

Tirupati was also included in the pilgrimage. Arrangements were made for the stay of Maharaj and party for two days on the hills. When Maharaj went over there, he was in such an ecstatic mood that nobody dared to remind him of the scheduled programme of starting on the third day. He stayed there for eight days. When he came down, he told me at Mylapore that, left to himself he would have stayed there for even two months, for he found that of all places Triupati temple was the only place where 'Chaitanyam' remained unbroken. These great souls are like water-diviners, to find out which place is surcharged with spiritual atmosphere and is conducive to spiritual Sādhanā. It is said that Sri Ramakrishna discovered similarly the actual birth-place of Sri Chaitanya, in the middle of the river, which was verified as correct by referring to the diversion of the river at that spot years ago.

On 6th May 1917, Maharaj laid the foundation-stone of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, in the new land gifted to it for the purpose. It was an unpretentious private function when he sat on the spot, meditated, and blessed the project. He returned to Calcutta thereafter.

* * *

Though we had been closely moving with Sasi Maharaj and other members of the Order, what practical steps should be taken towards spiritual Sadhana did not occur to us. It was only Swami Srivasananda that put the idea into me of getting initiated. For some time, it was soaking in my mind.

A sudden urge rose in me to go to Belur and seek the refuge of Maharaj. With the permission of my mother, I immediately proceeded alone to Belur, promising her that I would myself cook my special diet of wheat in the Math. When I went there, Maharaj was away to Dacca. I had to wait at the Math for his return. After nearly ten days Maharaj returned to Calcutta. All the important members of the Math went over to Calcutta to Balaram Babu's house to receive him. I also went with them. When I prostrated before him he recognized me and obviously my purpose also and patted me on my back. I felt most happy. There was a fortnight still for Sri Ramakrishna's Tithi Puja. Giving of Sannyasa and Brahmacharya Ashrama and initiation were to be done on that day. The intervening time was the most momentous period in my life. The only thought and concern that were eating me up were whether Maharaj would graciously accept me. How to communicate my purpose to him was the only thought. I had mentioned it casually to Amulya Maharaj (Swami Sankaranandaji, the present President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission). But yet I thought, I must myself supplicate Maharaj. How to get at him? He was always surrounded by devotees. Rising very

early in the morning, he sits up in the room in meditation and the room gets filled up before day-break with devotees trying to avail themselves of the rare opportunity of the atmosphere of meditating in his presencee. In perfect stillness, more than fifty people sit in deep meditation, waiting for Maharaj's coming down. Often, when he opens his eyes, he will start Nāma-sankirtana, beginning with *'Hari Haraye namaḥ, Kṛṣṇa Yādavāya namaḥ; Yādavāya Mādhavāya Keśavāya namaḥ'*. The whole audience will keep singing and he will be in perfect communion, enjoying the Sankirtana.

When he goes out in the compound for a stroll, he will always be followed by a number of Brahmacharins and others. My only concern was to find out what Maharaj was doing at each time. I kept a vigil always. Suddenly, one day in the evening, when he was walking on the ground with only two Brahmacharins following, I was watching whether these two would leave Maharaj alone. Fortunately for me, Maharaj sent one on some errand. There was another. I desired very much that he also must leave Maharaj. As my good luck would have it, he also went out. Maharaj was alone, standing in the compound. I rushed from the room, ran up to him, and clasped his feet. My joy was so great that words would not come out. By signs and in a low voice, I begged of Maharaj to take me under his shelter. He benignly nodded. That was all that I wanted and I considered it the happiest day of my life. Amulya Maharaj put me then in the way of getting prepared for the event ; and I had the blessings of Maharaj.

During my stay at the Math, on this occasion, Maharaj used to take special care of me and of my food. I was along with the congregation in the dining hall, giving up my attempt to cook for myself. Maharaj would affectionately come to my place and ask curds to be served to me, for we 'Dakshinis' were used to it.

It is very rarely that one could hear the voice of Maharaj at the Math. One day, he gathered all the Brahmacharins and members and delivered a very forceful talk. It was all in Bengali and we never heard Maharaj talk so vehemently. It was to impress upon his audience the supreme importance of service and of the subordinate place of lonely Tapasya without service.

* * *

For the third time, Maharaj came to Madras in 1920. He opened the new building of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home on 10th May 1921. He performed the dedication ceremony of the new building of the Home, the foundation-stone of which he had laid. It was a very imposing function. From the last rented house a grand procession started with Maharaj, Swami Shivananda, and other Swamis at the head. Maharaj said, 'For a *gṛha-praveśam*,[6] three things are essential: a white cow, Sālagramam, and Tulasi plant'. These came in as gifts and with all the temple paraphernalia, music and chanting, the procession came to the new premises and the dedication ceremony was completed with great enthusiasm.

On the opening day, Maharaj had 'Rāmanām Bhajan' conducted in one of the halls of the new Home. Later on, Maharaj condescended to stay in that particular hall for a month and thus sanctified it.

At the end of the period, he started the Puja at the Home shrine. It was 11 o'clock in the morning. After this Puja, he asked me to drive him to the beach. For about half an hour he was gazing with fixed attention at the vast sea ; and I was informed later that this was 'Akhanda-svarupa Dhyāna'.

Madras was getting hotter and I enquired of Maharaj whether he would like to stay at the hill-station Ootacamund, and if so I would arrange for it. He at once asked me whether Ootacamund was a 'kshetra' or a 'Tirtha'. Unless the place was so he would not care to go there. He then said that one had to be very careful about the food one took, especially when one was making spiritual practice. Clean food and water were the

[6] First ceremonial entry into a new house.

most essential things. He mentioned to me that when he was practising Yoga in Banaras, a Bhakta insisted on his taking 'Bhiksha' in his house. Reluctantly though, he complied and the result was owing to some impurity in the food, he suffered from fever for over a fortnight. While doing spiritual practices, he said, nerves become exceedingly sensitive and even a little impurity affects the person and that was why Yogis ran over to forests for pure air, clean food, and for uncontaminated water from fresh wells.

Taking advantage of Maharaj's presence, 'Durga Puja', on the scale adopted in Bengal, was performed at the Madras Math, for the first time. Maharaj took keen interest in it and directed all the details. My little daughter Padma was worshipped as Kumāri. From that day onwards, Maharaj used to call her 'Mā! Mā!' and very often he used to go to my house and give her sweets. On the last day of the Puja, Maharaj, with Ramlal Dada (nephew of Sri Ramakrishna), danced in the Math hall. It was a wonderful sight to see.

In November 1921, Maharaj attended a drama 'Mira Bai' of the Madras Secretariat Party, at the Victoria Public Hall and sat out fully. I took the part of the Rana. He appreciated the performance and suggested to me that I might take up for acting Girish Babu's[7] *Bilvamaṅgal*. I took up the suggestion earnestly, got the drama translated into Tamil, and began to act it. But I was not fortunate to do it in the presence of Maharaj, for before it could be brought out he passed away.

Though we had contacts with Maharaj for a number of days, the words that passed between us must have been very few. I remember one evening, sitting before him for one hour and a half, only three words passed from him to me enquiring about my 'Japam'. We were all in his thoughts though rarely expressions were given to them. I have heard that in his last days he gave all his disciples assurance that whenever they want his help he will always make himself available to them. Even in his last days, he is reported to have said, with cheer, 'I am floating on a leaf of faith on the Ocean of Brahman'.

A look of Swamiji (Vivekananda) turned a Station Master into Swami Sadananda. A touch of Swamiji turned 'Kidi' into a recluse. Innumerable were the lives that were changed by the touch of Maharaj.

From the spiritual magaziñes which were kindly made available to me by Providence, I have been able to take only such little as could make me what I am.

[7] Girish Chandra Ghosh, the great actor-dramatist of Bengal.

PAX DEI

The sun shines through the window-pane
And it is Thee.
The flower adorns Thy altar
And it is Thee.
The clock ticks, the seconds fly, the
hours pass,—
And it is Thee.

Thy music weaves a pattern
Intricate and vast.
Where? When? How? Why?
I look up to the sunlit pane
And I am blinded.

O Thou great ennobling Spirit,
I fall upon my face
At Thy feet.
Ecstatic tears
Clear paths along my face
Where beams of Thy light
Like sparkling jewels
Wink back at Thee.

Separation? No.
Not while I am Thine.

—STUART GRAYSON

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE FUTURE OF HINDUISM

By the Editor

The religion of the Hindus, widely and popularly known as Hinduism, is incontestably history's most ancient and at the same time most rational and synthetic exposition of human ends and means. According to many it is the Sanātana Dharma, the Eternal Religion of Man, which is, in its fundamental aspects, without beginning (*anādi*) and without end (*ananta*) and which forms the basis and background of the religions of the world. The word 'Hinduism' itself is a misnomer as applied to the Vedic or Aryan or Indian religion and philosophy and more recently this term has unfortunately acquired a narrow and specifically sectarian concept. All the same one cannot easily and quickly replace this term by any other, howsoever appropriate, because the nomenclature 'Hinduism' has gained currency throughout the world and is being freely and unreservedly used everywhere to denote the cultural traditions, religious practices, and philosophical tenets of the vast majority of the Indian people. Hence when most people constantly use the words 'Hindu' and 'Hinduism', they mean all right, though they may be using knowingly or unknowingly, terms that are historically inaccurate. Today these words have lost their significance from their derivative point of view and there seems to be no ambiguity in their meaning for all practical purposes.

When we speak of the future of Hinduism, there is not the least intention of prejudging future history or prophesying the shape of things to come. For, where transcendental truths and a search for them through spiritual means are concerned, there can be no serious attempt at investigating or interpreting such basic ideas as God, soul, and the universe and their interrelation in a purely academic or naturalistic manner. The laws of the Spirit are immutable and imperishable and require no historian or social scientist to survey their past workings or indicate their future trends. This is all the more so in the case of Hinduism which has come down to us undisturbed in its essentials through trackless centuries and which has not to depend for its authority entirely on any historical personality or any book of revelations. Though every Hindu is expected to acknowledge the general authority of the Vedas, his allegiance is not so much to the books only as to the accumulated and eternally existent spiritual truths and practices recorded in those books by the seers of old who discovered or enunciated them. While it has produced the largest number of saints, prophets, and incarnations in the world, Hinduism, in its purest form, stands above, beyond, and independent of these great souls. The moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between soul and God have been there even from before our knowledge of them and would remain even if we forgot them.

When, therefore, we speak of the past or future of Hinduism, we take for granted that its core is unchangeably sound and stable and only take into account the active manifestation and practical expression of its spiritual content in the life of the people at different times and under varying conditions of social and cultural *milieu*. The supersensuous truths of religion are seen to reveal themselves spontaneously to men of intuitive perception. But such men are few and far between, and to the majority these truths remain a closed book unless they are interpreted and reinterpreted in a manner easily comprehensible to them in theory and practice. In the remote past, when the Hindu religion was free from internal conflicts and external exotic influences, the nation as a whole prospered and reached heights of

glory. It sent forth missionaries of peace, love, and brotherhood to far off countries. Compared with this, the Hindu religion of the recent past presented a very different picture. Two sister religions—Christianity and Islam—and many internal sects and creeds, some openly challenging the very fundamentals of the mother faith, had taken deep root. In the altered environment, though social rigidity and cultural instability were witnessed, in matters religious, the same all-embracing catholicity of Hinduism as before came to the rescue and created conditions,—with suitable adaptations,—needed for harmonious coexistence.

Modern Hinduism, of the last two centuries, has had to contend with still stranger and more disturbing forces from the domain of occidental materialistic and mechanistic civilization. In spite of its vast and varied developments, the ancient religion of this land, which had already absorbed and assimilated alien faiths and communities, now faced the great onrush of political and cultural currents from the Continent. Indigenous religious ideas, ingrained in the nation's inherited culture and tradition, were repeatedly assailed, belittled, and ridiculed by a carefully conceived exotic system of educational-political-missionary enterprises. This brought on cultural stagnation, confusion of ideals and norms, and disregard of the ancient heritage and fascination for anything and everything Western. Religion and Dharma having disappeared from the field of public relations and been given hardly a meagre place in private life, the national righteousness showed signs of ebbing away, making the nation more and more prone to weakness, cowardice, and intellectual thraldom. Political conquest was being followed up by cultural conquest and what was even more alarming was the gradual undermining of the deep spiritual note of Indian civilization and the rapid crumbling of the aims and values for which the nation had stood for thousands of years. In this situation too, Hinduism has exhibited a remarkable degree of self-possession, adaptation, and resurgence. A faith that has sustained Hindu society for over seven thousand years—if the probable dates of the earliest Indian civilization are to be accepted—cannot be expected to face disintegration or dissolution unless the Hindus themselves are so unmindful as to let this happen.

Though oft-repeated, the following words of Sri Krishna, in the *Gita,* most truly present the spirit underlying the periodic reawakening and resurgence of Dharma in the successive phases of ebb and flow of national life:

> 'Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma and rise of Adharma, then I body Myself forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age'.

Thus, whenever Hinduism, in the long course of its history, by the natural process of time, showed signs of deterioration in moral and spiritual stamina, a wave of power in the form of a superman or divine incarnation appears among mortals and serves to stem the tide of unrighteous forces that militate against the highest good of the people and simultaneously sets in motion a powerful movement of spiritual renaissance. These great epoch-making teachers and seers of the world have been the greatest lovers and well-wishers of mankind inasmuch as they always come not to destroy but to revive and reconstruct the dilapidated social, cultural, and religious edifices on the unshakable foundations of the past. Every prophet or Avatara, who has had an honoured place in Hinduism, neither condemned the past nor despaired of the future. The fundamentals were ever there, in their pristine glory, and the world-teacher was called upon to restate them in a new light and with renewed force. In doing so, he accepted all the teachers that had preceded him and yet added his own much-needed and original contribution to the making of a new world order.

Modern India and Hinduism have witnessed many a movement of no small significance devoted to political, social, and religious reform. But to the man whose soul is hungry for spiritual food no useful purpose would be served by adding to or reshuffling his stock of

doctrines, scriptures, and rituals. His problem is essentially philosophical and psychological and he is turning away from God and religion because he is frightened more by pseudo-religion than by real religion. The average educated Hindu found himself in such a predicament at the time when Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of new India, appeared on the spiritual horizon. It is well over a hundred years since the advent of Sri Ramakrishna ushered in an epoch of synthesis, catholicity, and religious dynamism in the annals of Hinduism. He invigorated the ancient ideas and ideals of the land and exemplified them in his own life, thereby opening the eyes of all sections of Hindus, and even non-Hindus, to the invaluable cultural heritage of India. Passivity, often wrongly associated with a religious life, was replaced by balanced activity; Indians of all persuasions were taught to live and act in unity and harmony, irrespective of religion, caste, or creed; renunciation, unselfish service, and love of God were re-emphasized as the great ideals of India, their form and extent varying with the individual's stage of life (*āśrama*), but their ultimate goal remaining the same for all. It is here that we find the unparalleled contribution which Sri Ramakrishna has made to Hinduism and through it to the entire world. And this unique phenomenon, whose effects are hardly beginning to be felt and understood, is bound to have resounding echoes in distant lands and also exert an unerring and enormous influence nearer at home on the future of Hinduism itself for centuries to come.

In the context of the world events of today, mere formal religious faith and practice has lost favour with the majority of the educated and enlightened humanity. Not that they are irreligious or anti-religious. But they are looking for a deeper spiritual philosophy which will enable them to find a way out of personal and group unrest and also keep for life's purposes the most treasured scientific and material advances. Renunciation has become an idea that is viewed with dread or suspicion, in so far as people still associate renunciation with complete world and life negation and quite often they see that the form only remains while the spirit is lost. It is therefore held by misinformed critics that Hinduism has failed the moderner because it has insisted too much on a monastic ideal of ascetic denial. But informed students of Hindu religion and philosophy know such criticism to be unfounded.

In the life of Sri Ramakrishna, who was the King of Sannyasins and who attained complete mastery over all the forces that bind the soul to the flesh, we find a clear enunciation of what renunciation means to the householder and to the Sannyasin. The Master always insisted that one should mind one's duties to parents, wife, and children before one thinks of leaving them even to become a recluse. He never approved any sort of escapism or pseudo-renunciation. As he himself has observed, one who thinks of renouncing without making provision for one's dependents is heartless, 'and a man without compasion is unworthy of the name of man'. Tender in his nature like the softest of flowers, Sri Ramakrishna, far from forbidding anyone from feeling or showing legitimate affection, offered the man in the world as much hope and means of the Great Freedom as he did the man of total renunciation.

Hinduism has given scope for religious charity, and gifts or endowments, however small, are recommended as means to salvation. But modern ideas of secularism have engendered an outlook which views such charity as indiscriminate and unhelpful. For Sri Ramakrishna charity meant nothing less than the love of God in all men. For, nobody can truly love man unless and until he loves the God in him. He says: 'You are seeking God? Very well, look for him in man. The Divinity manifests Itself in man more than in any other object. In truth, God is in everything; but His power is more or less manifest in other objects. God incarnate in man is the most manifest power of God in the flesh. . . . Man is the greatest manifestation of God'. Hence he declared that the attainment of

perfect knowledge is to see God in every man. Charity may begin at home, but need not remain permanently confined there. If so limited, it would be not charity (*dayā*) but 'love of self' (*māyā*). Charity, which is not limited to self, family, sect, or country, raises the giver and leads him to God.

Humanism, deriving its inspiration from scientific pragmatism and natural ethics, is a movement of some consequence in many parts of the world. It tends to make life independent of God and spirituality. Such godless materialism is not entirely unknown to Hindn society. Yet, what strikes one as bizarre is that the humanist's argument, viz. that good life is possible without God and that it is practicable to love and serve the sufferer even withont any need to realize the Divinity in him, is finding favour with many of our intellectuals who should know better. But the Hindu idea has been that unselfish motives alone can inspire service 'without expectation of return' and the *Bhagavad Gita* also lays down Nishkāma Karma as the most effective means of reaching the goal along the path of Karma Yoga. It has been verified and demonstrated in the lives of Indian saints and seers that when the consciousness of the Divine in men is the motive of service it is doubly effective—the person served receives the full benefit of the service, withont obligations, and the person who serves feels infinitely happy and elevated and finds that such service becomes a profitable and potent means of God-realization.

In this respect Sri Ramakrishna's warning cannot go unheeded. He told his followers to be on their guard against ostentatious philanthropy, which, lacking the warmth of spiritual awareness behind it, gradually degenerates into a subtle expression of vanity, egoism, and a desire for glory. To a devoted philanthropist who spoke to him about founding hospitals and relief works, Sri Ramakrishna said: 'Yes, but only on condition that you remain detached (i.e. unattached or disinterested) in doing good'. 'Jiva is Shiva (all living beings are God). Who then dare talk of showing mercy to them? Not mercy, but service, service, for man mnst be regarded as God!'—the Master had once declared while in a state of Samādhi. And Swami Vivekananda (then Narendra), who was present, heard these pregnant words and exclaimed, 'I have heard a great saying today. I will proclaim the living truth to the world'. One of his brother-disciples, who was also present on the occasion, said, much later, 'If anyone asks for the foundation of the innnmerable acts of service done by Ramakrishna Mission since then, he will find it there'.

Untonchability, as it is so called, which has all but disappeared, has justifiably been a target for the critical arrows directed against Hindu society. It is wrong to hold religion responsible for this weakness. During the long years of his Sādhanā, Sri Ramakrishna set one of the noblest examples in the relation between the higher and the lower castes. He, of an orthodox Brahmin family, went to the humble dwelling of a Pariah, one of the lower classes, and wished to be allowed to clean the place. The Pariah family would not, of course, even dream of agreeing to such a proposal. So the Master went unnoticed, at dead of night, when the family was asleep, and cleaned the place, wiping the floor of the Pariah's dwelling with his own long hair. He prayed: 'O Mother, make me the servant of the Pariah, make me feel that I am even lower than the Pariah'. Today the whole country, including the Government, is alive to this important issue of removal of nntouchability, and the sooner this blot on the social escutcheon is obliterated the better for the future of Hinduism itself.

The caste system of the Hindus has aroused not a little controversy. None can predict the future place of this socio-economic institution in the shape of things to come. Once again the blame for the ills of present-day 'casteism' is wrongly laid at the door of religion. Whatever its defects today, and whether it remains or goes as the changing times demand, there is no wisdom in persistently decrying what can be remedied with-

out acrimony and with all-round co-operation. In answer to the question, 'Do you observe caste?', put to him by a well known contemporary social and political leader, Sri Ramakrishna said: 'How can I say Yes? I ate curry at Keshab Sen's house. . . . You see, caste restrictions fall away of themselves. As cocoanut and palm trees grow up, the branches drop off of themselves. Caste conventions drop off like that. But don't tear them off, as those fools do (meaning some extremist reformers of his day)'. As a boy of nine, when Sri Ramakrishna was invested with the holy thread, he stuck to his earlier promise to and accepted the first Bhiksha from Dhani, the blacksmith woman of the village, notwithstanding orthodox objections. Even this little incident has great significance for the future of Hinduism. He boldly set aside ordinarily desirable social obligations and conventions when he saw in the blacksmith woman purity of heart and sincere devotion. Sri Ramakrishna often used to say that there is no high or low caste or rank among those who are deeply devoted to God, for Bhaktas are all of one class.

The attitude of the mild Hindu towards the followers of other religions has always been one of extreme toleration and welcome regard. True to her ages-old ideal, viz. 'Truth is One; sages call it variously', India has kept her hospitable doors open to all the religions of the world. Within Hinduism itself there are innumerable sects and schools of thought, all coexisting in perfect harmony, as an object-lesson in 'unity in diversity'. In Sri Ramakrishna Hinduism has once again found that rare combination of intensity of spirituality and extensity of universality, a combination which has enabled Hinduism to regain and consolidate its own spiritual and secular values. Sri Ramakrishna has shown where, amidst all its many divisions and offshoots scattered over the land in the course of its immemorial history, lies the true unity of the Hindu religion. The future of Hinduism is inseparably bound up with the other religions of the world and India stands once more in the van of civilization. Hindu thought, though ancient and idealistic, has immense potentialities for promoting human solidarity and brotherhood. In her long line of divine exemplars of her ideas and ideals, India of today and of the near future has the extraordinary personality and character of Sri Ramakrishna to give her a rational interpretation of what she holds most dear and also to unite all religions and sects within her borders in the quest for the Highest Good.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN PRESENT-DAY INDIA

By Swami Nikhilananda

Religion has played a vital part in the creation and preservation of Indian culture. Even today prophets and philosophers like Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, and Chaitanya are regarded as India's national heroes. Every aspect of Indian life bears the impress of religion. Mahatma Gandhi said: 'I am but a humble seeker after truth, and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity, whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian, or ethical, is directed to that end'. Swami Vivekananda, a great patriot-saint of modern India, wrote: 'The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself. The banner of the Spirit cannot be raised too high in this country. In the Spirit alone is salvation'. India's cultural contribu-

tion to the outside world, either through the Buddhist missionaries of olden times or through the contemporary Vivekananda, has been in the spiritual field. A few introductory words about Hinduism in general may be useful here.

Even during the earliest period of India's cultural history, the Hindu thinkers became convinced of the transitory and unsubstantial nature of the sense-perceived world. Through reasoning, introspection, and contemplation, they discovered an unchanging Reality in man, which they called Ātman, and also in the universe, which they called Brahman. They further realized the identity of Brahman and Atman. The aim of Hindu philosophy is the intellectual apprehension of Ultimate Reality, and that of religion is its realization through certain disciplines and the application of the knowledge of the Reality in daily life. The Hindu philosophers never denied the reality of the world and life for an average person. Hence such mundane subjects as ethics, sociology, politics, theology, and physical science were developed by them in minute detail.

The key to the understanding of Hindu religion is the word *dharma,* which is profound in its implications and varied in its definition. Often translated as 'duty', 'righteousness', and 'religion', the word is somewhat similar to Thomas Aquinas's 'Eternal Law'—'the name given to the first law, which is the source of all other laws'. The *dharma* determined by the past action of the individual is his duty, which everyone must fulfil in order to qualify himself for higher growth. In the Hindu tradition duty and obligations, and not rights and privileges, mould human conduct in society.

The formulation of the caste system and the various stages and ideals of life shows that Hindu religion utilizes the life of the world for the realization of the transcendental truth. Spiritual wisdom is most highly prized in India. The Brahmin caste is its creator, the military its protector, and the merchant its propagator. The Shudra caste contributes physical service for the preservation of the culture. The four castes, in their relationship to one another, are guided by justice, which again is based upon truth. Thus the caste system is based upon justice and truth. Its aim, though it may seem strange at the present time, is to eliminate ruthless competition in society and establish harmony among its different parts. Through it the rights of the individual are balanced by his obligations to the social organism.

The life of a normal person is divided into four stages: the first is devoted to the acquisition of knowledge ; the second, to the rearing of a family and the discharging of one's duties to society; and the third, to the life of retirement and the contemplation of the eternal verities. During the last stage, a man relinquishes exclusive loyalty to family or State and becomes a citizen of the world, devoting himself to the welfare of others. Likewise, every normal person should pursue four ideals of life, namely, righteousness, wealth, sense-pleasure, and lastly, liberation from the bondage of earthly existence. Through the disciplined enjoyment of natural desires one ultimately transcends them. Hindu philosophy does not deny the world, but spiritualizes it. To embrace the universe after transcending its limitations is the goal of religion.

The religious history of India can be divided into three parts. During the first part, when the Hindu kings were the preservers of culture, it was free, creative, and dynamic. With the Moslem conqnest began the second period, when society became conservative and tried to protect itself with a fence of rigid customs and rituals. Religion degenerated into mere dogma, and philosophy into hair-splitting logic. But saints and mystics, born from time to time, saved society from total annihilation.

Indian history entered into its third period with the British conquest of the country, especially with the introduction of English education during the middle of the nineteenth century. The Christian missionaries intro-

duced the element of social service in religion. The schools imparted the rational and scientific education of the West, while Indologists translated the Hindu scriptures into English and made them accessible to the educated youth. Religion was studied following the scientific method of the West, and religious experiences were subjected to the test of reason. The slogans of the French Revolution awakened an intense desire for an all-round social reform, especially the elimination of the many glaring injustices towards women and members of the lower classes. The effect of Western culture on Indian minds was varied. One section wanted to recreate Hindu society totally according to Western light. As a reaction, another section wanted to preserve the old orthodoxy and reject everything that smacked of the West. And a third section avidly took up the study of Western culture and with its help discovered the greatness of their own spiritual legacy. To this gronp belonged many of the builders of modern India, from Rammohan Roy, through Swami Vivekananda, Tilak, Ranade and Rabindranath Tagore down to Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Bose. With the help of the powerful solvent of the scientific knowledge of the West, they wanted to dissolve the effete encrustations of present-day Hinduism, thus revealing its pristine essence.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed the advent of several outstanding religious thinkers, like Rammohan Roy, Dayananda, Ramana Maharshi, and Aurobindo Ghose. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda have been hailed as the prophets of the new India. Vivekananda emphasized service to men as the best way of worshipping God. Ramakrishna, too, said that religion cannot be practised when the stomach is empty.

Fortunately, India's spiritual culture never showed any hostility towards knowledge in any form. Physical science has been pursued from time out of mind with the same respect as religion or super-science. Therefore the religious leaders of modern India have shown no repugnance to science and technology, without which India's poverty, illiteracy, ill health, and general social backwardness cannot be removed. For hundreds of years the devout Hindus accepted their present misfortune as the result of an irrevocable past. But today they know that it is not so, and they are determined to enjoy the material amenities of life.

But discerning Hindu minds will not allow alien ideas to blow their society off its foundations, though they keep all its doors and windows open to welcome a healthy breeze from anywhere in the world. India will learn many things from foreign countries. The nation that refuses to learn is already dead. But India will not go before the world as a beggar. She will exchange her spiritual treasure for material goods received from outside.

India obtained her political freedom in 1947. Free India contains millions of Moslems and Christians. In order to remove any suspicion of fanaticism, the present political leaders call their government a secular one. This does not mean that India encourages a Godless culture. But she does not want one Indian citizen to discriminate against another on account of his religious beliefs. The Indian constitution forcefully excludes any kind of religious favouritism.

Of all the forces that are working in India at the present time, religion is the most vital one. This fortunately is not in conflict with such cherished ideals of the modern world as freedom, democracy, respect for others, and social justice. Hinduism supplies them with a spiritual foundation. The Vedic ideal of the divinity of the soul is the spiritual basis of democracy and freedom. The Hindu ideal of the harmony of religions is the key to the fraternal relationship between the different faiths. The Vedantic ideal of the oneness of existence gives the rational interpretation of ethical virtues. For her own sake and the welfare of the world, India must fight the materialistic interpretation of life and the universe with the spiritual experience of her saints and philosophers.

MEN MUST CHOOSE

By Arnold J. Toynbee

In our day we are living through a change in the scale of human affairs which is moving almost too fast for us to keep track of it. Within the year a jet plane has flown from India to Great Britain in 24 hours; it is difficult now to recall our thrill when the first plane made the same journey in seven days. The writer of this article, who is 63 years old, used, as a child, to listen to a great-uncle, who served on a sailing ship, describing a voyage in which it had taken him not hours or days, but months, to make the journey from the Thames River to the Hooghly Channel under sail round the Cape of Good Hope.

The Constitution of the United States allowed four months for a newly elected President to put in order his affairs in his home in Georgia or New Hampshire and then make the long ride to Washington. At the date when the U.S. Constitution was drafted, land communications were still much what they had been in the sixth century B.C. when Darius organized the Persian Empire. At both dates, riding on horseback was the fastest means available for covering the ground. In Darius's Persian Empire, as in George Washington's United States, it was a three months' journey from the border—say from Ephesus, on the shore of the Aegean Sea—to the capital at Susa near the head of the Persian Gulf.

Well, what is the size, today, of a United States which has expanded physically in the meantime from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Coast? In the human terms in which we measure distance by our ability to 'annihilate' it, a United States extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific is no larger today than the Persian Empire's pygmy contemporary Attica. In Darius's day the Athenians gave themselves a democratic government in which every citizen participated, not through an elected representative, but in his own person. This direct form of democracy was feasible in the Attica of 508 B.C. because the country was small enough for every citizen, even if his home lay in the most remote of the border districts, to reach the capital and cast his vote within the day.

In 1953 the United States is just about that Attic size; for in 1953 any American citizen can reach Washington within the day from any section, while conversely a President domiciled in the White House, or a presidential candidate encamped at Springfield, Illinois, or at Denver, Colorado, can travel within the day to any spot in the United States where he may choose to make a speech. Of course, today all this travelling is done by air, whereas your Athenian in the sixth century B.C. had to do his travelling on foot, but this technological difference in the means of locomotion is immaterial from the human point of view. In terms of human geography the United States A.D. 1953 is a country of the same scale as Attica in 508 B.C. in the pertinent sense of being a country in which no section is more than a day's journey from the capital.

Indeed, there is a sense in which the United States today is humanly far smaller than Cleisthenes' Attica was—is no larger, in fact, than the room in which the notes for this paper were being written at Princeton, New Jersey. Without stirring from that room, the writer could listen to and look at Chicago while world history, as well as American history, was being made at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions there. Instead of having to attend the conventions in the flesh, he could make the conventions attend on him over the radio just by turning a knob. People all over the world on those same days were

bringing these American conventions into their rooms over the radio, because by this time the world had become so small that American politics had come to be a matter of life and death for the whole of mankind.

This latest change in the scale of human affairs has shrunk—and, in shrinking, has simplified—the human geography of the globe. Every land and sea has suffered a sensational reduction in scale. The former English Channel, which was still an effective strategic obstacle as recently as 1940, now has become almost invisible as the jet plane streaks across it. The British Isles have been reduced to the dimensions, and been parked in the location, of what used to be called the Channel Islands. North America has succeeded to Britain's former role of being an island moored close off the western shore of a continent from which 'the Channel'—as we must now learn to call the Atlantic Ocean—no longer insulates either the estuary of the St. Lawrence or the Bulge of Brazil. But 'a' continent is now a solecism; for today there is only one continent—the one which stretches from the west shore of the Bering Straits to the east shore of the Straits of Dakar—and there also is only one ocean, the Pacific. Even the Pacific, when one thinks of it, is no longer the ocean that it once was.

Thus the mechanical means of transport which we have been inventing during these last 150 years have changed the world's human geography almost out of recognition. What are the human consequences of this technologically engineered human revolution likely to be? We may gain some inkling of them by looking at the sequels to previous revolutions of the kind; for this is not the first time that a revolutionary change of scale has suddenly overtaken human affairs. There was a comparable change about four centuries before our day, as a result of the fifteenth-century Portuguese invention of an ocean-going sailing ship. Before that, there was a change of the same kind in the seventeenth century B.C., as a result of the Central Asian invention of domesticating the horse and harnessing him to a wheeled vehicle. What were the human consequences of a technological revolution in these two cases, in which history already knows the end as well as the beginning of the story?

Any revolution in the means of communication is apt to become the cause, if it is not the effect, of a general revolution in technology, and a general revolution in technology is bound to bring with it a change in the scale of economic, and therefore of military and political, operations.

On the political plane, one regular effect of technological revolutions in the past has been to dwarf the states of the previous standard calibre by overshadowing them with new giant communities geared to the new scale of human operations. On the eve of the fifteenth-century invention of the ocean-faring sailing ship, the standard states of Europe were city-states such as Venice, Genoa, Florence, Milan, Nuremberg, and Ghent. As a result of a Portuguese technological achievement, the standard scale of state suddenly jumped from the city-state class to the nation-state class. Portugal, Spain, France, Britain, the Netherlands—from the sixteenth century till within our own lifetime this string of nation-states along the Atlantic seaboard of the Old World dominated the globe with their shipping, their commerce, their manufactures, their emigrants and their empires. Now, within our lifetime, we have seen these nation-states go the way of Venice and Florence. The invention of the aeroplane has put down European nation-states from their seat and has exalted the United States and the U.S.S.R. In an air age the standard state must be one of a supranational calibre, and in our mid-twentieth-century world there are only two such states.

But, at the pace at which an ever more rapidly advancing technology is now 'annihilating distance', will even the Soviet Union and the United States be massive enough to stay the course? Our age is not merely an air age; it is also an atomic energy age. In a world in which human hands wield this

weapon, is there a future for any state short of a world-state? For only a world-state can put the atom bomb out of action by monopolizing the possession of it, and only a political dispensation which is capable of putting the atom bomb out of action can give mankind the means of saving itself from 'genosuicide'.

History is now moving at a rapidly accelerating speed. What is the moral?

One moral is that, in such times above all, the penalty for looking back and lingering is the fate that overtook Lot's wife. At the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Italian city-states were collectively preponderant over all the neighbouring areas in population, technical ability, and wealth. Individually, though, a Venice or a Milan was a dwarf compared with the gigantic new nation-states—France, Spain, and the rest—which were suddenly arising all around; after the danger threatening Italy from the new 'barbarians' had been advertised by the Italian states' impotence to cope with the French invasion of Italy in 1494, Machiavelli, in the last chapter of *The Prince,* put it to the Italians that they were now confronted with a choice between uniting and going under. In the end, the Italians did take the great Florentine statesman's advice, but not till they had waited for four centuries. Machiavelli died in 1527; Florence joined Piedmont and Milan in constituting a new national Kingdom of Italy in 1861.

In the meantime, a still disunited Italy had paid for her dilatoriness by becoming the battle-field of Europe instead of continuing to be Europe's counting-house and workshop; even when she did at last unite, she did this too late to save her situation. If Italy had brought herself to unite in 1493, she would have been the dominant national state in the Western world throughout the modern age. As it was, she achieved, through her tardy union, nothing but an admission to the lowest place on the list of powers of the nation-state calibre at a stage when the days of such mere nation-states already were numbered.

We can read the same story in the history of the city-states of Ancient Greece; for the warning which the medieval Italian city-states received from Machiavelli was given to the Greek city-states by statesmen whose insight was as clear as his. A fourth-century Athenian Isocrates urged union upon Greek city-states that were being overshadowed by a rising Kingdom of Macedon; a third-century Aetolian Agelaus urged it upon them again when they were being overshadowed by a rising Roman Empire. Each time, the Greeks hesitated and delayed, and the penalty which overtook them was their unification—by conquest instead of by mutual agreement—in a Roman world-state to which, at this stage, the Greeks found themselves compelled to submit as the only alternative to annihilation.

These historical precedents are prophetic warnings to us in our day. They will be Jeremiads for us if we ignore them; but they can equally well be good tidings of salvation for us if we take them to heart and act upon them in time, without lingering and looking backward towards a past which—however home-sick for it we may be—has been relegated to ancient history by a revolutionary change of scale which has been the consequence of a contemporary revolution in technology.

What must we do to be saved? The heart of our difficulty is the difference in pace between the hare-swift movement of the scientific intellect, which can revolutionize our technology within the span of a single lifetime, and the tortoise-slow movement of the subconscious underbelly of the human psyche, which knows no change or shadow of turning and is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. In truth, of course, the subconscious psyche does move, but at a rate which is infinitesimally slow by comparison with the scientific intellect's, and the difference between these two rates of spiritual movement is the crux of the statesman's problem. The inability of the subconscious to fly at the intellect's pace is apt to drive the subconscious, in blind panic, into an irrational, obstinate, anachronistic conservatism which may land us in disaster

unless we can contrive to buy from Fate the time that the subconscious psyche requires for accomplishing the slow and painful task of adapting itself to the inevitable human consequences of a revolutionary change of technological circumstances.

Our racing technology has now suddenly brought within point-blank range of one another a number of human societies which are still psychologically poles apart because, in the sailing-ship age, horse-cart age, and wheelbarrow age in which we have been living right into our own lifetime, these societies have been insulated from one another. We need time to give them their chance of growing as close in spirit as they now are in body, and this need for time spells a need for patience and for mutual forbearance.

We cannot yet foresee the day when the free world and the U.S.S.R. will be able to live together as one flock with one shepherd because—as every citizen of any federal polity knows—it is impracticable for people to co-operate politically unless they already share a common way of life. Until they have grown together to that degree, the best political relation they can hope to achieve is one of live and let live. It is of vital importance for all of us that, in the dangerous age in which we are still strangers to one another, the free world and the U.S.S.R. should maintain a modus vivendi which will save them from drifting into war. The United Nations is the forum in which Elephant and the Whale can continue to do business until they have had time to digest the truth that, however alien from one another they may look, the Elephant, the Whale, and the Bat nevertheless are three fellow members of the mammalian order.

Meanwhile, there is everything to be said for encouraging elephants, whales, and bats to enter into family unions with the other members of their own species. Europe, for example, is ripe for union now. It would, though, be both unnecessary and wrong-headed to confine the membership. Political capacity is the proper test for admission.

There is no reason why such a community should not expand, as the United States has expanded, by successively admitting new states to membership as they qualify for this. Nor need we foresee any limits to a progressive political unification of mankind; for the same technology which, by inventing the atom bomb, has now made world unity Man's only ultimate alternative to self-destruction, also has made world unity feasible for us by placing in our hands physical means of communication which we can use as tools for demolishing the pre-air-age psychological barriers between us.

If only we school ourselves to be patient and forbearing, as well as inventive and constructive; we can look into the future, not indeed without anxiety, but also not without a heartening hope. (*The Atlantic Monthly*)

'Man is born to conquer Nature, it is true, but the Occidental means by "Nature", only physical or external Nature. It is true that external Nature is majestic, with the mountains, and oceans, and rivers, and with its infinite powers and varieties. Yet there is a more majestic internal Nature of man, higher than the sun, moon and stars, higher than this earth of ours, higher than the physical universe, transcending these lives of ours; and it affords another field of study. There the Orientals excel, just as the Occidentals excel in the other. . . . Therefore, it is fitting that, whenever there is a spiritual adjustment it should come from the Orient. It is also fitting that when the Oriental wants to learn about machine-making, he should sit at the feet of the Occidental and learn from him.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

UPANISHADIC CONCEPTION OF PSYCHOLOGY

By Dr. Chinmoy Chatterjee

Psychology is a popular subject of the day and experiments carried on continuously in the past fifty years in Western countries, particularly in the United States of America, are admirable and astonishing. India, in her hoary past, had also some conception about the subject and made experiments in her own way.

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. vi. 1-2) there is a passage which states: 'That which is the subtle portion (*aṇimā*) of curds, when churned (*mathyamānasya*), rises upwards (*ūrdhvaḥ samudīṣati*) and becomes butter (*sarpirbhavati*). In the same manner, when food is eaten (*annasyāśyamānasya*), the subtle portion rises upwards and becomes *manas* (*tanmano bhavati*)'. Shankara, commenting on the Shruti, has stated: 'Food denoted by rice, etc. (*annasya odanādi*), when eaten (*bhujyamānasya*) and churned by air in the heat of the stomach, becomes the subtle portion (*aṇimā*) and rising upwards becomes *manas* (*tanmano bhavati*)'. He also says: 'That subtle portion (*aṇimā*) becomes united with other organs of the *manas* and nourishes (*upacinoti*) the *manas'. Manas* has been described by the same Shruti as the resultant of the food digested (*annamayaṁ hi manaḥ*) (*Ch. Up.* VI. vi. 5).

To make this point more explicit the Shruti introduces a story. Shvetaketu could not follow his father when Uddālaka had said that *manas* originated from food. Uddalaka then asked his son to abstain from food for about a fortnight, but he was permitted to drink as much water as he could, for vital energy depended on water (*āpomayaḥ hi prāṇaḥ*). Shvetaketu abstained from food for fifteen days. Then he came to his father and said: 'What shall I say?'. Uddalaka asked him to repeat the Ṛcaḥ, Yajus, and Sāman verses. Shvetaketu replied: 'They do not occur to me, sir' (*na vai mā pratibhānti*) (*Ch. Up.* VI. vii. 2). Shankara, commenting on the phrase 'they do not occur to me', states: 'I do not see them reflected in my mind (*manasi*)'. Then his father asked him to take food. After that Shvetaketu recalled all the Vedas by *manas* (VI. vii. 4). Then Uddalaka said: 'As of a great lighted fire one ember of the size of a fire-fly, if left, may be made to blaze up again by putting grass upon it, and will burn more than that, similarly one part of the sixteen parts (of *manas*) left to you and that lighted up with food (*sānnena upasamāhitā*) burnt up, by it you now remember the Vedas'.

Shankara, commenting on the Shruti, states: 'That by the processes of *vyāvṛtti* and *anuvṛtti*, i.e. by abstaining from food and taking it again, it may be proved that *manas* originates from food'. The term *manas* occurring in the Upanishads does not indicate the 'mind' as we understand by the term today. The later modification of the original conception of *manas* may mean so. In the Upanishads *manas* is regarded as much material in nature. It has been definitely mentioned in the Shruti that *manas* is the subtle portion of food eaten. (*Ch. Up.* VI. vi. 2).

Grossness of *manas*, in relation to other subtler sheaths, which envelops the soul, has also been thus proved by the Shruti: 'Bhrigu understood that the *manas* was Brahman. Because from the *manas* all the creatures are born (*imāni bhūtāni jāyante*), having been born they exist (*manasā jātāni jīvanti*), and into the *manas* again they enter after having departed from this world'. Since thought is the father of action and sustainer of life, it was but natural for Bhrigu to mistake *manas* for Brahman. *Manas*, both in its microcosmic and macrocosmic aspects, is in a way the

cause, the sustainer, and the element of dissolution in existence (*vide Taitt. Up.*, Bhrigu-Valli). Hence Bhrigu first thought it to be Brahman. But being in doubt he went to his father who again instructed him to perform *tapas* (austerity). Had *manas* been the Final Reality, Varuna would not have asked him to perform *tapas* again.

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it has been stated: '*Manas* holds speech (*vāk*) and name (*nāma*) by feeling them (*vācam ca nāma ca manaḥ anubhavati*). As the closed fist (*muṣṭi*) holds two Āmalakas or two Kola or two Aksha fruits, so does *manas* hold speech (*vāk*) and name (*nāma*)' (*Ch. Up.* VII. iii. 1). It has been declared that *manas* is better than speech (*vāk*). Interpreting the term *manas,* Shankara states: '*Manas* denotes the internal organ which is endowed with the qualities of cogitation (*manasyanaviśiṣṭaṁ antaḥkaraṇaṁ*).

The general psychical energy originates from food and manifests itself through the particular faculties like desire (*kāma*), conviction (*saṅkalpa*), doubt (*vicikitsā*), regard (*śraddhā*), disregard (*aśraddhā*), patience (*dhṛti*), impatience (*adhṛti*), modesty (*hrī*), talent (*dhī*), and fear (*bhī*).

The function of the *manas* has been denoted by the term *manana, manasyati,* and *manute* in the various Upanishads.

The term *manana* has been interpreted by Shankara as *tarkaḥ* (*matirmananaṁ tarkaḥ*) (*Ch. Up.* VII. xviii). In the *Kenopaniṣad* (I. 6), when the Shruti declares that Brahman is beyond the comprehension of the mental faculties (*yanmanasā na manute*), Shankara, commenting on the term *manas,* states, 'Here, by the term *manas* all the tendencies of *manas* such as desire, conviction, doubt, regard, disregard, patience, impatience, modesty, talent, and fear are denoted. The internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*), endowed with these tendencies, is the *manas*'. The retentive faculty of *manas* has already been emphasized in the story of Shvetaketu and Uddalaka.

Commenting on the term *manasyana,* the commentator has thus stated: '*Manasyanaṁ vivakṣābuddhiḥ,* i.e. the term *manasyana* indicates the faculty of expressing the desires (implied in the term *vivakṣābuddhiḥ*) as "I shall learn the Mantras or pronounce them". The desire of pronouncing the Mantras is first expressed (*vivakṣāṁ kṛtvā*); then he learns them *adhīte*). Similarly the desire of performing rites is first expressed; then one engages oneself to do them. In the same way, one first desires sons, cattle, etc., and then adopts means to attain them (*Ch. Up.* VII. iii. 1, Shankara's Comm.).

The functions of the *manas* are therefore first denoted by the term 'desire' (*kāma*). After desire comes *saṅkalpa* (a firm conviction), after distinguishing what should be done and what should not be. (*Ch. Up.* VII. iv. 1).

The term *saṅkalpa* (a firm conviction) has been interpreted by Shankara as one of the tendencies of the Internal Organ (*antaḥkaraṇa vṛttiḥ*) in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* In the *Kenopaniṣad,* he has defined it as one of the tendencies of *manas.*

The Western approach to the problem is entirely different. Psychology to them 'is the science of the conscious and near-conscious activities of living individuals', and to a psychologist conduct is a matter of cause and effect of natural law. They have mostly dealt with the functional aspects. How does a mind work and by what forces—that is their problem, whereas the thinkers of the Upanishads made an attempt to know the composition of *manas* and believed that it was a sort of a 'comprehensive all-penetrating fluid or occult power originating from food eaten by man'.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE*

By James B. Muckle

We come here tonight to delve a little deeper into the religion and philosophy of the world. We come here to honour that great Hindu saint and mystic, Ramakrishna.

As I read once again that great book *Prophet of New India,* I could not help but feel akin to the thinking of that great teacher Ramakrishna and his devoted disciple Vivekananda. India has long been the mother country of many great and famous religions, so it is not unusual that in the nineteenth century another great awakening took place—this time under Ramakrishna. I think it is natural and logical to look over the field of action in religion.

There seem to be three principal types of techniques that man uses to place himself directly into relation with a divine being whom we shall call God. These three are: ritual, supplication, and contemplation; and each has played a part in the major religions which have sought to find this closeness and understanding of God.

Many religions depend on ritual to bring the individual follower into harmony with God. They will build a magnificent, ornate building dedicated to their deity. They will make effective use of subdued lighting, soft carpeting, and the burning of incense and candles to bring disciples into a closeness with God. This ritual really means the doing of the right thing at the right time in the right place in order to achieve a goal. The goal may be seeking help from God in some daily problem. It may be the need of assistance and assurance from a source that is unending and unfailing. It may be comfort, or guidance, or any one of the things that you and I seek from our God. By living according to the 'laws' of God, one hopes and knows that ultimately he will receive this divine relief. There is an automatic relation, as it were, between doing right and receiving the help of the supernatural order. Ritual may be classed as religious because in it many people receive a definite religious experience which causes them to do something about it.

The second approach in religion may be called supplication. This can be supplication through prayer, wherein we bow our heads, or kneel and humble ourselves to God; or sacrifice. We place our God here as a personal God, a Father, or a great saint to whom we can come for help and forgiveness. This is the Christian point of view. Sacrifice, as a type of supplication, is bringing material gifts to be given to God or to the uses of the religious orders. More dramatic is the use of animals, or even people, as actual sacrificial gifts to beg audience with the Father. It is like a small child who wishes to go to a circus and has been told by his father that he cannot go. By cajoling and begging, perhaps threatening or promising, he hopes to change the father's mind.

Whereas in ritual we approach God by laws and order, in supplication we approach Him as an actual person who is capable of making decisions and changing his mind, as it were, by the appeals of his children. The third type of action that is used to approach God is that which we call contemplation. Those of the East have used this mechanism to a greater degree than the usual religions of the West. Here, the individual worshipper prepares his mind (by contemplation) to receive the will of the deity. He readies himself by various devices so that he may be

*Address delivered on the occasion of the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Anniversary celebration (last year) organized by the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, U.S.A. Reverend Muckle is Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Libertyville, Illinois, U.S.A.

acceptable to this reception. The God who is worshipped in this manner is a much less personal God—one who is everywhere and yet not touchable, one who is immanent as well as transcendent. We have termed these religions 'mystical religions' and they are those such as we find in your beloved India.

Whichever the way in which man reaches his God, reach Him he must; for there is a wide river between what man imagines the world should be and what it actually is. The religious beliefs of individuals are systems of orientation which give definition to the situation—to the meaning of nature, of man, or society, the vicissitudes of human life,—and man tries to reduce the tension and strain that just plain living brings. However, there is adjustment and defence needed in explaining things that happen to us—premature death, in fact the mortality of men in general, 'meaningless' suffering, 'the problems of evil', and unearned rewards. Man's knowledge of the physical world and his expectations of what should happen cannot alone constitute adequate adjustment to life. He must add a higher, evaluative element so that these 'irrational' discrepancies, which seem so inevitable, will not break down his way of living.

Man needs a 'light unto his pathway', for he must walk into the light—with vision of his steps. Man can never walk long away from the light, for then he must falter and fall. God has sent His prophets to earth to tell man that there is but one God and that we, His people, are but one people. He has meant His light to shine for all humanity, not to be turned to just one corner of His world or to one section. Where there is light, fear and ignorance melt away.

God has not restricted His teachings to one race, or to one country. Within this room —for each individual there is perhaps a different concept of God because each one has a different need and each a different way to express his union with God. The Word of God is open to all mankind—to withhold it from any man is to withhold life itself.

Many Christians claim the New Testament, but would disclaim the Old. The Old Testament is a root from which two great branches have sprung—the Jewish Faith and the Christian Faith. One needs the background and the teachings and the individual lives and faith of each man in the chain. Out of trials and errors and eventual successes man struggled closer towards the Truth.

Jesus Christ lived and walked with mankind, and when He left His influence was to remain so that man could reach the peak of Ultimate Understanding. His teachings are still above most of our achievements, but they remain as a magnet to hold us from going backward.

Mohammed announced that his followers must acknowledge Moses and Jesus the Christ. He taught that there was but one omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, relentless, merciful, everlasting, and eternal God—'no distinction do we make between any of His messengers; follow ye, O people, the messengers of God! All mankind is but one people'.

Ramakrishna lives very near to the heart of many Western people because they see him as a man and not as an Incarnation as he appears to his disciples. Ramakrishna's very human approach to the daily problems of life is what endears him to many people. Ramakrishna said to his disciples: Are you seeking God? Very well, look for Him in man; the divinity is manifest itself in man more than in any other object. In truth God is everything; but His power is more or less manifest in other objects. God incarnate in man is the most manifest power of God in the flesh—man is the greatest manifestation of God.' And then he goes on to say, 'the attainment of perfect knowledge is to see God in every man'. When a person like Ramakrishna speaks words like these surely he is very close to God.

Centuries ago, Plato was denounced as irreligious because he no longer believed in the existence of Homeric gods in a literal sense, and certainly not in all the tales that were told about them in the mythological

tradition. He felt as much as he understood that religion, to survive in an enlightened society, must attain its answer in One Mind and Will, not in many.

In achieving also a new conscience, it was gradually expressed that God need not be simply all-powerful but that He shall be supremely good. He can neither commit nor approve any evil thing, so that in being true to conscience one is loyal also to God. Indeed, one may say that in being and doing good one does not become happy and tireless until it is regarded as achieving in time some eternal purpose of the Ultimate Divinity. All of us cannot help but feel that if religion is to last and be of value, it must have the aroma of saintly men and women, the assurance of immortality, and some present experience of the supernatural. God does respond to him who faithfully observes, supplicates, and contemplates and submits himself to the good. As Wordsworth said,

> 'I have felt a presence that disturbs me
> With the joy of elevated thoughts'.

The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind. Now is the time for unity. Now is the time to lay aside all self-purposes and know for a certainty that all men are the servants of one God who will bind them together in love and agreement. Mature man is no longer his brother's keeper; he is his brother's brother.

THE PURANAS

By Akshaya Kumar Banerjea

The Purāṇas are a particular type of Sanskrit religio-philosophical literature which has for many centuries played a unique role in the development of Indian national culture. Along with the great Epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, the Puranas have rendered the most inestimable service in bringing about the unity of the moral, social, intellectual, and spiritual culture of the diverse races and tribes and religious communities of this vast sub-continent. They helped greatly in spiritualizing the outlook of all classes of Indian people. They clothed in the simplest and most popular garb and at the same time in the most artistic literary decorations the deepest spiritual realizations and the highest philosophical speculations of the most venerable saints and sages of immortal memory. They expounded, amplified, and illustrated them in all possible ways for making them attractive and easily intelligible to men and women of all possible temperaments and all grades of intellectual development.

The Puranas made a wonderful collection of the national historical traditions, biographical legends, mythological stories, allegorical parables, poetic imageries, current religious ideas and beliefs, and all sorts of things for popularizing the most abstruse metaphysical and spiritual truths. They invented an astonishing system of cultural irrigation, through which the highest achievements of the loftiest minds and hearts of the nation and the world could flow with the utmost ease and smoothness and at the same time with all-conquering force and speed to the lowest stratum of society and bring about a cultural and spiritual union of the lowest with the highest. The leaders of Indian culture devised a plan of mass education by virtue of which no class of people in India would be deprived of the noblest culture of the country, though they might remain untrained in reading and writing. The Puranas were memorized and recited and sung and staged by people who were not always educated in the ortho-

dox sense of the term. These preachers of the Puranas would move from place to place and convey the message of the most enlightened teachers of the ancient and relatively modern times to the men and women of all parts of this great country.

Truths became delightful. Philosophy became homely. The noblest ideals of human life appeared before the eyes of the people in the inspiring and enchanting forms of living personalities. The distance between God and man, between heaven and earth, between ideal and actual, between supernatural and natural, was shortened to the minimum. The Puranic stories painted charming pictures of God playing various sorts of games of mercy and love with men, women, and children. The people were inspired with a living faith in the Divine government of the world, when they saw, as if before their very eyes, God invariably intervening just in the nick of time to destroy the apparently invincible forces of evil and to strengthen the forces of good, love, and harmony.

The Puranas vividly present before the eyes of imagination of the people the glorious pictures of national heroes, who not only fight fearlessly and vanquish the enemies of peace, harmony, and prosperity of human society, but who also voluntarily undergo all sorts of hardships and ignominies for the sake of truth and religion and renounce their all for the attainment of spiritual perfection. The age-long history of the country with all its memorable aspects is impressed upon the memory of the people in the form of interesting and heart-ennobling stories. While listening to the Puranas, people forget that they belong to any particular village or district or to any particular sect or community; they feel that they are participators in the life of one Bhāratavarsha which is a vast and eternal country and which is their *mātṛbhūmi* and *pitṛbhūmi,* and which is not merely a geographical territory, but also a living spiritual reality,—a living embodiment of whatever is good and noble and of eternal value.

The Puranas have not only established the cultural unity of India, but they also became the most potent instruments for carrying the message of India to various countries beyond the borders of this great sub-continent. The Puranic stories and ideas having made their way to distant lands exercised a great influence upon the art and literature and customs and manners of their inhabitants and indianized them.

Pargitar, who devoted his life to the systematic study of the Puranas, has very appropriately remarked that 'taken collectively they may be described as a popular encyclopaedia of ancient and medieval Hinduism, religious, philosophical, historical, personal, social, and political'. We get a complete picture of the mind, heart, spirit, and body of India from the intelligent and comprehensive study of the Puranas.

As religio-philosophical literature one of the remarkable features of the Puranas is that they do not identify themselves with any particular scholastic system of philosophy or any particular sectarian dogma of religion. They take their stand on the religious experiences and spiritual realizations of the recognized saints and seers of all religious sects, the metaphysical doctrines and hypotheses of all the respected philosophical schools, the widely prevalent moral and social ideas and ideals of all sections of humanity, and perhaps, above all, on the historically adored patterns of good and great, noble and courageous, beautiful and magnificent, morally and spiritually advanced human life, picked up from all parts of the country. The Karma-kāṇḍa of the Vedas, the Jñāna-kāṇḍa of the Upanishads, the laws of moral and social discipline of the Smṛtis, the methods of psychical discipline of the Yogi-sampradāya, the methods of philosophical speculation of Sāṅkhya, Vedanta, and Nyāya—all these have their proper place in the Puranas. Karma, Jñāna, Yoga, and Bhakti, Dvaita-vāda, Advaita-vāda, Dvaitādvaita-vāda, Bahndeva-vāda,—all these embrace one another in them. Leaning towards Bhakti is of course

predominant all through the Puranas, inasmuch as this is most appealing and elevating to popular minds and hearts. Logic does not play any leading part in these discourses. Their chief interest lies in inspiring the lives of the men, women, and children of all classes in human society, and not in establishing any particular metaphysical or religious view. As Dr. S. N. Dasgupta, in his *History of Indian Philosophy*, has observed, 'Compared with this general current of Hindu thought, which flows through the Puranas and the Smṛtis and has been the main source from which the Hindu life has its inspiration, the extreme Sankhya, the extreme Vedanta of Shankara, the extreme Nyaya, and extreme dualism of Madhva may be regarded as metaphysical formalisms of conventional philosophy'.

The Puranas made a grand attempt to bring down philosophy from the height of intellectual speculation to the plains of ordinary people's practical life and to liberate religion from the entanglements of metaphysics on the one hand and ritualism on the other and present it to all grades of people in a form capable of being easily understood, followed, loved, and made their own by every member of the human species. The aristocracy of religion was done away with. Religion became wholly democratic. All people felt that they could be religious, even though they might be born in the lowest caste, even though they might be looked down upon and kept at a distance by the other castes, though they might remain deprived of Śāstric learning and the knowledge of orthodox rituals. The Puranas made all people feel in their heart of hearts that religion was their birthright, that God was as much theirs as of the educated priests and higher castes.

In their noble attempt at popularizing philosophy and religion, the Puranas greatly liberalized them and freed them from all sorts of exclusiveness. People were made acquainted with all the varieties of conceptions about God and taught to cultivate a feeling of respect for all of them. God, being in Himself above time and space and relativity, must be above adequate comprehension by human understanding, above adequate expression by human language. Hence whatever may be thought or spoken about Him, even by the most exceptionally talented thinkers and speakers, must as a matter of course be inadequate and partial. But this does not mean that men should cease thinking and speaking about Him and disregard and decry whatever is thought and spoken about Him by others.

As thinking and speaking beings we are born with the inherent right and duty to think and speak about the Supreme Sourse of our existence and Ultimate Cause of the world of our experience and cultivate admiration, reverence, and love for Him. However inadequate our thought and speech may be, we must not abandon this most valuable right of human life. But we must be free from the arrogance that what we think or speak about Him or what our chosen masters have thought or spoken about Him is the whole and sole truth about Him and whatever the teachers of other schools say or think about Him must be wrong and false. All views and assertions about Him are relatively true, and accordingly all of them should be respectfully discussed, and earnest attempt should be made to get inspiration from them. We should remember that every thinker and speaker is trying to think and speak about the One who is beyond the range of thought and speech, who is at the same time the most worthy object of thought and speech, with whom it is the highest duty of every human being to put his life in perfect tune. He should be the centre of our thought and speech, the centre of our attraction, the centre of our life's endeavours, the supreme object of our heart's admiration and love. What is thought and spoken about Him is not so important, but that He is the centre of our thought and speech, that we are sincerely and earnestly trying our utmost to think and speak about Him, is the most important thing.

Thus from the study or rather the hearing of the Puranas the most ordinary people get

a general idea of the various channels in which the philosophical and religious thoughts and practices of the cultured and enlightened sections of the great Indian community have flowed for hundreds of years. They imbibe a sense of respect for all of them. They spontaneously and almost unconsciously seek for and discover an underlying unity behind all these diversities of views and practices. Their outlook is almost imperceptibly liberalized. Their minds are not sophisticated by the logical quibblings of the learned advocates of particular sectarian doctrines. Their unsophisticated common sense, enlightened and liberalized by the Puranas, not unoften sees more of the Supreme Truth than the logically trained and sharpened intellect of scholars belonging to particular sectarian groups.

In India one may find dogmatism and consequent narrowness, bigotry, and fanaticism among the learned pundits and devout ritualists belonging to particular orthodox schools of philosophy and religion, but among the Indian masses dogmatism is unknown, and therefore fanaticism also is unknown. They have regard for every Rishi and Muni, every founder of every religious sect, every philosophical viewpoint, every mode of religious discipline. They receive inspiration from all of them. Their special attraction for and devotion to any particular system does not involve disrespect for other systems followed and loved by other religious people. Thanks to the teachings imparted by the Puranas, the Indian men and women in general, though so backward in book-learning, have an intelligent conception of the deepest problems of human life and have a very broad and tolerant philosophical and religious outlook.

From the Puranas all classes of Indian people learn from their very childhood that behind all the diversities of this vast world system there is one Supreme Reality, which is infinite, eternal, absolute Spirit, which has no such definite name, form, and attribute as we can conceive of, but which is the sole ultimate source, ground, and substratum of all names and forms, of all the diverse orders of living and lifeless existences of this boundless universe, of all the wonderful powers, wisdoms, and qualities which we find manifested in this world of our experience. They also learn that this one nameless and formless, all-transcending, all-originating, and all-supporting, absolute, self-existent, self-luminous Spirit is spoken of by various names, is represented to us in various forms, is eulogized in terms of various powers, attributes, and actions, is adored and worshipped with various modes of religious practices by various types of human beings, with their finite capacities of thought, speech, and action. Thus they know that Brahmā, Vishnu, Shiva, Rama, Krishna, Kāli, Durgā, Surya, Indra, Varuna, etc. are different names by each of which the same one Supreme Spirit is pointed to. Similarly they are taught inwardly to feel that all the images of gods and goddesses which are designed and constructed by artists are diverse visible and tangible representations in finite and material forms of the One infinite Spirit, which not only transcends our vision and touch, but even transcends our imagination and thought. But they do not stupidly decry them as foolish attempts and superstitious habits to make the Infinite finite, to make the Spirit material, to conceive and worship the One as many. They bow down to all such names and forms as are accepted as Divine by sincere and earnest spiritual aspirants of human society. They know that finite and imperfect human minds can attempt to conceive the infinite absolute Spirit in terms of finite relative concepts and ideas only, can try progressively to spiritualize themselves only with the help of finite and relative names and forms imagined as representative of the Infinite and Absolute.

The names and forms are nothing but ideas or concepts made more vivid, more stable, and more living before the empirical consciousness. We must conceive the Inconceivable, and the concepts must naturally be many and varying; we must name the Nameless, we must have vivid repre-

sentation of the Formless One before our imagination, and therefore there must be a large variety of Divine names and forms in human society. The Puranas teach the people to refine, elevate, and spiritualize their minds and hearts and transcend the bondage of finitude and imperfection, and to attain to the plane of the Infinite and Absolute Spirit with the effective help of the Divine names and forms and sacred religious observances, which form as it were fine bridges between the finite and the Infinite, the temporal and the Eternal, the world and the Beyond, between the human mind and heart and the Supreme Source of all existence.

God of the Puranas is *saguṇa* as well as *nirguṇa, saviśeṣa* as well as *nirviśeṣa, sākāra* as well as *nirākāra, sakriya* as well as *niṣkriya*. He is eternally Being as well as eternally Becoming. He eternally transcends all temporal, spatial, and relative existences and dwells in the bliss of His non-dual, absolute, self-shining existence; He eternally creates, governs, and destroys all temporal, spatial, and relative existences without any motive or effort and without any modification of His self-luminous blissful nature; He is eternally immanent in all these diverse orders of finite and changing existences without the least stain upon His eternally pure transcendent, spiritual character; He eternally plays various kinds of delightful games with His creatures and makes special revelations of His Divine nature in this imperfect world. In relation to this world of finite beings He is not only omnipotent and omniscient, not only the infallible administrator and perfectly just ruler but also infinitely merciful, benevolent, and loving, the supreme deliverer from sorrow and bondage, the kind bestower of Divine light, peace, and bliss.

Perhaps the most remarkable and valuable contribution which the Puranas have made to the spiritual culture of India and the world is that they have brought down God very near to the common people of the world. Avatāra-vāda is a doctrine which the Puranas have greatly popularized. This doctrine of God's coming down to the world for the good of His creatures lays strong emphasis upon the merciful and loving character of God. There are many religious systems in the world which have preached the love and mercy of the Divine Lord of the universe. They generally propound the belief that the Lord, while always residing in His spiritual realm above and beyond this material and human world, showers His blessings upon His creatures from above, grants the prayers of His Bhaktas, delivers them from distress and bondage, and performs many acts of mercy from behind the screen. One of the great acts of His love and mercy to the human race is that He sends special messengers, prophets, apostles, or messiahs for conveying His commands or gospels to the men and women of the world and showing them the path to Heaven.

But the Puranas go far ahead of them. They assert that the Lord Himself comes down to this world in finite human forms and sometimes in the forms of other creatures as well, in order to destroy the forces of evil and disorder, to make the path of self-fulfilment easier for the weak and depressed men and women of the world, to show by the example of His own worldly life as well as by inspiring teachings the super-worldly ideal of human life, to demonstrate the possibility of the realization of Divine life in and through the finite psychical and physical embodiment, and to attract men, women, and children of all grades of society towards Himself by His wonderful and admirable activities. The Puranas describe the various processes of man's ascent towards God as well as the various astonishing ways of God's descent among men and His various playful activities in association with them for their earthly benefit and spiritual elevation.

It has been aptly said that the Puranas have wonderfully humanized God and divinized man. They have drawn glorious pictures of men realizing Divinity in their own human lives by dint of their deep devotion and systematic Sādhanā. They have shown

the manifestation of divine qualities and powers in human personalities and elevated man to the position of the object of worship to man. *Man-Gods are not unoften given higher posi*tion than the superhuman and supernatural gods of the Vedas. On the other hand, the wonderful imagination of the Puranas has most skilfully and without any violence to our reason presented the supreme Brahma-tattva of the Upanishads in the forms of most attractive human personalities, endowed with the best human feelings and sentiments, and dealing with men almost in terms of equality. God appears to man as Father or Mother, as Brother or Friend, as Son or Daughter, as Husband or Wife, as King or Master, as Lover or Playmate. There is perhaps no form of human relationship which man cannot possibly cultivate with God. He, who is in an abstract way above and beyond all relativity, is certainly the *adhiṣṭhāna* and *āśraya* of all possible relations as well. He is the Universal Sonl of all human beings and of all other creatures: all creatures are, according *to* Vedanta, Brahman Itself in particular names and forms. It can be easily conceived that all enjoyable relations which men or creatures cultivate towards one another are ultimately enjoyed by Brahman Itself as the Soul of them all. A man, whose consciousness is illumined by divine light, can inwardly feel that Brahman, which is his own true Soul, is appearing before him in the names and forms of his father and mother, brother and friend, son and daughter, etc. and playing different games with him.

The Divinity of the Soul, the Divinity of our worldly father and mother, brother and friend, son and daughter, husband and wife, and other relations, the inner spirituality of all our domestic and social relationships, is in our normal life hidden from our empirical consciousness by the veil of *avidyā* (ignorance about the Supreme Truth). Perhaps in order to teach His human children to pierce through this veil of *avidyā* and see the Truth, God occasionally reveals Himself in the world in particular human forms in which He exquisitely plays the parts of God and man at the same time, in which He shows Himself as true to all domestic and social relationships and at the same time as true to His Divine nature, in which He most consistently and charmingly performs the duties and displays the finest sentiments of a human child in relation to all around Him and at the same time whenever occasions arise He displays His Divine qualities. Thus God Himself comes down to this human world in finite forms, assumes particular names, cultivates various kinds of relationships with His creatures, and demonstrates how all human relationships can be spiritualized, how Divinity and humanity can exist side by side in the same finite body, how man can see the Divine presence in the person of a man, deal with Him in all possible human ways without forgetting His Divinity and cultivate all kinds of relationships with him.

The Puranas thus teach men and women of all classes that God is so loving and merciful to them that He is always eager to minimize the difference between Himself and them, that He comes down to live among them and enjoy all forms of sweet relationship with them, and that they can enjoy His love and mercy by cultivating all kinds of human relationship with Him in accordance with their tastes. They also teach that through the cultivation of such human love for God men get rid of the veil of *avidyā* and can see God everywhere in His world. The true God-lovers can feel that all the existences of the universe are really made of the love and bliss of God, and hence everything in the world of their experience becomes enjoyable to them. Thus the Puranas not only show the easiest path to the union between God and man, but they also teach the best way to make the world enjoyable to man.

MY FIRST CONTACTS WITH VEDANTA

By Swami Atulananda

One day in New York, a friend of mine in the course of conversation told me about Swami Vivekananda and the Philosophy of Vedanta that he lectured about. He also mentioned how wonderful an orator the Swami was. I was very much interested in the subject-matter of the conversation and wanted to know more about it. At this my friend said that the Swami had been lecturing in New York but had then probably gone back to India. However, if I wanted to know about Vedanta and Advaita philosophy, I could go to the Theosophical Society where I could hear lectures and read books dealing with the subject. Accordingly, I went there to the lectures and I started taking books from that Library.

After a few months, one day, as I was leaving the hall I heard a conversation between two gentlemen behind me in which the name of Swami Vivekananda was mentioned. I at once got interested and turning round introduced myself to the gentlemen and told them that I could not help hearing a part of the conversation where they mentioned Swami Vivekananda. Could they, by any chance teli me where I could meet the Swami? At this they said 'Yes, the Swami is lecturing regularly every Sunday afternoon at "Mott Memorial Hall".'

So, the following Sunday found me among the audience there. The place was filled with people. Exactly at 3 p.m. a Swami entered and went straight to the platform. He was young, tall, and of fine appearance. He was dressed in a long ochre robe and turban. In a beautiful voice he chanted a verse in Sanskrit and started explaining it in English. It was like this: 'There are two birds of the same plumage sitting on a tree. One of them is sitting quiet on a top branch while the other is tasting the fruits of the tree, some sweet and some bitter. Every time it tastes a bitter fruit, it looks up to the other bird sitting so serene and unruffled and approaches a little nearer to it. But the next instant another fruit attracts it and it busies itself tasting the fruit again—till another bitter fruit reminds it of the upper bird and it approaches it nearer. Thus, little by little it goes to the other bird, till all of a sudden it vanishes within it and finds that it really had no separate existence all the time!' Then the Swami went on and said, 'This tree is nothing else than this body of ours and this bird that tastes the sweet and bitter fruits of the tree is the Jivātman, the individual soul. Every time it gets a shock in life, it is attracted to the other bird, the Paramātman, the Over-soul and approaches Him. But it is again enticed by some other sweet fruit of desire and starts enjoying it, forgetting completely the Paramatman. Thus, by going through the cycles of pleasure and pain and approaching the Paramatman, again and again, there comes a time when it, the Jivatman, gets completely merged in the Paramatman and realizes that its existence was nothing but a dream—that in reality it did not exist at all as a separate entity. It was all Maya'.

I thought to myself that that friend of mine had spoken truly. What the Swami spoke was most appealing. I liked it immensely and made up my mind to come to the lectures regularly. There was a rack of books displayed there for sale. I picked up and bought from it a book *Raja Yoga* by Swami Vivekananda, which had just come out. As I was doing this, I enquired of the attendant about the Swami and was told that he was not Swami Vivekananda but a brother-disciple of his, named Swami Abhedananda. Thus it was that I saw Swami Abhedananda for the first time.

From that day I attended his Sunday lectures regularly. After I had done so for a few times, as I was coming out of the lecture hall, a lady came up to me and said, 'I see that you come to the lectures very regularly. You must be much interested in the subject. Have you met the Swami yet?' On my answering to her in the negative, she said, 'Every Wednesday evening we have a small little gathering at my place for meditation, where the Swami comes. If you care to attend, you are quite welcome'. I thanked her for the invitation and noted down the address. Then it was that I got introduced to the Swami the following Wednesday and thenceforth I started attending regularly the Wednesday gatherings too.

After about nine months had passed this way, one day after the Wednesday meditation, the Swami called me to him and said that three members of the class were going to take the vow of Brahmacharya. Would I care to take the vow? Upon this I enquired of the Swami the meaning of this vow of Brahmacharya. I was told it meant that I would be taking a vow of living a pure life, of practising celibacy and so on. This appealed to me and I decided to take the vow. At this I was asked to keep a fast on the appointed day and to come in the evening with some fruit-offering for Sri Ramakrishna.

And so it happened that on the first of April, 1899, we were seated before the altar fire with the Swami in front of us, my three companions beside me. The Swami started chanting the 'Shlokas of the Mantras' one by one, and we would repeat them after him, and at the end of each, would offer a little butter to the fire with the word 'Svāhā'. It is needless to say that he explained to us in English the meaning of each Shloka before we would confirm the vow by offering butter to the fire. After this we prostrated ourselves before the picture of Sri Ramakrishna and offered to him the fruits and sweets that we had brought with us. We were asked to follow a certain routine of 'practice' but had to keep our jobs—mine being in an office—for our own maintenance.

One would think that we became very intimate with the Swami. But in reality, it was not so. He liked us, he loved us, but yet, there was something in him which kept him a little aloof. He was always steeped in his own thoughts. He was kind, and would answer any of our questions, and remove any of our difficulties—but intimacy, he would have none. However, this did not have any damping effect on us. On the contrary this made us 'practise' all the more, having always the comforting feeling that whenever we had any difficulty on our way, the Swami was there to remove it.

Months of my Brahmacharya-hood passed smoothly. I felt I was progressing in my 'practices' and that always kept my heart full with great joy. But after a time, I found that the progress had come to a stop. Try however much I would, there was no advancement! What was this? Why was it so? Assailed with thoughts, doubts, and misgivings like this, I went to the Swami. He received me very affectionately and put all my doubts at rest by a few simple statements of his, which I could feel came from his very heart—from his store of personal experience and realization. Put in a nutshell, what he said was this: 'Set-backs like what I was passing through come to almost every treader of the spiritual path. It should never be taken as a discouragement. One must persevere with great sincerity. The path of progress in the "Divine Field" can be compared to a vertical spiral, the aspirant starting from the centre of it. After he has reached a peak, his path leads him to a trough which though a descent, is really a gathering up of his energies for the next crest, which is higher than the previous one. This seeming descent is absolutely necessary for his climbing up to the next altitude. Thus, taking everything into account, this going down is really a progress!' It can be easily imagined how much encouraged I was with these words of the Swami. Now that I can

look back on the whole of my life, I find how true every word of the Swami was!

When this life of Brahmacharya had lasted for some time I felt an intense desire to renounce the world. I went to the Swami and told him about it. The Swami was pleased with it but was worried when the thought came to him as to how I was to maintain myself. I was determined to give up my job. I could not very well live in the street! For, thereby I would attract the attention of the police and the public and would thus be a source of hindrance to the smooth propagation of the Master's faith in America! What was he to do? How could he agree to my adopting this course of action? Thereupon I told him and Swami Turiyananda who had come to America in the meantime, that I could go and live at a place called 'Lord's Farm', 25 miles from New York, with the holy people living there, as the Swamis had no Ashrama of their own. This was agreed upon and accordingly I betook myself to the 'Lord's Farm'. When taking leave of Swami Turiyananda I jokingly told him that when we would have an Ashrama of our own, I would certainly join him.

I had been at the 'Lord's Farm' for about seven or eight months when a letter and a money order came from Swami Turiyananda reminding me of my promise and telling me that now they had started an Ashrama in California known as 'Shanti Ashrama' and asking me to join it—the money sent being for the purpose of meeting my expenses of the journey. Accordingly, I came from 'Lord's Farm' and joined the 'Shanti Ashrama'. Here I renewed my intimate contact with Swami Turiyananda. Later I met Swami Abhedananda in India and had the blessing of being initiated by him into Sannyasa.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

As the Birth Anniversary (in the first week of March) of Sri Ramarkishna approaches, our mystic poet Chandicharan wends his way towards Kamarpukur. As he enters the blessed village, he is vividly reminded of the unforgettable scenes of *the Boyhood of the Yugāvatār* and feels happy to share with our readers what he sees in his mind's eye. . . .

Sri C. Ramanujachari—whose valuable *Reminiscences of Swami Brahmananda* are reproduced here from the *Vedanta Kesari*—is the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras. He is actively and intimately associated, in a very important capacity, with the Ramakrishna Mission, especially in South India, for the past half a century. . . .

Swami Nikhilananda is the Leader and Spiritual Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York, U.S.A. His talk on *The Role of Religion in Present-day India* was given at the Second Annual International Conference on Asian Problems held in New York. . . .

Men Must Choose, by Arnold J. Toynbee, the renowned historian and author of the monumental work *A Study of History*, is reproduced from the January 1953 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*—one of the oldest magazines in the United States. We are indebted to *The Atlantic Monthly* for permitting the republication and to the United States Information Service for their co-operation. . . .

Dr. Chinmoy Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D., of the Press Trust of India, Lucknow, who has conducted valuable research in the techniques of mind-fixation as contained in the Upanishads and other allied literature, briefly

presents the *Upanishadic Conception of Psychology*. . . .

The Purāṇas, from the learned pen of Principal Akshaya Kumar Banerjea, M.A., one of our old and valued contributors, is a fascinating and comprehensive study of the various religio-philosophical implications of the great Itihāsa-Purana literature which acts as a popular medium for inspiring the masses with the truths of scriptural wisdom. . . .

Swami Atulananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, more familiarly known as Gurudas Maharaj, who hails from Holland and America, met Swami Vivekananda and many of the other direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He is now over eighty years old and has been residing in India since a long time.

THE VOICE OF INDIA

The story of India's cultural influence on the world at large is a fascinating study in itself. From the beginnings of her history right up to the present day the great spiritual personalities of India have contributed ideas of inestimable worth to the storehouse of the world's spiritual wisdom. The Voice of India, speaking through eternity, found expression at different periods of her history in gifted individuals whose intellectual acumen was matched by their spiritual achievements.

Among the pioneers who disseminated Indian thought in the West and elsewhere in modern times stands forth Swami Vivekananda as a challenging figure whose message of the harmony of religions and the divinity of man summed up the spiritual view of life the world had been waiting for. Writing in the *Indian Review,* on 'Indian Influences in Modern Times', Sri Sisirkumar Mitra, referring to Swami Vivekananda and his great work in the cause of the spread of Indian thought and spirituality, says:

'Among the inspired sons who voiced the message of Mother India Swami Vivekananda stands out as a stately tower of light. His prophetic words were: "Once more the world must be conquered by India: this is the dream of my life. We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no alternative. We must do or die".

'This mighty son of India made all the more mighty by his Guru's grace, thundered out to the world the central message of the Vedanta: "Thou art That". Never before was there one who had spoken of the divinity of man with such an electrifying intensity of conviction as that soldier of Light, that indomitable exponent of India's spirituality. His luminous interpretation of the Vedantic thought and its application to the practical life of men attracted seekers from almost every part of the world, who formed the first nucleus of a universal fellowship based on the intrinsic unity of man in the world of the Spirit. Whether it was America or England or the Continent, wherever he went, people of all classes flocked to him only to be illumined in their soul by a new light. Spiritual India, reawakened after a long sleep found in him an inspired champion of the divine heritage of man: and the materialistic West bowed its head before the majesty and sublimity of his message. The Math and the Mission, started by the Swami with the express object of giving form to the ideal he stood for, have since grown and expanded into a network of organizations of social and spiritual service spread all over the world'.

Swami Vivekananda's message was true to the traditions of Indian genius and culture and emphasized the permanent elements of her civilization. The effect of his effort and thought has far outlived his short but eventful life and the Vedantic teachings that fell from his lips continue to exert great influence in India and abroad even in the context of today. Sri Mitra, therefore, aptly points out: 'But Vivekananda's influence has always been much deeper and wider than that we generally feel and know. He has been a force, a great dynamic force, from whom millions derive inspiration and the exalting strength of the divine light which he embodied. This is how he helps mankind to grow in readiness for the

greater future that is to come to it as the end and consummation of its strivings through the ages. Thus by Vivekananda was given a new tempo to the work of India towards the building up of her spiritual empire in modern times'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TALKS ON JNANAYOGA. By Swami Iswarananda. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, The Villangans, Trichur. Pages 123. Price Re. 1-8.*

The author in this book has treated Jnanayoga as propounded in the Upanishads and as interpreted by Shankara. The nature of the self as pure subject-consciousness has been established to be different from all non-self objects in clear and forceful terms. Vichara or reasoning based on experience is the royal road to Jnanam or Knowledge. This is the path of Jnanayoga. That which is considered as non-self is also not real as such, being an appearance of the one Self through Maya or ignorance.

But in a few points of metaphysical importance the author has attempted to push a new theory, which he himself considers to be a bit out of the beaten track. He wants to establish by arguments and authority that in Sushupti (dreamless sleep) the self attains its real nature, as much as in Nirvikalpa-samadhi. The experience in Sushupti or Samadhi requires to be transformed into knowledge in the waking state, through reasoning. There is complete oneness both in Sushupti and Samadhi, there being no Avidya (Ignorance) or mind in those states. Since there is no Avidya or mind in Sushupti, it is the same which is called Turiya (Fourth). Actually, therefore, it is the third and not the fourth, the other two (states) being the waking and the dreaming state. As such, Sushupti is not a state ; it is the ultimate nature of the self, which is described as *Turīya* in the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad*. The author quotes a good number of texts from the Upanishads and from the commentaries of Shankara in support of his views. True it is that there are many texts which seem to support his theory. There are lines and passages in the Upanishads and in Shankara's commentaries which declare that the Jiva attains to its real nature in Sushupti, that there is the one Self in that state, free from all bondage, limitation and duality, that the knowledge of the nature of the self as revealed in Sushupti leads to Atma-Jnanam. But a little deeper analysis of the texts will reveal that the intention or import of the texts is different. In the commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* **स्वाप्ययात्** (1.1.9) Shankara says— **सुषुप्तावस्थायां उपाधिकृतविशेषाभावात् स्वात्मनि प्रलीन इव इति 'स्वंह्यपीतो भवति' इत्युच्यते ।**

The word **इव** (as it were) shows that the unity in Sushupti is not actual (real) but a seeming one. The mind dissolves into the causal-state Avidya, which is the limitation of Jiva in that state. But as Avidya in that state remains in its causal form without any distinctive characteristic, no gross or subtle duality is experienced in that state. The Jiva knows nothing external or internal, as there is no mind to have any differentiating knowledge. Even it cannot know at that time that it has attained to such causal unified state (Iswara) because it is then covered by a false principle **'अनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढाः'** (*Chāndogya*, 8.2). This false principle is nothing but *Avidyā*. Here it is clear that there is something other than the self, in Sushupti. The author's repeated assertion that our reason should be based on the experience of Sushupti or of the self in Sushupti, leads also to the conclusion that there must be something in Sushupti by which Sushupti or the nature of the self in Sushupti is to be experienced. If there be nothing other than the self, how could there be an experience at all! **'यत्र त्वस्य सर्वं आत्मैवाभूत् केन कं पश्येत्'**. In fact, there is the seed-mind in the form of Avidya (Ignorance), by which the unified state of Sushupti and the nature of self as revealed therein are experienced in a very subtle way. Though there is Avidya, being in the causal unmanifested form it loses its differentiating power, and the self appears as free from all adjuncts and limitations due to the absence of gross (**स्थूल**) and subtle (**सूक्ष्म**) adjuncts. Thus, it is true that the knowledge of Sushupti (the nature of the self revealed in Sushupti) is the key to the realization of Brahman, not because there is no Avidya in Sushupti, but because Avidya in Sushupti does not function in projecting any duality.

In Samadhi, also, there is the mind absorbed in the infinitude of the self. It is the mind by which

the experience of Samadhi (self) is acquired **'दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः'**—the self is experienced by the purified concentrated mind. The author has betrayed his great confusion in determining the nature of Sushupti and Samadhi. He asserts that the mind is absent both in Sushupti and Samadhi. But the Upanishads declare that the self is experienced in Samadhi by the mind. In Sushupti, of course, the mind is absent, being dissolved into its causal state. Though the author admits that the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* describes Prājna as the third, and Turiya as the fourth, he accuses the Upanishad of superfluity, stating that the third and the fourth are the same. It is surprising that the author does not care for the clear statements describing Turiya as quite different from Prajna. While Prajna is described as **प्रज्ञानघन** (cognition-compact), the mind being in causal compact state, the Turiya is described emphatically as not cognition-compact (**न प्रज्ञानघनं**) but as pure consciousness (**एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं**). Prajna is described as **आनन्दमय** (blissful) and **आनन्दभुक्** (enjoyer of bliss), but Turiya is described as **अलक्षणं** (devoid of characters) and **अव्यपदेश्यम्** (unspeakable). The author himself admits with text-authority that the Prajna is held to be the cause of the universe, because it is bound with seed-force due to ignorance (page 122). Again he quotes (page 115) that in Sushupti there is the potential differentiating power connected with **मिथ्याज्ञान** (Avidya). The differentiating power is inferred in that ignorance, because no power (**शक्ति**) can ever be perceived. Here (pp. 116, 117) the author has made many confused and incorrect remarks, which are almost self-contradictory. Is not inference a source of valid knowledge? If Avidya is inferred to exist in Sushupti by correct reason, it must be there. There is no proof of the author's statement that Avidya is adventitious (**आगन्तुक**). We agree fully to the statement that **'संप्रसादस्थानं मोक्षदृष्टान्तभूतम्'** —Sushupti is an illustration for liberation. But an illustration is not exactly the same thing. Therefore Sushupti cannot be the Turiya. The self, which is the substratum and witness of *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti,* which is essentially identical with *Prājña, Taijasa* and *Viśva,* in its pure undual nature is Turiya. This Turiya, when experienced in Samadhi spontaneously, leads to Brahman-Knowledge in the waking state. This final Samadhi is to be produced by Vichara assisted by Dhyana (meditation). This Vichara should be based on our experience of Sushupti, where the nearest semblance of the liberated undual self is revealed.

DINESH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYA

THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA. By ANIL KUMAR RAY CHAUDHURI. *Published by Das Gupta & Co., Ltd., 54/3, College Street, Calcutta 12. Pages 222. Price Rs. 5-12.*

The book under review is a faithful exposition of a cardinal principle involved in the world view represented by Advaita Vedanta. We find here a systematic treatment of the various aspects—epistemological and metaphysical—of Shankara's doctrine of Māyā. As on the one hand Shankara's Advaita Vedanta posits undifferenced Consciousness as the only Reality, so, on the other it involves a negative metaphysic of dualism, denying all multiplicity that are phenomenal. Thus Shankara's Absolutism takes on the form of *māyāvāda* in its doctrine of Appearance. And the concept of nescience, with its corresponding cosmic principle of Maya, is undoubtedly a unique contribution of Shankara to philosophic thought.

In his laudable attempt to show the importance of the theory of Maya for Shankara's philosophy, the author rightly begins with the epistemological analysis as given in the different views of Error (*khyāti-vāda*) in Indian philosophy. Thus the concept of Ajñāna has been justified, on a comparative treatment of the chief Indian and Western theories of Error, as the most adequate explanation of the phenomenon of illusion. It is through an examination of the content of false cognition that the Advaita system introduces the inexplicable (*anirvācya*), though intelligible, principle of Ajnana, whereby is explained the appearance of the manifold. And such a significant principle is also proved in various other epistemological ways. Also the rationale of the concept of Ajnana is sought to be brought out in the book through a relevant discussion of its necessary implications, such as with regard to its locus and to its object. The whole account is throughout based on original sources, with scholarly references to important works in later post-Shankara Vedanta.

Besides the theory of Maya, the author also discusses the Advaitic position with regard to the important metaphysical issues concerning the nature of Reality and the nature and status of the individual and of the world. One chapter is aptly devoted to a discussion of the true significance of Vedantic Ethics and another to an exposition of the Vedantic theory of Emancipation ([illegible]), which marks the aim of the whole system. In keeping with Vedanta tradition the objections of other Schools to the doctrine of Maya are also considered. The Appendices contain brief Notes on some important topics which have a direct or in-

direct bearing upon the central theme of the book. Some of them, e.g. the question of Shruti-Pramāna and the doctrine of Adhikāra, are characteristic corollaries to the study of Vedanta.

The chief merit of the book lies in the effective manner of representation, in clear and intelligible terms, of the genuine ideas of Advaita Vedanta. The work will prove to be a useful and reliable guide for every student of Vedanta in so far as it will enable him gain a proper understanding of the standpoint of Advaita and also grasp the meaning of the intricate speculations developed within this classical system. The author provides very useful Notes (at the end of the book) to references throughout the text.

D. S.

WOMEN IN 'THE SACRED LAWS'. By Shakuntala Rao Shastri. *Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Chaupatty, Bombay 7. Pages 220. Price Re. 1-12.*

This is an able summing-up of the Dharma Sutras and the Dharma Shastras and the digests by an able woman scholar. Dr. F. W. Thomas, who is a renowned Sanskrit scholar and is the Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the Oxford University, refers in his Foreword to 'Miss Shakuntala Rao's meritorious and well-inspired work'. The author, in her Prologue, narrates an interesting Puranic story as to how Dharma came into existence and says: 'The shades of meaning implied by this term have changed from age to age'. Though this is no doubt true, one however feels that the author has overstressed the changes and underemphasized and undervalued the changeless and permanent aspects of Dharma in India. That the essence of Dharma is eternal and sustains humanity in mutual interdependence and dependence on God is the view of the Indian mind.

The author is too prone to accept the comparatively recent dates assigned by Western indologists to Indian sacred literature and does not discuss such dates on their merits.

The author gives a clear and brief summary of the Dharma Sutras and the Dharma Shastras and the commentaries and their digests. A specially valuable portion of the book is Chapter II where it is sought to evaluate the Dharmic concepts in the light of Kautilya's *Artha-Sāstra*, Vātsyayana's *Kāma-Sāstra*, and Bhāsa's plays. There is certainly much truth in the author's attributing the later restrictions in regard to women's marriage, status, and freedom to the unsettled character of the later periods; but it may be that the operative forces included also an urge to subordinate unregulated passions to ethical control and discipline.

It is heartening to see the author's general survey in the last chapter entitled *Esprit Des Lois*. In the last paragraph of the book, the author strikes a high note: 'It is heartening to see modern India attempting to re-establish the time-honoured laws of this ancient country, which were, however, forgotten during these changing centuries. The laws of ancient India were so catholic in spirit and all-embracing, if they are taken in their true spirit they can cover the entire needs of humanity. At the time when these laws were framed, no country in the world produced better laws for womanhood, nor gave a higher status to woman in society'.

We may, here, draw attention to a minor point: On page 173 the author refers to 'the pathetic condition of women in India at the dawn of British rule' and mentions as examples 'the exposure of female children, putting to death female children by throwing them at the junction of the Ganges and the sea', etc. She also observes that such a state of affairs as narrated 'made woman not only an object of pity but many a woman sighed in the secret recess of her heart and wished that she had never been born a woman in this unfortunate country'. But Indians have now no doubt in their minds that such a glaring description of the condition of women in India at any time is mostly baseless exaggeration. Defects there have been and still there are; but surely none can deny that these have been remedied and are being remedied. It is of course not possible to discuss all such aspects in a short review.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

HYMNS TO THE GODDESS. Translated by Arthur and Ellen Avalon. *Published by Ganesh & Co., (Madras) Ltd., Madras 17. Pages 234. Price Rs. 6.*

The renderings, in English verse, of the hymns to Devi, or the Divine Principle conceived of as the Mother of the universe, brought together in this volume, are culled from the Tantras, Purānas, *Mahābhārata*, and from the writings of Shankaracharya. The hymns are appropriately introduced by a *stotra* to Shiva, the spouse of Devi, in His aspect as Kālabhairava, composed by Shankaracharya. This is followed by soul-stirring hymns to the Divine Mother—ten from the Tantras, five from the Puranas, three from the *Mahābhārata*, nine by Shankaracharya, and two more from miscellaneous sources. Some of the aspects of the Devi—Durgā, Sarasvati, Chaṇḍikā, Tripurasundari, Mahālakshmi, and Gangā—are objects of supreme adoration throughout India and hence the hymns on them, which appear in translation in this book, possess a universal appeal.

The translation in verse may not possess the mingled tenderness and splendour or the lilting rhythm of the original hymns in Sanskrit, but they do give the reader an accurate idea of the sense

and spirit of the hymns, embodying the loftiest philosophical conceptions as well as devotional ideas of the highest order. The scholarly Introduction by Arthur Avalon, dealing with the philosophy of Shakti worship, and the verse-translations of the hymns rendered by himself and his wife, are admirable. Foot-notes have been added with an eye to a more comprehensive exposition of the spirit of the hymns. The book, which is in its second edition, will be of great value to all those who are in need of a reliable English translation for understanding the famous and popular hymns to the Goddess. The original Sanskrit texts of the hymns (here translated) are not included in this book, perhaps with good reason, as that would have added to the bulk and the price.

THE MARCH OF INDIA (Vol. VI, No. 2) (ĀDIVĀSI NUMBER). *Published by Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Old Secretariat, Delhi 8. Pages 66. Price Rs. 2-8.*

The term 'aboriginal' as usually applied to the tribal population of India is used not in a derogatory sense but as an indication of their being the Ādivāsis, the descendants of the earliest among the present inhabitants of the Indian sub-continent. The various aboriginal tribes scattered throughout India present a remarkable variety of autochthonic types. In free India they form part and parcel of the social structure and are considered as much the citizens of India as any other advanced groups. We therefore welcome the publication of the Adivasi Number of *The March of India* (November-December 1953), the bi-monthly published by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The Number fittingly opens with an Address delivered by Jawaharlal Nehru, and contains many articles of special interest. 'Indian Aborigines and who they are', by B. S. Guha, gives the reader the historical setting and the geographical distribution of the various tribes of India. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, the renowned philologist and linguist, contributes a paper on 'The Languages of the Adivasis'. Besides, the Number also contains authoritative articles on the cultural, religious, and political aspects of the life of the Adivasis—Santals of Bihar, Abors of Assam, Dhyantis of North-West India, Lanjia Saoras of Orissa, and Malapandarams of Travancore, to mention only a few—by many eminent Indian anthropologists and two foreign collaborators, Verrier Elwin and U. R. Ehrenfels. This Number serves to acquaint the people of India with the natural beauty and dignity of the life of the 'aboriginals' whose cultural and political consciousness is gradually awakening.

DENTISTRY IN ANCIENT INDIA. BY K. M. CHOKSEY. *To be had of The Popular Book Depot, Lamington Road, Bombay 7. Pages 96. Price Rs. 5-8. ($ 1.50 or 10s. 6d.).*

The author, who is a leading dentist of Ahmedabad, has presented, perhaps for the first time in the way he has ably done, the glorious achievements of physicians and surgeons of ancient India in dental science and treatment of diseases of the mouth. In seven chapters, accompanied by some illustrations depicting typically indigenous instruments of ancient Indian dental surgery, the treatise deals briefly but lucidly with the origin, development, and scientific technique of dentistry. It contains interesting information on ancient India's institutions for teaching dental science, dental surgery, art, and legends, and many other facts which reveal the hidden glory of India's own science of dentistry. The author also makes mention of the reasons that contributed to the decline of this great and ancient science. The two eminent names in ancient Indian medicine, viz. Charaka and Sushruta, and their contributions find an honoured place in the book. The publication of this book is timely and helpful inasmuch as its contents may inspire interested dentists and also inform the general reader in respect of a better understanding and appreciation of dentistry in ancient India at a time when Indians are seeking to know more and more details of the nation's hidden cultural treasures.

BENGALI

ASHRAMA (1953). *Published by Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara, 24 Parganas, W. Bengal. Pages 86.*

The eighth (printed) annual number of *Āśram* (1360 B.S.), the organ of the Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara, ably conducted by the young inmates of the Home, carries a large number of well-written articles and poems contributed by the students of the various classes of the High School attached to the Home and also by some ex-students. While most of the writings are naturally in Bengali, there are two articles in English and two in Sanskrit. They all reveal the commendable originality, intellectual endeavour, and aesthetic and spiritual interests of the youthful writers who are privileged to develop their abilities by living and studying under ideal conditions provided by their institution.

CORRECTION

Page 38, column one, line 3—in the January 1954 issue—should read as follows:

THE GREATNESS OF SHIVA (MAHIMNA-

The correct name of the book is *The Greatness of Shiva (Mahimnastava of Pushpadanta).*

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

Inaugural Celebrations at Belur Math and Calcutta

The first Birth Centenary celebrations of Sri Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother, which will be celebrated at different times till her next birthday in various parts of India and abroad, were inaugurated on the 27th December 1953 by the Belur Math (Howrah), the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, with a week-long programme. The following is a brief report of the celebrations held at the Belur Math premises and at Calcutta.

At Belur Math: A dawn to dusk programme which included Mangalārātrika, chanting of the Devi-sukta, Ushā-kirtana, special Pujā and Homa, Kāli-kirtana, public meeting with speeches on the Mother, formed the special features of the function at Belur Math on Sunday, the 27th December 1953, the day of commencement of the Centenary celebrations.

From early morning an unceasing trek of devotees from the neighbouring areas began to assemble at the Belur Math to pay loving homage to the sacred memory of the Holy Mother. As the day advanced the crowd began to swell and the peak-point was reached in the afternoon. It is estimated that about two lakhs of people visited the Belur Math on that day and about thirty thousand devotees received Prasad (consecrated food).

In the evening, a largely attended public meeting was held in the Math compound overlooking the Ganges. Swami Madhavananda, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, presided over the meeting, which opened with the chanting of Sanskrit peace-invocations and devotional songs. His Holiness Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, read a message suitable to the occasion. Several speeches were delivered on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother. Sri Kumud Bandhu Sen, Swami Tejasanandaji, Dr. Kalidas Nag, and Sri N. C. Ghosh were among the speakers who explained the message that the life of the Holy Mother holds to humanity in general and the ideal it presents to womankind in particular. Swami Madhavananda mentioned that it was a good sign that seven ladies, inspired by the ideal of Sri Sarada Devi, had taken the vow of Brahmacharya on that morning at the Math. In the Interim Report of the Executive Committee of the Celebrations, read earlier, mention was made of the publication, in the morning, of the Centenary Memorial volumes *Great Women of India* and *Śri Mā Sāradā Devī* (a comprehensive life of the Holy Mother in Bengali), a small compendium containing 108 precepts of the Holy Mother (in Bengali), and the issue of Centenary Memorial Stamps.

The President's message and a talk by Swami Avinasananda, Secretary of the Celebrations Committee, were broadcast from the Calcutta Station of the All-India Radio in the evening.

At the Udbodhan House: At the Udbodhan house, where the Holy Mother used to stay whenever she was in Calcutta and is well known as the 'Mother's House', the celebration was held with a day-long religious programme in which large numbers of devotees participated. A portrait of the Holy Mother was decorated with flowers on the cot used by her and on the second floor a small thatched hut, recalling the one in which she used to live at Jayrambati, was built in which was placed a well decorated picture of the Holy Mother. Devotional singing was held here and Prasad was distributed to about 5,000 people.

Contribution of the Newspapers: *The Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Hindusthan Standard, The Statesman, Ananda Bazar Patrika* (Bengali), *Basumati* (Bengali), *Yugantar* (Bengali), and *Vishvamitra* (Hindi) published a number of articles specially written for the occasion with the pictures of Sri Sarada Devi and Sri Ramakrishna and of some places intimately connected with her. Some of the papers wrote editorials on the subject.

Public Meeting at Calcutta on the 30th December: A big gathering of men and women filled the spacious University Institute Hall to overflowing and listened with rapt attention to the discourses on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother delivered at the public meeting held there on Wednesday afternoon lasting for nearly three hours. Sri Saila Kumar Mukherjee, Speaker, West Bengal Legislative Assembly, presided. On the stage of the Hall, wherefrom the speakers addressed the gathering, were placed flower-bedecked and well-decorated portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi. Sri C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, Sri Achintya Kumar Sen Gupta, and Swami Avinasananda spoke in English and Srimati C. K. Handoo in Hindi.

Procession to Dakshineswar: An impressive procession on Sunday, the 3rd January 1954, with the

beautifully decorated portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi, carried in open palanquins side by side along the three-mile route from Belur Math to Dakshineswar Temple, marked the completion of the week-long inaugural programme of the Holy Mother Birth Centenary celebration. Over 4,000 devotees belonging to various associations as well as boys and girls of different schools joined in the procession along with the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Ramakrishna Order. The procession started from Belur Math at 8 in the morning. The playing of bands and singing of devotional songs, the Gerua flags flying in the hands of the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins and specially made attractive flags, with the word *'Mā'* (Mother) imprinted in the centre, in the hands of hundreds of boys and girls, and various other flower decorated designs lent colour and charm to the fairly long procession which was watched with eager interest and devotion all along the route by the onlookers lining closely the two sides of the road.

The procession terminated at the Dakshineswar temple and the processionists assembled in the spacious courtyard of the temple where devotional songs were sung and passages from the *Māyer Kathā* were read. Prasad was distributed to all in the temple garden.

Readings from *Māyer Kathā*, discourses from the *Bhāgavatam* and the *Mahābhārata* on different days, at the Belur Math, were other items of the week-long programme.

It may also be mentioned that at Jayrambati, the birthplace of the Holy Mother, celebrations were held with appropriate programme which was attended by thousands of people from the neighbouring villages and towns as also from Calcutta and suburbs.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

Report for 1952

The Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium is ideally situated in a dry and salubrious climate and in quiet surroundings, about 10 miles away from Ranchi railway station, to the east of the Ranchi-Chaibasa road. The Sanatorium is at present composed of 28 blocks and buildings, including temporary wards, kitchens, staff-quarters, stores, guest house, and a monastery for its monastic workers. The population of the colony is 150.

Accommodation: At the end of 1952 there was accommodation in the Sanatorium for 58 patients and the numbers of patients maintained free and at concession rates was 7 and 6 respectively. During the year under review a single-bed 'A' type Cottage, a double-bed 'A' type Cottage, and a ten-bed General Ward were opened.

The maximum number of patients undergoing treatment in the Sanatorium at a time during the year was 56, and the average number per month was 47. 59 new cases were admitted and 44 were discharged, and 2 died. 33 patients, among those discharged, gained in weight during treatment in the Sanatorium. The average gain in weight per patient was 16.3 lbs., the highest individual gain being 72 lbs. Classified according to the stage of the disease, 1 patient,—among the 44 discharged and 2 dead cases,—was in the first stage, 15 were in the second stage, and 30 in the third stage.

Surgical Aid, X-Ray, and Clinical Laboratory: During the year, 6 Phrenic Crushes and 13 Thoracoscopies and Intrapleural Pneumonolyses were performed. There were 585 Artificial Pneumothorax and 374 Pneumoperitoneum injections. 12 Lumbar punctures were done. With the completion of the Operation Theatre and the Post-Operative Ward, both nearing completion at the end of the period under report, the Sanatorium will be in a position to undertake advanced surgical operations.

In the X-Ray department, 308 skiagrams were taken and 698 Fluoroscopic examinations were carried out.

The total number of routine examinations of blood, urine, sputum, etc., carried out in the Clinical Laboratory, was 1,834.

Out-patients' Department: During the year 87 out-patients suffering from Tuberculosis were given A.P. and P.P. injections. Some more out-patients also came for consultation, X-Ray photo, and Laboratory examination.

The outdoor free Homoeopathic Dispensary, maintained for the benefit of the local people, treated 3,692 cases, of whom 3,298 were new cases.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL (HARDWAR)

Report for 1952

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal (Hardwar), (Dt. Saharanpur, U.P.), started in 1901, is a full-fledged hospital, with 50 beds and with all up to date arrangements. The following is a brief report of its various activities during the year 1952:

Hospital: The total number of cases treated during the year in the indoor department was 1,716. The outdoor dispensary treated 63,469 cases in all, of which 20,974 were new cases. 472 surgical operations were performed during the year under review and 1,491 clinical examinations of blood, sputum, etc. were also carried out in the Clinical Laboratory. Diet, medicine, nursing, and treatment under qualified doctors were provided free of charge for the patients, without any distinction of caste, creed, or community.

Temporary Relief: 10 barrels of skimmed milk powder, 1 barrel of cod-liver oil, and 25,000 multi-vitamin tablets—gifts from the Indian Red Cross Society—were distributed among ill-nourished

mothers and children of the locality, for three months beginning from December 1951.

Library: There were 4,149 books in the Ashrama and the patients' libraries. 1,452 books were issued during the year. 21 periodicals were received for the reading-room.

Feeding of Daridranarayanas: Nearly 3,000 persons, including many Harijans and refugees, were fed on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

General: The acquisition by the Sevashrama of 2.7 acres of adjacent land was effected during the year with a view to constructing quarters for the resident doctors, a kitchen block, and a cowshed. The construction of the cowshed was completed during the year. The Government of Uttar Pradesh took up the unfinished work of underground sanitary and drainage installations in the Sevashrama.

Finance: Income for the year under General Fund was Rs. 49,408-9-0 and expenditure Rs. 51,208-10-6, leaving a net deficit of Rs. 1,800-1-6.

Of the immediate needs of the Sevashrama, construction of resident doctors' quarters is an urgent necessity and a sum of Rs. 20,000 is required for this.

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BANKURA

Report for 1952

The following is a brief report of the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Bankura, West Bengal, during the year 1952:

Math: In addition to celebrating the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda and observing important religious festivals, 51 indoor religious classes were conducted and 10 public lectures were arranged.

The library and reading-room contained 1,888 books and received 32 periodicals. The number of books issued during the year was 1,950.

At the end of the year 1952 the Math started a rural library at Ramharipur.

Mission: The Mission conducted 3 charitable dispensaries. The Bankura Main Charitable Dispensary treated a total of 61,501 cases in the outdoor department and 239 new cases in the indoor department. The number of new surgical cases was 208. Anti-malarial drugs were distributed among 618 persons. The Branch Dispensaries at Ramharipur and Doltola treated a total of 20,716 and 6,091 outdoor cases respectively.

There were 7 students in the Vivekananda Homoeopathic Medical School, of whom 3 were full-free and one was part-free.

The Saradananda Students' Home had 23 students, of whom 3 were part-free.

The Free Primary School at Ramharipur had a total of 117 students, of whom 101 were boys and 16 girls.

The Ramharipur Extended M. E. School had 150 students on the rolls, out of whom 13 were full-free and 23 half-free. This institution will be raised into a High School and a suitable building for the purpose was under construction at the end of the period under report.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

Report for 1952

During the year under review, the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama (Charitable Hospital), Rangoon, Burma, had 135 beds in the Indoor Department and treated a total of 3,688 in-patients. The daily-average was 126. The outdoor dispensary treated 2,23,667 cases in all, of which 81,804 were new cases. The average daily attendance was 722.

The Physiotherapy Department gave diathermic as well as ultra-violet and infra-red rays treatment. 1,793 persons received treatment in the department in 1952.

92 persons were given radium treatment for cancer and other malignant diseases. 1,227 patients (507 indoor and 720 outdoor) were given x-ray facilities in the hospital's own x-ray plant. The clinical laboratory carried out, in all, 6,692 tests.

9,960 surgical operations were performed and 55,337 injections (intravenous and intramuscular) were given in the hospital during the year.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls on the 6th March 1954