

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LIX

JUNE 1954

No. 6



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

WITHIN THE SECRET GARDEN OF MY HEART

(TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA)

BY CECILLE POMERENE

Today I did not meet my love.
We had a rendezvous at dawn within the secret garden of my heart.
But I did not appear.
Ah, wretched fickleness—and human frailty!
How could you keep Him waiting? Faithless one!
His sad eyes pierced my heart with the sharp sword of reproach
and oh, the anguish of it.
Words or anger I could meet, but that look within His eyes
I could not bear.
And falling at His feet I begged forgiveness.
Tomorrow will be different—but tomorrow is today!
With breathless eagerness I can but scarce await the dawn.
This incertitude is agony.
And then the hour comes!
My rapid footsteps seek the spot within this sacred garden.
Will He be there?
Perhaps not.
My yesterday may perchance occasion His refusal.
Oh, evil thought—take your departure and go far from me!
This intensity of listening provokes anxiety.

But lo! I hear a light, soft step amid the rustling of the leaves.
 It must be He approaching!
 My breath is stilled—my heart has almost ceased to beat.
 My Beloved comes! It is He!
 His radiance transforms our simple trysting place
 Into Heaven.
 I rush to His embrace!
 And in the deep, deathlike stillness of the garden
 A love is consummated.
 For there in one brief moment we touch eternity.

THE PATH OF DEVOTION

(DEVARSHI NARADA'S REALIZATION OF
 DIVINITY)

One of the many ways in which Nārada—an outstandingly prominent sage and seer, commonly met with in Hindu scripture and mythology—came to realize Brahman or the Divinity is related in detail in the *Bhāgavata*. The account begins with Narada's own words to Vyāsa.

Narada confided to Vyasa that he had risen to the highest spiritual glory from a very low state. He said: 'O sage, formerly—in a past life—I was born of a woman who was the servant in a Brahmin household. During one rainy season certain great ascetics lived there, and I was asked to wait upon them. Though they looked upon all beings as equal, those ascetics were particularly kind to me, who was a boy, humble, reverent, and free from childish caprice. I was with them constantly, and so conceived a taste for their virtuous ways and for their religion. I became sparing of speech and gave all my attention to listening.

'I was privileged to be near when thrice daily those great Yogins sang the praises of Sri Hari (God), and I heard their long discourses concerning Him. When they told of the deeds of the glorious Lord, I felt complete faith in their words. Thus, blessed by holy association day after day, my sins were

gradually erased. I became purer of heart, and intense devotion arose within me.

'Seeing that I was humble, possessed of self-control and faith, and that I was ready to do them any service; seeing also that I was deeply attracted by their mode of life and longed passionately to follow in their footsteps, those great sages, when about to depart at the end of the rainy season, spoke to me of God, though I was but a child. They gave me a Mantra (the sacred word representing Divinity) and imparted to me the knowledge by means of which one is able to attain to Bhagavan Vāsudeva (the blessed Lord).

'O Vyasa, when the ascetics had given me the precepts of true knowledge and gone away, my eagerness to know God increased. I repeated my Mantra, meditated on God and was devoted to Him. I was firm in the path laid down for me—and a great longing came upon me to go to the forest and become a recluse.

'But my mother had no other child. She was anxious for my welfare and success, and so clung to me; yet, being a servant, she was unable to help me. And I, not having attained the age of discretion, not knowing exactly where my duty lay, and fearing lest I break

my mother's heart, lived on in the Brahmin household for her sake.

'When I was eight years old, my mother went out one night to milk the cow and unknowingly trod upon a cobra, from the bite of which she died—and I found myself free to depart in search of God.

'For days I travelled northward. Having passed through many cities and villages and beheld seemingly endless fields and mountains, I came at last to a great forest, where, overcome by hunger and thirst, I bathed in a cool river and sat down under a Pippala tree. In the manner learned of the sages, I began to meditate on the Supreme Being. I took refuge at His lotus feet, my heart overflowed with love of Him. So eager was I to see Him that my eyes were filled with tears and my hair stood on end. And slowly He, the glorious Lord, revealed Himself in my heart. In the bliss of His presence all anxiety, everything, was forgotten.

'But when the communion was broken and I lost sight of Him, I could not bear the agony of separation, and concentrated my mind in order to repossess Him in my heart. Yearning to see Him again, looking for Him and failing to find Him, I was even as one sorely stricken and in pain—and at last to me sitting alone in that desolate forest, the Lord spoke softly:

' "It is a pity, but thou art unfit to behold Me in this life, for I am inaccessible to those whose sins and passions are not completely destroyed, to those who have not properly practised Yoga. That I once showed Myself to you was because you desired so fervently to see Me. But know this, my child: a mind

truly fixed on Me shall ever remain so, whether creation comes or goes, and through My grace you will never forget Me. Spend your life serving the holy ones. Through devotion to Me, constantly and intensely cherished, you will gradually be cleansed of all impurities, and when your present body falls off, you will attain to eternal companionship with Me".

'Having spoken these words, the great Being, the Ruler of all, became silent. And to that great Being, greater than the great, I bowed down my head.

'After that, with a heart evermore free of envy, pride, and all desires, I wandered over the world, repeating the auspicious names of the Lord and singing of His auspicious deeds.

'O sage, to me with a mind set on God, unattached to worldly things, death finally came—and like a flash of lightning the gross body fell off. I became united to the Divine Being and lived in the blessedness of that union for a whole Kalpa (creative cycle). Then God drew the universe, including all beings, into Himself—and existed alone, unmanifest.

'When after countless ages the Unmanifest became again manifest, when the universe was re-created, other Rishis and I issued fully formed from the mind of the Creator.

'In and out of all the worlds I wander, always observant of the vows of purity and by the grace of God my way is nowhere obstructed. As I sing of Him and of His glories, He is ever manifest in my heart, and all who hear me feel in their hearts a longing for Him'.

'How can the mind be purified without devotion characterised by a softening of the heart, the hair standing on end and tears of joy flowing out of the eyes? A devotee of Mine whose speech is broken by sobs, whose whole heart melts and who, without any idea of shame, sometimes weeps profusely, or laughs, or sings aloud, or dances, purifies the whole universe'.

THE VALUES OF LIFE

BY THE EDITOR

Freedom, intelligence, and perfection are common concepts that are easily and universally understandable. It is also easy to misunderstand them and reduce their essential significance to parochial and penultimate standards. All intelligence and perfection are inherent in the soul of man and the limitations with which Nature binds the soul seem to originate and manifest themselves from nowhere. The struggle for freedom, the culture of the intellect, and the quest after perfection have enabled mankind to create as well as to destroy, to unite as well as to divide. Good and evil and all such pairs of opposites have a relatively tangible meaning and importance for the ethical and social development of the individual. Yet, everybody is aware that these dualities of phenomenal existence cannot be considered as absolute or ultimate values in themselves. Man is generally prone to evaluate almost everything as either good or bad with his own measuring-rod of past experience. What ought to be done and what ought not is, therefore, of supreme importance to life. Again, we see that what one does or does not determines what he will be; and *vice versa* what he is or believes in decides what he would do or would not do. As Meister Eckhart has said, 'People should think less about what they ought to do and more about what they ought to be. If only their being were good, their works would shine forth brightly. Do not imagine that you can ground your salvation upon actions; it must rest on what you *are*'. This is only too true because the nature of a person's being influences and determines the nature of his actions.

To a reflecting subject, who proceeds about his business with the fullest awareness of a conscious conception of ends and means, there is an inevitable need for a clear and distinctly

developed scheme of human values. A value, as distinguished from a mere 'fact' of knowledge-experience, signifies the 'object of desire to be attained' (*iṣṭā*) and inspires the aspirant to take to the pursuit of the right means that lead to such achievement (*iṣṭā-sādhanā*). Anything that becomes the object of explicit awareness, belonging to the present, past, or future, may be termed a fact, which could suffice for the purposes of purely theoretical investigation. But, invariably, such facts, revealed by knowledge, lead to action and consequent acquisition of some positive and permanent value. Desire springs eternal in the human breast and the satisfaction of desire by attaining the goal as a result of knowing facts that relate to it constitutes the realization of value.

As temperaments vary profoundly from individual to individual, the goals of life are bound to be many and on occasions mutually incompatible. It will not be wrong to say that there are and can be as many ideals and goals as there are human beings on earth. Material, political, social, and psychological conditions have placed man in an unenviable position so far as his mental, moral, and spiritual valuations are concerned. There are and have been values, ultimate or instrumental, in almost every field of human action and aspiration, to the attainment of which men have applied themselves through mediating factors, appropriate or inappropriate. Instrumental values are almost infinite and yet one could never be sure of many of them as effective means for securing the ends that are sought to be attained through them. It is also a fact of everyday experience that the satisfaction of desire derived through most of these lower values is transient, imperfect, and illusory. All the same they are also values of life, though non-essential in comparison with

what to man constitutes the highest and imperishable Good.

Thus, while some values are undependable (*anaikāntika*) and some others are unstable (*anātyantika*), there is one ultimate and absolute value which includes and transcends all the rest. According to the Indian conception of values, there are four well-known Purushārthas or basic goals of life, viz. Dharma or moral and righteous conduct, Artha or pursuit of economic value, Kāma or aesthetic and psychological fulfilment, and Mokṣha or liberation through self-realization. The first three, called the *tri-varga*, are no doubt important and necessary values and were recognized as such. But it was at the same time made unambiguously clear to each individual that these moral and secular values should subserve, lead to, and be controlled by the fourth and last Purushārtha, viz. Mokṣha. This Highest Good or supreme end of life is the most essential and all-inclusive value which transcends and fulfils all relative values. It is the *summum bonum*, not of this or that ethical system, but of life itself. Though philosophers hold different views about the meaning and content of this ultimate spiritual value of Mokṣha, most of them, if not all, are unanimously agreed that the attainment of this Parama-Purushārtha,—Knowledge of and Identity with Reality or Brahman, in other words, God-realization,—is and should be the one goal of all religious practice and philosophical inquiry.

Of the two patently secular values, Artha, or economic wealth and prosperity, was given its due place in the scheme of social order and individual welfare by the seers of India. It is therefore wrong to attribute India's latter-day economic backwardness to the legitimate over-emphasis on the spiritual value of Mokṣha. As an instrumental value, Artha is helpful in satisfying one or other of the diverse needs of life. In every way it subserves Kāma, an intrinsic value. Kāma is aesthetic or psychological not only in the sense a subjective value is in general but also in the wider sense of an end which satisfies a natural impulse common

to man and the lower animals, felt and pursued consciously or unconsciously. Thus all sentient creatures seek the two values of Artha and Kāma, whose fulfilment is more natural than spiritual. Animal activity can be said to involve an end, for animals too seek to satisfy their desires like man, though they differ from him in that they seek such satisfaction instinctively, without definite consciousness of the value they are seeking. Purushārtha or 'human value', therefore, represents what is pursued by man with complete awareness and positive deliberation. Or else, value ceases to be Purushārtha, even if a man were to pursue it, as he sometimes does, in an instinctual and sensate manner not far removed from that of the brute.

Though man is seen to exhibit, at times, the character of an animal, in close combination with his innate and essential character as a self-conscious agent, he stands head and shoulders above all other sentient beings. He is not content without inquiring into the whys and wherefores of facts and occurrences that constitute the empirical universe. Being endowed with a highly developed faculty of reason and a subtle sense of discriminatory valuation, man hankers for a value or values higher and more satisfying than mere Artha and Kāma. The cognitive, conative, and affective functions of his consciousness demand fulfilment in such measure as to transcend the pain-bearing (and also pleasure-yielding) categories of finite and mediate value-scale. As the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* says: 'Among living beings, it is man alone that says what he has known, that sees what he has known. He knows the future, he knows this world and the next; and he desires to attain the immortal through the mortal. Thus is he endowed while other creatures are aware of only hunger and thirst'. Hence, notwithstanding the values common to all men as well as to man and the animal, the notion of Dharma or higher morality makes its irresistible appeal to man only and not to the lower animals.

The value of Dharma is definitely superior to Artha and Kāma and is recognized to con-

note not only moral but also religious values of every description. According to the Vaiśeṣhika philosophers, Dharma is that from the practice of which one ensures the perfection of secular prosperity (*abhyudaya*) and spiritual good (*nihśhreyasa*). Of all mundane values available to man, Dharma provides the necessary criterion with which to judge the truth of and regulate principles and practices which one has to observe in daily life and in social relations. It is such a wide concept at times that under it are brought all forms and activities, virtues and ritualistic laws, which shape and sustain the social order. Dharma is coextensive with all values, including Artha and Kama, and enunciates the whole duty of man in relation to his secular and spiritual well-being. The word 'Dharma' is derived from the root *dhṛ*, which means, 'to sustain, nourish, or uphold'. The *Chkāndogya Upaniṣhad* mentions three branches of Dharma, relating to the functions of the student, the householder, and the recluse. In some other Upanishads, in the *Gita*, and in the Smritis Dharma refers to the duties of the stage of life and the particular class or group, to which one belongs. In the Dharma-Shāstras, ethics is discussed from the subjective as well as the objective standpoint,—the former laying down individual discipline and the latter principles that constitute the foundation of social welfare.

Hindu Dharma was and is never static. It aims at perpetually raising the follower of Dharma as high as possible in accordance with his past tendencies to and present aptitudes for the temporal and spiritual ends of life. Pleasure for the sake of evanescent sense-bound enjoyment was naturally deprecated. But it is wrong to say that Hinduism has stood for world-negation and pessimism, thereby implying that it has called upon man to deny himself the ordinary pleasures of mundane life in favour of deliberate but meaningless misery and poverty in the hope of reaching ultimate salvation. Nothing can be farther from the truth than to suggest that the weakness of Hindu society lies in the emphasis on Dharma and Moksha in prefer-

ence to Artha and Kama. Keeping progress from lower to higher and yet higher values as its watchword, Hindu Dharma fully recognized the needs of the practical and secular sides of life and marked out their relatively important spheres as inevitable stages on the way to the ultimate goal. The exaltation of the Parama-Purushartha did never imply or demand the decrying of the other three Purusharthas. Contrariwise, without due emphasis on the supreme spiritual end, the value of Artha (economic pursuit) may degenerate into a means of tyrannizing over and exploiting others, and the value of Kama (aesthetic and sensuous expression) may end up in the enjoyment of baser sensual pleasures. Even Dharma—which according to some is an instrumental value, and according to some others an intrinsic one,—at its best, may not rise above individual self-interest or humanistic ethics when it is divorced from the ultimate value, after attaining which no other value appears worth striving for.

The values of life other than the highest value, viz. Moksha, are not stable and their consequent effects on the life of the individual are not an unmixed blessing. So long as duality and polarity persist in the structure of valuation, perfect and perennial joy, free from imperfection, separateness, and fear of disappointment is not attainable. As the *Kāṭha Upaniṣhad* states: 'The self-existent Supreme Lord inflicted an injury upon the sense-organs in creating them with outgoing tendencies; therefore a man perceives only outer objects with them, and not the inner Self. But a calm person, wishing for Immortality, beholds the inner Self with his eyes closed'. A man chooses and pursues the value his psychological make-up naturally prompts him to do. This psychological proneness to one value or another is determined by the subtle force of the three qualities (Gūṇas)—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas—which are present in Nature (Prakṛiti) in varying degrees. To take the last first, Tamas, which is the element of inertia and complete ignorance, when predominant, makes man a slave to sensual

enjoyment and keeps him unaware of higher spiritual values. *Rajas* is the quality which impels man to intense and excessive activity, making him restlessly eager for gaining fame, power, and success. Here, too, man is fascinated more by the hedonistic and utilitarian outlook than by spiritual insight and eternal bliss. Then there is the noble and peaceful quality of *Sattva*, which, when predominant, fosters calmness, righteousness, and a well balanced aspiration for the spiritual values of life.

The world offers man many a pleasant thing he would wish to obtain and enjoy. But neither satiety nor complete satisfaction can ever be reached with the attainment of the impermanent and illusory values that *Artha* and *Kama* consist of. The urge for more and more of everything—more wealth, more beauty, more power, and more pleasure—remains unabated and so gives no peace or rest to man's uneasy mind. Failure, loss, disease, and death have stood as insurmountable obstacles in the way of man's enjoyment of pleasures. It is true that by utilizing all the knowledge and power at his disposal man has been trying to remove these obstacles. This way if he has succeeded in saving hundreds from disease or death, he has also failed to save thousands from the horrors of war and pestilence. It was, therefore, discovered before long that the forces of material culture could act only as palliatives, removing or reducing the obstacles to pleasure for a short duration and that too with little or no certainty in all cases. Naturally the distressed but discerning soul of man eagerly searched in other directions to find a way that would lead to a complete and permanent annihilation of these obstacles. The Rishis of India took up this paradoxical challenge of the material values of the universe and gave a bold and affirmative answer to the question: 'Is there no way out of this life of misery, frustration, and pleasure-cum-pain?'

Yes, say the Hindu Shastras, there is a way out, of not only this life but also the round of continued births and deaths in

future, known as the cycle of *Samsāra*, to which, the Hindus believe, the majority of the innumerable souls are subject. By renouncing attachment to lower values one gains freedom from the binding effects of pain as well as pleasure. By transcending the limitations of matter and even mind, one can, through perfectly scientific processes, hasten the gradual manifestation of divinity that is already present in man. The lower values drop themselves off automatically and even morality becomes not an end in itself but an aid to the attainment of the still higher state of *Moksha* which is beyond relative good and evil. This state of liberation from *Samsara* is called *mukti* and the liberated man (*mukta puruṣha*), freed from all fear of pain or hope of pleasure, becomes the possessor of the great spiritual treasure much more valuable than all the joy and wealth that Nature can confer. Such a man becomes perfect in the real sense, even in this life, as the teachings and realizations of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda clearly indicate. Even those schools of philosophic thought whose conception of final liberation is eschatological (*videha-mukti*) accept in all strictness that *Moksha* is the supreme value of life. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'This (*Moksha*) is the higher part of our life, and the science of the study of mind and its powers has this perfection as its real end. Helping others with money and other material things and teaching them how to go on smoothly in their daily life are mere details'.

The values of *Dharma* and *Moksha* have come in for not a little criticism in modern pseudo-scientific circles. The critics, for the most part, seem to have suffered from the limitations of superficial study and insufficient or inaccurate understanding of the Hindu view of life. That good alone, to the exclusion of all evil, cannot be fixed as a possibly realizable goal of progress has yet to be understood by those who view ethics (*Dharma*), and not God-realization (*Moksha*), as the ultimate value. If the existence of the soul is denied and the Idea of the Good is defined as that

which is conducive to the survival of a particular individual, group, or species, what can such survival mean and how does it ensure security and happiness for all in a materialistic and competitive society where the fittest to rule or conquer can alone survive? Moreover, struggle through the contradictions of right and wrong and 'ought' and 'ought not' being the basis of moral conduct, how can the clash of inevitably dissimilar interests create perfectly good individuals that could be fit to survive within the bounds of moral law but outside the pale of contradictions? However, history has yet to reveal the tenability of the enlightened materialist's claim that moral law, without any reference to soul or God, can suffice to confer on man the highest value he is in need of.

The field of religion and God-realization is beyond the reach of the senses, beyond even the intellect. God-realization is direct perception of the Supreme Reality, subtle reflections or manifestations of which are revealed to man as the essential part of the commonly recognized triad of values—Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. These are indispensable to the

enjoyment of normal life. But they can by no means be considered supreme or absolute. There cannot be more than one absolute value and the values of Artha and Kama, though sought after as Purusharthas, are inadequate in taking man finally beyond them. Even Dharma is transcended at a stage when man reaches the knowledge of the ultimate Truth and the sense of 'oughtness' ceases to have effect on him. Where there is no imperfection, there is no ought. Let no one take this supreme state to mean a condition of inert void or unrestricted disregard of moral law. The ideal man, according to the Hindu Shastras, lives in the world, loves the world, and works for the highest good of humanity. His struggles are at an end and he can never fall into error even according to the standards of moral authority. One cannot better describe the person who has gained the Parama-Purushartha than the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upaniṣhad* which declares: 'Evil does not overtake him, but he transcends all evil. Evil does not trouble him, (but) he consumes all evil. He becomes sinless, taintless, free from doubts, and a knower of Brahman'.

LORD! WHAT IS MAN?

BY BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA

ILLUSIONS OF THE EGO-SENSE

The sense of me and mine, says the *Bhāgavata*,¹ doth not fade so long as the beginningless compound of mind and intelligence, sense-objects, and their qualities endures. No exorcism is known to have the skill or the power to master the spirit of man's egotism. It has a perpetual lease and has assumed diverse shapes through the ages. That the

¹ *Nāham-mameti bhavo'yam puruṣhe
vyavadhīyate,
Yāvad-buddhi-mano-kṣhārtha-guṇa-vyūho
hyanādīmān. (IV. xxix. 70).*

earth is the centre of the universe and man the acme of creation for whose behoof all objects and forces exist and operate is a self-flattery now almost laid aside. But not altogether. The illusions which feed the present phase of our collective self-esteem are, *first*, that man can cast off the bondage to Nature and be complete master of his destiny and, *second* that his own mental apparatus furnishes the master-key, the only sure and correct clue to the design and pattern of this world. The deeper he goes into the mysteries of the cosmic mechanism and the more widely he puts them to his

own use, the more firmly he is persuaded that his intelligence is specially constituted to probe into and unfold the heart of things. The other delusion about the power to extricate himself from Nature's shackles is fostered in him as a corollary to this. But the perils and perplexities that his own devices have entangled him in today may provide a wholesome chastener of this infatuation. These should instil in him a sober consciousness of the limits of his power and the shortcomings of his achievements. As Jung reminds him somewhat severely,—If he is the culmination of the history of mankind, the fulfilment and the end-product of countless centuries, he is also the disappointment of the hopes and expectations of the ages (*Modern Man in Search of a Soul*). A few obvious facts may serve to impress the view.

TRUTHS—OLD AND NEW

It is equally plausible to affirm that man's intellect has travelled from truth to truth or from error to error. For what is an error but a truth discarded? The pragmatic test of truth is whether it serves man's ends and implements his purposes. The passage from truth to error is by this test tardy and uncertain. No dogma exploded, no hypothesis outworn, no contrivance disused can be cited that had not once its day. Hardly is there a creed or an appliance, however crude or primitive, which even today in some odd corner of our forward-spinning sphere does not render yeoman's service. These may no longer be conspicuous on the highways of human intercourse, but they still hold the ground. And our age runs so fast from feat to feat that nothing can ensure that the marvel of today shall not be a fossil of tomorrow. Modernity, therefore, is an ephemeral conceit, the witchery of a day. The distinction between archaic and modern of which so much is made is the outcome of a limited perspective. Man's existence is six lac years old; and Life is dated fifty lacs and the age of our planet is two-hundred crores. On this time scale ancient history may be said to be contemporary with our lifetime.

SAME PSYCHIC MAKE-UP EVER

This is still more patent in regard to man's inner being which has remained essentially unaltered for the last six thousand years. The Christian sees no reason to expect any change in unredeemed human nature while human life on earth continues. There has been no variation in the average sample of humanity in historical times nor is there any ground to expect such either for better or for worse in future. The psychic make-up of all extant human beings, says Toynbee after a comprehensive survey, in all extant types of society appears to be substantially identical. The modern man's superior assumptions should be carefully weighed against these verdicts. In moments of level thinking, facing both before and behind, he would not perhaps deny these. But the obsession of the present overspreads the mental horizon and shuts out admissions which ruffle our self-complacence. To be modern is perhaps to be conscious of the present only and even to ignore what lies before and after.

INTELLIGENCE UNEQUAL TO ORGANIC MECHANISM

Man's pre-eminence in the world of the living is his intelligence. But it is known to be a faculty modelled on the simplicity of the cosmic universe and not on the inner mechanism of the living creature. This latter is the product of adaptation and sums up the action through aeons of the encounter of forces. Hence the intestine fantastically coiled, the heart unsymmetrical, the liver constricted, the complex structure of the organism, its intricate functioning—the whole thing 'so bizarre, so devoid of apparent logic'. This accounts for the baffling impediments to man's efforts to reproduce which organic matter presents in contrast to inorganic. The living cell, the blood plasma, a tiny tissue, a ligature, or a gristle defies man's synthetic ingenuity although the constituents may be minutely analysed and reduced to the elements. These

are wonders that continually effect themselves in the animal body. Each organ, each tissue, creates its own medium at the expense of blood plasma. Each part seems to know the present and the future needs of itself and the whole and acts accordingly. The same food content is assimilated by the different component parts and diverted to their respective nurture. Above all, there is the primal principle of organic growth. The whole body is born from a cell 'as if the house originated from one brick—a magic brick manufacturing other bricks'. Have these been exhaustively traced and understood? What other magic, asks the *Pañchadaśhī*,² is there than that the germ lodged in the ovum puts forth a variety of stems, so to say, arms, head, and legs and becomes conscious?

FOOD AND LIFE—INVIOLATE SECRETS

In the face of the absolute and helpless dependence of life upon processes that are imperfectly known and not in the least controlled by the creature, all talk of man casting off the bondage to Nature sounds rather empty and futile. Adepts in Indian Yoga are known to have coerced some of the reflex actions, the involuntary organic functions—the *jīvana-yoni-yatna*—the exertions that originate in life. They exhibit some physiological feats for which science is not prepared, but these touch merely the fringe and are brief interferences in mighty operations that sweep through the animal kingdom. Two secrets that Nature seems loth to part with are food and life. Indeed, the two are at bottom the same as the *Taittirīya Upaniṣhad* says: 'Food is that which alternately is eaten and eats all creatures.... Therefore is food established in food'. Synthetic food is indeed within man's power to make, but the ingredients are Nature's gifts of vitamin.

NATURE'S LAWS OR HUMAN FANTASIES

By intent study some of her ways have no

² *Etasmāt-kim-ivendra-jālam-aparam
yad-garbha-vāsasthitam.
Retāśhchetati hasta-mastaka-pada-
prodbhūta-nānānkuram. (VI. 147).*

doubt been unravelled and turned to use but there are unplumbed depths all round. It has been aptly observed that the laws of Nature that man discovers are fantasies of his own love of order. It is out of himself, says Jung, and out of his own peculiar constitution that man produced his sciences. They are symptoms of his psyche. We only understand that thinking which is a mere equation and from which nothing comes out but what we have put in. Such is the working of the intellect. It is partial and confined to what subserves definite ends. The finality of truths discovered under these conditions cannot but be tentative and dubious. The possibility of higher intelligence than man's is slightly reckoned. 'What may be happening elsewhere, we do not know,' says an eminent rationalist of our age, 'but it is improbable that the universe contains nothing better than ourselves'. Flying saucers and luminous balls mysteriously moving through the upper air make man gape with wonder and speculate about the higher knowledge of cosmic secrets that Martians may command.

UNCHANGED EMOTIONS

And what about man's emotional reactions, his conative impulses stimulated by the phenomena that environ him? Love and hate, hope and fear, joy and sorrow, greed and anger—incessantly these waves surge in us and stir the depths of our being at the impact of experiences. They are the same today in Tokyo, Stalingrad, and New York that they were in Nineveh, Babylon, and Taxila. The basic needs are universal—food and drink, health, clothing, housing, sex and parenthood—unchanged in kind and degree, they have moved and move men and women. It is demonstrable that increase of technical skill has not increased the sum of human happiness. A refinement of ease and comfort and faster transit—these super-luxuries enure to the benefit of the few. But for the millions of toilers in tropical heat and polar ice, on snow-bound mountain slopes, in jungles infested by prowling beasts and charged with the miasma

of disease germs, in deserts and coal-mines, and in furnaces and rain-swept ploughed fields, the sum of life's drudgery and soot and grime remains substantially the same. The facts are obvious notwithstanding the glamour of the mechanical civilization of the day. Atomic power, it is claimed, will make all countries in fifty years as prosperous as U.S. is today. Be that granted, but will this uniform prosperity, should it actually be attained, transfigure the inner man and make him respond otherwise than he has been doing for the last 250 or 300 generations to the cycle of changes which makes up life on earth?

MACHINE-AGE HAPPINESS

Civilization is a continual fight against want, ignorance, disease, and squalor. It seeks to reduce the strain, dirt, and ill health under which millions earn their bread. Cleaner, more plentiful, and more enlightened has the human lot certainly to be. The boredom of labour for a bare living is to be eliminated. But there is no human device serving a special purpose which is without its snag. Machinery is to lighten labour and to give the toiler his paradise of four hours' work. But with this target, attained, would not life be so tedious as to be scarcely endurable? Besides, unless we can eliminate war, there is nothing to rejoice in labour-saving technique but just the reverse—remarks the author of the *Unpopular Essays*. Mass unemployment is the primary scourge and curse of the modern world. Modern conditions of technology cannot restore the former balance between supply of labour power and demand for it, not even though millions be cannon fodder or atom bomb target. We must face the truth that we have no patterns of thought to deal with 'the emergent world of leisure and plenty' which lies ahead of us. Labour saved would create a vacuum for human nature to fill which no programme, no routine, has yet been devised. 'The economics resulting from the use of atomic energy in industry about which some people talk fine stories', remarks our modern sage, 'may set free a greater part of human energy for mutual

destruction'. Schemes of melioration for whole societies or all mankind somehow fail to make both ends meet. They are strangely self-contradictory. Machines may reduce the period of exertion but at the same time they reduce men to commodities. Work with tools, the worker contriving every detail of his craft, was work for joy. But men in industrialized societies are now merely hands, each just turning a handle or putting a spoke, being no better than a sentient machine part. Delight has to be extraneously provided for them and life made livable. Here is man limited in his sociological projects.

SOUL REDUNDANT?

But hitherto fettered in the operations of his mind, man is now said to be free, emancipated from the trammels which bound his soul and no longer enslaved by the bugaboos conjured up by ignorance and superstition. It seems now to be an accepted truth that traditional religion and morality were for the most part inspired by man's bondage to Nature. Have these irons been struck off? Can they ever be? The foregoing examination hardly supports the claim. Rationalism, according to Russell, is absence of fanaticism, and holds opinions not dogmatically but tentatively; it is empirical sobriety. And yet he positively asserts that 'a grand concept scientifically useless is the Soul'. And so at a stroke is consigned to the scrap-heap the intuition of mystics, the conviction of the men of faith, the conclusion of most philosophers, the mainspring of the good life. He himself formulates certain questions of a perennial and passionate interest, which, he says, being forgotten or inadequately answered, would impoverish life. Survival after death and the relation of mind and matter—whether either dominates or is independent of the other—are two such questions. He cannot answer them, he declares, nor does he believe anybody else does. Is his position then an adequate answer or an ignoring of these large issues on which life's richness so much hinges? To hold the soul a growth and God a hypothesis is to

dissipate at once the restraining influences on man's conduct and to leave him with his temporal possessions only which he is to strive for with gnashing of teeth and rage in heart and fire-arms in hand. A cult which makes death the end-all and mind and intellect and ethics emanations or derivatives of the physique has yet to vindicate itself as an adequate energizer and consoler and reconciler of men in society. The proof of it can only begin after the debt of the Present to the Past has been entirely cancelled and blotted out.

PSYCHE-BEHAVIOUR?

The achievements of man are the achievements of the spirit. The landmarks in history, the most inspiring, dynamic personalities, have found their incentive in a sense of its reality. Neither body nor mind, says Dr. Radhakrishnan, can function but for the principle of self. Are its operations mere behaviourism? Does *feeling* consist of visceral and specially glandular occurrences and *knowing* of movements of the larynx and *willing* of all other movements depending on the striped muscles and is no room left for the psyche and its proper experiences and exertions? Is all that we have to do for inner life—to move the muscles only? In whole races or periods of history, it has been observed, the psyche is to be found on the outside, for they take no account of psychic life as such. Is ours such an epoch and the whole Race in such a pass?

INDIVIDUAL'S OWN LIFE

Welfare of the community and projects to ensure it are the major preoccupation of our times and rightly so. Society is the very bed-rock of human existence; cut it away, and the fine fabric of individual life with all its graces and ornaments topples down. But the means must not swallow up the end. Each man has a merit that is wholly unique, he is himself. It is over the sanctity of the individual's personality that the world is today split into two hostile camps. Under totalitarian regimentation the individual is in danger of being lost in usefulness for the State. The individual,

it is forgotten, possesses a degree of self-conscious personality which raises his soul above the level of collective consciousness. He has a genuine life of his own distinct from the life of the society. In the tussle between the whole and the unit the East has ever given primacy to this inner life of the spirit as against the life of the community.

THE INEVITABLE INFERENCE

Set amidst the sea of life are islands of solitude on which individuals dwell, each man having one to himself. When the noises of the world which break his isolation subside, the Infinite in Time and Space keeps calling to him. To be deaf to it is for him to lose mental peace and quiet. The wonders within and without never cease to stir questions in him as to the Author of the universe and the purpose and significance of his own life. The immensity of the panorama in which he is less than a tiny dot staggers him and, if his being is rightly composed, moves him to the silence of the full heart. And yet the *Ethics for an Atomic Age* has it that 'religious instinct as an innate tendency would not imply an affirmation of God any more than thirst as a physical hunger would affirm the existence of water'. But the analogy seems hardly apt. In the moon one may suppose nobody suffers from thirst. But hunger and thirst and all the cravings, urges, and intuitions that distinguish man originate in him because he is conditioned in a very special way by his environment. And so if there were no water there would be no thirst. And thus God becomes the Inevitable Inference. Man's petty wants no doubt at times tarnish his idea of the Divinity and leave him open to the mockery of the lines:

Gott strafe England, and God save the King,
God this and God that, and God the
other thing,
'Good God,' said God, 'I've got my work
cut out'.

RIGHT APPROACH AND WRONG

But an object of religious devotion is a necessity of his very existence. And missing the traditional object, he finds synonyms for

God. These may be sports or planchette or the Communist no-God, 'the British Empire, the Bank of England, the Standard Oil Company' and like objects of passionate interest and attachment. The Indian idea which describes Him only by negations makes an approach most in accord with Truth and Reality. For the attributes that man endows the Godhead with are no better than homonyms of qualities he is conversant with. Divine Justice, Divine Truth, Divine Goodness bear names that have a familiar ring, but in essence who knows what they are? He is the Ineffable One, His name is a secret. Even to name the Infinite Unity was a sacrilege according to one of the oldest religions. And the truly devout prayer that may be addressed to him is framed by Prahlada:

'O Supreme Boon-giver, if Thou wouldst grant my desires, the boon I pray of Thee is that desires may no more sprout up in my heart'.³

ILLUSION-BREAKING ILLUSION

The name of God, like all worldly things, as the Sister Nivedita,—the dedicated soul—puts it, is an illusion; only it helps to break down bondage to illusion. Her words echo the note of loving self-surrender sounded by Uddhava in language of concretest imagery:

'Adorned with wreaths and scents, clothes and ornaments which have first been enjoyed by Thee, we Thy slaves, fed with the remnant of Thy repast, shall conquer the spell of Illusion which Thou hast cast over all'.⁴

In other words, looking through eyes of Thy gift, we shall look beyond the limits set to their range.

LORD! WHAT IS MAN?

The deep blue rippled waters of the Bay of

³ *Yadi dāsyasi me kāmān-varāṁstvām*
varadarśhabha,

Kāmānām hṛidyā-samroham bhavatastu
vṛiṇe varam. (Bhāgavata, VII. x. 7).

⁴ *Tvayopabhukta-srag-gandha-vāsolaṅkāra-*
charchitāh,

Uchchhiṣṭa-bhojino dāsāstava māyām
jayemahi. (Bhāgavata, XI. vi. 47).

Bengal roll and sway to the shimmering line where the canopy of the light blue sky descends on it. Between them the two frame a miniature of Infinity which shines forth at night with tens of thousands of starry symbols. At all hours of the day and night, the restless waters are charged from the Power House of the Almighty. In foam-crested breakers they dash with thunderous noise on the brown sandy beach from which crumbling boulders jut forth here and there in unavailing defiance. In never-ending rows and clusters, palm-trees fringe the shore, mingling with cactus and cocoanut, mango and margosa and *ketaki* groves that lend the green shade to the carnival of colours which earth and water, sky, rock, and vegetation together contrive. The rocky slopes intersected by dried-up, red-sanded watercourses rise to heights and melt into the panoramic circle of soft, rounded, purple-tinted hillocks which enclose the valley. Bogainvillas, red and pink, unfurl their luxuriance of blossoms in bunches and squander their lavish tints on the unseeing air. Steamships with the blaze of hundreds of lamps at night ride at anchor in twos or threes and mimic the illumination overhead. Leisurely they glide away and pass out of sight and contrast the puny scale of man's handiwork against Nature's immensities. Was all this vast and superb theatre laid out for man the petty player for a brief while to strut and fret and fume and then to sink into silence and inertness for ever? 'Lord! What is man, that Thou shouldst care for him?' But His care is unmistakable, His mercy boundless! Or man might have been a clod of earth or a lump of stone on some scorched sphere senselessly whirling round a futile sun. Never might he have been fitted to wake up into sentience or reflection or rapture at the marvels that surround him and testify at every step to the supreme Intelligence and architectonic skill that orders and upholds the universe.

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR

Though Swami Vivekananda may be a historical figure to many, to me he is more than a memory, for I had the privilege of listening to him in the epoch-making days of our renaissance when the Swamiji addressed the students in Madras on their problems ahead. I have visited the many Ashramas founded by the Swamiji, in various parts of India and abroad, and especially the Ramakrishna Math in Madras. I have also associated myself with many devotees of the Ramakrishna Mission. Here I shall deal with the message which Swami Vivekananda left for the common man,—the man steeped in worldly affairs,—the message that he gave to his countrymen to help them to conduct themselves efficiently in whatever station in life they were placed,—social, political, economical, and spiritual. His message is meant for all time and for the whole world, and it is needed much more now than at any other time. He was a man of vision and his message has unfolded itself more and more as time has rolled on.

His first and foremost message was the doctrine of toleration. In the opening address at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago he thrilled the vast audience by addressing them not in a cold and formal way but with a touch of human intimacy as 'Sisters and Brothers', thus for the first time establishing the international companionship of human beings. He pointed out in glowing terms the imperative necessity of tolerance amongst people adopting different faiths. He brought out the unique fact that in India alone was to be found a continuous record of tolerance so helpful to civilization. As he said, here in India the Hindus have built and are still building churches for the Christians and mosques for the Mohammedans. He said that the world had to learn from India not only toleration

but universal acceptance, universal sympathy. As the different rivers, taking their rise from different mountains, and running straight or crooked, at last come to the ocean, so the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to the same goal—This was how the Swami emphasized the ideal of tolerance, quoting a Sanskrit verse.

Swami Vivekananda had a prophetic vision of the future of India. The opening words of his famous speech at Ramnad in 1897 have this prophetic ring:

'The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awaking and a voice is coming to us,—away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were, from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, and of love, and of work, India, this motherland of ours,—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold, the sleeper is awakening. Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet'.

Due to repeated foreign aggression and consequent social apathy, India had lost faith in herself and in her inherent strength. But he boldly proclaimed that there was no room for any pessimism whatsoever. If only we recapture our faith in our religion and in ourselves, he said, we could work out the spiritual conquest of the world. He strongly rebuked those who spoke that India had no stamina. She had the greatest spiritual

strength which can be restored to each one of us if only we have faith in ourselves. He exhorted everyone to arise, awake, and stop not till the goal was reached. It was this great call which was fully endorsed in our days by Mahatma Gandhi who recaptured this faith and dreamt of freedom and galvanized the nation in a struggle as a result of which we achieved our political independence. Swami Vivekananda quickened the soul of India and Mahatma Gandhi canalized its forces to achieve national liberation.

Swami Vivekananda was a true social reformer. When confronted by critics about our social evils, his reply as to their eradication was constructive. Referring to the destructive methods of the reformers of the day, he said:

'To the reformers I will point out that I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root-and-branch reform. Where we differ is in the method. Theirs is the method of destruction, mine is that of construction. I do not believe in reform; I believe in growth. . . . Feed the national life with the fuel it wants, but the growth is its own; none can dictate its growth to it'.

Pleading for a calm and dispassionate view on the subject of our social evils and the methods to tackle them, he continued,

'Evils are plentiful in our society, but so are there evils in every other society. Here, the earth is soaked sometimes with the widow's tears; there, in the West, the air is rent with the sighs of the unmarried. Here, poverty is the great bane of life; there, the life-weariness of luxury is the great bane that is upon the race. Here, men want to commit suicide because they have nothing to eat; there, they commit suicide because they have so much to eat. Evil is everywhere, it is like chronic rheumatism. Drive it from the foot, it goes to the head; drive it from there, it goes somewhere else. It is a question of chasing it from place to place'.

Evil and good are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. If we have one, we must have the other; a billow in the ocean must be at the cost of a hollow elsewhere. Therefore, 'Why condemn?' asks the Swamiji, and proceeds, 'We admit that there are evils. Everybody can show what evil is, but he is

the friend of mankind who finds a way out of the difficulty'.

Putting the problem in a clear focus, the Swamiji said:

'The whole problem of social reform, therefore, resolves itself into this: Where are those who want reform? Make them first. Where are the people? The tyranny of a minority is the worst tyranny that the world ever sees. A few men who think that certain things are evil will not make a nation move. Why does not the nation move? First educate the nation, create your legislative body, and then the law will be forthcoming. First create the power, the sanction from which the law will spring. The kings are gone; where is the new sanction, the new power of the people? Bring it up. Therefore, even for social reform, the first duty is to educate the people, and you will have to wait till that time comes'.

Thus Swami Vivekananda advocated social evolution instead of revolution and he called his method 'root-and-branch reform'.

Swamiji had a message on the subject of idolatry. Idol worship was talked of in the closing part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century by foreigners and by western-educated Indians in terms of disparagement. Swamiji gave a fitting answer to this shallow criticism which proved unanswerable. He said: 'If such Ramakrishna Paramahansas are produced by idol worship, what will you have—the reformer's creed or any number of idols? . . . Take a thousand idols more if you can produce Ramakrishna Paramahansas through idol worship, and may God speed you. Produce such noble natures by any means you can'. He pointed out that idolatry is rampant in other religions as well. He said that 'if God is represented in any beautiful form, or any symbolic form' as the Hindus do, it is awfully bad according to the Jewish notions; it is sin. 'But if He is represented in the form of a chest with two angels sitting on each side, and a cloud hanging over it, it is the holy of holies. If God comes in the form of a dove, it is holy. But if He comes in the form of a cow, it is heathen superstition; condemn it'. Swami Vivekananda condemned such a narrow and fanatic view. It is the faith behind a worship

and the inspiration it produces that are significant and not the image or symbol in itself. By this criterion, image worship has proved itself to be a nursery of spirituality at all times. I have to warn particularly the educated men of our day in this connection, that they learn this message of Swami Vivekananda, lest in their zeal for reform they take away from the people the faith that sustains them.

Swami Vivekananda had already forestalled the problem of the Harijan community. To his mind, every man and woman, and everyone, was equal in the eye of God and there was no room for any differences. He did not like the idea of superiority and inferiority usually associated with philanthropy. We cannot help anyone, he said, we can only serve. It was a privilege given to us to serve the needy. Sri Ramakrishna had demonstrated this spirit of humility in service through his love for the untouchable whose house he had cleaned. The poor, the sick, etc. need not thank us but we should thank them for being given the opportunity to serve. It is the greatest privilege and gift of our lives that we are allowed to serve the Lord in all these shapes. Let us serve and leave the rest to God. 'To work you have the right and not to the fruits thereof', is the exhortation of the *Gita*. There should not be any inferiority or superiority complex involved in service. We have to do service as a form of worship.

Swami Vivekananda was the great teacher of the synthesis of all religions. The world is one spiritually. Whatever religions are followed and whatever the manner of worship, the same goal is reached, which is the ocean of bliss. All rivers lead to the ocean, whatever the shapes they assume or paths they follow. It is want of understanding of the underlying unity of all faiths that has been responsible for mutual suspicion and hatred. It must be realized that whatever the religion or mode of worship, the faith behind all is the same. This is the ideal of the synthesis

of all religions which he preached so eloquently and fervently.

Swamiji was a great patriot and he has defined the virtue of patriotism in memorable words:

'I believe in patriotism, and I also have my own ideal of patriotism. Three things are necessary for great achievements. First, feel from the heart. . . . Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? . . . Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step. . . . You may feel, then; but instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you, sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right? . . . Have you got that steadfastness? If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles'.

And in this form and field of national work, declared Swamiji, there is no scope for the vice of jealousy. There should not be jealousy between patriots, even as between worshippers in a temple. There can be no precedence in patriotism, even as in worship. But he was pained to note that we have been awfully jealous of one another. It is a kind of slavery, he said, and should be avoided. 'Everyone wants to command and no one wants to obey', he remarked, and added, 'First learn to obey. The command will come by itself. Always learn to be a servant and then you will be fit to be a master'. In this patriotism each has a part to play, high or low, rich or poor, leader or follower. If one has done his part well, it is enough. Let him do best what is allotted to him. If jealousy clings to us there can be no true leadership or patriotism.

Swamiji also demonstrated clearly the need for the appearance of great teachers and incarnations if India was to live. Great personalities are born time and again to fulfil the *Gita* saying 'I will come whenever virtue subsides'. It is remarkable that so many great *Avatars* had appeared in the East and founded religions and carried all light, knowledge, and civilization from the East to the West; this is the verdict of history, though we, in modern times, wrongly feel that civilization came to the East from the West. This however does not mean that we were or are the repository of all wisdom. Every nation at sometime or other has something to contribute to the good of the world and something to take from the world for its own good. Take all the good in the world, wherever it may be found, and assimilate it for

the welfare and development of your nation—was the Swamiji's message. 'Give and take is the law', said he. This is a message for all times and especially in these critical modern days, when tensions are great within the body politic of each nation and between nation and nation. Mahatma Gandhi came in our times with a similar message. Such a message alone can undo the mischief of creating and exasperating jealousy and suspicion between nations. Bombs are not the way to peace, but touching the heart of man and changing him to ways of love and co-operation is the only way to achieve peace. The message of Swami Vivekananda, with its emphasis on toleration and universality, faith and service, is urgently needed today to sustain civilization and world peace.

IS METAPHYSICS POSSIBLE?

(THE RELATIVE STANDPOINTS OF SCIENCE AND VEDANTA)

BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

I

Any metaphysical construction, which means business instead of toying with ideas, weaving webs of speculation, and indulging in verbal magic or logic-chopping, must itself be a clear proof of the possibility of metaphysics as a valid cognitive discipline. It must be, so to say, a practical refutation of the positivist's contention that the natural sciences cover the whole field of knowledge proper and beyond them lies the obscure twilight region of faith or subjective preferences, emotional commands, and cries. A metaphysics, in other words, constructed as a science and not as an expression of one's temperament, will itself disarm any doubt against its validity. But there is so much resentful suspicion in the philosophical atmosphere to-

day against metaphysics in general, due justly to the history of philosophy during the last thousand years or more being one of speculation or prose-poetry rather than of metaphysical sciencing, that a work which means to belong to the latter category has to be prefaced by a vindication of metaphysics as a science in general terms. It has to show first in an abstract manner the possibility of a scientific metaphysics. For, unless the deep-set positivist prejudice against all metaphysics is neutralized, any work on the subject will suffer in communication.

II

Let us then see why it is that metaphysics as knowledge or science is regarded impossible,

The main reason may be stated in the steps as follows:

(i) Metaphysics means a discipline that goes beyond natural science. It must mean this, for it has its origin in questions which arise out of natural science, yet which is beyond the scope of the latter to answer. The questions refer to such features of nature as are and must be assumed by natural science to carry out its task, which is organization of sense-perceptions or simply ordering of sense-experience. They are *a priori* for natural science. Such *a priori* factors or presuppositions are space, time, quantity, quality, causality, substance, etc. known as categories of understanding. Also such *a priori* factors are the particularity or contingency of the sense-data or presentations and their particular laws. Science cannot question these features, rather it starts with these. Again, such factors as the objecthood of the object and the subjectivity of the knower and the possibility of the two coming together in the peculiar relation which makes knowledge possible are presupposed by science. Knowability of the objects is never questioned by science.

(ii) Natural science gives us knowledge proper which is marked by universality and necessity, i.e. objectivity and compulsiveness, because the sense-data, the content of natural science, and the categories, the forms, are both universal and necessary. This makes scientific knowledge verifiable by everybody.

Now as we go beyond natural science to what lies behind these universal and necessary factors of knowledge and seek to account for them, we have no similar universal and necessary experience. If we regard the transcendent ground as a *cause* we have then ideas which are vague and speculative. They are even self-contradictory and, so, meaningless, having only an emotive significance or evocative function. The question itself of the *cause* of the *a priori* factors in natural science will then appear meaningless when stated. The fallacy of the cosmological proof of God illustrates this. And if we avoid such meaningless and private ideas by regarding the transcen-

dent ground as a logical ground instead of causal or ontological, we are left with no experience and nothing at all. For, we cannot know the logical implication of things which are not given propositions in a deductive system and the *a priori* factors of knowledge are not known as logically connected or defined concepts which are terms in propositions of logic. To illustrate the above contentions, then, the question of the cause of the world, which science takes for granted, may be considered. This question is generally answered by speculative philosophers in terms of a vague supersensible entity conceived as a spirit by some, matter or ether by others, also as love, will, vital force, and duration by some others. In any case, it is conceived as a substance causing this world. But this leads to the idea of a first cause which is self-contradictory, for, a cause must itself be caused and there cannot be causality and freedom characterizing the same entity. The real difficulty arises from conceiving the ground of the world in terms of substance and causality which are applicable to the world itself. Therefore, this alleged ground is no real ground. But what is a real ground? That which cannot be thought in any of the terms used in science,—space, time, substance, causality etc. But then it becomes unthinkable and so unknowable. It is, in other words, a truly transcendent object. But then what is the use of our speaking about it and affirming its existence? The causal ground of the world or for that matter, of any of the *a priori* factors of natural science, is then a meaningless notion. This may be more clearly shown thus. These factors are not known as individual items in natural science definitely given as objects and causally ordered; so they cannot be thought to be caused as fire is caused. The world as a whole, or space-time-matter, is never known as an object, but is assumed in every individual knowledge of objects. These objects are said to be of the world which is the ideal limit of integration of these objects through causal relations amongst one another. Thus to speak of the world as itself having a cause is a mistake;

it is making a transcendent, and so, illegitimate, use of the category of causality as Kant pointed out. It is like seeking the heater of fire that heats or the illuminator of light that illumines.

Again, to ask for a *logical* ground of the world is meaningless, for the simple reason that the 'world' is not regarded as an element of a logical system or a language with syntactical rules. X can be a logical ground of Y if they are propositions and X is one of the premises of Y in deductive syllogism or if both are terms in a proposition and Y is defined in terms of X such that Y implies X. Logic is verbal and logical analysis works out and exhibits the tautologies which are not at once self-evident. Logic, therefore, cannot discover truths.

(iii) Thus from the above it follows that metaphysics, which implies transcension of natural science and which procedure, as just shown, leads *either* to vague and subjective experiences and to self-contradiction *or* to nothing significantly beyond the obvious data of experience, is no science or knowledge proper. It may have some emotive value but not of any cognitive one.

III

Now how to face and answer this positivist thesis? Certainly the need for metaphysics arises out of the question of the ground of the *a priori* factors in natural science, but the ground conceived either as causal or as logical leads to cognitively meaningless, though imaginatively or emotionally significant, results. Is there no other way to conceive the ground such as would lead to meaningful metaphysics? Positivism or any philosophical theory cannot limit the possibility of meaning of the ground and there cannot be any *a priori* reason why there should be only two ways of conceiving it. For these two ways are as contingent as any number of them. Rather than these two ways of conceiving the ground,—the causal and the logical,—as being exhaustive, we have some *a priori* reason to believe that there may be a *third* way. For, even

though these two ways are proved to be intellectually ineffectual, we do entertain the idea of ground of the *a priori* factors of natural science; we are not emancipated from it as we are in the case of ideas found erroneous on analysis. We cannot but seek the ground, cannot but ask the reason why there is the world, sense-experience, space, time, causality, and the rest, and knowledge itself with its subjective and objective poles. And we do see, after all the positivist exposition of the meaninglessness of these questions, that there still lurks some meaning behind them. So we come to suspect that there may be a *third* meaning of the ground of the *a priori* elements in natural science implicit in our mind. We suspect, in other words, the existence of a metaphysical world of which we might have some experience.

IV

The problem is to find out this meaning and thus to construct a meaningful metaphysics. We affirm that this meaning is *phenomenological* in character. What we affirm by this is that there is an experience, which, though non-sensuous and non-conceptual in the ordinary sense (in which we perceive and conceive empirical objects), is yet objective and implicit in the *a priori* factors of natural science, and, so, is the ground of the latter. Just as empirical objects in their interrelations, when contemplated, yield the *a priori* factors or the categories to the contemplative mind, so do these categories in their turn reveal their underlying reality or ground to the in-seeing mind. Such a searching depth-analysis of experience in order to trace its obvious aspects to their original home is generally known as phenomenological research by Husserl and his school and this is not essentially different from the meditative method in Indian philosophy, particularly followed by Yoga and Vedanta.¹

¹ Note particularly the levels of reality gradually reached in the Bhṛigu-valli of *Taittirīya Upaniṣhad*, the Gārgī-Yājñavalkya dialogue in *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣhad* (III. 6), and the Nārada-Sanatkumāra dialogue in *Chhāndogya Upaniṣhad* (VII. 1), as also the Prajāpati-Devāsura dialogue therein (VIII. 7). Again, note the levels of reality

It is a serious method of philosophical research which makes transparent what appears to be obscure and explicates what is implicit through a series of direct intuitions. It does not hypothesize and speculate as do the scientist and the scientific philosopher who ever remain in doubts and never can break out of the charmed circle of the provisional or the tentative. For, in science and such speculative philosophies no theory can be finally verified to be true, there being always the possibility of its being reversed by a better theory and there being no knowing as to the uniformity of Nature. By virtue of this method, which is scientific, leading to objective results, philosophy becomes an enterprise of discovery instead of invention, construction, or system-building, a true cognitive discipline yielding Truth directly such as its Sanskrit name *darśhana* (which means perception) suggests.

To come to our specific question, viz. the notion of the ground of the presuppositions of natural science or, in other words, of the empirical world, we have affirmed that it is neither causal nor logical but phenomenological in the sense that there is an objective experience underlying the experience of the world as offered by natural science, and that this former experience when explicated will account for the latter. It is not a causal ground or a first cause, but is experienced as a truly transcendent ground, as a creator. It is again not a substance which is a naturalistic conception and as such cannot characterize the transcendent ground of Nature (i.e. our experience of the empirical world). It is immaterial and may be called spirit, mind, or soul if each is conceived as unsubstantial. Similarly, it is not in space-time, has no quantity and quality in the empirical sense. revealed in Yoga in successive stages of Samādhi or meditation. Note also Shankara's and other Vedantists' insistence on Vedic revelation as the authoritative source of knowledge in matters metaphysical. Shankara disregards reasoning (*tarka*) as a source of such knowledge as it has no foundational value. It has value only in understanding and collating revelation or scripture (See his commentary on *Brahma-Sūtras*, I. i. 2, II. i. 6, II. i. 11).

So, it may be said to be here, there, and everywhere, yet nowhere in particular; now, then, and everywhen, yet nowhen in particular, infinitely big, yet infinitely small, having all qualities, yet discarding all of them.² The transcendent ground as experienced in a trans-empirical meditation will have to be provisionally expressed in such paradoxes. For, it, on the one hand, transcends all empirical nature, being the ground of it (the ground cannot contain the characters of the grounded) and, on the other, cannot totally negate the empirical nature (for the ground comprehends all the characters of the grounded in a sense). The creator spirit of the world, as directly revealed by phenomenological research, cannot be characterized in terms of the characters created by it, yet it cannot be said to be as excluded from them as fire from water, for creations are somehow in the creator. This true realization is expressed by some as the ground to be both *in and above* empirical characters, both transcendent and immanent. (Note also the statement about Brahman in the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* of the *Rig-Veda*, 'Pervading the universe, it exceeded it by ten fingers'.) This conception of the ground may be elucidated by an analogy. The empirical self creates the dream objects—including the dream self; all the characters of the dream do not characterize the empirical self which *cannot* nonetheless be said to be absolutely above them, for they are immanently in it, created and operated by it. (Hence it is said in the Upanishad that everything is Brahman, yet It is known by negating everything in the world,—through *neti, neti*).

Now, we do not propose to delineate a phenomenological metaphysics here.³ We have given above just a hint of such a discipline to exhibit the possibility of metaphysics as a science. The conceptions of this metaphysics are expressible in such negative terms as

² Compare such paradoxical statements regarding Brahman in *Iśha Upaniṣad*, 5-6.

³ This is attempted elsewhere. See *Prabuddha Bharata*, July-August, 1952, the article 'Vedanta Phenomenology'.

infinity, non-spatiality, non-temporality, and non-substantiality, and such paradoxes as everywhere and nowhere, everywhen and nowhen, big yet small, known yet unknown (see *Kena Upaniṣhad*, 9-11). This is because our language is a product of empirical experience, that is, of science and common sense, which serves our ordinary work-a-day life. If we have, in large measure and collectively, the transcendental knowledge through meditative or phenomenological research, then we can have also appropriate terms for the metaphysical concepts just as higher mathematics and the sciences have their own. The only positive terms we seem to use in our metaphysics are creation and freedom, but they too are open to misunderstanding, being sometimes understood in their empirical sense of causation and licence. So, it would be advisable for clarity of expression and communication in metaphysics proper to have a terminology of its own. But that requires, as noted above, a good measure of common experience in this province. Thought and conceptual articulation presuppose this ground and it is only on the basis of this that they can carry out their mission which is organization of experience into an objective and communicable form and thus emancipation of the mind from mute feelings and sentiments to expressive knowledge.

Thus, though the scientific attitude, in its initial and narrow, dogmatic form, is sceptical of any metaphysical knowledge, it, when developed and enlightened, shows the way to true metaphysics, which is not a speculative movement 'about and about' but a real research somewhat like science itself in another plane of experience. The positivistic criticism of 'so-called' metaphysics is largely correct and it is healthy for true philosophy which must seek some clear objective form in order to be a cognitive discipline and which must not rest satisfied with either the speculative ventures of the literary artist or the visions and sentiments of the poet, and the prophet. It is no use repeating that thought cannot apprehend and express the trans-empirical truths; for, thought can reflect any experience as is

proved by its success in the higher sciences like biology, psychology, sociology, also ethics and aesthetics studied as science, where higher and more complex concepts are formed to grasp the richer and subtler experiences. What we need for metaphysics is real digging and drilling to bring out the requisite experiences underlying the surface ones of natural sciences. Given the experiences, thought will not be idle or wanting in its business of organizing the data mass into a science through its usual process of conception, judgement, and reasoning. The mind wants to *know* what it experiences, to mediate what it apprehends as immediate, to hold apart and grasp reflectively and possess what it appears to *be*, and, lastly, to communicate to and share with others what is first got as one's own. In other words, mind seeks to and is competent to transform its own discovery into a social reality, to objectify the subjective realizations into objective knowledge. This it does through thought. Before one has fully exhausted the capacities of one's mind to discover through a meditative search the basal experiences beneath the ordinary ones, and to translate these into thought, it is idle to speak of the impossibility of metaphysics as a science. This is a caution to the positivists who deny metaphysics on the ground that we have no experiences other than sense-experience, and an appeal to others who deny it on the ground that the supersensible experiences are incommunicable.

To conclude this discussion on the possibility of metaphysics as a science, let us observe the relative standpoints of science and Vedanta. (Our phenomenological method is really Vedantic with its insistence on having transcendental experiences instead of relying on speculations, argumentation, and mere analogies from empirical experience). Science, i.e. natural philosophy, may deny at first the possibility of a metaphysics or superscience. Its ground for this denial is not altogether false and destructive of cultivation of true metaphysics. For, what it demands is that metaphysics, to be authentic knowledge, must have objective metaphysical experiences just as science has

empirical experiences amenable to conceptualization and so communication. Science thus exerts a healthy influence on true metaphysics and curbs useless speculation and dry argumentation. Vedanta admits this criticism. Then science itself become keenly aware of its presuppositions which can be known only through a metaphysical search on a higher level of being. So, it encourages this search. And by the success it has achieved in the various fields, where it has had to search for original experiences and to bring them to concepts of a new kind (such as in biology, psychology, ethics), science teaches this lesson that thought can rise to the occasions presented to it instead of remaining hide-bound and cramped. Thought can think and articulate not only the simple mechanical concepts but the complex

ones of life, mind, goodness, and beauty with perfect clarity and objectivity. So there is no bar to our metaphysical search in a scientific manner. Vedanta lays stress on realization just as science does on observation and verification more than on mere abstract theorization. Vedanta says that the reality is beyond thought and speech, but then it means *ordinary* empirical thought and speech. It *does* think and speak of this reality and does speak of Brahman—knowledge and teaching. It rightly lays stress on the experiential data just as science does on experiment and observation. So, there is no essential diversity between the methods of the two. They have different datal planes. And then Vedanta metaphysics completes science which *reaches* its consummation in the former.

WHAT IS THIS UNIVERSE?

BY JAGDISH SAHAI

When we talk of the universe we refer to the whole of creation—the entire manifested reality including organic as well as inorganic Nature. Nature includes *Homo sapiens*. There is an inborn curiosity among human beings to know something about the things and happenings around them. The external world—the sun, the stars, the plants, the animals, and natural scenery—arouses interest and wonder in the heart of every man. Man's senses are irresistibly drawn towards the diverse objects of the vast and illimitable creation. The harmony and beauty of Nature appears enchanting. The curiosity to know or the inborn thirst for knowledge has ever prompted man to dive deep into the mysteries of the universe. From where has the universe come and how has it come? What is it made of and what is the goal or purpose for which it exists? In the East—the cradle of civilization—this quest led man to inquire into

the very nature of his own self and he ultimately discovered that the 'Self' is one, beginningless and endless, and the entire universe, presenting an appearance of many and diverse phenomena is, in fact, an indivisible part of that one 'Self' which alone exists, the other seeming existences being mere kaleidoscopic appearances on a cosmic scale. This discovery helped in the formulation of the Science of the Spirit—the basic foundation of all religions. In the West, on the other hand, the inquiry into the mysteries of the universe led man to the study of the world and Nature as something external to himself, something distinct and alien to himself. This approach to the external world presumes the human observer and the object of his observation as two different entities that can be studied separately and independently one from the other. Thus the two different ways of looking at the universe—the subjective and the objec-

tive—have given rise to different theories about the origin, evolution, and destiny of the universe. These different theories of cosmogony can broadly be classified into two general types—the materialistic and the spiritualistic. We shall here consider both and evaluate the truth of each. It should not, however, be forgotten that if a man's cosmogony is wrong, his religion will also be all wrong and then his will be a wasted life.

COSMOGONY OF THE MATERIALIST

A materialist is one who holds the view that nothing exists but matter and its movements and modifications and also that consciousness and will are wholly due to material agency. Perception is regarded as the only means of correct knowledge. On the basis of the perception of the phenomena of Nature, man has built up a fund of knowledge, called Natural Science, systematized into various branches such as Astronomy, Meteorology, Geology, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. On the data supplied by these sciences and Mathematics, a theory of cosmogony is propounded. According to this theory Nature is an assemblage of objects located in space and continually changing with the passage of time. The finite region of space is called the observable universe. Space, which in fact is infinite, is not empty at all. Throughout the Milky Way, stretching across the heavens, there is a diffuse gas called the interstellar gas and hydrogen is said to be the commonest element of this gas. According to Fred Hoyle, a British scientist, hydrogen is the basic material out of which the universe is built. Basing on observations extending over a few centuries (modern science is hardly 400 years old), scientists have found that the entire universe consists of 92 elements. (Hydrogen is the first and simplest element. After hydrogen come helium, lithium, beryllium, and others). By various combinations of different elements every conceivable variety of matter is making its manifestation. The countless kinds of minerals, vegetables, and animals that constitute the physical world take on almost every

imaginable form, ranging from tough metals and intangible gases to growing leaves and living flesh. All these things change and sometimes even seem to disappear; metals rust, gases burn, leaves and flesh decay. But though matter is changeable it cannot be destroyed, for all its endless forms are made up of a few changeless and chemically irreducible substances. These are the elements, the building blocks of the universe.

Initially matter was uniformly and sparsely distributed in the universe. Due to gravitational attraction,—a force inherent in matter,—it condensed into large clouds called galaxies. The mutual attraction of the galaxies resulted in their rotation on their own axes. Rotation caused further condensation, which in turn brought about an increase in the velocity of rotation. Each cloud flattened lens-like. The matter at the edges was thrown into space during the rotation and it is this scattered matter that condensed into stars. From one of the stars—the Sun—came out the planets—the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, etc. and these have been revolving round their parent. This we know as our solar system. One of the planets of the solar system is our earth. On the earth we find a variety of life. 'From the bacteria and the protozoa to the anthropoid apes and *Homo sapiens*—this is the entire gamut of animal and human life on this earth'.

MATTER OR ENERGY?

To the question where the created material comes from, it is stated that matter simply appears. It is created out of the 'background material' which remains of constant density because matter is being created and is also disappearing simultaneously. Though no microscope has yet been able to reveal the basic structure of matter, nor any chemical test to precisely define it, it is surmised that matter consists of some physically indivisible particles called atoms which are too infinitesimally small ever to be seen or directly measured. They are supposed to consist of electrons, protons, and neutrons. Recent experiments

have proved that atoms of matter are made up of packets of energy, thus robbing matter of its materiality. In the remotest recesses of space, waves of energy that have travelled for millions and millions of years are supposed to have been transformed into matter. It is by a combination of formless and invisible energy packets that hard matter has come into existence. By the bombardment of the smallest speck of matter vast amounts of energy are released. In the ultimate analysis both matter and energy lose their distinctiveness and they do not really stand poles apart as one is led to believe, but they present an interconvertibility that is amazing. This dual role of the 'background material' has been termed 'Matter-energy-tensor' by Eddington.

Energy known to modern science is of various kinds. Heat, light, electricity, magnetism, and sound are various manifestations of energy. Energy is continuously travelling in space in the form of waves and undulations. Rays of heat and light are made up of fast-speeding packets of energy called 'photons' (bullets of radiation) and it is the quick succession of these packets or quanta that give rise to a sense of continuity. All waves of energy, except those of sound, speed through space with the greatest velocity known so far. An Indian scientist has lately succeeded in establishing a relationship between sonic and thermal energies. The ratio of this conversion of sound into heat is in close agreement with similar constants for the conversion of mechanical and electrical energies into heat. This establishes the fact that all types of energies are inter-related in some mysterious way though they have different and distinct functions in their own respective fields and that the sum total of energies remains constant through all changes that seem to occur.

MECHANISTIC VIEW

The scientists' idea that the universe is a huge machine where energy is changed into matter and matter into energy has given undue prominence to a materialistic and mechanistic view of Nature. According to this view, since

the creation of the world bodies or objects have been eternally going through some fixed sequence of movements governed by inexorable laws. On the concept of a 'material point' Newtonian mechanics formulated the law of inertia, the law of motion, the law of gravitation, and the laws of force. These laws explain motion of bodies in terms of force, mass, and velocity with reference to 'absolute space' and 'absolute time' and form the foundation of the nineteenth century physics. It is claimed that the whole of the universe can be explained in physico-chemical terms. Attempts have been made to explain organic evolution or evolution of life, from the lowest to the highest forms, in terms of the known laws of physics, chemistry, and biology. It is said that when the fiery surface of the earth cooled, gradually complex carbon compounds, called colloids, were formed. From these living cells developed and then through chance variation and natural selection all the forms of life gradually evolved during millions of years. The whole process was mechanical and unpurposeful. The entire organic evolution was and is governed by the mechanical principles of chance variations, changes in limbs due to adaptation to environment, struggle for existence, and survival of the fittest.

MATHEMATICIANS' CHALLENGE

In the beginning of the twentieth century, some mathematicians questioned the fundamental propositions of physical science such as the theorem about the sum of the angles of a triangle, the law of inertia, the law of conservation of energy, and so on. They contended that these postulates gave no factual description of the reality, but were mere theoretical speculations as to how words such as 'straight line', 'force', and 'energy' were to be employed in the propositions of geometry, mechanics, and physics. The geometrical theorems were not statements about the true nature of space, as was commonly taken for granted, nor did they describe any observable phenomena; but they were mere definitions of expressions such

as a 'straight line' or 'uniform motion along a straight line.'

Einstein contends that Euclidean geometry ceases to be valid in a space where masses that exert gravitational forces are present. He says that curves are the shortest distances between any two points in space and the angles of a triangle formed by these lines do not add up to two right angles. Space in Nature is not a plane surface of the Euclidean geometry but a curved surface. The presence of material bodies produces certain curvatures in space and the path of a particle moving in a gravitational field is determined by this curvature of space. The curvature itself is determined by the distribution of matter which produces a gravitational field. Likewise electrically charged particles due to the phenomena of attraction and repulsion give rise to an electro-magnetic field. Both the fields are analogous. According to Einstein, the inertia of bodies is not due, as Newton assumed, to their effort to maintain their direction of uniform motion or of rest in 'absolute space', but rather to the inert mass of a material system and that inert mass was nothing else than latent energy. The doctrine of the conservation of mass thus became merged in the doctrine of the conservation of energy. The mass of a body increases in proportion to its speed and speed modifies the value of time. Einstein therefore replaced the idea of 'absolute motion' by 'motion relative to a given system of co-ordinates', which in mechanics is called an inertia-system.

EINSTEIN'S UNIFIED FIELD THEORY

Einstein believes that the physical universe is one continuous field, like an endless stream. There is nothing at rest in the universe. Every particle is in constant motion. Nature is concerned with only relative velocities without any reference to either 'absolute space' or 'absolute time'. Space and time have no existence in their own right but only as seen by a conscious mind. They are derivative and not fundamental. Time is local and is different for each individual. There is no one

uniform time for everybody. No material body can move with the velocity of light. The velocity of light—186,300 miles per second—is, as far as man's finite mind is concerned, the only constant in a universe of continuous flux. There is no other fixed reality in the cosmos except that of light. On the sole absolute of light-velocity depend all human standards of time and space. Time and space derive their measurement validity only in reference to the yard-stick of light-velocity which is constant for all observers. There is no separate space and time of our conception in Nature. Nature is concerned with a four-dimensional continuum in which space and time are welded inseparably together into 'space-time' where all directions are treated equally. 'It is as impossible to locate an event in time in an objective way as to locate an object in space in an objective way. The primary ingredients of Nature are not objects existing in space and time but events in the continuum'. Every event creates its own space-time. The theory of relativity shows that space is related to momentum in the same way in which time is related to energy. Energy is inherent in matter, the mass of a body being no more than its concentrated energy. Energy in any particle of matter is equal to its mass or weight multiplied by the square of the velocity of light. In the space-time continuum, momentum and energy are merged into one like space and time themselves. Gravitational masses and inertial masses are identical in their effect for they have the same mass constant. Einstein has thus synthesized matter and energy, space and time, gravitation and inertia—hitherto considered as individual and unrelated entities,—electro-magnetism. While gravity controls the 'unified field' theory embodies in one mathematical formula the laws of gravitation and electro-magnetism. While gravity controls the distances between the stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies, electro-magnetism is more especially concerned with the chemistry and radio-activity of matter; light, heat, Hertzian waves, X-rays, and gamma rays, all of which

are no more than various 'projections' of the particles of electrical energy of which the atom is made up. 'It is intolerable to a theoretical mind', says Einstein, 'that there should be two structures in space independent of one another—a gravitational one and an electromagnetic one'.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISTS' VIEW

As against this mathematical interpretation of the world, in which matter becomes something insubstantial, the dialectical materialists hold that motion without matter is inconceivable. There are no absolute boundaries in Nature. All boundaries in Nature are conditional, relative, movable, and express the gradual approximation of our mind towards the knowledge of matter. In Lenin's words:

'The essence of things or substance expresses only the degree of profundity of man's knowledge of objects; and while yesterday the profundity of this knowledge did not go beyond the atom, and today does not go beyond the electron and ether, dialectical materialism insists on the temporary, relative, approximate character of all these milestones of knowledge of Nature gained by the progressing science of man. The electron is as inexhaustible as the atom. Nature is infinite. . . . Dialectics is the study of the contradiction within the very essence of things'.

The entire phenomenal world is under the inexorable sway of polarity. No law of physics, chemistry, or any other science is ever free from inherent opposite or contrasted principles. The self-movement of matter is the driving force of development and development is the struggle of opposites. This struggle is continuous and inconclusive and therefore absolute. There is no other substance in existence except matter. Such a theory stands self-condemned as it draws a boundary to thought and life; it beckons humanity to think gross and live gross on the material plane of existence only. It suggests no way out of the perpetual world-conflict.

MATERIALISTIC PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

It is the materialistic cosmogony that has given birth to a materialistic philosophy of

life. Taking perception to be the only valid means of knowledge, some materialists believe that the whole world is made up of the five ultimate elements of earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The soul of man is nothing but the conscious living body. Consciousness is merely a product of the processes in the brain. Hence when the body dies consciousness also dies. There is no spiritual substance or soul which survives the death of the body because such a soul is never perceived. Therefore there is no transmigration of soul, no previous life and no future life. This life is all in all and death is the end of life. It is not necessary to believe in God as the creator of the world. The world is created by combinations of the physical elements obeying the law of causality. It is the very nature of atoms to act as they are acting. The world is not controlled or designed by any intelligent or merciful being. It is just there by the inherent nature of the physical atoms. Mind is either a kind of matter or an attribute of matter or a product of matter. Matter and form are relative terms and are inseparable. Matter is the substratum, a mere potentiality or capacity of becoming something. There is no separate realm of mind or spirit. All the phenomena are governed by the inexorable laws of Nature. This reign of law is absolute and universal. Ends or purposes do not exist in Nature, nor does freedom. Matter in motion, under the operation of natural laws, will explain the world and all that it contains.

This thorough-going materialism and complete denial of soul and God naturally leads to a hedonistic ethics which says that the ideal in life should be 'Eat, drink, and be merry as long as you live'. 'Dust thou art to dust returnest'; there is no higher end or destiny for man!

PRESENT CONDITION OF HUMANITY

The materialistic theories of the universe have permeated the thoughts of mankind, and deeply influenced by the materialistic philosophy of life, the present-day humanity finds itself maimed and crippled so far as its power of vision and realization of truths of a spiritual

order is concerned. Charmed by the triumphant successes of science of the last century, man today refuses to believe that there can be any higher experience beyond the senses. For him matter is everywhere, matter is everything and everything is matter, under the firm grip of inexorable laws known to the scientists. Matter and motion or energy had in his newly opened eyes supplanted God and evolution had banished altogether the divine workings in Nature. For an average man to disbelieve his own senses is tantamount to 'cutting away all grounds of certitude'. To him the external world or Nature is a tangible reality and more real than his ephemeral self with the life that pulsates in it. Ask him, 'Do you contribute anything to the image of Nature you perceive?' And his answer will be, 'Far from it, rather I myself owe to Nature as I am evolved out of it'. For him Nature exists by itself and for itself. The external world which he experiences or rather perceives by the senses, is to him not only real but substantial. Its contents differ as widely as varieties of colour, shape, taste, smell, and of every other thing his various senses can admit of. Such is the working of the average mind.

But the specialized knowledge of the scientists of the twentieth century tells a different story. They have come to the conclusion that projections of our ideas, which exist in us alone, to the world outside makes the world so multi-coloured, so beautiful and rich in many other qualities. Even matter, they now admit, has its origin in something not-matter; for, on deeper analyses matter has progressively transformed itself into electrons, 'quanta of energy', potentials, ether, Hamiltonian functions, and Einsteinian 'singularities in the field'. It is now agreed by the scientists that our sense-perceptions are deceptive. The external world or Nature does not possess any of the characteristics which the average mind thinks it to possess. The colour in Nature which we see with our eyes does not exist in the Nature outside; in its place have been found only ethereal vibrations. They strike the retina, send some messages through the optic nerve,

and vanish somewhere in the brain. Outside, there are vibrations of a wide range of frequency, but all of them do not behave like this. Only those vibrations of limited frequency somehow give rise to the sense of colour; this is due to a limitation of our organism, for we are not sufficiently sensitive as good cameras are. Similarly when vibrations in air impinge upon our ears, the stimulus is sent to the brain and there it disappears, but the mind, somehow, as a result, develops the sense of sound. Taste likewise depends upon the stimulus on the papulae of the tongue and smell on the olfactory organ, the diaphragm of the nose.

Such phrases as 'sweet scented rose', 'azure blue sky', 'melodious as a nightingale'—expressions of man's aesthetic sense—may have a value for a poet, but they are useless for a scientist's matter-of-fact way of thinking. What the average mind thinks of the world, on scientific analysis, transforms itself into a metrically measured and determinate scheme, possessing nothing in common with the former. Science thus lands us in a quarter where we find that the world of our experience has for ever been estranged from the world of its certain truths, for, it cannot encompass values of all orders of knowledge.

ORGANIC EVOLUTION: FACT OR FICTION?

Is it not true that the theories of the scientists change like fashions in society? What is in high esteem today may be derided or dropped tomorrow. It is seldom safe to be dogmatic on any of the changing theories of the scientists. The evolutionist is deceived by appearances. It is mere speculation to say that each species evolved from the one below. Would it not be easier for one inanimate object to evolve into another inanimate object than for the inanimate to evolve into animate as evolutionists claim by their spontaneous generation theory? Could it not be that the similarity that exists in creatures springs from a single Creator who designed them for life on earth, with special adaptation to fit some for life in the air or on the ground or in water? Why would the Creator vary the make-up of bone,

muscle, and nerve in every living form when these three substances perform similar functions under similar conditions and are nourished by similar foods? On the basis of blood test, man would be the missing link between the gorilla and the chimpanzee. But it is not one link that is missing. The greater part of the entire chain is missing, so much so that it is not at all certain whether there is a chain at all. Leave aside man, the evolutionists cannot forge a single link to connect any two of the hundreds of family groups among the sub-humans. More embarrassing still is that they cannot produce even a starting-point of life for their evolutionary chain reaction. Their first link is a missing link.

The late Lecomte de Nouy, well-known French scientist, in his book *Human Destiny*, wrote:

'Each group, order, or family seems to be born suddenly and we hardly ever find the forms which link them to the preceding strain. When we discover them they are already completely differentiated. Not only do we find practically no transitional forms, but in general it is impossible to authentically connect a new group with an ancient one. There is not a single fact or a single hypothesis, today, which gives an explanation of life or of natural evolution'.

Natural selection may explain the survival of the fittest, but it cannot explain the arrival of the fittest. Selection, whether natural or artificial, can have no power in creating anything new. The most fundamental objection to the theory of natural selection is that it cannot originate characters; it only selects among characters already existing. Until 1900 many biologists believed that the characteristics plants and animals acquired from their environment were passed on to their offspring. Modern genetics has proved they are not. In the nucleus of each body cell there is a certain number of small bodies called chromosomes, but in the germ cells (either sperm or egg) there is only half the normal number. Hence when a sperm cell unites with an egg cell, the fertilized egg or new cell that will become a new individual has once more the normal number of chromosomes, having gained half

from the mother and half from the father. That is why characteristics are inherited from both parents, for in each chromosome are thousands of genes, and it is the genes that determine heredity. Because of the great number of genes and the almost countless gene combinations possible, there is an amazing degree of variation within each family. That is why, by careful selection of parent stocks, man has been able to breed such a variety of dogs, horses, cattle, chickens, and other domesticated animals, as well as plants. But no new genes have been created, no characteristics absolutely foreign to the family have been introduced, but only qualities already present have been developed to a certain extent.

EMINENT SCIENTISTS' VIEWS

But all this phenomenal creation is nothing but an appearance on the surface of a deeper reality, a mode of its self-manifestation, 'an ordered deploying of the infinite possibilities of the Infinite'. In *The Great Design*, edited by F. Mason, fourteen renowned scientists have written short articles summing up their life's researches. All agree that the world is not a soulless mechanism and is not the work of blind chance; that there is a Mind behind the veil of Matter. Eddington, in *The Nature of the Physical World*, says:

'Modern Physics has eliminated the notion of substance. . . . Mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience. . . . I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard Matter as derivative from Consciousness'.

Sir James Jeans, in *The New Background of Science*, says:

'Our space-time framework is inadequate for the representation of the whole of Nature: it is suited to form a framework for but little more than our sense-impressions, which is precisely the purpose it was originally constructed to serve. We are thus led to think of space and time as a sort of outer surface of Nature, like the surface of a deep-flowing stream. The events which affect our senses are like ripples on the surface of this stream, but their origins—the material objects—throw roots deep down into the stream'.

He adds:

'From the time of Plato onwards, philosophic thought has repeatedly returned to the clear idea that the temporal changes and the flux of events belong to the world of appearances only and do not form part of the Reality. The Reality, it is thought, must be endowed with permanency; otherwise it would not be real and we could have no knowledge of it. Behind the kaleidoscopic changes of Nature there must be a permanent kaleidoscope, imparting a unity to the flux of events. For this kind of reason philosophers have insisted that Reality must be timeless, and time merely, in Plato's phrase, "a moving image of eternity".'

The same author sums up the essence of the new philosophy of the twentieth century physicist in the following significant words:

'Man no longer sees Nature as entirely distinct from himself. Sometimes it is what he himself creates or selects or abstracts; sometimes it is what he destroys. . . . In certain of its aspects, Nature is something which is destroyed by observation. Trying to observe the inner working of an atom is like plucking the wings of a butterfly to see how it flies, or like taking poison to discover the consequences. Each observation destroys the bit of

the universe observed and so supplies knowledge only of a universe which has already become past history. In certain other aspects, especially its spatio-temporal aspects as revealed by the theory of relativity, Nature is like a rainbow. . . . It is not an objective structure set in the heavens for all men to behold. . . . We now know that the objective rainbow is an illusion. Raindrops break sunlight up into rays of many colours and the coloured rays which enter a man's eyes form the rainbow he sees. . . . Each man's rainbow is a selection of his own eyes, a subjective selection from an objective reality which is not a rainbow at all. And it is the same with Nature which each man sees. . . . Again just as a man's rainbow follows him about as he moves round the countryside, so Nature follows us about. At whatever speed we move, we find Nature adjusting itself to our motion, so that our motion makes no difference to its laws. . . . It is difficult to separate the subjective and objective aspects of the world. . . . We can only see Nature blurred by the clouds of dust we ourselves make; we can still only see the rainbow, but a sun of some sort must exist to produce the light by which we see it. . . . Thus the history of physical science in the twentieth century is one of a progressive emancipation from the purely human angle of vision'.

(To be continued)

THE THEORY OF PURITY

BY SANAT KUMAR RAY CHAUDHURY

With the progress of science our theories about matter, as also its forces and their influence, have been and are daily changing. Formerly we could conceive of no matter which even in its aggregate would not be perceptible to our physical senses. Most classes of matter can be *seen*. Certain transparent gases like hydrogen and oxygen or gaseous mixtures like air cannot be seen, but can be perceived by our other senses, i.e. they can be felt by our sense of touch or smell.

But other kinds of matter too are gradually coming within mortal ken. It is still an open question whether energy is or is not

matter. Latest researches have established that light partakes of the characteristics of both matter and pure motion. We attribute to matter the qualities of mass and inertia. It is significant that modern research has established the fact that energy possesses both these characteristics, viz. inertia and mass, which can be detected by suitable delicate instruments. This is very important and opens up hitherto unknown fields of knowledge.

For example, the force of gravitation and the force of mutual attraction between any two bodies are noticeable everywhere. If energy is matter, energy in one body will attract energy in another. It is well known that

matter possesses another characteristic, viz. one piece of matter mixing with another when placed in close and direct contact. This quality is most discernible in liquids and gases, though it has been demonstrated to be present even in solids.

If energy is matter, it must be matter of a subtler and finer nature than hitherto perceived by our senses. If it has the qualities of light and electricity, it must then possess in itself the capacity for incredible speed. If such type of infinitely subtle matter is subject to the law of attraction (and repulsion) it stands to reason that the energy in one body must always be influenced by the energy in another; in fact no single body can exercise its pure and uncontaminated influence unless kept in isolation.

There is another physical law—that the force of attraction between two bodies varies inversely as the square of the distance between them.

Man is composed of not only physical elements but also mental energy in the form of thoughts, feelings, and propensities. If these mental acts be forms of energy, it is but natural that the propinquity between one person and another, even without any act or desire of either, must of necessity influence each other in their thoughts, feelings, and propensities.

It is possible that the ancients knew of this and therefore formulated rules of conduct to preserve purity and maintain its quality unaffected. The need for seeking good and healthy company and environment, and avoiding their opposites, with a view to gaining purity in body and mind, arises directly from this idea of the effect of propinquity between man and man.

It is well known that a mob or an army will brave dangers which no individual composing the same will even dream of facing. We find that the sum total of valour, which is an animal attribute, increases with increase in numbers. So also fear. Mobs and armies are susceptible to unreasonable and ungovern-

able fear, and here also it is an animal instinct which gains momentum with numbers.

The same thing however cannot be said of reasoning faculties. Our reason does not seem to gain strength in company. This may be because reason is dependent on an effort of the will of the individual. Whereas instincts of fear, bravery, etc. are natural to men, reason is not so.

That a surrounding influence is radiated by a person or a place most of us have experience of. Most people have felt that on entering a temple or other place of worship a feeling of solemnity, reverence, and peace affects the mind. Similarly many are aware of holy personages in whose presence they feel or have felt peace and a sense of purity free of all base thoughts and desires.

A Hindu believes that not only is it true that mere proximity exerts an influence but also that it is possible for energies of different individuals to combine. The classical example is the birth of Goddess Durga. The *Candī* relates that the Devatas, each fighting separately, were all individually and collectively beaten and overpowered by Mahishāsurā (the Buffalo Demon). But when they met with the common object of regaining their heavenly kingdom, from each Devata a force (*tejas*) emanated and all these forces coalesced and out of this combination the Goddess Durga, the personification of Shakti, was born. And the Devi, born of the united force of the Devatas, accomplished the rout of the Demon's forces, which the Devatas had been unable to achieve when they considered themselves as different individuals.

While social prejudices, condemning a class or depriving it of amenities and privileges, are wholly wrong and unjustifiable, it seems there may be good reason for a person to select the kind of company or atmosphere which he may consider congenial and desirable and keep away from its opposite, the morbid influence of which, either individually or in the mass, may be too much for him to resist.

SRI-BHASHYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

Topic 1: THE INQUIRY INTO BRAHMAN
AND ITS PRE-REQUISITES

अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ॥ १ ॥

1. Then (after an inquiry into the ritualistic portion [Karma-Kāṇḍa] of the Vedas), therefore having come to know (through that inquiry that the results obtained by mere sacrifices etc. are ephemeral, whereas the result of the knowledge of Brahman is eternal), the inquiry into Brahman (should be taken up).

The necessity of such an inquiry is questioned, to start with, by the Mimāṃsakas.

Objection: There is no need to know Brahman, the knowledge of which is attained after great effort; for the result of such knowledge is the attainment of immortality, which can also be had by rituals, as is declared by texts like, 'Drinking Soma (juice) we have become immortal'.

Answer: The results of work are ephemeral and can never give permanent results, and so it cannot help us to attain immortality. Texts like, 'Having examined the worlds attainable through works, a Brāhmaṇa should get dispassionate towards them. The uncaused cannot be had through the caused' etc. (*Mu.* 1. 2. 12),* declare it. *Vide Ch.* 8. 1. 6 also. On the other hand, the scriptures declare that immortality can be attained only through the knowledge of Brahman, in texts like, 'The knower of Brahman attains the

Highest' (*Taitt.* 2. 1); 'Knowing Him alone one transcends death' etc. (*Svet.* 3. 8). What is stated by 'Drinking Soma we have become immortal' should not be taken literally, but in a relative sense only. So Brahman should be known.

A further objection is raised by the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas.

Objection: The power of a word to signify a thing is known only from the use it is put to by experienced people, and as such use always implies the idea of something to be accomplished, the true purport of a word is to denote an action; it cannot produce knowledge of a mere existing thing. Therefore the import of the Vedas is only action, and as such the Vedānta texts cannot be authority with respect to Brahman, which, being an already existing self-established thing, has no connection with action. Hence an inquiry into Brahman need not be taken up, since it cannot produce the result expected of it.

Answer: People who are guided by the accepted criteria of truth cannot respect an opinion which sets aside the universally known method of establishing the relation between words and the things signified by them, and which wants to establish that words signify only actions that are not commonly known and which are inculcated by the Vedas. Parents point out to their child the things that are signified by the words they use, and thus the child comes to know that these words mean those things. It finds in time that these words of themselves give rise to certain ideas in its mind, and as it finds no other relation

* The following abbreviations are used in this and other articles of this series:

Mu. for *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣhad.*

Ch. for *Chhāndogya Upaniṣhad.*

Taitt. for *Taittirīya Upaniṣhad.*

Svet. for *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣhad.*

Bṛh. for *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣhad.*

between these words and the objects signified by them, it comes to understand that the relation between them is based on the denotative power of the words. Therefore, the rule that words denote only actions is not binding, and we find that it is possible for words to convey knowledge of a self-established existing thing. So the Vedānta texts are authority with respect to Brahman, though It is a self-established existing thing, and as such an inquiry into Brahman should be taken up.

Even if the Vedānta texts relate only to things to be accomplished, still an inquiry into Brahman should be taken up. The scriptures prescribe meditation on Brahman in texts like, 'Verily, my dear, the Self has to be seen, to be heard, reflected on and meditated on' (*Brh.* 2. 4. 5); 'It has to be sought after, we must try to understand It' (*Ch.* 8. 7. 1); also *Brh.* 4. 4. 21, *Ch.* 8. 1. 1. etc. An action like meditation, which is enjoined, should have a result of a particular nature and quality, and we have to find this from other laudatory statements, just as in the case of other Vedic injunctions. In texts like, 'He who desires heaven must perform the Ashvamedha sacrifice', we do not have any description of the nature of heaven; we have to gather it from other statements like, 'where there is neither heat nor cold nor suffering' etc. Again, in texts like, 'He shall perform the nocturnal sacrifices', no mention is made of the result of such sacrifices, but later the texts say, 'Those who perform these sacrifices attain eminence'. Similarly, that the result of meditation on Brahman, which is prescribed by the scriptures, is the attainment of Brahman has to be known from texts like, 'He who knows Brahman attains the Highest' (*Taitt.* 2. 1). The nature and attributes of Brahman also have to be gathered from similar other texts. So the knowledge of the true nature of Brahman and Its attributes are helpful to actions prescribed, and therefore an inquiry into Brahman should be taken up.

Topic 2: DEFINITION OF BRAHMAN

जन्माद्यस्य यतः ॥ २ ॥

2. (Brahman is that Omniscient, Omnipotent, all-merciful Being) from whom proceed the origin etc. (i.e. origin, sustenance and dissolution) of this (varied and wonderfully fashioned world).

What is the nature of that Brahman which is to be inquired into? 'That from which these beings are born, by which they live after birth and into which they enter at death—try to know That. That is Brahman' (*Taitt.* 3. 1). This text gives a definition of that Brahman, i.e. it gives those peculiar characteristics by which Brahman is distinguished from other things.

Objection: These characteristics, viz., the origin etc. of the universe, cannot define Brahman, for the attributes being more than one, there arises the possibility of their denoting more than one Brahman, even as when we say, 'The ox is that which is broken-horned, hornless, or fully-horned', more oxen than one are meant. Again, these attributes, the 'origin' etc., cannot be accidental characteristics of Brahman, for such characteristics denote in a different form a thing already known from a certain source, as, for example, 'The house where there is that crane, belongs to Devadatta'. But we do not have any idea of Brahman from any source other than this text; so 'the origin' etc. cannot be accidental characteristics of Brahman. Therefore Brahman cannot be defined at all, and consequently an inquiry into It is useless.

Answer: 'The origin' etc. can be indicative of Brahman as being Its accidental characteristics, inasmuch as Brahman is already known in another form or aspect from the etymological meaning of the word—as possessing 'supreme greatness' and 'power of growth'. Moreover, the *Taittirīya* text refers to some Being already well known, whose greatness is due to Its being both the material and the efficient cause of the universe. *Vide* Ch. 6 2. 1 and 3. This Brahman, which is known to be all this, can well be indicated by 'the

origin etc. of the universe as Its accidental traits, and therefore a knowledge of Brahman through these characteristics is possible.

Again, 'the origin' etc. can define Brahman. The objection that more than one attribute would give rise to the idea of more than one Brahman is not correct, for it is only when the attributes are contradictory to each other that they give rise to such an idea, as in the example cited by the objector, but not when they do not contradict each other as e.g. 'The tall, fair-looking youth is Devadatta'. Here we do not get the idea of more than one person. Similarly, as 'the origin' etc. of the universe are attributes that are not contradictory, having reference to different times, they denote only one Brahman and It can be known through them.

So the objection that Brahman cannot be defined, and consequently that no inquiry into Brahman is possible, is not correct.

Topic 3: BRAHMAN COGNIZABLE ONLY
THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

शास्त्रयोनित्वात् ॥ ३ ॥

3. The scriptures (alone) being the source of right knowledge (with respect to Brahman), (the scriptural text, *Taitt.* 3. 1., is proof of Brahman).

Objection: The scriptures give us knowledge only of those things that cannot be known otherwise. If Brahman could be known only from the scriptures and not from other sources, then the scriptures would be proof of Brahman and the text, *Taitt.* 3. 1., cited in the last Sūtra could be taken as a definition of Brahman. But the scriptures are not the only source of knowing Brahman, as It could be known through other proofs such as inference. This world, being made up of parts, is an effect, and one can easily infer that an effect like this, which is so varied and wonderful, must have a creator who is omniscient and all-knowing, unlike ordinary souls which are of limited power and knowledge. So, the scriptures not being the only means of knowing Brahman, they cannot be proof of Brahman, and therefore

Taitt. 3. 1. cannot be accepted as defining Brahman.

Answer: This objection cannot be accepted. Though one can infer a creator, yet it is not known that the entire world was created at one time and by one being. It is quite possible that different parts were created at different times, and as such it might have been created by many individual souls, which are known to acquire extraordinary powers by spiritual merits. Therefore, the existence of a single transcendental Being cannot be inferred. Nor can one infer that the same Being, having for Its body the world of matter and spirit, is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. Hence other means of proof have no place with respect to Brahman. In the scriptures also we find, 'I ask you of that Being who is to be known *only* from the Upanishads (Aupanishadam)' *Bṛh.* 3. 9. 26), where the word *only* shows that It cannot be known by any other means of knowledge except the Upanishads. Therefore, the scriptures alone are authority with respect to Brahman, and we have to admit that *Taitt.* 3. 1. does define Brahman.

Topic 4: BRAHMAN THE MAIN PURPORT
OF ALL VEDĀNTA TEXTS

तत्त समन्वयान् ॥ ४ ॥

4. But that (the scriptures alone are authority with respect to Brahman is established), because It is the main purport (of all texts as constituting the highest aim of man).

Objection: Granted that Brahman cannot be known by other means than the scriptures, yet they cannot be authority or proof with respect to Brahman which is self-established. The scriptures must aim at some practical purpose, and they can have a purpose in so far as they lay down injunctions for man which either induce him to or prohibit him from some action conducive to his well-being. The very meaning of the word 'śāstra' is this. Texts, therefore, which do not contain any such injunctions, but are mere descrip-

tions of things existing, are purposeless. It is only a non-existing thing that induces or prohibits activity. So, though there are texts about Brahman in the scriptures, depicting It as a self-established existing thing, and also as one's own self, these texts do not induce or prohibit any action on the part of a person, and so they are purposeless.

It may be said that texts describing Brahman are connected with injunctions prescribing meditation on It. But though such descriptions are necessary to the act of meditation, yet they do not vouchsafe the reality of the object of meditation, for meditation of an unreal object is also possible, as, for example, 'Let him meditate on name as Brahman' (*Ch.* 7. 1. 5).

Even where a reference to an accomplished thing serves some purpose of man, as, for instance, the joy expressed on hearing, 'a son is born to you' or the removal of fear when one says, 'this is a rope and not a snake', it is not the thing or fact that serves man's purpose, but the knowledge of the thing or fact. So it is quite possible that man's purpose may be attained by the mere knowledge of a thing or fact, even where the thing or fact is not a reality. Fairy-tales give great joy to children. So, though the scriptures may serve some purpose, yet they may not be proof of the existence of a thing since it relates merely to the knowledge of a thing, and not to the thing itself. So the Vedānta texts do not establish Brahman.

Answer: The word *but* refutes what has been stated above. It is not correct to say that inducement to or prohibition from some

action alone makes the scriptures purposeful. Those that establish something which serves man's purpose or aim are authoritative. Since the Vedānta texts teach Brahman as the highest object to be attained, as It is infinite bliss and free from all evil etc., it is childish to say that these texts are devoid of a purpose simply because they have no relation to an action. Whatever is attained through rituals (*Karma-Kāṇḍa*) though it serves some purpose of man, yet it cannot be his ultimate goal, inasmuch as it is not eternal. Brahman alone can be that ultimate goal or aim. Therefore, Vedānta texts which have Brahman as their main purport, as constituting the highest aim of man, and which describe Its nature, which is obscured due to ignorance arising out of beginningless Karma (past actions), cannot be purposeless. Rather, these scriptural texts alone are purposeful, because they establish Brahman which is the essence of all that man can aspire after.

Again, the proposition that a description of a thing gratifies people through a mere knowledge of a thing, though the object may not be a reality—is not correct, for the moment one knows that the object described is not real the gratification will cease. Fairy-tales give joy to children, because they think they are all real; but if they once grasp that the tales are false, they will not be gratified by them. So also Vedānta texts if they do not describe the existence of a real Brahman to us, the mere idea conveyed by them will not satisfy us. Therefore Vedānta texts do establish Brahman.

(*To be continued*)

'All the various doctrines arising in different times and different countries lead to the same supreme Truth like many different paths leading travellers from different places to the same city. It is the ignorance of the Absolute Truth and the misunderstanding of the different doctrines that cause their followers to quarrel with one another in bitter animosity'.

—*Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The Path of Devotion is a short selection taken and reproduced from a long and informative article, entitled 'Deva-rishi Nārada', which appeared years ago in *The Voice of India*, published from the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. . . .

In his thought-provoking article, *Lord! What is Man?*, Prof. Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L. with his keen insight into human problems, applies the critical but much-needed scalpel to the intumescence of perplexities, paradoxes, and even pretensions of our age. His suggestions and conclusions are incontrovertible and well founded. . . .

The Message of Swami Vivekananda by Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras, is largely based on the illuminating address delivered by him at a public meeting held at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, in March last. . . .

Ably presenting the relative standpoints of Vedanta and science, Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury, M.Sc., P.R.S., D.Phil., reiterates the view that there is no essential divergence between the methods of search and inquiry pursued by either of them. He confirms the conclusion, largely supported by the new background of modern science, that Vedanta metaphysics completes science, which reaches its consummation in the former. . . .

What is this Universe? Is it Matter or Spirit? One could easily divide mankind into two: those who accept the spiritual view of life and those who accept the materialistic view. Though these two appear to be rival theories, in fact they are not. For, though the latter may deny the Spirit, the former, whose integral view includes and transcends the partial naturalistic view, do not conflict with others. Sri Jagdish Sahai, M.A., makes a brief study, in contrast, of the two cosmogonies—the materialistic and the spiritualistic.

The 'Cosmogony of the Materialist' is dealt with in the present instalment. The 'Cosmogony of the Spiritualist', dealt with in another instalment, will appear in our next. . . .

A probable scientific explanation for *The Theory of Purity* is offered by Sri Sanat Kumar Ray Chaudhury, a former Mayor of Calcutta.

Sri-Bhashya, the well-known commentary of Ramanujacharya on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, is an authoritative exposition of Viśiṣṭādvaita aspect of Vedanta. Swami Vireswarananda of the Ramakrishna Order, is the author of a scholarly English translation and annotation of the *Brahma-Sūtras* based on Shankara's commentary. His translation of the introductory portion of the *Sri-Bhashya* in which Shankara's Monism is refuted was published serially in the *Prabuddha Bharata* during the year 1938. We are glad to resume the Swami's translation of the Sūtras from this issue, and the present instalment commences with the first Sūtra. (I.I.I).

Here we may mention, for the benefit of our readers, that the learned article entitled 'Brahman or the Ultimate Reality according to Shankara and Ramanuja', by Dr. Rama Chaudhuri, published in the issues of *Prabuddha Bharata* for April and May 1954, presents in a condensed form Ramanuja's refutation of Shankara's Monism; those who have read it may find it easy to follow the *Sri-Bhashya* translation.

SALVATION THROUGH CONVERSION

It is a unique feature of Hinduism that it has succeeded in attracting, through the past centuries, innumerable admirers and adherents by a process of slow and steady diffusion of its spiritual culture. In contrast to this there have been and are religious systems which claim to possess exclusively the whole Truth of God and Man, *ergo*, that man can achieve salvation in one way only, viz.

by unquestioningly accepting, through religious conversion or otherwise, their own doctrines and practices. In these religions the whole stress is laid on the view that those who do not believe in or belong to the particular faith these profess and propagate are on the wrong track and so must be 'saved' and shown the 'correct' way to salvation. It was more or less such an attitude that brought the large number of foreign Christian missionaries (barring a few exceptions) to India in recent decades. In support of the campaign for getting more and more religious converts from Hinduism, a subtle form of vilification of India and the Hindu way of life and thought was employed and encouraged in foreign countries towards the latter half of the last and the beginning of the present century. When Swami Vivekananda went to America as a representative of Hinduism to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, he found it necessary to tell the people there to beware of the factual misrepresentations about Hinduism and Hindu society which had been given currency to by Christian missionaries. He therefore presented to the American people the correct facts about the Hindu view of life in matters spiritual, defining at the same time the characteristic Hindu attitude, understanding, and appreciation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Said the Swami in one of his lectures in America:

'The Hindu will never attack the life of Jesus; he reverences the Sermon on the Mount. But how many Christians know or have heard of the teachings of the Hindu holy men? They remain in a fool's paradise. Before a small fraction of the world was converted, Christianity was divided into many creeds. That is the law of nature. Why take a single instrument from the great religious orchestra of the earth? Let the grand symphony go on. Be pure. Give up superstition and see the wonderful harmony of nature. Superstition gets the better of religion. All the religions are good, since the essentials are the same. Each man should have the perfect exercise of his individuality, but these individualities form a perfect whole. This marvellous condition is already in existence. Each creed has something to add to the wonderful structure'.

It may be said that due to the lack of this tolerant perspective,—which is the very essence of the broad and universal culture of Hinduism,—the majority of foreign Christian missionaries who have been to India and the East seek to count their influence more by the number of converts than by the depth of genuine spiritual transformation among those converted. Writing in a recent issue of the *Modern Review*, on 'Christian Missionary Work in India', Dr. Abinash Chandra Bose, eminent scholar and author, has made a brief survey of Christian proselytization work in India with reference to the result of such evangelical work ever since the appearance of missionaries on the Indian scene centuries back. He observes:

'Let us have a glimpse of proselytization in India through the ages. It appears St. Thomas converted a fair number of Brahmins who still have preserved the superiority of their social group. Among the Portuguese converts there were the courtiers of the Zamorin who were invited by Vasco da Gama to his ship and treacherously carried away to Portugal and members of their class converted later. In the British period Brahmins and other advanced Hindus were converted in the beginning but soon it was found more profitable to concentrate on the scheduled castes—the so-called untouchables—and a good harvest was reaped in Madras. But it soon appeared that even these did not respond satisfactorily; so, at a later stage, the usual entrants to the Christian Churches were small children, rendered destitute through famine, flood, or poverty. Even this process, however, did not bring the desired numbers; so the Missions turned from the plains to the hills and began to work among the aboriginal tribes, who, presumably by a form of tacit courtesy, had been left alone to live their picturesque tribal lives by Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims. As anthropologists say, these aborigines are no better than children in their psychological make-up, and converting them is like converting children. This retreat from advanced to backward Hindus and from backward Hindus to destitute children and to primitive races tells its own tale. This proves conclusively that Christian missionaries failed to attract attention to their religion and having given up all hope of success in a purely religious propaganda offered Western secular knowledge and secular science as a substitute for the spirit of religion which Jesus had placed above bread and physical and material prosperity'.

Elucidating the Hindu view of Christ, Dr. Bose writes:

There is also a strange irony in the situation that the spirit of the New Testament was admired, preached, and demonstrated in practice by eminent Hindu leaders of religion and morality. Ramakrishna Paramahansa . . . arrived at a spiritual realization of the Christian approach to the divine; Swami Vivekananda preached about "Christ the Messenger" and members of the Ramakrishna Mission (described as missionaries by some) are engaged in interpreting, without any machinery for conversion, the highest truths of the Christian religion; preachers like Keshab Chunder Sen and philosophers like Dr. Radhakrishnan have shown the same regard for the finest things of Christianity as they have done for those of Hinduism; and we do not know of any Christian political leader of the world whose life approximated to the ideal set up by Jesus as the life of Mahatma Gandhi did. If in India there is a very reverent attitude towards Jesus it is not because of the strange dogmas and pseudo-historical facts circulated by missionaries in a strange spirit of intolerance, but because of the life and teachings of eminent Hindus who loved their religion the more because of their loving what is fine in other's religion too'.

The philanthropic and humanitarian activities of foreign Christian Missions in India and other non-Christian countries have gained the admiration and gratitude of the peoples of those countries. But the incontrovertible fact of these missionaries engaging themselves in works of public welfare with a view to aiming finally at conversion of the people among whom such works are carried on leaves one in no doubt as to the intentions of most of those who seek to bring the benefits of Christian charity to nations other than their own.

Dr. Bose further observes:

'In the eyes of Indians who have been taught through the ages to look for the spirit of religion and not to substitute it by mere form or belief, there is something unnatural in the hard Christian dogma, that says that only Christians can go to heaven and all others are doomed to eternal hell. This strikes the Indian not only as a lack of "spiritual good manners", but as an affront to human personality. The attitude of the average Indian towards the missionary who brings him the message of salvation from the otherwise sure doom is one of bitter resentment. . . . It has been claimed by missionaries that they conduct humanitarian

work and convert only those who, fascinated by their religion, implore them to admit them to the Christian fold. This claim is not tenable. For one thing, how can small children picked up from villages or given shelter during famine, flood, and earthquake decide for themselves?'

Suggesting possible ways in which Christian missionary work in India may be rendered more positive and constructive, Dr. Bose pleads for a bold and tolerant outlook on the part of the missionaries.

True to her spirit of catholicity and tolerance Hinduism has welcomed and is always prepared to welcome the followers of all the religions of the world. India has never stood against freedom of faith and worship for the individual. Though Christianity, as preached and professed by the organized Church, has failed to influence the basic Hindu attitude to life on earth and beyond, it is seen that it has at some places and to some extent created a feeling of antipathy to Indian traditions and culture among those whom it has converted. For, Christian missionaries from abroad, nurtured in the atmosphere of Western civilization, have rarely been able to understand or adjust to India's tolerant and generous outlook. It is against such unfair use of the constitutional 'right of propagating one's own religion' that right-minded persons have raised their voice of protest.

For Hinduism the times are indeed not without trials and challenges. But there is enough strength and vitality in resurgent Hinduism to be able to hold its own against active and aggressive proselytization carried on by other faiths through means not always rationally convincing. The harmony of Hinduism has been a balancing factor in a situation full of conflict and rivalry of faiths, which have sown the seeds of religious intolerance. For salvation one need not necessarily undergo conversion from one's own religion to that of another, though conversion through honest and wholehearted religious conviction cannot be ruled out in individual cases. Coexistence through mutual respect for each other of any two religions can alone be conducive to the spiritual welfare of the followers of either.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A CRITICAL EXPOSITION OF NICOLAI HARTMANN'S ETHICS. BY DR. S. K. MAITRA. *Published by the Author, Quarters No. D/8, Banaras Hindu University, Banaras 5. Pages 104. Price: Rs. 2; 4s. or 75c.*

This small book, consisting of the articles the author had contributed to different journals, is intended to present a lucid exposition of the main features of Nicolai Hartmann's theory of value along with the author's critical estimate of some of the conclusions reached by Hartmann. For the students of philosophy the book has a special interest and will repay a careful study. The author is a distinguished philosopher of contemporary India and has always brought a vast and varied scholarship to bear upon his study of a large number of philosophical positions. Particularly, his contributions to the philosophy of value have been of great significance as they embody the last and the maturest fruit of his lifelong search for truth and the final destination of his philosophical pilgrimage. To those who would desire a fuller acquaintance with the author's pilgrimage, I might recommend his article, 'Outlines of an Emergent Theory of Values', in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, published in the Muirhead Library of Philosophy.

The book under review is in a way the continuation and further elaboration of the author's well-considered views on the philosophy of value in the context of Hartmann's analysis. Hartmann, in the opinion of Dr. Maitra, is a typical representative of the Western standpoint of values; and one of the objects of the present essay is to judge the tenability of the Western tradition in the light of Indian philosophy. The Western tradition in respect of the problem of value, we are told, is rooted in the Platonic tradition which is characterized by a dualism of value and reality on the one hand, and by the pluralism of values on the other; and this has been inherited by Hartmann. In the first chapter, Dr. Maitra has given an illuminating exposition of Hartmann's general theory of values, and this is followed by Hartmann's criticism of Kant's Ethics, his theory of moral values, and lastly the author's estimate of Hartmann's philosophy. None who is interested in the recent developments of the philosophy of value can afford to omit a careful perusal of this little book which is expository as well as critical. Dr. Maitra has indeed done a great service to the cause of sound philosophy, particularly in India, by writing this valuable

essay; and for this the students of philosophy should be grateful to him.

A. C. MUKERJI

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI. BY DR. DHIRENDRA MOHAN DATTA. *Published by the University of Wisconsin Press, 811, State Street, Madison 5, Wisconsin, U.S.A. Pages 170. Price \$2.50.*

The prolific writings of Mahatma Gandhi that appeared in the pages of the *Young India* and the *Harijan* have furnished many students of philosophy with valuable material for profound study and interpretation. Some of them have been trying of late to read a system of philosophy into his numerous utterances on various aspects of social and human problems. Prof. P. T. Raju has recently incorporated one of his earlier essays on Gandhi in his *Idealistic Thought of India* and now Dr. Datta has devoted an entire book to the study of the philosophy of Gandhi.

After outlining the general religious and traditional background of Gandhi, Dr. Datta proceeds to interpret, in the second chapter, Gandhi's statements on God, the world, and man. Gandhi was a theist,—perhaps even a pluralist at that,—though a recorded statement from the *Young India* shows that Gandhi admitted he was also an Advaitin. With regard to such utterances, one principle adopted by the present author is that Gandhi was using the terms not as a philosopher but as a layman. Many an enlightened layman of India knows the philosophical gulf that divides the pluralist from the Advaitin. Gandhi did not recognize that the world, being ever-changing, is ultimately unreal; and yet he felt the actuality of human suffering. Such feeling does not do away with the ultimate unreality of the world. There is Gandhi's own statement that God is not a person. According to Dr. Datta, God, for Gandhi, is self-consciousness plus will.

God or Reality is both immanent and transcendent. It is the all-inclusive whole. It is, as the author observes, similar to the conceptions of Ramanuja, Jainism, and Whitehead. But Gandhi's God includes the aspects of suffering, terror, and tyranny. Evil is one of the forms devised to purify man. God, then, may be love, but he is essentially Truth, and Truth is God. This view leads us to the oneness of all religions and Gandhi did insist many a time that reason and love do constitute the God in man. Philosophically developed, this position will lead one into some form of mysticism

akin to that of Plotinus. Yet a doctrine of law cannot be ethically related to a belief in crime and punishment which one finds in Gandhi's writings. The author has not attempted any detailed explanation of this. But Gandhi's teaching has been, for most of us, less of a system of metaphysics than a system of individual and social ethics. And such a system surely does not omit this problem of love and crime. Further, crime (as Gandhi has taught) is a form of Himsa, while the concept of Ahimsa is the same as love. In any systematic account of Gandhi's philosophy, the relation between the two cannot be easily overlooked.

The third chapter of the book is devoted to Gandhi's views on morals, society, and politics. Gandhi admitted that the ultimate aim of man is the realization of God; and here he evidently means the realization of the God that is manifest in man. God and the Individual Self are then identical. But his statements on grace and the like have been interpreted in the light of a pluralistic personal idealism. In contrast to this interpretation, we have Gandhi's statement (quoted in the book) that 'the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all'. To realize this identity we need those principles that involve, imply, and lead to such identity. Such are the twin principles of Truth and Love, also spoken of as Knowledge and Love, or as Satya and Ahimsa. And the basis of all moral activity is the spirit or soul. This moral activity proceeds through self-sacrifice and Self-affirmation. Such an ethics of Self-realization not only has a social purpose but also refers to the individual. It embodies the social weal and also the development and perfection of the individual. And the relation between the individual good and the social good plays a prominent part in Gandhi's ethics. One misses an adequate treatment of this problem in the work under review.

Gandhi observed, 'The individual is the one supreme consideration'. He opposed the strengthening of the authority of the State much in the same way as Tolstoy, Kropotkin, and Thoreau did. He held that individuality lies at the root of all progress. Such an individuality pursues the ideal of *satyāgraha* (peaceful non-cooperation with the forces of evil), decentralization of all power and authority, and spiritualization of human life. These are the principles that governed Gandhi's attitude to society, politics, and individuals.

Dr. Datta brings his thought-provoking work to a close with a brief fourth chapter with the title 'Moral Leadership of the World'. One may find oneself not in a position always to rationally agree with the conclusions in this chapter, though one may perhaps agree with the main spirit of the work as a whole. To a strict student of philosophy

it may naturally and justifiably occur that what Gandhi wrote or spoke, after due deliberation and thinking, was based more on personal and individualistic considerations than on academical or scholastic lines, and that consequently his expressions were not intended at all times to carry the technical meanings they generally do in the systems of pure philosophers. Gandhi was both an original thinker and an active participant in the drama of life. His method was based on the agreement between theory and practice. In interpreting his writings, one cannot, therefore, make a selection of only those passages that lend support to one's own conclusions and reject others.

This work may appear somewhat limited in its scope to Indian readers who know Mahatma Gandhi so intimately and so well. It is perhaps so because the author was addressing the American audience. We welcome the book for the profound interest it is bound to arouse in academic circles.

AMAR MUKHERJI

STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE AESTHETICS.
BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY. *Published by Visvabharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal. Pages 134. Price Rs. 5.*

A series of eleven essays, mostly in Indian Aesthetics, with an attempt to compare ancient Hindu concepts with modern European ideas, and to evaluate them aright, constitutes the content of this valuable brochure. Hindu Aesthetics is a formidable field for study, and it is forbidding in that it demands for its understanding a sound knowledge of Sanskrit and a thorough grasp of modern psychology. Rarely do we find a scholar who is a Sanskritist, and is at the same time conversant with developments in contemporary psychology. Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury is one of those rare scholars. His treatment of Psychic Distance, of the theory of Rasa, and of Feelings in Art is masterly, and should be studied by all students of Aesthetics. The learned doctor has analysed the psychological foundations of Art thoroughly, and has cited the most eminent authorities on the subject. And as is fitting he has concluded his brochure with a statement of the Vedantic view of Art. He has also added a chapter on Rabindranath Tagore's aesthetics.

To speak of art for art's sake is tendentious and cavalier. Art, according to our thinkers, must function as the handmaid of spirituality. The learned author of the booklet under review has rendered a distinct services to Hindu Aesthetics by the timely publication of his studies. His views deserve to be studied with diligence and understanding.

P. S. NAIDU

ENGLISH-BENGALI

VIDYAMANDIR PATRIKA. *Published by the Principal, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandir, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal. Pages 172.*

We gladly welcome the annual number, for 1954, of *Vidyāmandir Patrika*, the illustrious Organ of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandir, a residential college at Belur (Howrah). It contains a large number of well written articles and poems and also a good number of illustrations. The major part of the contents of the magazine is naturally in Bengali

and reveals the admirable literary ability as well as general knowledge of the students of the Vidyamandir. There are five writings in English and two in Sanskrit. Among the learned contributors are some members of the staff and also some monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order. In keeping with the sacred and joyous occasion of the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother, the editors of this number have appropriately placed a Frontispiece and some articles to commemorate the occasion.

NEWS AND REPORTS

HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

FESTIVAL AT JAYRAMBATI

In the temple in memory of the Holy Mother, at her birth-place—the Matri Mandir at Jayrambati (Dt. Bankura, West Bengal),—with a newly built Nāṭmandir attached to the temple,—a beautiful marble statue of the Holy Mother was consecrated on the 8th April 1954 by Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, before a very large gathering of devotees. Simultaneously, the public celebration of the Holy Mother's Birth Centenary was also held there. A special train was run for the pilgrims between Calcutta and Vishnupur, and back. Arrangements were made for the accommodation of nearly 2,500 devotees and 250 monastic members. The programme consisted of processions, special worship, Yāgas, Homa, fireworks, performance of religious dramas, etc., and attracted about three lakhs of spectators. The local people and particularly the District Magistrate, Sri M. A. T. Iyengar, I.C.S., showed great enthusiasm and helped in many ways to make the functions successful.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, LONDON

SARADA (HOLY MOTHER) BIRTH CENTENARY
CELEBRATION

The celebration of the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother in England was inaugurated on 21st January 1954 at a function held at the Caxton Hall, London, under the auspices of the Sarada Centenary organized by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre of London. The function commenced with the chanting of a Sanskrit hymn to the Holy Mother by a group of Indian lady students and the reading of a message from Srimat Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Mr. Kenneth Walker, M.A., F.R.C.S., the well-

known writer-surgeon of London and a Vice-President of the Sarada Centenary, in his inaugural address, dwelt on the universal appeal of Hinduism and the qualities of grace, beauty, and dignity that characterized the life of the Holy Mother who had set an example not only to the womanhood of India but also to the womanhood of the world.

Phyllis Austin, the Secretary of the Centenary, then read a report of the activities of the Centenary and the future programme of the celebrations.

Swami Ghanananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London, and President of the Sarada Centenary in England, spoke on the Holy Mother. He said that the life of the Holy Mother proved that woman could be the equal of man in spiritual endeavour and attainments—that she too could realize God and reach the very summit of spiritual experience.

The Secretary of the Centenary then read messages of goodwill received from many parts of the world, including those from: Countess Mountbatten of Burma; Sri B. G. Kher, High Commissioner for India in U.K.; Rev. Johu Haynes Holmes; Professor William Ernest Hocking; Mr. Chester Bowles; and Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer.

Dr. R. S. Ojha, Visiting Professor of Yale University in Connecticut, spoke next. Dr. T. N. Dave, Lecturer in Sanskrit at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, read a learned paper on the great women of Hinduism. Sri Aravinda Basu, Spalding Lecturer at the University of Durham, spoke last.

Other important activities on the programme of the Sarada Centenary in England are: Publication of a commemoration volume entitled *Women Saints of East and West*; A Women's Conference in the late spring; A final public meeting in December 1954.