

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

NEW DISCOVERIES REGARDING SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—VII

BY AN AMERICAN DEVOTEE

In the last installment I promised to present more material regarding Swamiji's visit to Memphis, Tennessee. This material is now available and will serve to complete the story of the busy and, it might be said, electrifying nine days that Swamiji spent in that Southern city. Since the story of the Memphis visit has been scattered piecemeal over three installments, I think it might be advisable to give a brief summary of the entire visit, with the new material inserted in its chronological order.

Swamiji arrived in Memphis on Saturday, January 13, 1894. As will be seen, he was invited there by the members of the Nineteenth Century Club, some of whom had attended the Parliament of Religions and had been deeply impressed by “the Hindu Monk.” It would seem from what we so far know that many of Swamiji's engagements were made independently of the lecture bureau, negotiations being made directly between him and various clubs or individuals. For instance, the peripatetic Club invited Swamiji to speak in Minneapolis; Dr. H. O. Breeden arranged for his lectures in Des Moines; the Nineteenth Century Club brought him to Memphis; and, as will be seen in a future installment, the Unity Club first sponsored him in Detroit. No doubt, since Swamiji was under contract, the lecture bureau received a large share of the proceeds from every lecture, whether arranged under its management or not.

In Memphis, Swamiji was the guest of Mr. Hu L. Brinkley, who lived in what was variously known as “Miss Moon's establishment” or “the La Salette Academy.” Actually, although its name persisted in current use, the La Salette Academy was nonexistent, having been closed in 1891. Miss Virginia Moon, fondly known in Memphis as “Miss Ginny,” turned the building in which the academy had been housed into a boarding house for six or seven bachelor gentlemen. At the time of Swamiji's visit Miss Moon was around fifty and

one of Memphis' most extraordinary characters. She must have delighted Swamiji with her spirit of independence, for she was an emancipated woman par excellence, who had little use for men and who toted a pearl handled revolver in a dainty, ruffled parasol. But Miss Ginny had a heart of gold. Her main vocation was giving in charity and, with her ever-present and persuasive parasol in hand, convincing the wealthy men of Memphis that they should do likewise. History has recorded her as "a one woman community fund."

It was in the large parlors of Miss Ginny Moon's boarding house that Swamiji received callers, held interviews and lectured twice.

On the evening of Swamiji's arrival in Memphis a reception was held for him by a Mrs. S. R. Shepherd. The following day, Sunday, January 14, "Swami Vive Kananda dined at Col. R. B. Snowden's [at Annesdale] where he met Bishop Thomas F. Gailor. He had only a short time returned from this visit when a Commercial reporter called upon him at Miss Moon's and was accorded an interview with him in the rooms of Gen. R. F. Patterson, where he was sitting at the time." The report of this interview has been given in the sixth installment of this series.

The following afternoon, Monday, January 15, Swamiji gave his first lecture in Memphis at the Nineteenth Century Club. What his Subject was we do not know, but we do know from an item in the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 21 that "the address of Swami Vive Kananda before the Nineteenth Century Club and the reception given after the lecture was one of the pleasant events of this eventful year in club calendar." A piano solo and a song formed the musical program of the afternoon." How many musical programs Swamiji must have heard while on tour! Few occasions were considered complete without at least two solos, rendered, as a rule, by accomplished young women.

The following reports which cover the first three days of Swamiji's stay in Memphis and which give some idea of how his reputation had spread, appeared in the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 14, 15 and 16 respectively. As will be seen, no matter how well known Swamiji became, the idea that he was a Brahmin who became a Hindu priest still persisted.

COMING WEEK'S ATTRACTIONS

Memphis this morning has a distinguished visitor in the person of Swami Vive Kananda, a Brahman monk of India, who is the guest of the Nineteenth Century Club. His culture, his eloquence, and his fascinating personality has given this country a new idea of Hindoo civilization. He is an interesting figure; his fine, intelligent, mobile face in its setting of yellows and his deep, musical voice prepossessing one at once in his favour. So it is not strange that he has been taken up by the literary clubs, and has lectured and preached in many American churches. He speaks without notes, presenting his facts and his conclusions with the greatest art, the most convincing sincerity, and rising at times to a rich, inspiring eloquence. "Hinduism" will be his subject next Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock at the Auditorium.

AMUSEMENTS

"One of the giants of the platform," "a model representative of his race," "a sensation of the World's Fair parliament," "an orator by divine right." All this and more is true of Swami Vive Kananda, the Hindu Monk, who is in the city, a guest of the Nineteenth Century Club. Several members of the club heard Vive Kananda during the recent parliament of religions, and were so charmed with his eloquence, his earnestness, his culture, that they determined to have him visit Memphis, and to this end have been in correspondence with him since the adjournment of the parliament. On tomorrow even-

ing at 8 o'clock in the Auditorium an opportunity will be given the people of Memphis to see and hear this earnest, eloquent Brahman tell of the religions, manners and customs of his people.

THE HINDOO MONK

The Eloquent Lecturer From the Orient Will Be Heard Tonight

Swami Vive Kananda, the Hindoo monk, who is to lecture at the Auditorium tonight, is one of the most eloquent men who has ever appeared on the religious or lecture platform in this country. His matchless oratory, deep penetration into things occult, his cleverness in debate, and great earnestness captured the closest attention of the world's thinking men at the World's Fair Parliament of Religion, and the admiration of thousands of people who have since heard him during his lecture tour through many of the states of the Union.

In conversation he is a most pleasant gentleman; his choice of words are the gems of the English language, and his general bearing ranks him with the most cultured people of Western etiquette and custom. As a companion he is a most charming man, and as a conversationalist he is, perhaps, not surpassed in the drawing-rooms of any city in the Western World. He speaks English not only distinctly, but fluently, and his ideas, as new as sparkling, drop from his tongue in a perfectly bewildering overflow of ornamental language.

Swami Vive Kananda, by his inherited religion or early teachings, grew up a Brahmin, but becoming converted to the Hindoo religion he sacrificed his rank and became a Hindoo priest, or as known in the country of oriental ideality, a sanyasin. He had always been a close student of the wonderful and mysterious works of nature as drawn from God's high conception, and with years spent as both a student and teacher in the higher colleges of that eastern country, he acquired a knowledge that has given him a worldwide reputation as one of the most thoughtful scholars of the age.

His wonderful first address before the members of the World's Fair Parliament stamped him at once as a leader in that great body of religious thinkers. During the session he was frequently heard in defence of his religion, and some of the most beautiful and philosophical gems that grace the English language rolled from his lips there in picturing the higher duties that man owed to man and to his Creator. He is an artist in thought, an idealist in belief and a dramatist on the platform.

Since his arrival in Memphis he has been guest of Mr. Hu L. Brinkley, where he has received callers day and evening from many in Memphis who desired to pay their respects to him. He is also an informal guest at the Tennessee Club and was a guest at the reception given by Mrs. S. R. Shepherd, Saturday evening. Col. R. B. Snowden gave a dinner at his home at Annesdale in honor of the distinguished visitor on Sunday, where he met Assistant Bishop Thomas F. Gailor, Rev. Dr. George Patterson and a number of other clergymen.

Yesterday afternoon he lectured before a large and fashionable audience composed of the members of the Nineteenth Century Club in the rooms of the Club in the Randolph Building. Tonight he will be heard at the Auditorium on "Hindooism."

By the time Swamiji reached Memphis his name seems to have been established as Vive Kananda. This division of Vivekananda into a first and last name was probably an inspiration on the part of the lecture bureau. It was easier to remember this way, less liable to distortion in spelling and pronunciation and, in the jargon of modern publicity agents, "better box office." In most cases, particularly in advance publicity, the Vive was dropped

altogether and Swamiji was heralded in the papers as "Kananda" in letters an inch high.

Swamiji's lecture on "Hinduism," as has been seen in the above reports, was delivered on Tuesday evening, January 16, at the Auditorium, *The Memphis Commercial* report of this lecture was given in the fifth installment under the heading "Plea for Tolerance."

From the material given in this present installment we learn that on the following evening, Wednesday, January 17, Swamiji lectured in the rooms of the Woman's Council on "The Destiny of Man." The lecture was reviewed as follows by the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 18:

THE DESTINY OF MAN DISCUSSED

Lecture by Swami Vive Kananda, the Hindoo Monk.

The Eloquent Orator Talks Entertainingly of Man and His
Destiny—Synopsis of His Lecture Last Night in
Rooms of the Woman's Council.

"The Destiny of Man" was the subject of a lecture by Swami Vive Kananda last night at the Woman's Council-room, corner Second and Adams street.

The audience was moderately large, and was made up of the best literary and musical talent of the city, including some of the most distinguished members of the legal fraternity and financial institutions.

The speaker differs in one respect in particular from some American orators. He advances his ideas with as much deliberation as a professor of mathematics demonstrates an example in algebra to his students. Kanada speaks with perfect faith in his own powers and ability to successfully hold his position against all argument. He advances no ideas, nor makes assertion that he does not follow up to a logical conclusion. Much of his lecture is something on the order of Ingersoll's philosophy. He does not believe in future punishment nor in God as Christians believe in Him. He does not believe the mind is immortal, from the fact that it is dependent, and nothing can be immortal except it is independent of all things. He says: "God is not a king sitting away in one corner of the universe to deal out punishment or rewards according to a man's deeds here on earth, and the time will come when man will know the truth, and stand up, and say, 'I am God,' am life of His life. Why teach that God is far away when our real nature, our immortal principle is God.

"Be not deluded by your religion teaching original sin, for the same religion teaches original purity. When Adam fell he fell from purity. (Applause) Purity is our real nature, and to regain that is the object of all religion, All men are pure; all men are good. Some objections can be raised to them, and you ask why some men are brutes? That man you call a brute is like the diamond in the dirt and dust—brush the dust off and it is a diamond, just as pure as if the dust had never been on it, and we must admit that every soul is a big diamond.

"Nothing is baser than calling our brother a sinner. A lioness once fell upon a flock of sheep and killed a lamb. A sheep found a very young lion and it followed her and she gave it suck, and it grew up with the sheep and learned to eat grass like a sheep. One day an old lion saw the sheep lion and tried to get it away from the sheep, but it ran away as he approached. The big lion waited till he caught the sheep lion alone, and he seized it and carried it to a clear pool of water, and said, 'You are not a sheep, but a lion; look at your

picture in the water.' The sheep lion, seeing its picture reflected from the water, said, 'I am a lion and not a sheep.' Let us not think we are sheep, but be lions, and don't bleat and eat grass like a sheep.

"For four months I have been in America. In Massachusetts I visited a reformatory prison. The jailor at that prison never knows for what crimes the prisoners are incarcerated. The mantle of charity is thrown around them. In another city there were three newspapers, edited by very learned men, trying to prove that severe punishment was a necessity, while one other paper contended that mercy was better than punishment. The editor of one paper proved by statistics that only 50 per cent. of criminals who received severe punishment returned to honest lives, while 90 per cent. of those who received light punishment returned to useful pursuits in life.

"Religion is not the outcome of the weakness of human nature; religion is not here because we fear a tyrant; religion is love, unfolding, expanding, growing. Take the watch—within the little case is machinery and a spring. The spring, when wound up, tries to regain its natural state. You are like the spring in the watch, and it is not necessary that all watches have the same kind of a spring, and it is not necessary that we all have the same religion. And why should we quarrel? If we all had the same ideas the world would be dead. External motion we call action; internal motion is human thought. The stone falls to the earth. You say it is caused by the law of gravitation. The horse draws the cart, and God draws the horse. That is the law of motion. Whirlpools show the strength of the current; stop the current and stagnation ensues. Motion is life. We must have unity and variety. The rose would smell as sweet by any other name, and it does not matter what your religion is called.

"Six blind men lived in a village. They could not see the elephant, but they went out and felt of him. One put his hand on the elephant's tail, one of them on his side, one on his tongue [trunk?], one on his ear. They began to describe the elephant. One said he was like a rope; one said he was like a great wall; one said he was like a boa constrictor, and another said he was like a fan. They finally came to blows and went to pummeling each other. A man who could see came along and inquired the trouble, and the blind men said they had seen the elephant and disagreed because one accused the other of lying. 'Well,' said the man, 'you have all lied; you are blind, and neither of you have seen it.' That is what is the matter with our religion. We let the blind see the elephant. (Applause.)

"A monk of India said, 'I would believe you if you were to say that I could press the sands of the desert and get oil, or that I could pluck the tooth from the mouth of the crocodile without being bitten, but I cannot believe you when you say a bigot can be changed.' You ask why is there so much variance in religions? The answer is this: The little streams that ripple down a thousand mountain sides are destined to come at last to the mighty ocean. So with the different religions. They are destined at last to bring us to the bosom of God. For 1,900 years you have been trying to crush the Jews. Why could you not crush them? Echo answers: Ignorance and bigotry can never crush truth."

The speaker continued in this strain of reasoning for nearly two hours, and concluded by saying: "Let us help, and not destroy."

At the behest of his already large following Swamiji delivered three more lectures in Memphis. The first two of these were held at the La Salette Academy (Miss Moon's boarding house) whose parlors were no doubt large enough to hold a sizable audience. On Friday evening the subject was "Reincarnation." It was reported upon by the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 20 as follows:

VIVE KANANDA ON REINCARNATION
The Hindoo Monk Discourses on Metempsychosis.

An Appreciative Audience Is Enlightened on the Subject of the
Transmigration of the Soul by the Learned Theosophist
from the East.

Swami Vive Kananda, the beturbaned and yellow-robed monk, lectured again last night to a fair-sized and appreciative audience at the La Salette Academy on Third street.

Kananda's popularity has increased wonderfully since his arrival in this city, and especially is this noticeable among the ladies. To them he is like the latest sensation, they never grow tired of talking about him. Two-thirds of the audience last night were feminine and throughout the discourse they were most attentive, taking in every word that dropped from the speaker's lips as if they were pearls being given up by the bottomless seas.

The subject was "transmigration of the Soul, or Metempsychosis." Possibly Vive Kananda never appeared to greater advantage than in this role, so to speak. Metempsychosis is one of the most widely-accepted beliefs among the Eastern races, and one that they are ever ready to defend, at home or abroad, As Kananda said:

"Many of you do not know that it is one of the oldest religious doctrines of all the old religions. It was known among the pharisees, among the Jews, among the first fathers of the Christian Church, and was a common belief among the Arabs. And it lingers still with the Hindoo and the Buddhists.

"This state of things went on until the days of science, which is merely a contemplation of energies. Now, you Western people believe this doctrine to be subversive of morality. In order to have a full survey of the argument, its logical and metaphysical features, we will have to go over all the ground. All of us believe in a moral governor of this universe; yet nature reveals to us instead of justice, injustice. One man is born under the best of circumstances. Throughout his entire life circumstances come ready made to his hands—all conducive to happiness and a higher order of things. Another is born, and at every point his life is at variance with that of his neighbor. He dies in depravity, exiled from society. Why so much impartiality [sic] in the distribution of happiness?

"The theory of metempsychosis reconciles this disharmonious chord in your common beliefs. Instead of making us immoral, this theory gives us the idea of justice. Some of you say: 'It is God's will.' This is no answer. It is unscientific. Everything has a cause. The sole cause and whole theory of causation being left with God, makes him a most immoral creature. But materialism is as much illogical as the other. So far as we go, perception involves all things. Therefore, this doctrine of the transmigration of the soul is necessary on these grounds. Here we are all born. Is this the first creation? Is creation something coming out of nothing? Analyzed completely, this sentence is nonsense. It is not creation, but manifestation.

"A something cannot be the effect of a cause that is not. If I put my finger in the fire the burn is a simultaneous effect, and I know that the cause of the burn was the action of my placing my finger in contact with the fire. And as in the case of nature, there never was a time when nature did not exist, because the cause has always existed. But for argument sake, admit that there was a time when there was no existence. Where was all this mass of matter? To create something new would be the introduction of so much more energy into the universe. This is impossible. Old things can be re-created, but there can be no addition to the universe.

“No mathematical demonstration could be made that would have this theory of metempsychosis. According to logic, hypothesis and theory must not be believed. But my contention is that no better hypothesis has been forwarded by the human intellect to explain the phenomena of life.

“I met with a peculiar incident while on a train leaving the city of Minneapolis. There was a cowboy on the train. He was a rough sort of a fellow and a presbyterian of the blue nose type. He walked up and asked me where I was from. I told him India. ‘What are you?’ he said. ‘Hindoo,’ I replied. ‘Then you must go to hell,’ he remarked. I told him of this theory, and after explaining it he said he had always believed in it, because he said that one day when he was chopping a log his little sister came out in his clothes and said that she used to be a man. That is why he believed in the transmigration of souls. The whole basis of the theory is this: If a man’s actions be good, he must be a higher being, and vice versa.

“There is another beauty in this theory—the moral motor [motive] it supplies. What is done is done. It says, ‘Ah, that it were done better.’ Do not put your finger in the fire again. Every moment is a new chance.”

Vive Kananda spoke in this strain for some time, and he was frequently applauded.

Swami Vive Kananda will lecture again this afternoon at 4 o'clock at La Salette Academy on “The Manners and Customs of India.”

The lecture on “The Manners and Customs of India” was, according to the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 21 (Installment V), poorly attended owing to the pouring rain. It was perhaps the smallness of the gathering that gave this lecture a somewhat informal aspect. As readers will remember, the ladies kept interrupting Swamiji to ask questions both relevant and irrelevant, the first of which Swamiji answered “without the least hesitancy,” the second of which he did not answer at all.

On Sunday afternoon, January 21, Swamiji held a discussion meeting in the parlors of Miss Moon’s boarding house (Installment V) and that evening he “gave his farewell lecture,” at the Young Men’s Hebrew Association Hall. A lengthy announcement of this lecture, “Comparative Theology,” was given in the sixth installment, and a report of it in the fifth. We can now add to these the following announcement which appeared in the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 21:

Tonight Swami Vive Kananda, the Hindoo monk, will lecture at the Young Men’s Hebrew Association Hall on “Comparative Theology.” Among the literary an thinking people generally of Memphis, he has attracted a great deal of attention. He possesses a keen mind, his ideas are broad and philosophic, and he reasons with a logic that is almost convincing. Altogether, he is a man of strong intellect, and his lectures are very instructive, especially to the student of religion and its more intimate relation to civilization and mankind.

This was called “the blue ribbon lecture of this series.” It was arranged by Swamiji’s good friend and host Mr. Hu L. Brinkley and was, according to the papers, the only lecture in Memphis which Swamiji did not deliver for the benefit “of one charity-worthy object or another.”

The following day, Monday, January 22, Swamiji entrained for Chicago, leaving behind in Memphis a host of friends and admirers.

TWO EPISODES

BY SHRI KUMUD BANDHU SEN

Some twenty years back, revered Swami Sankaranandaji Maharaj, the present President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, told me, in course of conversation, that one evening when he was strolling in the Deshabandhu Park, Calcutta, he met an old gentleman who had the privilege of seeing Shri Ramakrishna. The gentleman incidentally related to him a unique episode of Shri Ramakrishna's life in connection with a Muslim faquir. The faquir used to stay in a mosque near Gerātāla in Calcutta. The episode is not published in any of the biographies of Shri Ramakrishna. The Maharaj gave me the whereabouts of that old gentleman and asked me to get all first-hand information about the episode. Sankaranandaji Maharaj was then staying at Balaram Mandir in Baghbazar.

A few days later I, according to his directions, went to meet the gentleman. He was then living in a two-storeyed building on the west side of the Deshabandhu Park. His name was Manmathanath Ghosh. I referred to Sankaranandaji and told him that I had come to meet him at the Swami's request, at which the old gentleman showed great respect and bade me sit by his side. I took my seat and continued, 'You had related a beautiful episode of Shri Ramakrishna's life to Maharaj, how Shri Ramakrishna came to a Mussalman faquir. Would you kindly repeat it to me? Moreover, I am greatly interested to know when and how you came to meet Shri Ramakrishna. It is with this end in view that I have come here.' The old gentleman was very glad and said, 'Oh yes, I will tell you everything.' He started:

'I was then residing on Beadon Street. In those days young men used to spend much of their time in musical entertainment.

There were several concert parties also. I was then just on the threshold of youth, and being rather indifferent to studies, had a strong inclination to music. My friends were all members of one such party. I used to frequent their rendezvous.

'One day we were having a pleasure trip in a boat and were proceeding towards Panihati on the Ganges. The famous Kali temple of Rani Rasmani at Dakshineswar lay on our way. So we asked our boatmen to anchor the boat there. As we were approaching the landing ghat, one of our friends exclaimed, 'I am very hungry. They say there is a Paramahansa (a sage or an enlightened soul) living in this temple and he offers sweets and fruits to visitors.' However, on reaching the landing ghat we could not decide who would go to the Paramahansa for sweets and fruits. Finding my friends shy and afraid of meeting Shri Ramakrishna I volunteered myself for the errand. After making necessary inquiries as to his whereabouts I came upon Shri Ramakrishna. Just then he asked me what I wanted. I told him plainly, 'Sir, we are residents of Calcutta and are proceeding to Panihati with a concert party of our own. We did not have our lunch, so we are feeling very hungry now. Please give us something to eat.' Shri Ramakrishna looked at me intently for a minute or so and then went and brought some sweets and fruits on a leaf. It was not much, so I said, 'What shall I do with this small quantity, sir? We are about a dozen persons in all. This is not enough even for me alone!' Seeing that there were in the room several baskets full of eatables I added, 'Let me have more, you have plenty in there.' Just like a boy Shri Ramakrishna instantly tried to hide them from me; it seemed as if someone was going to snatch

them away. Then he said petulantly, 'Well, take that if you like. "He who has nothing to spare should not keep a dog." You are yourself hungry, so have your fill. Why do you plead for others?' I replied, 'Sir, I don't wish to take this without sharing it with my friends. And further I am not going to take this small quantity also; so let it remain with you!' So saying I was then about to come back when Shri Ramakrishna called me sweetly to his side and said, 'Oh, come, come, you don't have to make yourself miserable.' This time he gave me a little more but I again grumbled, 'What shall we do with this when every one of us is feeling extremely hungry? You have enough to spare and you are so reluctant to give more!' Shri Ramakrishna said laughingly, 'What's that to you? And why should I give to any and everybody? Couldn't they all come here and take things directly from me, ye, self-chosen leader?' I was offended and said, 'Well, if you don't believe me, come and see whether there are not a dozen of us there.' Why should we come to you if we were not really hungry?' At this Shri Ramakrishna sent for somebody and asked him to give a basketful of fruits and sweets to us. Overjoyed, I returned to my friends and exclaimed, 'You did not dare to go to the Paramahansa. See, how I have brought all this for you.'

That was the first time I met Shri Ramakrishna. Afterwards I had been to Dakshineswar several times. I got attracted to him. But then I would not have the courage even to address him when I saw many famous public men like Keshab Babu and Vijay Krishna, sitting round him and talking on various topics. However, as soon as Shri Ramakrishna would see me he would bid someone or other to feed me sumptuously and would add jokingly that I always felt very hungry. And at this I would feel shy.

Later on I got married. I had to roam about hunting for a job and so found no time to go to him. After a lot of struggle I at last secured a job with Messrs. Rally Brothers & Co. The pay was poor; and everyday I had

to foot out the whole distance between Beadon Street and Dharamtalla via Gerātāla. One evening as I was returning from Office I saw a Mussalman faquir standing in front of a mosque in Gerātāla calling out affectionately, 'Come my Beloved, come', tears streaming profusely from his eyes. It was really touching; I stood transfixed, watching his divine fervour. A hackney carriage rattled up to the mosque and pulled up abruptly where the faquir was standing. Shri Ramakrishna got down from the carriage and ran up to the faquir. What happened next was simply indescribable—they were in each other's arms in deep embrace, their faces beaming with a heavenly joy. They must have stood clasping like that for some seconds.

Ramlal, Shri Ramakrishna's nephew, was he who, often at Shri Ramakrishna's bidding, would offer me fruits and sweets at Dakshineswar. Now they were returning to Dakshineswar from the Kali temple at Kali-ghat. And on the way, before my very eyes, was enacted that divine scene, whose sweet memory is still so fresh in my mind. Alas! at that time I did not realize who Shri Ramakrishna was! Now in my old age I grieve over my fate to think that though I had the supreme privilege of seeing one whom many now regard as God Himself, I then failed utterly to understand him! Ah! time is all important. Now in my old age I am painfully reminded again and again what a rare opportunity did I miss in the prime of my youth.

He had ended his narrative when I told him, 'Yet . . . you are really blessed, for you have seen Him in human form. Why, you are certainly fortunate.' I then took leave of Manmatha Babu and related the whole story to Sankaranandaji Maharaj.

* * *

It is about three months that buses began plying between Howrah and Bally. I was returning by bus to Belur Math one evening. On the way a gentleman sitting by my side turned to me and asked, 'Do you, sir, belong to the Shri Ramakrishna Math?' I answered,

'Yes; why, would you like to tell me something?' He started, 'In my childhood I came to learn from my father—who had passed away some years ago—about an incident in connection with Shri Ramakrishna. Something really mysterious. We are Mohammedans, you know, and our homestead was not far from Kamarpukur. We keep a small shop at Chandni in Calcutta. I will now repeat what I heard from my father's lips:

'“Economically we belong to the middle class. We had a thatched house and a barn adjacent to it. But due to some evil turn of fate, our house and barn would catch fire every year. This happened not once or twice but several times and we were terribly worried about it. I was one day relating this sad state of affairs to a Brahmin friend of mine when we saw Shri Ramakrishna passing in a procession along the village road dancing and singing the glories of God. Referring to Shri Ramakrishna my friend said to me, 'Seek the protection of that great soul. He might free you from all your strange plight.' I approached Shri Ramakrishna with great humility and saluted him. He then compassionately asked

me, 'What's the matter, my child?' I replied, 'Sir, we are a middle class family and are burdened with too many dependants but as ill luck would have it our house and barn invariably catch fire every year. And we are reduced to paupers. I seek your refuge. Please find some way out.' Shri Ramakrishna inquired where my house was. Pointing it out I said, 'Please see, the ashes are still there.' Shri Ramakrishna then asked the members of his party to wait and he himself proceeded to the spot along with me. On almost reaching it he asked me to bring some jujubes. Taking those jujubes in hand Shri Ramakrishna asked me to go round the whole area on foot. I started accordingly, Shri Ramakrishna following me with those fruits in his hand. He was muttering inaudibly something and would throw the fruits at intervals. When I had covered the whole area I stopped. Shri Ramakrishna asked me if I had completed the round. On my answering him in the affirmative he left me to join his party. After this never again did our house and barn catch fire and we, for our part, are immensely grateful to Shri Ramakrishna for that”.'

VEDANTA AS A SCIENTIFIC METAPHYSICS

BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

(Continued from the August issue)

III

THE WAY FROM SCIENCE TO METAPHYSICS

The right way to move towards a metaphysical view of things from science is thus, not to start from any of its results, nor to regard the presuppositions of its aim and method as necessary implications or conclusions. In a word, science, both in its results and method, has no metaphysical implications, which people generally believe it to have. No

such metaphysics can be really derived from science as some have done with great popularity. Such metaphysical speculations arising out of science may have some place in philosophy of science because of their connection with science and their popular appeal to the imagination and sentiment of the people who do not very much bother about the logical rigour of the speculations. Thus the works of James Jeans and Arthur Eddington have received much praise from various sections of their

readers though they have been pungently criticized by more careful thinkers like L. Susan Stebbing and C.E.M. Joad.²

The way we think one might philosophize on science is through a critical reflection on the method of science. Thus, when one reflects on the situation discussed above, namely, that there is neither a direct intuition nor demonstration of substance and causality being there in nature and yet they cannot be dispensed with in scientific thinking, one comes to view these categories as originally given in self-consciousness but projected on nature which is understood through them. Substance and causality are in nature more or less as beauty is there. From a purely scientific or positivist point of view it is *as if* they are in nature, for they are not as evident as chairs and tables, but are somehow presupposed by science which, as we have seen, cannot adopt a phenomenistic outlook. A philosophical reflection on this situation would reveal that the categorical aspects of nature, the pervasive principles of unification of sense-data, are *in us*, as Kant first pointed out, and they are read into nature. The other main categories, besides substance and causality, are space, time, quantity, quality, and reciprocity. These are the chief forms of our knowledge of the world which is known as out there (and not imaginary) so far as it is intelligible to us through them. These are the principles of objectivity as well, for the phenomena that fall into these grooves are distinguished from our subjective and free world of imagination. Besides these general forms of unification of sense-data and objective knowledge regarding them (apart from our beliefs regarding our dreams and delusions) we have specific rules of co-existence and succession, which we arrive at through experience employing the general rules of causality and reciprocity which are within us and which are presupposed by any such inductive search after the specific rules of dispositions of the sensible data. These rules are the specific determinants of objectivity. Anything not

causally related to other things is regarded as false—a fire that does not heat is rejected as an illusion. The world is a system of objects interrelated by causal laws which science seeks to discover.

Now the question that naturally arises here is one of the relation of the self-consciousness, that is awareness of the categorical forms of knowledge being within it, to the sense-data and the specific laws that appear to be out there. Why should the mind's law apply to the extra-mental data which conform to them or why should the mind be able to anticipate certain broad features of nature? The answer seems to be this, that the two are not really alien. The same mind that has the categorical forms in it and projects them upon nature also projects the latter and its specific laws. Why then is this apparent otherness of nature and specific laws, which are sought after by the mind? The answer is, this is how the mind can regard the world as real and, so, enjoy it as an experience, just as it enjoys the dream world which also it projects and alienates for the purpose of enjoyment, though on a lower level. Knowledge thus comes to be recognition or receiving what is one's own. Unless we think of it in this manner it remains a puzzle, for otherwise how can the mind know what is foreign to it or receive what is not its own remains unexplained. Knowledge, then, is like knowing what is projected by the mind, which sportively forgets that it is projected and thus enjoys the objects as given. Reflective analysis or self-probing reveals the secret operation of the mind in knowledge; and as this analysis proceeds, the different stages of this projective and self-forgetting activity are laid bare. At first the basic categories that appear to be out there in nature are found to be in the mind. Such an analysis with its results was first given by Kant. That the sense-data and their specific laws ordinarily revealed by the senses and our inductive enquiry are also the work of the same mind is at first conjectured from the fact of the application of the categories to nature. The

² Stebbing's: *Philosophy and the Physicists*, and Joad's: *Philosophical aspects of Modern Science*.

analogy of our dreams and delusions also helps this conjecture.

Then comes the testimony of the mystics, particularly those of the Upaniṣads, who regard the mind to be the origin of the world which is said to be an illusory creation or *māyā*. While one may not believe in such a transcendental solipsism until one has himself had an experience of the situation described, one cannot also deny the possibility of such an experience on any *a priori* ground. It would be dogmatic to do so and not in keeping with the spirit of science. Particularly so in modern times, when science is revealing the higher reaches of our personality through its researches in para-psychology. We cannot set arbitrary bounds to our knowledge and to the universe of intelligent discourse. To say with the positivist that we can know only the sensible characters is to raise a mandatory principle, viz. that we need not go beyond the little definite that the senses offer us, to the level of a metaphysical principle. It is, in other words, to confuse a methodological policy, which may serve science and workaday life well, with an epistemological law, and as a result, to buy clarity and precision at the cost of wisdom and comprehensiveness. It is to allow our biophysical nature to rule our intelligent one and, so, to decide our ultimate philosophy.

This is then our theory of knowledge, that it is but recognition of a content which belongs to mind that is creative and cognitive while ordinarily forgetful of this real nature of knowledge. Again, philosophy, in the sense of discipline for the mind to delve into itself and be self-aware reveals to it the subjective origin of the world which therefore gradually ceases to be objective as one progresses in this discipline. Philosophy thus spoils the splendid dream by taking off the aspect of reality or givenness from the sensible world lent to it by the mind in its self-willed delusion and love of sport. It is as if the mind through its poetic activity conjures up a charming dream-world while philosophy, the proverbial enemy of poetry, exposes

this dream and makes all charm fly at its cold analytical touch. In other words, a knowledge about our knowledge of the empirical world tends to expose the illusoriness of the latter knowledge, and, so, of the world. This awareness of the illusoriness of the world leads to the annihilation or sublation of it, as the realization of a delusion as such leads to its cancellation. But the same self that poetizes also philosophizes, and we are led to look upon this state of affairs as the self's alternate falling into a dream and coming back to its own—its rejoicings in this alternation between delusion and waking, creation and retraction, self-losing and self-finding. But the self that effects these transitions must be above both these states, one of actual self-possession, of which the self is conscious by virtue of its being aware of the possibility of self-alienation, over against which possibility it stands, and of this self-delusion from which it recovers itself. This higher self is the subject-object-less undifferentiated self or pure consciousness that adopts these alternate forms—self-consciousness, to which the world is an illusion and a mere possibility, and objecto-centric consciousness in which the self takes the world for reality.

Thus the epistemological presuppositions of the scientific outlook, when worked out, offer us an idealistic view of the world that science studies and a view of the self as pure transcendental consciousness. All this, however, does not conflict with science just as the dream world does not conflict with the empirical reality. They belong to two different planes of reality, so that these presuppositions of science are not on the same plane as science or the physical world occupies, and, therefore, they are *transcendental*; and this form of idealism is called transcendental idealism. It is empirical realism, for the world is real from an empirical or relative (*vyavahārika*) standpoint but it is mental from a transcendental or ultimate (*pāramārthika*) point of view. The presuppositions are not obvious and they lie in the underground to be dug out by transcendental reflection. Kant was essentially right in holding that the categorical forms of knowledge

are in us and that the world is phenomenal and not ultimately real. What he failed to prove is the necessity of these forms, that is, their being as objective as the sense-data they unify. This he could not do for he took the sense-data to be really given from outside, the unknown and unknowable things-in-themselves. So when he spoke of the world as phenomenal he meant the world that is intelligible to us through the categories that are in us. Why the forms apply to the data could not be really answered by him, as his answer was circular. The forms apply because otherwise the world would be unintelligible. But why the world should be intelligible he did not answer; and so Hume, who challenged anybody to show why causality should be held as necessary, remains unanswered, though Kant thought he answered Hume. Thus the necessity of the categorical forms and, so, of the idealistic view of the world, to which the view that categories are in the mind leads, is not a logical type. Nor is it of a psychological type, such as is presupposed in our faith in the uniformity of nature, learnt from experience, when, for example, we predict that there will be light if we strike a match. These metaphysical presuppositions are transcendental in the sense that they belong to transcendental, and not empirical, psychology. They are not on the surface but in the deep; and their existence and necessity can be revealed and appreciated only when one delves deep into one's self or goes beyond the obvious experiences to trace them to their ground or original home. Kant went very near this view of things which we find in Vedanta where it is told that the necessity behind all this creation, sense-qualities, and their laws, is that of sport. The self that is free creates a world and regulates it by laws and takes all this as real, for a sport cannot start unless there is variety of items and rules and unless these are taken seriously as given from outside. The rules as well as the so-called data or the items are thus necessary in a sense, yet not so in another. This view of the matter accords to some extent with that of the conventionalists in scientific methodology,

such as, Poincaré and Einstein, who believe that the laws of science, both general and specific, are mere conventions and may be changed at will. They are necessary so far as some rules are necessary for understanding phenomena or playing a game, but conventional so far as there may be alternative sets of them.

Thus a critical reflection on science leads to a view that, while accepting everything in science as proper in the plane where it works, shows the relative status of this plane with regard to a standard that is ultimately our self or consciousness. The subject that knows the empirical world is the empirical self while one that is aware of this knowledge as its own making and, so, as illusory, is the transcendental self. To the latter the world is there as a dream which, therefore, it can fashion as it pleases, just as we sometimes do in our dreams when we are conscious of it as such. We catch ourselves manipulating affairs in the dream. This transcendental self also knows the future and the past and other minds which are but its creations. This state of the self is God-like. *Īshwara* is said to be the wielder of *māyā*, *māyādhīsha*. The self that attains this state is free from the bondage of the world though it is in the world, which still appears to it to be there though like a dream when the world is known as such. This state of the self is called in Vedanta *jīvan-mukti* or salvation in the living condition. But this state will naturally lead to one in which the world is sublated, even as the recognition of a dream as such leads to its cancellation. This state is called *videha-mukti*, salvation after bodily death, for in this state the body cannot exist. We have a foretaste of this state in our dreamless sleep when we have no world standing over against us. But as in the dreamless sleep, so in the *videha-mukti*, there is the self standing over against the possibility of the world to appear. The world is cancelled but not its possibility or its absence. Thus the self is still a subject against a dark background of an object which is not any definite thing but an

indefinite object in general or objectivity in a symbolic form. But beyond or above this subject-object bifurcated self and forming its ground is the undifferentiated self or pure consciousness which in itself, being aware of the duality to which it willingly descends, is neither a subject nor an object. This is Brahman, the one without a second, which in itself never really becomes the world of change and multiplicity but only adopts these forms which are in it *as it were* in the manner in which we adopt various forms in our dream and fancies. Thus Brahman as pure Spirit is ever the same and all its descent into the plurality of names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) are but like the self-conscious imaginative activity of a poet who never really loses himself in his work, which is deliberate. Thus Brahman is the foundational self, the most self-aware which knows all the lower states and their objective counter-parts as its self-adopted modes.

The task of the philosopher is to lead the enquiring mind to this state of perfect self-awareness which is implicit in us and which, indeed, is the real enquirer of the origin and status of everything that appears to be there. Since the Absolute is really in us It cannot accept anything else than Itself as given but must question it. Everything appears to It as contingent which has to be traced back to some self-subsistent Being, which must be Itself, for It cannot question Itself. Thus a philosophical enquiry has for its real enquirer the highest Self which starts with a question regarding the origin and status of ordinary knowledge, that science and common sense gather, and ends with the realization that all that appear to be not this Self are but Its adopted states and their objective correlates, 'fallings and vanishings' of Brahman. The philosopher asks the overwhelming question, 'How comes this world of sense-experience and coherent laws?' which does not occur to the scientist who takes the world as given and only seeks to know the details of its content. The philosopher, therefore, is awakened dimly from the state of sleep and self-delusion or the

Brahman in him is preparing to come to its own. This home-coming will be in the form of its tracing everything to It, that is, in showing everything as self-evidently involved in It. Philosophy, thus, is a process of self-recovery and not a speculative theory or telling of stories. This is natural, for that which enquires after the ultimate reality cannot really have an answer if this reality lies outside it. It must identify this reality with the mind that enquires and reality must be shown to be manifest in our actual experience. This was realized by almost all great thinkers and mystics including Plato, Aristotle, the scholastics, and Hegel. The Vedic seers said, 'That thou art' and believed that philosophy is that knowledge which reveals reality to us and, therefore, our highest self to us. As such philosophy is not like natural science that offers us informations about, and a handle to, nature. It is a spiritual science that transforms our being. It makes us aware of the free and immortal Self in us, the Brahman that we are, of which God is but a form or mode of appearance. 'To know Brahman is to become Brahman' says the Upaniṣad. This is because Brahman is but perfect self-awareness and ultimate being that we really have in us as our ground and, so, to know or realize this is to assume our original and authentic state, withdrawing from the playfully adopted modes or mock-beings. To know Brahman is to know our essential being (our *sat*, our *swarūpa*) and this is also to realize the essential joy of our being (*ānanda*).

IV

CONCLUSION: CERTAIN MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING SCIENCE

A critical reflection on science, thus, may lead us to a certain view of our knowledge and of Self and God. It is impossible to develop in full the philosophy we have sketched above, and many loose-ends and gaps, obvious to anybody who looks into it, are left therein. It has been our purpose here to indicate how a metaphysics might be constructed on the basis of science. The general nature of this metaphysics is spiritualistic, such as is found in the

Vedantic tradition. Such a metaphysical construction, when fully carried out, will have a value in our age of science when the great prestige of science will add importance to this metaphysics, which will, therefore, appear more worthy of our attention and application than one arising out of our reflection on moral or religious intuitions. The latter have now less credit with the people at large than science. Of course the results of science are justly held as more or less tentative and of a narrow field of applicability and, so, as not a fit base for philosophy. But the method of science, because of the vast amount of information it has helped us to gather and of the technology to master, commands great respect and confidence from us. Therefore a metaphysical search, such as we have undertaken here, starting from a reflection on the method of science or of empirical knowledge and tracing the beliefs that are involved in this method back to their origin, the pure awareness and the ground of all experience, is a fruitful undertaking on the part of a modern thinker. And what is interesting and hopeful in this task is that the conclusions to which it leads us do not conflict with but support those arrived at through reflecting upon our moral and religious experiences. That is to say, they reinforce, and not interfere with, the traditional ethical idealism and theism.

And here we have to point out some of the misconceptions regarding science and its underlying philosophy. It is true that the religio-ethical outlook that science generates in the first instance is rather positivistic, where it is hard to find God or conscience in the idealistic sense. There is instead an awe for, and a stoical resignation to, law and order; and no hope in personal freedom and immortality and in the future of the world. So there is a general pessimism that lack of faith in God, the beneficent overseeing Lord of the universe, naturally engenders. And as for morality, science no doubt fosters the virtues such as respect for facts, love of rational order and clarity, freedom of expression, collective enterprise, co-operative understanding, and equality

or opportunities. Yet science does not bother over the spiritual basis of our morals which, for it, are neither universal and categorical laws of our being nor indicative of our higher and immortal Self. Thus science, as it has actually influenced our outlook so far, has not been as salutary as our traditional religions and ethics have been. So the sages of our time, as of old, are uneasy with it though some magnify its faults unnecessarily. But science need not generate a positivistic religion and ethics which are its first fruits plucked a bit too early. That is to say, science breeds a rather narrow naturalistic outlook when it is taken raw. What is needed is a reflective analysis of the scientific method, that is, of empiricism, and this would show us a way to God, personal freedom and immortality, the future good of the world, and the immortality and spiritual origin of the moral law. The categories of our natural knowledge are shown to be in the transcendental Self by critical reflection on this knowledge; so are the laws of morality shown by the same reflection on our moral feelings and behaviour. And as the reflective activity in the first case exposes the part played by our self in the appearance of the world which then ceases to be a given object, it effects a similar disinterestedness with regard to the human world of profit and loss, success and failure; and everything appears to be a sport or a play-acting where duty becomes a free act of love, a thing of enjoyment or beauty. The moral laws appear as self-instituted rules of a joyous game. Thus they will appear as conventions, but in a way different from that of the naturalist who takes them as man-made conventions or contracts or even superstitions. They are objective and necessary so far as they apply to all, being instituted by the universal Self or God who resides in every mind and manifests Himself through our disinterested acts of goodness as He does through our love of truth and beauty, that is, our search for reality and our appreciation of things for their own sake. But these laws of morality are conventional in the sense that they are after all rules of a game and there might

be other rules in another game and all this play (*līlā*) itself, is a mock-play, an imaginary affair. Thus a reflection upon our mental behaviour will take one beyond the superficial view of it fostered by a positivistic outlook, yet it will not make one a dogmatic and joyless moralist but will really conduct him to a position where he will have perfect freedom and peace.

Now the reflective activity, which is philosophizing in the real sense, is natural to us who must enquire into the ultimate basis of everything that appears, because that basis is our real Self. Then things that appear as given and self-subsistent in our naive attitude shed off their self-contained look and seem to be somehow related to us, borrowing their appearance of self-existence from ours who want our counterparts to play with. Philosophical reflection is a sign of our waking from the dream of life in this world and this reflection may start from anything which it judges with the criterion of self-subsistence and finds it falling short of this reality. The criterion is derived from self's own nature and all else is rejected as shadow of reality and declared 'not this', *neti*. So the truth may be reached from any point in the world grounded on it, as all roads lead to Rome. The world that covers Brahman, having been issued from It, also points to Brahman, its source and ground, to the enquirer, who being himself essentially this Brahman is not content with the appearance of truth, and sooner or later asks the all-important question of the origin and ground of the world. This ground itself is assumed to be self-subsistent, and since the only thing that cannot be questioned but must be accepted as ultimate is pure consciousness, this ground is pure consciousness.

To conclude, then, science has metaphysical implications but they have to be brought out through reflection upon its method and not speculating upon its results. They, when thus recovered, will be found to be not much different from the tenets of the perennial philosophy and not less salutary for the individual

and society. In fact, they help our self-knowledge which is the ultimate good behind all other proximate ones. These implications, however, are not the direct logical consequences, nor psychological influences, of science, which are rather positivistic and metaphysically neutral. They are the far-reaching presuppositions or ultimate results, to be drawn out, through a kind of transcendental reflection; and their necessity or objectivity is not as obvious as that of the logical or even psychological ones of the ordinary type. Logical necessity flows from our definitions, whether explicit or implicit; and psychological necessity from our ordinary common human nature studied by empirical science. The necessity pertaining to the deep-seated presuppositions of science, which we have brought out here and which form a metaphysics, is of a peculiar type. It is the necessity of the free cosmic mind in its creative activity so that every individual mind that reflects on any obvious experience finds the latter to involve and to be grounded in, more basic experiences, which become clearer as the reflection proceeds further. The necessity of these various stages of experience with its subjective and objective poles, appears in the form of these stages being *recognized* to be there, discovered and not invented. It is therefore the same kind of necessity as we grant to the perceptual objects which also appear to be out there *as unknown* before and after they are actually perceived. This is the original and ultimate nature of necessity of perceptual objects, chairs and tables. The practical test of necessity and objectivity is social agreement or public assent; but that this is not ultimate is seen from the fact that the opinions of persons and persons themselves, to count for anything, have to be first accepted as objectively there. Of course, the practical test of necessity or truth of our metaphysical derivations of science is also public assent; but before one assents or dissents to any of them, one has to undergo the necessary discipline and see for oneself whether the experiences follow one another in the

manner described here. One should not refuse to reflect like the critics of Galileo who refused to peep into his telescope. Such dogmatic critics of our metaphysics of science will not be

wanting but they should remember that this is against the spirit of science, which is bold and experimental.

(Concluded)

WHAT IS MAN?

BY SHRI JAGDISH SAHAI

(Continued from the August issue)

THE DRAMA OF MANKIND

In the drama of mankind men and women are not only actors but spectators as well. The actors are of various types. There are beings who are chiefly guided by their animalistic instincts. Though in human form, they behave and act as though they are nothing better than animals. 'Serpent types, scorpion types, wolf, fox or the dog types of men are not too rare in any generation and at all levels of social living. They express values entertained by the animal kingdom—values of security, appetites, lusts and passions.' They have so little claim to human significance. They are the proverbial pleasure-seekers. A pleasure-seeker seeks satisfaction in the line of least resistance and runs his life on the cheap. His characteristic is not that he seeks or finds the greatest pleasure in the things he chooses, but that he fails to find sufficient pleasure in anything else. With no high ideals to work and live for, sense-gratification becomes his ruling interest in life. His is a rudimentary conscience, for he has very little to choose. Thoroughly self-centred, he would not look beyond his nose. Grabbing instinct gets a hold on his life. He knows no sacrifice. He is on the lowest rung of the ladder of human evolution. On the lower levels of human nature there are always conflicts of interest between society and the individual. It is only when man's social conscience is awakened and when he begins to see his own good in the good of humanity that he

truly becomes a man and a human being. Sympathy, fellow-feeling, disinterested service with a desire to do good even at the risk of his own life become part and parcel of his very nature. Such people are the salt of the earth and pride of the human race. The whole history of human evolution is the transformation of selfishness to its opposite.

Man lives in aggregations of various forms of complexity, duration, and size. In a family the personalities of the two sexes complement each other as well as the age groups of elders and children. A family lasts as long as its members live, particularly its head. The same individual performs different functions at the same time—as the member of the family, as the inhabitant of a town or a village, as a worker, as a voter, and as the citizen of a state. Man's behaviour in his family differs from that while pursuing his profession or in company of his friends. Such a behaviour consists in the observance of injunctions, in the avoidance of prohibitions, and in carrying out certain duties. Human life runs through an enormous number of situations, and each one requires its own decision. The decisions may be of far-reaching character and may affect other aggregations and other situations.

It is a remarkable fact of human society that groups and aggregations of men, although living side by side in the same place or in the same community, know so little about one another. Not only this, they do not even care

to know. Their ego-centricity holds sway over them. Vanity and envy, suspicion and ambition, dominate their sentiment, and fear creates hostility. They retard progress which requires a wider co-operation between groups.

'It is a fundamental fact of all times that man depends on powers which he cannot think of controlling. His existence not only is due to the conditions of his environment, but also is primarily the result of biological factors. Whether we are born as cripples or endowed with brilliant gifts, it does not depend on us. We cannot determine our maturing age or our senility, nor can we dispose of our health or disease. Our drives and our desires are merely stimulated by the surrounding world, but the particular kind of reaction proceeds from our physical and mental system, from ourselves. Our thoughts are beyond our command. . . . We feel ourselves in the hand of powers which dominate us and with which we constantly have to deal.

'Trying to take a detached view of social processes, past and contemporaneous, we bow in veneration before the superhuman power that directs the fate of man from inside; as a force active in him, and which at the same time permeates everything around him. Being conscious of that we cannot help asserting ourselves in this world. When our life becomes involved in the actions of our neighbours, it may become imperative on us to influence others. If the life of the groups with which our existence is associated is at stake, we shall interpose ourselves. For the continuation and procreation of our life is bound up with the groups in which we participate. Hence a dilemma may arise between the process of which we feel ourselves to be a minute part and of which we conceive a limited division by our intellect on the one side, and our ego-centric self-assertion on the other.

'Man on his path is always vexed by this dilemma. As a result of this the groups have produced moral demands. Not only that, sages have outlined ideals of how man should live and act. These men acquired disciples and even masses of followers. But even the disciples failed to live up to the ideals of their masters. . . . Hard and slow is the way of high morals to enter into the hearts and actions of man.

'Becoming conscious of all this, men have drawn encouragement from their way of interpreting their particular destiny. Such an interpretation is a compass in the desert of perplexity and helps to make decisions. It delivers man from the depressive feeling of being inexorably doomed to a blind fate.'

MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

Man cannot be separated from his environment. His consciousness is inextricably linked with his surroundings, physical and social. He adapts himself to social environment as well as to physical environment. Both the environments affect his organic and mental development. Neither nature nor nurture is more

important because they are both essential for the development of the human personality. The basic relativity of nature and nurture cannot be overlooked. Sentience means for us to be conscious of something and that something, whether painful, pleasurable, or indifferent, comes within our experience. Some experiences are agreeable and some disagreeable; some are of our own seeking and some are thrust upon us. The character, quality, and trend of such experiences depend upon and are, to a great extent, determined by our birth, nationality, place, etc., in short by heredity and environment. The hard knocks which a poor man suffers from are rare in the family of the rich; the blessed feelings of superb health is unknown to one suffering from a chronic disease; the experiences of a man born in a free nation differ widely from those of a slave; the feeling for more activity, or feeling of less fatigue peculiar to cold countries cannot be expected, where the sun sends down its scorching rays and inanition prevails. The station in life, the position he holds in society, determines the character of the experiences the individual will participate in. The station in life is determined by birth and immediate surroundings. The birth is determined by previous acts. Only a few surpass the limits of their birth. The overwhelming majority lives, moves, and toils within the status inherited by their predecessors, rising a little now here or falling down there. Human life is a book of experience. In its pages are written the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, the ups and downs, all events and incidents, which a man, as a sentient being, encounters during the career of his earthly existence.

'The individual does not generally get without effort the position he covets in the group of which he is a member. He wants wealth, knowledge, power, pleasures. He is driven by his greed, his ambition, his curiosity, his sexual appetite. But he finds himself in an environment always indifferent, sometimes hostile. He quickly realises that he must fight for what he wants. His mode of reaction to his social surroundings depends on his specific constitution. Some people become accommodated to the world by conquering it. Others by escaping from it. Still others refuse to accept its rules.

'The passion for conquest assumes diverse aspects according to individuals and circumstan-

ces. It inspires all great adventures. But it drives the modern human being to robbery, to murder and to the great financial and economic enterprises characterising our civilisation. But its impulse also builds hospitals, laboratories, universities and churches. It impels men to fortune and to death, to heroism and to crime. But never to happiness.'

By far the most important part of the environment of man is the social environment. It differs from one nation to another, one period to another, one class to another, and its influences are outside the control of any one individual. Social system needs to be so remodelled that individual success does not conflict with communal welfare. This can be achieved by encouraging such social traits as altruism, readiness to co-operate, sympathetic enthusiasm, and so forth, instead of putting a premium on many anti-social traits such as egoism, low cunning, and insensitiveness to human misery.

'All in all, differences among mankind are the outcome of nature and nurture, of heredity and environment. Some are sharp, some are dull. Nevertheless many apparently dull persons can be restored to normal intelligence by proper education, constant exercise of the mind, and facilities for wholesome association. . . . The way to progress lies in a ceaseless effort to develop our knowledge and intelligence. Such development is possible only when the mind is kept steady and well-poised.'

FATE AND FREEWILL

Each individual, as a matter of cherished sentiment, self-esteem, and privilege, is no doubt free to act as he or she might like, but to what extent is he or she so free? In our daily lives we see that individual, communal, and social behavioural types are hemmed in on all sides by countless controls and inhibitions, mainly governmental or political, economic, social, moral, and religious. The teachings of science are that our will is determined by heredity and environment or nature and nurture. These have made, are making, and will make us what we have been, are, and will be. According as what we are at any time, so we act, and since the action flows from what we are, we feel it to be the free choice of ourselves. Recent psychological studies show that we are simply doing what we are so constituted

as to do; we being what we are, and the circumstances being what they are. Perhaps we seem to be clearly and freely choosing between two courses; but in fact there is only going on a trial of strength between various instincts, impulses, tendencies—some inherited and some due to habit or education—which are within us, and the strongest will win and make the choice for us. Our choice is unreal inasmuch as the course we shall choose is thus forced upon us. To this degree science affirms the doctrine of predestination in the form of causation of the will.

But if a man is bound by the Law of Karma, predestination, etc. why should he be blamed for his actions? The truth is that man is bound and yet at the same time free in a restricted sense of the term. Just as a prisoner in jail is free within his cell to stand, sit, walk, sleep, eat his food or reject it, similarly man in the universe, though subject to the operation of certain inexorable cosmic laws, has the freedom to choose between good and bad, between right and wrong, etc. This moral sense in man enables him to influence the causation of the will. Moral education, therefore, helps a man to develop himself as a being who should not do certain things, for they will determine his will and the will of others in a direction not desirable. Thus in the determination of our will, the idea that each of us has of himself and the ideals that animate our existence are also factors equally potent as others—psychological, physiological, and environmental. There are two currents, as it were, in the determination of the will, one flowing inwards from the environment and the organism, and another outwards from the ego and its ideals. Will thus becomes the fusion point of ego and the body encasing it.

Even if it be admitted that past actions influence our present condition the question arises what gave different tendencies to different minds when they first started on the life's journey? In answer it may be said that in some the moral sense was so weak that they failed to develop a strong will and so they succumbed to the path of evil and misery, and those who

made the best use of their free will by rising superior to their animal instincts, conquered their minds and secured perpetual happiness for themselves. 'The mind is the friend of him who, by himself, has conquered it, but to him who has not restrained himself the mind becomes an enemy. Mind (or will) is the cause of man's bondage or freedom.'

THE TRAGEDY OF MAN

Confusing of means with ends has been and still is man's greatest tragedy. The first mistake he commits is with regard to his own body. He regards his physical body to be his real self and so engages himself in a round of activities calculated to gratify his senses. His ego becomes self-centred and makes him thoroughly selfish. His vision gets confined to his immediate self-interest, so he becomes anti-social. The person whose greed is overpowering magnifies his own interest and minimizes the interests of others. He then finds it easy to harm others and cause them pain and suffering. Thus the passions that make us forget others prove inimical not only to others but to ourselves, for they prevent us from fulfilling ourselves in kinship with our fellow men. By nature man is gregarious. Singly he is not complete; he is fully himself only in conjunction with others. Because it is man's nature to live and work with others, his welfare and prosperity lie in fulfilling his nature. When many live as one, each one benefits by the combined strength of the many. All human institutions, political, social, or religious, are run by co-operative effort. The welfare of the individual as well as the community is achieved only when there is scope in a community for each member to work for the good of all. Where ignorance or injustice prevents him from working for the common good, the result is misery and misfortune.

This raises the whole issue of human relations. Mankind has as yet failed to find a stable basis for it. The stability of society rests on the stability of family units. But no stable family life is possible when marriage comes to be looked upon as an end in itself

rather than a means for the welfare of society. Marriage is not true marriage if the union of the sexes does not lead to a unity of outlook on life and its purpose. True marriage implies a complete understanding of life and its functions. The life of the couple should express 'one hope within two walls and one will beneath two overshadowing minds.' To study household good and to promote nobler pursuits in her husband are ever the ideals of a true wife. Faithfulness, regard and respect for each other is the *sine qua non* of husband-wife relationship. It gives a meaning, a profound significance to marriage. The husband being the senior partner in the marriage tie, he naturally assumes the role of the head of the family. And because woman is the flesh of his flesh and the bone of his bone, let her be obedient to the man not as a servant but as a companion so that nothing be lacking of honour or of dignity in the obedience which she pays. The marriage tie should be held sacred and inviolate to provide the much-needed stability and security to the family unit. Every intimate human relation involves some loss of liberty. This sacrifice, willingly given by the parties concerned, strengthens mutual love and understanding, and adds to the sweetness and harmony of family life. 'Liberty is good, but loneliness is not; and loneliness can only be avoided by a cheerful and willing attitude of give and take. . . . Family life, where it is successful, can provide this relief from loneliness, and is for that reason one of the most important forms of happiness.'

The attitude of parents towards their children also suffers from the same initial confusion of means with ends. Parents think of their children in a sense of possessiveness, forgetting that they are 'the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself'. Parents mar the happiness of family life when they concentrate too much on their children, deny them an independent life, and feel that all is lost if the children do not turn out as they wish. This accounts for what is now a universal phenomenon—the revolt of modern youth. 'It does not do for a parent to have any fixed concep-

tion of the sort of person the child is to become. Children have natural bents and there is no use trying to force them into pre-conceived patterns.' They need, of course, parental guidance in early life and punishment too when they commit a moral wrong. 'Education can provide opportunity and nourishment and freedom from harmful interference, but it cannot turn a child into something quite different from what nature intended.'

However, children must be taught one thing, namely, to radiate joyousness and peace; it is a social duty. Daily do we see home life spoiled, fireside talks rendered uncongenial, family circles made depressing or indeed broken up by the non-recognition of this duty. The very roots, indeed, of every comfort and happiness are here touched. It is not in everybody's power to be a good talker, nor can all of us boast of high spirits, sunny disposition, or social accomplishments. But every one, in the full possession of his faculties, can curb a sullen or vindictive temper. It is just by little ignoble defects and weaknesses within our own mastery that daily life may be not only soured but rendered almost insupportable. Civility costs nothing but gains much. Politeness is the gateway to sociability. The following anecdote may well bring home the point. A vulgar fop called to a boot-black to polish his shoes and showered vituperative epithets for his slowness, till at last the little fellow stopped his work and looking up exclaimed, 'See here, Mister, it is no use to work on your shoes till somebody polishes your tongue.'

HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

What is true of family relationship is also true of human relationship in general, be it communal, national, or international. Tolerance, mutual regard and respect for each other, sympathy and understanding are qualities that make for harmonious human relations. All human relationship becomes a sham and a delusion and a mere make-believe when it is not based on mutual trust and affection. Self-denial and constant wish to work for others are

the secrets of happiness. Pining for what one cannot have and trying to run after what is pleasantest invariably end in disappointment. Love and friendship are man's most priceless possessions. He must be conscious of having loved and sought the truth—of having yearned the truth for its own sake! All else is either vanity or a sick man's dream.

Again, man's attitude towards wealth and power is equally defective. Both money and power are means of human welfare and not ends in themselves. When they become ends they become engines of human misery and destruction. Almost in every society work for the common good is hindered when the desire for making money takes possession of men, for personal ambition then gets the better of social welfare. Whenever a man resolves to excel others in money or power he does harm to himself, for no one is complete in himself. That selfishness and greed hurt the truth of man's being is proved by the fact that all conflict and treachery between man and man centre round this lust for money and power. Their corrupting influence is too evident in modern society all the world over. Industrialism and bureaucracy—the two great forces of modern life—are perhaps the modern incarnations of Mammon and Moloch. Under their regime man has been dehumanized and demoralized. While the industrialist is concerned with his ledger only, the bureaucrat takes work from workers under his charge as if they are soulless machines. They are ill-treated, humiliated, and laughed at on their lapses, and action taken against them in the high-sounding name of discipline. True discipline, they forget, is self-discipline and not an imposed discipline.

Capitalists and bureaucrats have no conscience. Just as people with conscience cannot comprehend the conscienceless system, so is an honest man a puzzle to the constitutionally dishonest. There are people in every walk of life whose avarice stops at no prudential considerations, who would, for the sake of a few rupees, break off with their nearest kindred. Such is the lust for money. The lust for power

exercises a maddening influence. The man who wields even a little power is generally seen using it to the detriment of his fellow-beings, just to air his own superiority over them. Power in the hands of weaklings who are denied a spacious practical vision—even though they are well-meaning and have the best of intentions—brings anguish both to them and to those who have to do with them. They cannot see at what point precisely the matter hinges and, in trying to provide for all possible eventualities, end by making a muddle. The most unfortunate aspect of the affair, however, refers to the way they deal with men. In their anxiety to keep well-informed about men and things in their jurisdiction, they encourage designing story-tellers and tale-bearers and pave the way for intrigue. Nothing can be more degrading for an individual, a community, or a nation than to make invidious distinctions between man and man. No one should be allowed to be a boss unless he has developed such social traits as are conducive to human welfare.

In growing all-powerful man has lost his own greatness. We have lost the dignity that at least religion gave to life. Our ethics have dissolved, science in the popular mind has made man a mere animal, if not a mere automatic switch-board of incoming and outgoing calls, impressions, and reactions. With all this has come for the time being an unconscious sense of inferiority.

This depressing situation has arisen because man's extrovert nature has made him study everything around him save himself. And unless man studies himself and knows his real nature he cannot find peace that passeth understanding.

MAN'S SELF

'Man, know thyself', has been the clarion call of all religions, ancient and modern. Deep within every human heart lies the yearning for a better, richer, and happier life. The aspiration for a really happy life is the most natural inclination of every right-thinking person. The vast majority, however, in their

ignorance roam through hill and dale in search of happiness, little knowing that the key to the happiness for which they strive is right at their very door. Man must know himself, if he wants peace for himself and for the world. The man who has known himself, i.e. his own self, supplies spiritual sustenance to millions of persons for thousands of years. When without knowing himself a man goes to work—to reform societies, to regenerate nations, to uplift humanity, he only creates fresh problems for himself and for others, instead of solving the existing ones. The discovery of the real self is, therefore, a thing of foremost importance in man's life.

What is man himself? The answer differs according to the standpoint we take. From the materialistic point of view, man is a body, composed of chemical substances having a definite mass and volume. This view relates him to the material world and treats him solely as a part of it. From the organic point of view man is a superb animal, with a highly specialized organism, functioning much in the same way the organism of other animals function. He has organic feelings of hunger, appetite, functions of excretion and reproduction and the like in common with the animal world. From the spiritual point of view, man is neither his body, nor the totality of physiological functions, or the bundle of mental states and processes, but is his self which uses his body and its functions as its instrument and is conscious of himself as self. It is a fact of immediate experience for us that our psychical life has a kind of core, a nucleus or centre which we call the ego or self. This centre is intensely self-conscious and is the nucleus of our personality and as such it places man even a world apart from the highest of the higher animals. It is in many ways conditioned and modified by the rest of the bodily and mental characteristics and yet it is a distinct reality existing apart from them. This ego, just because it is a living ego, changes with experience, changes as a result of its own acts and deeds, and yet the more it changes, the more it is the same thing. To it we refer all our judgements. Its interests

are our interests, and when we ask 'What will become of me when I die', it is of this ego, the unique personal nucleus of all our psychical life that we think of. And upon the belief of its survival in some form or other have been based all the great religions of the world.

The living man may be analysed into (1) ego; (2) faculties of sense; and (3) the material framework, i.e. the body. The ego evolves the faculties which in turn evolve and modify the body. Human soul is at once profoundly unitary at its base and infinitely complex in its manifestations. Life of the body is just the road that leads to the life of the spirit, and egos are continually being rushed on this globe, which nevertheless in a certain sense pre-existed. Though consciousness and brain are interdependent, 'yet the destiny of consciousness is not bound up on that account with the destiny of cerebral matter'. Much less is the destiny of the whole of mind, of which consciousness is only a part. Though consciousness is distinct from the organism it animates, it must undergo its vicissitudes. With each deed and thought, the experiences that the ego undergoes, cling to and change the ego and thus determine, according to the Law of Karma or spiritual evolution, its future habitat or reincarnation, and so indirectly its trend of experiences also. The doctrine of pre-existence implies reincarnation of one soul to undergo and experience the fruits of its previous actions, though the individual soul strives through much suffering and pain to achieve finally that primeval unity of Being—the state of Supreme Reality.

A living ego is thus connected directly with man's lives in the past as also of the future, and evolution of personality, though referring in a narrow sense to his present form, really refers to the entire chain of incarnations. Death thus is a liberation of the ego from the bondage of the body, and birth is entering into a new habitat to undergo the new kind of experiences ordained by the supreme moral law, which it deserves on account of merits and demerits in its previous existence. It is the merit and demerit, virtue or sin, i.e. moral

worth that adheres to, and forms the true riches of, the ego, when death drops the material framework and carries it into further sojourn in organic life in obedience to the cosmic moral order that binds the universe together. Each birth is thus the ego's temporary habitat for undergoing destined experiences and for further actions to elevate or lower itself.

MAN'S LIFE

We cannot truly understand a man's life unless we appreciate the values in it, for the value of life and its aspirations are ultimately determined by the nature of the self, the ego. If it is nothing but a product of matter, as the materialists would have it, then there can be nothing of supreme value but the enjoyment of physical life at its best. The dignity of life depends ultimately on the true nature of the self alone, which is something distinct from the body and all its functions.

All of us, as human beings, are subject to material laws, as we have material bodies; subject to organic laws, as we are masters of living bodies; subject to psychical laws, as all of us have minds; yet as souls, as experiencers, as egos, we are all subject to cosmic laws; for we are part and parcel of the underlying spirit in the cosmos. A human life, as it progresses in years, marches onward under the inexorable grip of this causation, the Law of Karma, which governs his very soul, though the rest of his being is subject to other laws, organic, psychical, or inorganic. The experiencer, the ego, is subject to this one law alone, though what is his is subject to the manifold laws of the sciences. The doctrine of Karma is nothing else but the affirmation of a moral order holding the universe. It only says: 'As you sow, so you reap.'

All of us understand the complexity of a human being. A human being is not a mere pure soul all divine, nor simply a centre of abstract intelligence, but has senses as well to excite feelings. He has a soul truly akin in nature to the Divinity that we call God; he has a mind essentially human, full of warmth,

feeling, and interests; he has a physique belonging to the material world; and he has a comprehensive intellect—the father of all thought, of which all philosophies, sciences, arts, languages are but offsprings; and he possesses, above all, the senses, the gateways of all varieties of experience. Such is the man on earth, and both science and philosophy have failed to take him fully into account. Spirituality takes him as a soul, the experiencer, the person, but fettered and limited by the faculty of the senses. And this man has an immortal longing from time immemorial to know himself, his dignity, and what causes it.

Every man must be made to realize that the essence of his being lies in his soul or spirit and that the meaning of life is something sacred owing to his close participation with the cosmos, whose ideals materialize in his person, sacred beyond mortals' telling.

The clear and salutary lesson of this spiri-

tual philosophy is: 'O Man, You are but an incarnation of cosmic ideas; be human and forget not that you are in the grip of the cosmos, sanctified by the living presence of God. Realize that, taking fully into account the moral deserts of the individual and of the nations collectively; His Will is being done on earth as it is in heaven.'

How true to say: 'Bounded in his nature, infinite in his desires, man is a fallen god who has a recollection of heaven!'

Deep down in the human Soul there is
Neither East nor West,
And on the surface there is
One fraternity, called humanity.
Man is the centre, a moving centre
Of all progress, Civilization and Culture.
A vital link between Nature
And God, he partakes of the Divine.
When Man the Individual becomes
Man the Universal, he rises to his full stature.
And therein lies his glory.

(Concluded)

EASTERN THOUGHTS AND THE WESTERN MIND

BY SHRI ARTHUR LALL

The first thing one ought to notice about the whole idea of the East and the West is the mistake of talking in terms of these two categories—East and West. We all know Kipling's famous line, of how the twain shall never meet. But it is important to remember that this idea of a separate East and a separate West is something which stems, not from the matrix of history, but from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was when the West went to the East in a conquering spirit that she found this dichotomy, this separateness. Indeed, even at the time Kipling was writing, Lowes Dickenson, a Cambridge scholar in England, a great humanist, wrote a very beautiful series of letters, called the letters of John Chinaman. These letters were simu-

lated, they were written as though a Chinaman were writing about Europe, in fact it was Lowes Dickenson, an Englishman, who was writing. And what these letters brought out was the basic essential oneness of life, in spite of the fact that life took forms in China that were different from those it took in late nineteenth century England. That was the humanist Englishman writing. As against him, we had the Jingoist, imperialistic tradition, which was expressed by Kipling and others: East is East and West is West.

Before that, if we go back to the earlier travellers, we do not have this sort of feeling, whether we take Megasthenes, who wrote in the time of the Greeks about the earlier India—not about the earliest India, because

when he wrote about the first century A.D., India had already had about two thousand years of history—and go through Marco Polo, the French travellers, and Sir Thomas Rowe, writing through the ages, we do not have this dichotomy of the East and the West. This dichotomy, as said before, has arisen out of a certain political relationship that occurred in the course of recent history. As long as we try to look at the world as the problem of the East and the West, we shall never solve it, unless we remember that this whole concept of division is an artificial one, especially today, when the world has essentially shrunk, because of the need for it to be interrelated and interdependent. For instance, a third of the steel made in U.S.A. every year is dependent on Indian manganese ore, without which steel production here would fall seriously. In a world of this kind, to take just a physical fact and not the facts of the relationship of the mind, it is obvious that this dichotomy, this idea of the East and the West, is out of date.

Now, why does this idea continue so much? Why is it that we have broadly lost the humanistic approach to our world? Well, a great deal of the East, including India, has remained under a sort of veil for the last two hundred years. If we think of some of the things that happened in these two hundred years, it will be clear to all what we mean. If we take the trade statistics of England and India for the year 1800, that is, a hundred and fifty years ago, we would find that a large proportion of the cotton textiles, the cotton cloth, used in England in 1800, was imported from India; in 1900 we find that practically no cotton cloth was imported into England from India; on the contrary, a great deal of the cloth used in India was imported from Britain and was made from Indian cotton which was baled, sent to England, made into cloth, and then sent back to India. These facts are not now important in themselves, but they give us a picture of the sort of thing that happened.

Sir Charles Wood (later Lord Halifax),

President of the Board of Control, East India Company, then governing India, sent the famous Education Dispatch in 1854, which laid the foundation of the Vernacular System of Education. He said that all the available evidence indicated that in 1800 one Indian in three was educated, could read and write, could enjoy the literature of the country. Incidentally, that was then probably the highest figure for any part of the world. Britain did not start universal education, did not start the aided school system, till 1833. So, till then in Britain there were practically only the expensive schools for the rich. However, in 1800 there was a fairly high percentage of literacy in India. In 1900, after a hundred years of British rule, the percentage of literacy in India fell from thirty-three to six.

The ships that fought Nelson's battles against Napoleon were for the most part built in India, on the west coast of India, of Indian teak, designed by Indian workmen and built by Indian shipwrights. All the ships that the British used for carrying trade between Britain and India up to the time of the 'iron horse', the modern steam-going ship, were built in India by Indian workmen.

This is only to show how the whole picture of relationships can alter, in a space of, say, a hundred years. We are human, we forget, we cannot be expected to look back two or three hundred years; and we tend to think only in terms of what exists, of what we see. So in our generation certain areas of the world seem very progressive, and certain other areas very benighted; and then we make compartments in our minds and say, it is clear that the East is very benighted, and perhaps the West is not so, or that the North is very wonderful and the South is not. Certainly, as one looks back over the long history of a country like India, and sees the fluctuations that have taken place in human affairs, it becomes very difficult for an Indian to think in terms of one part of the world being more or less developed, or endowed with better human material than another. It also becomes

very difficult for an Indian to think in terms of the East and the West, or 'compartments' of that kind. This arises partly from the long, continuous history of development, or underdevelopment, that India has experienced. The Indian mind attempts to take the problem of the world as a whole.

And one finds a relationship between this uncompartmentalized approach to practical affairs and the conclusions of our own thinkers. If one were going to summarize the whole of Indian philosophical thought in one word, that word would be 'universalism'. That word embraces the whole idea of Vedanta—the idea of the complete integration of life, the idea that each individual finds his relationship with the Absolute, that there is a whole, a totality of life, with which individuals are inextricably connected. That is broadly so, if one looks at Indian thought. It is so, if one looks at the Indian point of view in practical affairs. Everyone knows India's stand in international politics, which is described as neutralist. If, however, one examines this attitude carefully, one will find that it is not neutralist but universalist. It is an attitude that says we cannot have sectional peace in the world, cannot confine the good life to certain areas of the world, and build curtains, or allow curtains to be built by others, and to segregate certain people or certain nations from humanity as a whole. This is the central fact of Indian foreign affairs: that we cannot find a solution, we cannot accept a solution that leaves out large parts of the world. It is for that reason, primarily, that India advances the view that it is unfortunate, for example, that the mainland of China, with its six hundred million people, should not be represented in the United Nations. (You must forgive me, I am not talking politics, I am trying to point out the idea of universality in the Indian point of view; I have no intention at all of making this a political talk.)

But it is true, then, that in practical affairs, whether about China and the United Nations, or in the solution of the prisoners of war issue in Korea, India always tries to find

some meeting ground between various contesting views, not at a minimum level, not a level which means that human values have to suffer, but at a level where human values are to advance, and to meet at a point which will be of benefit to the various dissident elements.

Another important aspect of Indian life and culture is represented by the capacity of India to find syntheses, to combine points of view. Let us take one very old fact in India—the fact of colour. India has had a colour problem, since, roughly speaking, 2000 B.C., when the Aryans started to enter the country. Now the Aryans were a fair people, while the people who were already in India had had the advantage of more sun than the Aryans. A caste system grew up in India, based partly on colour; but there, too, what happened in the Indian scene was that a synthesis took place between the Aryan people and the people who were already in India; so that the caste system soon ceased to represent any colour significance at all, and really represented simply the division of functions in the community, in different groups and families in society. So, beginning from the Aryan impact on India, one gets in our country a continuous attempt at synthesis.

After the Aryans came the Greeks, the Indo-Parthians, the Bactrians, the Mongoloids, and with each of these, India formed a synthesis, formed a humanly tenable system of life. It is true there have been occasions when we have not perhaps succeeded so well in forming a synthesis—when India has had to deal with strongly iconoclastic invasion, or with dogmatism from abroad, it has been difficult for India to form a synthesis. But if we look for a moment at the recent history of India, then perhaps, we will see that the most remarkable synthesis of all has been performed.

When Gandhi returned to India from South Africa, he said to the country that we must attain our freedom through a mass awakening of the people—in fact, he said that the people were awake, and that the vast mass of people

were to attain their freedom, but without any bitterness against the British. Without any hatred, without any strife, we must maintain the position and convince the British that they were our human brothers, that we loved them, but that it was wrong for them to dominate India, and therefore they must leave. This was an extraordinary proposition, but in effect, that is exactly what happened. Gandhi went on persuading the British, step by step, that it was better for them to leave India to herself. Now, the important result of this was that India did not reject the West. India really assimilated the West. If India had rejected the West, then the spirit of India would have risen in violence against the West, and it would have been a total rejection. It was only possible for India to take the course of non-violence and gentleness, of toleration, because in fact she was assimilating the West. Because, to put it another way, as Gandhiji himself said, in Hinduism there is room for Jesus, for Zoroaster, for Confucius, and for Mohammed. So, in the Indian spirit, there was no longer any question of rejection; the feeling was: we know you, we think you are human beings, therefore please leave us to our own country. And I think that this form of synthesis which India was able to achieve with the West has been a most remarkable result of her cultural bases expressing themselves again in a practical way.

Particularly, as India has in this way synthesized with the West, has put out its hand to the West, it sometimes is a little disturbing when one hears here, in America, or in other parts of the world, that people still think in terms of a complete difference between the East and the West. I am constantly being told, or it is constantly being suggested in the writings of people, that the East is unpractical, that the East turns a blind eye on poverty, dirt, malnutrition, etc. If, however, we were suddenly able to project ourselves into Europe of 1700, we would see a great deal of ill health, almost universal illiteracy, disease, epidemic, and so on—there

was no sanitation. Obviously it would be incorrect for us to arrive at the conclusion that that state of affairs was directly related to Christianity. We would not say that all this was a Christian culture and these ideas of ill health, disease, insanitation, etc. were sanctioned by the Christian view of life. It is equally incorrect for anyone to go to India now and to look at the tremendous and terrifying poverty, ill health and disease, and to come away with the conclusion that this is related to the Indian view of life, or is related to the tenets of Hinduism. Nothing could be farther from the truth. On the contrary, if people were aware of the efforts that were being made by the Indian people themselves to alleviate these conditions, they would realize that these conditions had existed largely because of the operation of reasons and causes over which the people of India themselves had had no control for the last hundred or hundred and fifty years. It is incorrect for people to relate the material surroundings of India to any lack of concern for material welfare among the Indian people or their leaders, their religious thinkers or philosophers. It is true that our concept of material welfare is somewhat different from that which appears to exist in some other parts of the world, though my own view is that it would be extremely rash for anyone to say that the West is materialistic. One could say at the most that the West is experimenting with materialism. What the West will do with its materialism after, say, another hundred years of experimentation, one does not know. It may be that the West will begin to take a different view of material surroundings.

When we think of India and the West, we are dealing with different levels in the time-stream, as it were. Take, for example, steel, which is so important in modern life in the West today. It has been in use in India since 200 B.C. There is nothing very adventurous or very new about it. Anyone visiting India can see for himself the cast-iron pillars, which were erected by the emperor Ashoka almost

three-hundred years before Christ. This is just as an example to point out the fact that in material terms, India has seen many of the things which now appear to us very modern. It is not suggested that we had television, but that the present experience that man has with material things is not altogether new after all. It would be as incorrect to think that the West has reached any finality in relationship to material surroundings. We are perhaps only at the beginning of a relationship, in the course of which these things may come into a different focus. In *The Philosophies of India* Professor Zimmer writes: 'We of the Occident are about to arrive at a cross-road that was reached by the thinkers of India some seven hundred years before Christ.' This is only to show that we are dealing in different levels of the time-stream, as it were. It is not correct to try to give any finality to the East or to the West as we know them. It is wrong to think in those watertight compartments, to think that the East for ever represents certain things and the West for ever represents certain other things. On the contrary, various human experiments go on in all parts of the world, and at any one time these experiments are in different stages of development, or perhaps some of them are in a chrysalis stage. When one thinks of the vast continent of Africa, one wonders what man will do, perhaps in the next fifty years, in that vast continent; but one should hesitate a great deal before saying that either the West or the East have any right to dictate to Africa what the people should do, what their development should be. This is certainly something for us, wherever we may be, to encourage or to look at with interest, if we can, and certainly not to discourage by doing things which keep the people of Africa from developing as they wish to develop. That, of course, is very important. For any of us, Westerners or Easterners, to put obstructions in the way of anyone's development, and then to say that we can teach them how to develop is a contradiction in terms. Let us not get caught in that situa-

tion. One thing is, however, certain that no conclusions can be drawn from the fact that material development varies from one part of the world to another.

John Seymour is a man of action with some insight. He was recently in India attending a school set up by the government of India, to train workers for the community projects. This is a school where people are being trained in village work. This is what Seymour says was the result of his stay in India.

'In short, the impact which India made on me, against my strong resistance, was to make me lose confidence in what we call progress in the West, even in our best sort of progress. I now find myself constantly asking, as I heard so many Indians ask, "Progress to what?", and of our famous efficiency, "Efficiency for what?" Industrial efficiency produces more goods per man-hour, I have no doubt about it. But what do we want with all these goods, what do we do with them when we have them? Are they really good? The Gandhian idea lacks novelty; of this I am perfectly aware, but it does not lessen its importance. It is an old idea which has become blunted over the centuries. As a sharp, living idea, it can only be found nowadays in India.'

This again brings out just what we were saying: here is a Westerner from Britain who has begun to doubt, and sincerely doubt, the material phenomena as he sees them developing around him in his particular society. That does not mean that he has become an Easterner; it only means that he understands something which is going on in India. If we, each of us, could look at life with toleration, if we really had the capacity to understand life in forms different from those in which we know it in our personal experience, then we would realize that there is really no such thing as the East or the West, and that the man next to us, in our own town, may have an attitude toward material things similar to that which we expect an Easterner to have; that a man in India may have an attitude toward material things which the average Westerner has.

In India the two most important operative ideas are the ideas of duty and *ahimsā*. In India we have one word which serves both for duty and religion—it is *dharma*. The concept of duty in Indian life is so integral, so basic,

that a man's religion is his duty, and his duty is his religion. This idea of duty is certainly not a purely metaphysical idea; it is not something which disregards or ignores the world. It is something which, in a downright way, means that man's immediate concern is his relationship with his fellow men, with his material environment, with society, nations, peace, war. This concept is fundamental in India. The other concept of *ahimsā* in effect means that no duty can be performed if that performance of duty involves any irreverence to life. In short, in the Indian approach, the end never justifies the means. The means to be used must be as good as the end, otherwise it should be discarded. This may have important material effects. For example, if it is humanly bad for individuals to work eight hours a day in a mine, digging up coal for other human beings to use, in India the feeling would be: we would better not use coal, we would better try and get some other way of finding heat or light or whatever it is that we want this coal for. There is no point, in the Indian view, and no justification at all, for agreeing to human humiliation and subservience simply on the ground that other people, or even society as a whole, will benefit.

Now, in closing, let us ask this question: Are these concepts of duty and *ahimsā* really different from the underlying concepts in Western life? By Western life is not meant the one of today or yesterday, but the concepts which sustain Western life. This is, of course, an arguable point; but our own view would be that the same concepts of duty, love, forbearance are the concepts that underlie Western civilization at its best. When we go down to the fundamentals, we find that the same concepts of thought and behaviour which the West has accepted for itself are the concepts which the Indian people, sometimes with some measure of success, sometimes with no success at all, have tried to put into practice in their own history. At the moment, India has been fortunate in having had so great an exponent as Gandhiji to teach us

how to put some of these concepts into practice, concepts which are very similar to those we find in the *New Testament*, or in any great book of ethics.

Vinoba Bhave, a follower of Gandhi, has been able to collect three million acres of land which is being distributed to people without land in India. At a recent conference of social workers in India some thirty-five hundred of these workers assembled; five hundred and fifty of them, including Jayaprakash Narayan, the man in India who is perhaps most prominent politically, after Nehru, have dedicated their lives to what is known as the 'life gift' to spend the rest of their time and energies to revitalize the terms of human existence in India, in such a way that everyone will have a sufficiency of material goods, and facilities to enjoy those goods without strain—with time for meditation, for art, for music, and so on. Surely, there is nothing very different in such an objective, from the sort human beings in other parts of the world must want to espouse, and to see established in their own societies.

Vinoba Bhave's was a movement originally meant for land gifts for people who had no land. It is quite possible that in near future there will be a movement for money gifts, and no man who has a bank balance will be able to resist giving at least a part of it away, for the establishment of schools, hospitals, colleges, etc. This is something which cannot be contained in any of the ideological terms which are talked about in the world today so stridently, with so much bitterness, and with so much emphasis; but it is something which is very close to the human spirit; and we are fortunate, we admit this with great humility, that at the moment these experiments are being made in India. They are experiments we would like to share with the rest of the world, just as we take a great deal from this country in science and technology. We feel that what is needed is this spirit of mutual accommodation, of willingness to examine the basis and the performance of each other's

experiments in life, without getting caught in the business of trying to compartmentalize too much, of trying to pin down each part of the world to a completely set form of existence. If one gets caught in this idea of the separateness of life—East and West, North and South, Africa and Asia, Europe and America—then I think one is putting the time clock back.

If there is one universal thought, which has nothing to do with Eastern or Western minds, it is this that all of us realize that the

world is interdependent, that only a universalist point of view can have any value, whether in our thought or in our practice—political, social, or economic. It is this to which India is trying to get, and it is this to which the world will get, not necessarily in the Indian way, but through the various ways which will be experimented with by man, provided, of course, man's experiments are carried out in the spirit in which human experiments should be carried out.

THE CULTURAL CRISIS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA

BY DR. SUNTI KUMAR CHATTERJI

The peoples of West Africa and other parts of Africa are now, after centuries of neglect and injustice and opprobrium and oppression meted out to them, finally finding themselves. Until very recently, they were being told continually that they were a savage people without any civilization or culture, and it was Destiny or God who had decided for them that they were to live on the crumbs from the white man's table; and the Africans were almost all believing in it. Christian missions along the way of the sea and Muslim movements of peoples and proselytizers from the North caught them in a sort of pincer movement, and the result has been a wide-spread loss of nerve of the West African peoples, as a race which was disinherited before God in the family of nations. In certain areas where the African social and political organizations were strong and the old religion maintained its position, there was resistance. But the combined onslaught of Christianity in its various schools and of Islam upon the native African religions and the African way of life had considerably dislocated for the Africans the bases of their culture. The result has been that, at least outwardly, there has been a very wide-spread

allegiance or conversion to the Christian churches and to Islam. A good deal of this conversion has been on the surface only, because the African peoples—true Africans, whether of the Sudanese or of the Bantu stocks (the latter in Central and South Africa) preserved a good deal of their racial attitudes and sentiments with regard to matters relating to the worlds of both Man and God, to both society and religion. There is an African mentality—an African *Weltanschauung* or attitude to life and the unseen world, which is capable of formulation as a sort of *Africanism*, and this still persists deep under the outward veneer of Islam or Christianity. The African, again, is full of the spirit of self-determination in certain matters, and the West African converts to Christianity have in many places started independent organizations of their own—independent native African churches which have made in some cases noteworthy deviations from the original European Christian churches or denominations on which they were based, in both doctrine and organization.

At the present moment, there is a very strong upsurge of African nationalism, and with it has come back a pride in the African

heritage. Political workers and members of the intelligentsia everywhere are now urgently pressing for an evaluation of their cultural inheritance. There is a revival of the old African dress wherever it has survived, and African customs and usages on the background of African historical traditions are being cultivated and studied with a newly acquired pride. There is also a sort of a sneaking (one should say even wistful) regard everywhere for the philosophy that is behind African native religion, and also for the socio-economic arrangements of African life, even from among professedly Christians and Muslims. People are not as yet speaking out openly for a retention of old African values and ideals in religion, particularly among the large masses of Christians and Muslims, but those who have remained true to the old religions, as among the Akan peoples of Gold Coast, the Ewhes of Dahomey and the Yorubas and Igbos and others in Nigeria, there is often an attitude of wistfulness towards the native religion, a sort of uneasy and ill-understood tolerance for it, even though no intelligent or general comprehension. The study of Akan religion by Dr. J. B. Danquah of Accra in Gold Coast (*The Akan Doctrine of God*, London, 1944) and the *Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples* undertaken by a number of prominent European and African anthropologists (as in *African Worlds*, published by the International African Institute of London, 1954), among whom the name of Dr. K. A. Busia, Head of the Department of Sociology in the University College of Gold Coast is to be especially mentioned, Dr. Geoffrey Parrinder's books (e.g., *African Traditional Religion*, London, 1954, and other works), and works on African art and history in general, indicate this new attitude which is helping the Africans in acquiring a sense of self-respect and confidence in themselves.

In African religion, the early Christian missionaries found merely the 'beastly devices of the heathen', and the Muslim preachers could not be expected to have any sympathy

or respect for the idolatrous practices of the black *Kāfirs* or infidels. But scientific anthropologists who have taken up the study, and students of philosophy and comparative religion, have found that the basic African mentality in matters religious does not present anything particularly low or degraded: in fact, it is on a par with the ideas of most ancient peoples of antiquity and the middle ages, and with those of many of the advanced peoples of the present day as well. True, the African religion in some areas practised human sacrifice, but that as well as a kind of ritualistic cannibalism were quite wide-spread all over the world, and even enlightened Christians in Europe continued a kind of human sacrifice in the name of religion, though it was held in a different form, in the Roman Catholic inquisition and *autos-da-fé*, and in the witch-burnings in Protestant countries. Anthropological scholars have now shown how the traditional African religions possess ideas which were comparable with those of natural religion anywhere among any advanced people. The African religions, in West Africa especially, follow a similar pattern, and that pattern is not very much removed from the commonly accepted notions regarding God and the unseen world which we find among civilized peoples.

As India does not pin her faith on any exclusive religion preached by a particular incarnation or prophet, and as India is eager to find Universality and Truth in whatever man has tried to evolve in his quest for God, there is much in African religion which would agree with the spirit of the *Vedānta* as it was formulated in India. In West African religions mostly there is a faith in the existence of a Supreme Being who is far away and is the Ultimate Source of all existence, and to this Supreme Being human beings endowed with eternal souls must return. This Supreme Spirit is looked upon as a remote Being, and the affairs of the world are in the hands of a number of lesser Divinities who are the offspring or manifestations of this Supreme Spirit. This is like the Vedantic notion of a

Supreme Unknowable *Nirguna Brahman*, and of the various *Saguna* manifestations of this Brahman in the shape of the individualized gods and goddesses and incarnations. So the Akan peoples believe in *Nyamkumpon*, and the Yorubas believe in *Olorun* as the Supreme Spirit, one and unique, the ultimate source of everything in this world. Their religion is thus basically a kind of monotheism, which in the lower plane allows an imaginative interpretation or mythological expression through polytheism. They offer sacrifices of animals and birds—goats, dogs and chicken, and of food and wine to their Gods in the spirit of *do ut des*, i.e. 'I give you, so that you may give me in return', with prostrations and prayers and libations of water. Their present priesthood are rather more concerned with the sacrifices; and excepting that the traditions are somehow maintained by the more faithful among them, by both the priests and neophytes and the laity, the religion through a general neglect by its adherents, and through the contempt poured upon it by foreigners as well as by native converts to Christianity and Islam, who feel infinitely superior with their borrowed culture, has been on a downward path, and it has degenerated only into a number of feasts for social conviviality and also for an expression of the animal spirits or of the mystic experience in a primitive way. Yet the deeper elements in it still survive. In most of the West African religions, they believe that man possesses a soul in addition to his physical body, and this soul is a part of God, it is also a gift of God. It is given to man to obtain contact with the unseen powers behind life through certain ceremonies comparable to the mysteries of ancient Greece, and to be a better man (or a worse man, if the powers are evil) for that. On the basis of doctrines of this type, the native African can find a storehouse for spiritual regeneration, as well as political freedom.

The Hindu point of view is that it is sin to destroy any particular type of culture with its own special approach to the Supreme Spirit. Diversity of Religion according to the

Hindu view is like Diversity in Language. If an institution like the Ramakrishna Mission could start work among some of the more advanced West African peoples, it could be a potent means of restoring to them their self-confidence in matters connected with their culture—to an awareness of and response to the deeper things that are behind this culture in its spiritual bases. The Ramakrishna Mission is wedded to the faith that it would be highly improper to try 'to put souls in the same uniform'—for it does not believe in conversion to Hinduism, but it believes, as most Hindus do, that a man can attain to the *summum bonum* by following, in a spirit of sincerity and charity, the best that he finds in his own environment—not shutting his eyes, of course, to other great and good and illuminating things which might come within his purview. In America and in France, and elsewhere, wherever the Ramakrishna Mission works, it is actuated by the great principles of higher Hinduism which were preached anew by the greatest sons of India at the present day—by Ramakrishna Paramahansa himself, by Swami Vivekananda, the prophet and friend of the poor and the downtrodden, by Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and internationalist, and by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the sage and philosopher. The presence of Ramakrishna Mission monks or some persons endowed with a similar attitude towards religion in general could only be a silent influence to enable the Africans to look into their own culture and history and to rediscover the basic and permanent things in that culture. In a Ramakrishna Mission Home there could be discourses on the vital principles of Religion (with a capital R), and people would be encouraged to find out what they should not at all miss during the present enlightened age in their own environment. They might be taught to meditate more upon the character of *Nyamkumpon* or *Olorun*, to formulate and systematize the philosophical notions that are behind the concepts of the Divinity and of the World and Man such as are current in African religion, and their

priests might be heartened not to feel ashamed of their religion but to try to tell their people about the fundamental aspects of it and about its power to make men better and more helpful to each other, according to the social background which was based on this religion. Their feasts and festivals and ceremonial worship may also in this way be transformed to suit the present-day needs.

It seems that, for the purpose of their further progress, what the West African and other true African peoples require is a restoration of their nerve which they have lost or are in the danger of losing, a faith in themselves that their spiritual and religious lives have not been something hateful in the eye of God. A number of enlightened Christian missionaries have also come forward, whose love for man makes them feel a very great sympathy for the African in his spiritual struggle. As one of these scholarly missionaries has said, 'God has also spoken to the African Man'; and many Christian missionaries of this enlightened class consider that the aspirations for higher spiritual life, which has never been absent in African traditional religion, should form the proper basis for their future religious life (which, as these Christian missionaries, naturally enough, consider, will find its consummation in Christianity).

I think that if the African is enabled to preserve his racial spiritual outlook, and is helped not to lose his soul, he will be in a position to enrich the mental and spiritual experiences of mankind by his own specific contributions. All peoples should be taught to build on what they have and what they are—it is always a wrong policy to make them in their mental and spiritual outlook *deraciné*. I think here in this matter the Indian spirit—our *Indianism*—can come to serve the African people and help them to be established in an *Africanism* which some of them are so very eager to rediscover for themselves. I have talked about the bases of this *Africanism* with a number of intelligent Africans—political leaders, professors, and artists, in Gold Coast and in Nigeria, and my suggestions and

enquiries seem to have struck a very responsive chord in their minds.

To my mind, this *Africanism* consists, in the spiritual plane, of a conviction in the presence of an unseen (but nevertheless very intensely felt) Divine Being or Supernatural Spirit which is operating through everything in the Universe—all living creatures and inanimate objects, and this conviction forms the basis of a religious conception which has been called *Animism*, or *Dynamism* (or *Fetichism*, which is the old-fashioned and rather an improper term). There is belief also in the lesser Gods as manifestations of this Supreme Spirit—in fact, a simple type of polytheism comparable to that of the ancient peoples like the Egyptians, the Assyrio-Babylonians and other Semites, the Greeks, the Italians, the Celts, the Germans, the Slavs, the Indo-Iranians, as well as the Chinese and the Japanese. In the social plane, *Africanism* expresses itself in communalism rather than individualism. *Africanism* is also characterised by a sense of rhythm and colour and form, which are expressed in African dance and music, dress and textiles and decoration, and in sculpture. There is always a background of an intense spiritual hunger or aspiration to come in touch with the Reality behind life: a thing which we find in its Protestant Christian setting among the Negroes of the U.S.A., and also among those Africans in Africa and the New World who have kept up the traditional religion.

An institution like the Ramakrishna Mission is also required in West Africa for helping Indians who are sojourning there to have a living contact with their culture. In the Ramakrishna Mission there is always an arrangement to give discourses on the basic things in Indian culture and religion for all and sundry—whoever would care to come and attend the lectures given by the Swamis; and for those serious spirits, particularly among Hindus, and sometimes even among non-Hindus, who want to know about the things of permanent value in the thought and philosophy of India, regular classes on the

Upanishads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* are also held by the Swamis. I have noticed in America how these classes are attended by non-Hindu Americans also. In New York, Columbia University has shown very great honour to the Ramakrishna Mission by requesting Swami Nikhilananda to deliver courses of lectures on Hindu philosophy to its students. Similarly Swami Siddheswarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission in Paris was requested by the University of Paris to give lectures on Hindu philosophy at the Sorbonne, and that indeed is one of the highest academical distinctions which the French people can confer on a scholar.

The Indians who are sojourning in West Africa are mostly Sindhi Hindus, and I have had very close and friendly relations with them. During my sojourn in Indonesia and Malaya with Rabindranath Tagore 28 years ago, I was also on several occasions the guest of Sindhi merchants and lived with them and their assistants; and in West Africa also, during the time I was there (in Gold Coast, Nigeria and Liberia, in July-August, 1954), I had the privilege of meeting them as my hosts. The Sindhis like all other Hindus have a deep religious vein, and their businessmen keep up the traditional religious life even under most difficult circumstances, just to retain a contact with the spiritual life of their ancestors. In almost all Sindhi business establishments, they keep apart a small room as a sort of a chapel where they keep copies of the *Gītā*, the *Guru Grantha Sāhib*, and other religious books, in both Gurmukhi and Sindhi as well as Hindi, which the more serious members of the establishment read early every morning, and at that time the younger people also assemble in the chapel. They have some consecrated food (like *kaṛhā prasād*) on which they have their breakfast. Every Monday they abstain from flesh meat—the Sindhis are great meat-eaters among the Hindus—and on the fixed days they perform the worship of Vishṇu (*Satya-Nārāyaṇa Pūjā*). The Sindhis also frequently manifest a great spiritual hunger; and where

I was their guest, in West Africa, I was asked to give discourses on Hindu philosophy by their young men; and they also questioned me about the basic things in Hindu religion and philosophy. When Swami Nihsreyasananda of the Ramakrishna Mission visited West Africa, I met him at Accra. I could see how he was welcomed everywhere by the Sindhis, who arranged for lectures by the Swamiji which were not only largely attended by the local Indians but also created considerable interest among the Africans. Swamiji himself told me that he was very much impressed by a certain amount of serious spirit of enquiry which he noticed among the African Christians and Muslims both, and of course among some of the 'Pagans'. This was my experience also. If the Ramakrishna Mission may be persuaded to open centres in the more important towns of West Africa, these will form not only centres of Indian culture for the local Indians, but also will be in an indirect way conducive to the development of a spirit of faith in themselves and on the bases of their so-called 'heathen' religion among the Africans.

The Ramakrishna Mission draws its workers from all parts of India, and some of the most successful and respected workers are from South India. Swami Nikhilananda is from Bengal, Swami Siddheswarananda, who has been in Paris for over twelve years, is from Kerala, and Swami Ranganathananda, who is in charge of the Ramakrishna Mission in New Delhi, is also from Kerala. Swami Ranganathananda, like Swami Siddheswarananda and many others, is a most eloquent preacher, who has brought back the spiritual culture of their ancestors into the lives of many people from different parts of India. He dedicated his life for this work, and during the terrible days after the Partition, he stuck to his post at Karachi (where he was in charge of the local Ramakrishna Mission) for some months, until it became impossible for him to hold on. During his stay in Karachi he had become very popular with the local Sindhi people, and his religious discourses in English used to be attended by

audiences of over a thousand people; and he was instrumental in looking after and finally disposing of in the most advantageous manner possible the properties of a great many Hindus from Sindh who had to flee to India. Swami Ranganathananda is deeply revered by the Sindhis, and if he could come over to West Africa and establish Ramakrishna Mission centres in Nigeria and Gold Coast, he would get the spontaneous support of the Sindhis (they are always eager to help in a good cause like this); and work beneficial to Indians might in this way be started most easily. Normally, the Sindhi people will be happy to maintain the Mission, but some expenses for books and other necessities should be met from other sources. A series of centres like these will go a great way in counteracting interested religious propaganda which tries to divide mankind into mutually exclusive *blocs* according to religion and which has behind it definite political ideologies, and which might lead to a break-up of the solidarity of the African peoples.

Among other things which I have observed abroad, wherever there are Indian official establishments (e.g. like the Indian Consulates and other diplomatic bodies), it is imperatively necessary always to include in their personnel some person who is well qualified in Indian History and Culture and has some knowledge of Sanskrit, in addition to that of World History. Such a person would be always helpful in presenting the Indian point of view even under modern conditions, and can always be a referee for matters for which I have noted a growing amount of enquiry everywhere, both among Indians and non-Indians.

With regard to the West Africans, it looks as if they are going to be a sort of a bone of contention among two rival religions—Islam (which receives strong and persistent support from the countries of North Africa, Egypt and Sudan, and also from Pakistan), and Christianity in its various denominations (which finds support from America, Britain, and some Roman Catholic countries of Europe).

The Africans may be said to have become bewildered, and yet at the same time they are anxious to keep to their national bearings.

There are European educationists in Africa, who are anthropologists and Christian missionaries at the same time (like Dr. Geoffrey Parrinder, Professor of Religious Studies in the University College at Ibadan, West Nigeria, the author of a number of exceedingly objective studies of West African religion), and administrators (like Captain R. S. Rattray, whose scientific studies of Ashanti culture and religion are well-known), who have evinced the greatest amount of sympathy for the African in his bewilderment. The following observations from Dr. William R. Bascom (Professor of Anthropology, North-western University, Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., who stayed for a year at Ife, the religious centre of the Yorubas, to study Yoruba religion), as his peroration to a very interesting article he contributed to the quarterly journal *Nigeria* (published both by the Crown Agents for the Colonies, 4 Millbank, London, S.W. 1 and by the Nigerian Government from Lagos), No. 37 (1951), on 'the Yorubas in Cuba', will be *a propos*:

A recent issue of the *University Herald* of Ibadan contains an essay which was awarded a prize in the Nigerian Festival of Arts, 1950. Its author, Mabel Imoukhuede, asks the question: "Can the Old African Culture survive in a Modern World?" and gives "No" as her answer. Instead, in the light of the lesson of the New World, the answer must be an emphatic "Yes!". The Old African Culture not only can, but actually has survived in large Western cities as modern Havana, inspite of obstacles which do not have to be faced in Nigeria. The Cuban Negroes were forcibly taken against their will to a new continent with different geographical conditions; they spent many years under the unfavourable conditions of slavery; and they have been completely isolated from Africa. This lesson from the New World has important implications which should be seriously considered by those whose plans and politics for the peoples of West Africa are based on the assumption that African Culture is inevitably doomed to disappear (P. 20).

In a great book recently published from France, *Dieux d'Afrique* or 'the Gods of Africa' by Pierre Verger, (with 160 photographs by the author and prefaces by Theodore Monod and Roger Bastide, Paris, 1954), it is equally heartening to find how the West

African religion has survived among the Africans taken away into Brazil, and to find the deeper qualities of the African religion on the mystic side.

The following remarks from Captain R. S. Rattray (in his *Ashanti*, Oxford 1923, pp. 87 ff) will indicate the attitude of the educated African towards his religion and culture a generation ago:

The educated African, however, has been cut off from, and is out of sympathy with, the life of his own people. He has learned, in nine cases out of ten, if he has not actually been taught, to despise his own illiterate brethren and the unlettered past of his race. Concerning that past he really knows little or nothing, and generally cares less. Bosman, writing two hundred years ago, mentions 'the Negro who ridiculed his own country's gods'. If, as is probable, he has been educated in one of the mission schools, then his whole training, until quite recently, has been one in which it has not appeared orthodox or even conceivable to his teachers that there might be something in the African's own culture and religious beliefs worthy of retention side by side (for a time at least) with the greater, because higher, ethical teachings of Christian theology.

Such being the case, can one wonder that African pupils and converts alike have been quick to see and very ready to follow a trend of thought which denied, or ignored, the possibility of anything useful or good or ethical existing in the African's own religion.

The result has been that the cultured and the semi-educated Africans alike (with a few exceptions), when asked about the beliefs of their own people, unconsciously paint them in all the unreal and exotic colours with which their new training and their new environment have taught them to regard them.

They feel, and they have been trained to believe, that they are brands plucked from the burning. It is almost impossible that such persons can be sympathetic with their own past, a past which after all few of them have ever really known, seen, or clearly understood.

With regard to the second source of our European misinformation — the uneducated African—who is examined by the white man through the medium of an interpreter, such methods of dealing with a delicate and difficult subject like religion are, in my own opinion, and from my own experience, equally unsatisfactory.

Inquiries conducted on such lines will either lead to almost wholly negative results, or, what is as bad, the information so gained will again be tinged by just the same half-truths as the material obtained from the former source which it thus seems to corroborate. The wrong atmosphere is once again imparted by the educated or semi-educated interpreter, who will unconsciously give answers, couched in the only phraseology which he knows, with which he has been familiar since he first began to learn to read and write.

The old expert, the custodian of the past

lore of his race, whose head is full of wisdom undreamed of in the seventh standard board-school philosophy of the interpreter, is never going to open that storehouse at the bidding of a stranger and foreigner, with whom he has to converse through such a medium.

The interpreter very often has not even heard many of the words that these old folk employ in the recounting of ceremonies and rites. These gaps he fills up by words which he will borrow from his own very limited and often misapplied English vocabulary. Any success that the European may hope to obtain in gaining really valuable information from these old men and old women is attained by other methods.

He must first gain their fullest confidence, and inspire their trust and affection. He must make them believe that his interest in them is not one of idle curiosity or kindly superiority, nor yet again merely inspired by love of knowledge. I approached these old people and this difficult subject (their religious beliefs) in the spirit of one who came to them as a seeker after truths, the key to which I told them they alone possessed, which not all the learning nor all the books of the white man could ever give to me.

I make it clear to them that I asked access to their religious rites such as are here described for this reason. I attended these ceremonies with all the reverence and respect I could accord to something which I felt to have been already very old, before the religion of my country had yet been born as a new thought; yet not so entirely new, but that even its roots stretched back and were fed from that same stream which still flows in Ashanti to-day.

The stream crosses the path,
The path crosses the stream;
Which of them is the elder?
Did we not cut a path to go and meet
this stream?

The stream had its origin long, long ago,
It had its origin in the Creator.
He created things,
Pure, pure Tano.

Fortunately, with a new sense of freedom and a pride in their own African heritage, African thought-leaders, assisted by anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, artists and students of philosophy and also by British administrators with a broad view are on the eve of developing a new attitude towards the bases of their culture, both in the spiritual and the social domains. It is a spirit of sympathetic enquiry in the first instance; and they are on the eve of discovering for themselves the permanent values of African life and culture for them as a way of life suitable to their geographical and racial background, to the economic set-up and to the genius of the race. From sympathetic interest to redis-

covery, and then vindication, and finally willing acceptance of things of abiding worth in their social or national inheritance—these are the steps in the rehabilitation of their basic culture and *Weltanschauung*. When this is accomplished, and Africanism is studied and its finer and universal elements are resuscitated and presented, and developed (for develop it must, if it is to live and vivify), Humanity as a whole will be all the richer for that. And Africanism can then have its proper place beside Hellenism, Indianism, Sinism, Hebraism, Europeanism and other distinctive ways or attitudes, as one of the facets of a World Humanism.

If India, with her dislike of conversion from one religion into another, and of a narrow, dogmatic and exclusive approach to the Basic Unity and Reality that is behind all existence, can be of help to Africa, particularly to the Black Humanity of Western, Central as well as Eastern and Southern Africa, in this line, as she has all along been taking the side of the exploited and suppressed peoples, she would be continuing in all humility to do her service to Humanity, keeping true to the high ideals for which she stands.

I would like to close with a suggestion for the consideration of those Africans who have faith in themselves and their culture, and in their religion as being still capable of meeting the needs of the times. The authorities of the University College of Ibadan in West Nigeria, which has become a most important centre for education and culture (particularly for the Yoruba people numbering some 5 millions), have, as part of the well-appointed buildings, including fine student-hostels, erected a Christian chapel (with a most wonderful group of sculpture in wood by the great Nigerian sculptor, Ben Enwonwu, depicting the Resurrected Christ before Maria Magdalena), as well as a Muslim mosque, for the use of Christian and Muslim students. Why not also a sort of a "Hall of Olorum" within the University campus in Ibadan, as a centre for the deeper things in Yoruba and other West

African forms of native African religion and thought? In such a "Hall of Olorun", suitably decorated with figures from the rich mythology of the Yorubas in the severe and vigorous style of Yoruba wood-sculpture, wise *Babalowos* or priests and seers may, in collaboration with enlightened and sympathetic anthropologists and sociologists and believers in all religions being but diverse paths seeking to take man to the Ultimate Reality and to make him be in tune with the Infinite (whether they are Africans or non-Africans), formulate for the benefit both of Africans and of Humanity at large the bases of African religious experience and thought, and reinterpret the truth and the mystic perception that are behind the myths and traditions and cults and rituals of African religion. This will enable the young African intellectual to understand some of the basic things in his own ancestral inheritance in the domain of the Spirit. Similarly, there may be "Halls of Nyankumpon" for young persons, and old, of the great Akan people of Gold Coast, in Kumasi and elsewhere, which could very well be decorated by an artist like Kofi Antubam of Achimota Art School in Accra, who has painted the life and culture of his own Akan people with such understanding and almost inspired efficiency; a "Hall of Ngewo" in Freetown for the Mende people of Sierra Leone; a "Hall of Nyonmo" in Accra for the Gan people; a "Hall of Chi" and "Hall of Chukwu" for the Igbo or Ibo people, some 5 millions strong, in Enugu and Onitsha in Nigeria. The native African names for the Supreme Spirit in other parts of the continent, e.g. Unkulunkulu among the Zulus, Molimo among the Basuto, Leza among Rhodesian, Tanganyikan and Upper Congo Bantus, Mulungu or Murungu among Nyasa and other East African Bantus, Morimo among the Bechuana, Ngai among the Kikuyu, etc. may also similarly be made a rallying point for the Africans, to enable them to be conscious of their present-day life and their regeneration and rehabilitation as self-respecting peoples.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Shri Arthur Lall, I.C.S., is now India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Organization. 'Eastern Thoughts and the Western Mind' is gleaned from a highly appreciated talk given at the Vedanta Society of New York on 4 May 1954. A truer picture of the workings of the Indian mind and of the basic principles governing the trend of Indian history could not be expected. . . .

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, M.A., D.Litt. (London), F.A.S., *Bhāṣācārya*, *Sāhitya-Vācaspati*, *Padmabhūṣaṇa*, was for thirty-eight years Professor of Indian Linguistics in the University of Calcutta, and is now Chairman of the West Bengal Legislative Council (Upper House in Parliament) in Calcutta. He contributed to the *Prabuddha Bharata* of October 1945 an article on 'The Culture and Religion of the Yorubas of West

Africa'. (pp. 301-11.) He is also the author of several papers in English and Bengali on the art and culture of Africa. Last year (July and August 1954) he made a trip to West Africa, having visited Gold Coast (Accra, Kumasi), Nigeria (Lagos, Ibadan, Ifa, Kano), and Liberia (Monrovia, Klay). 'The Cultural Crisis among the People of West Africa' from the scholarly pen of Dr. Chatterji, is just a foretaste, we gladly share with our readers. Resurging Asia ought to know more of the African peoples, who shared the honour with those of Asia of laying the foundation of the civilization of the world. The Bandung Conference was the re-'finding' of these nations by themselves. There they talked of peace and love, heralding thereby a new kind of diplomacy, whose future, if mankind is to live, is great indeed. The article reveals the deep sorrow of the learned Doctor for this horribly oppressed section of humanity as well as the joy he feels at their re-awakening.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A NATION BUILDER AT WORK. BY PYARELAL. Pages 77. Price Re. 1.

GANDHIAN TECHNIQUES IN THE MODERN WORLD. BY PYARELAL. Pages 76. Price Re. 1.

Both Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 9.

Gandhiji's dynamic personality and philosophy of life, truly Indian to the core, played a notable role in the awakening and unification of the Indian nation. As a leader of vision and imagination, as a 'practical idealist', and as an astute politician, he dominated the Indian scene for three decades and more. What, however, makes him unique is that he made a synthesis of political action and spiritual idealism—a fact which has few parallels in the modern world—winning his political victories by conquering the opponent with love. His views on the problems of social economy and political structure of the Indian state were based on the fundamentals of humanism and non-violence, sanctioned by years of sound thinking and practical work in the field. These are the factors that made Gandhiji the focus of India's emotional surge—a unique leader of the Indian masses. 'Has Gandhiji's

method and approach any validity today?' asks Shri Pyarelal, one of his closest associates; the question is very important in the Indian post-independence era. His mature opinion that 'many of the ills from which we are today suffering and much of the frustration that fills the hearts of our youth are traceable to our deviation' from the principles and methods of Gandhiji, needs to be closely studied by all who wish the greater progress and prosperity of India.

Gandhian Techniques in the Modern World offers a clear and concise discussion of the applicability of the Gandhian techniques of truth and non-violence for bringing about world peace and understanding. Shri Pyarelal has put on record in this booklet an outline of the 'science' of non-violence as propounded by Gandhiji, its nature and scope, the techniques of its application, and the concrete details of its working in relation to the various problems confronting the modern world. The book is a reprint of a paper read at the 'Seminar on the Contribution of Gandhian Outlook and Technique to the solution of the Tensions between and within Nations', held in New Delhi in 1953.

NEWS AND REPORTS

MEMORIES OF INDIAN PILGRIMAGE

In the course of talks given at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre (17 East 94th Street), New York, U.S.A., Mrs. Elizabeth Davidson and Countess Coloredo Mansfeld, American devotees of Shri Ramakrishna, recounted their experiences of Indian pilgrimage last year, in the company of Swami Nikhilananda. Narrating her vivid impressions of holy India, Mrs. Elizabeth Davidson observed:

... 'In India the Ramakrishna Mission is a vital brotherhood which spreads Shri Ramakrishna's message throughout the land with that warmth and total dedication which our Swamis here, in quite another setting, bestow on us. In the stillness of Shri Ramakrishna's room at Dakshineswar, in the pure and holy atmosphere of Kamarpukur and Jayrambati, we found the living source of inspiration that impelled Swami Vivekananda to form the Ramakrishna Order, with its twofold aim of God-realization and service to man. In the short span of half a century, the Mission has become an integral part of India's re-awakening, a dynamic force which through the monks of the Order is raising India both in its inner and its outer life.

'Immediately on touching Indian soil in Delhi, we were made welcome as members of the Ramakrishna Mission and as admirers of India. Through Swami Nikhilananda we were introduced to many people of importance in the field of education and in national affairs. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Republic, was most kind; he expressed to us India's gratitude for American technical and other aid, and said that we Americans already enjoyed the best product of India in the person of our Swami and in the other members of the Ramakrishna Order working abroad. ...'

'We were eager to absorb something of the mood of worship which forms the core of Indian life, and hence proceeded to time-honoured places of pilgrimage, to the banks of the six great rivers that sanctify the soil of India from the lofty Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and to the Ramakrishna Mission Centres, where the spirit of Shri Ramakrishna dwells. Wherever we went, the Swamis took us joyfully into the heart of India, opening for us the gates of orthodox temples and the doors of boundlessly hospitable Indian homes.

'Our first pilgrimage was a visit to the ancient battlefield of Kurukshetra, near Delhi, where Shri Kṛṣṇa taught Arjuna the wisdom of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* centuries ago. We drove along a tree-lined highway in the clear hot air, through vast stretches of wheat and paddy fields, with here and there a thatch-roofed village, passing a stream of colourful humanity—on foot, in bullock-carts, on bicycles, loaded in antiquated buses. At Kurukshetra we found small hermitages, with water tanks and bathing ghats, providing shelter for the Brahmin priests who worshipped at the shrines of Sri Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, and taught the village boys the verses of the *Gītā*. Such holy places, ideal for peaceful contemplation, abound in India.

'From Delhi we turned north, by train and car, across the thirsty plains to the first mountain barrier. A full day's ascent over perilous roads brought us at nightfall to the vale of Kashmir. Its

tranquil lake reflects encircling peaks, their jagged edges hung with fleecy clouds. Though Kashmir is known for its picturesque Mogul gardens; houseboats, and green paddy-fields, for us the drive to the shrine of the Divine Mother. Kṣīr Bhavānī in a grove of stately *shal* trees, was unforgettable. Here our first offerings were accepted at an orthodox Indian temple, and we were warmly welcomed by the priests and wandering ascetics. Here, fifty years ago, Swami Vivekananda had had a revelation of the Mother's power and man's insignificance.

'Another week took us to holy Hrishikesh and Hardwar, where the swift flowing Ganges, near its source, attracts thousands of pilgrims, some on their way to the Himalayan shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan, others content, like ourselves, to pray to Mother Ganges and plunge into her purifying stream. How vividly this brought to us Shri Ramakrishna's veneration for the sacred river! From Hardwar began our descent along the Ganges valley, passing through Vrindaban where Shri Kṛṣṇa played with the shepherded maidens, on to Prayag, where the blue current of the Jumna joins the Ganges at the sacred confluence, and where we bathed with other pilgrims. South of Prayag, we saw from our plane the holy city of Banaras spreading below us on a mighty crescent of the Ganges, the bathing ghats and temples nestling in its sweep. We spent a week in this most ancient city, enchanted by its atmosphere of prayer. The Ramakrishna Sevashrama or Home of Service made us their guests, and in their hospital for aged and infirm pilgrims we saw the harmony of work and worship bearing sweet precious fruits.

'Early in October we came to Belur Math for the great Durgā Pūjā festival. The parent monastery and life centre of the Mission lies opposite the Dakshineswar Temple garden, where Shri Ramakrishna had attained his high spiritual realizations. We could hardly wait to visit the Kālī Temple, and in the company of several Swamis attended worship in the very shrine where the Master communed with his Divine Mother in soul-enthraling ecstasy. Shri Ramakrishna's room is vibrant with his presence; with M. we felt 'as if all the holy places met within its walls. We crossed the narrow garden to the Nahabat, the music tower beneath which Holy Mother lived and prepared the Master's meals in a tiny room, with baskets of dal and rice, and a pot of live fish hanging overhead. Here she spent long hours watching his divine moods and listening to his words of deepest spiritual revelation. Her room is now a shrine where she is worshipped daily as a living goddess. This is the the Holy Mother's age: she has emerged from a long period of hiding, and millions of men and women in India regard her as their spiritual guide. Her total self-effacement and obedience, contentment, purity, and love are virtues cherished by Indian tradition. ...'

'The second most important Ramakrishna Mission centre is in Madras, where Swami Ramakrishnananda, through his austerity and devotion, attracted the orthodox South Indians to his Master. Here, as in every Ramakrishna Ashrama, the presence of Shri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother's pictures in the chapel, where they are worshipped daily, is the pivot of inner peace and strength, and the point from which ever expanding welfare activities proceed. Thousands of young men and women are receiving classical, technical, and spiritual training at the Mission's schools and

college in Madras, and in turn transmit their new won knowledge to the next decade of boys and girls.

'Not far from Madras the sacred temples of Kanchi and Madura brought pilgrims from far distant places over the centuries, their stately *gopurams* and shrines forming the nucleus of prosperous towns. Still farther south, through hills with date and palm, we reached Cape Comorin, and watched the sun set golden in the Arabian Sea, to rise again above the Indian Ocean. Here on the farthest rock over fifty years ago, Swamiji evolved his plans to bring the East and West together for their mutual good, and brooded on the deep religious spirit pervading India—from Himalayan heights down to Cape Comorin, the Indian heart yearns for eternity. Symbolic of this yearning is the shrine of Kanyā Kumāri, the virgin bride of Shiva who waits her Lord, garland in hand, her tender face alight with expectation. Yet Shiva, in his Himalayan abode, remains unmoved, absorbed in meditation on the Absolute.

'The Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati lured us north again, and on the way we crossed the high plateau of the Western Ghats beyond Bombay, not far from the historic caves of Ellora and Ajanta. We stopped at the holy city of Nasik on the Godavari river, along whose banks temples rise and pilgrims bathe; then drove into the hills to Trambakeswar, the secluded temple of great beauty, near the high ridge from which the Godavari springs.

'A long and tedious journey by train took us to Tanakpur, the Himalayan terminus from which we made the slow ascent, through groves of *deodar*, past mountain streams and tiny villages clinging tenaciously to the steep slopes. Just before sunset a dazzling peak hung in the sky above us, and we gazed in wonder on eternal snows. For an entire week we watched the gleaming barrier, in ever changing light—the golden dawn, the gleam of day, the sunset glow, fading to ash. From Nanda Devi's dome of ice, twenty-five thousand feet above the sea, Trisul, and Kedarnath, stretched the vast range of named and nameless peaks, covered with wind-swept snow. At seven thousand feet our breath came short; for us no greater heights. Yet we became aware of the majestic presence of Lord Shiva, desiring nothing but the Infinite.

'Our pilgrimage was over but for a wondrous farewell to Belur Math and a brief visit to the birthplaces of Shri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother. At Belur Math for four unforgettable days the Holy Mother's Birth Centenary was celebrated with special worship, song, and sermon, attracting thousands to her temple overlooking the Ganges. The final day a great procession formed at Dakshineswar, bearing the garlanded pictures of the Holy Mother, with banners, drums, and rhythmic dance, entered the gates of Belur Math, and circumambulated the great temple of Shri Ramakrishna, the crowds dispersing far into the night.

'In Kamarpukur and Jayrambati the silent sanctity pervaded our souls; in coming years pilgrims from the wide world will flock to Holy Mother and Shri Ramakrishna's shrines to be up-

lifted and gain the victory of spirit over matter.

'Let us remember that the Holy Mother, the high ideal of Indian womanhood, also belongs to us, the women of the West. We need her virtues and her dedication, her pure unselfish love embracing all. In meditating on her holy presence, our restlessness is stilled, and we at length discover that to attain true peace and blessedness our crude human will must be united with the will of God.'

Countess Colloredo Mansfield observed in the course of her talk:

'As you all know something of India, I think you will agree that the best way to come close to the heart of that ancient holy land is to go there on a pilgrimage. I wish you know what a warm welcome and what kindness await the visitor who goes there with respect and a little understanding of Hindu tradition. Reverence and love of holiness are the basis of its age-old culture. These are the qualities which are the essence of India.

'How many times we saw the great men in the land, eminent scholars and high officials, bow low before a holy man; or in a village, a poor woman catching sight of an unknown monk, will run to offer him a fruit, her face alight with love; or a group of students will stand for hours waiting at the roadside in hope that the Swami's car will pass and he will stop and talk to them. And every holiday brings crowds, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, whole families come to spend the day at any holy place, all bound together by spontaneous love of God. This is the unifying force, it is the root of national consciousness in India.

'Coming from a younger . . . civilization, we have no idea of the subtleties of a culture which has developed over thousands of years. But we can notice a difference, and we can admire the restraint of some of our Indian sisters. Their quiet gentle manner hides reserves of tremendous strength and courage. In following the ancient Hindu ideal of loving and unselfish service, they have found the secret of contentment. Looking at their faces, we see security of purpose shining, unmarred by restlessness. And we of the West, in our eagerness to see and to learn, and to do, seem in comparison like bumptious adolescents at a grown-up party. We shall never be able to express our deep appreciation for the patience and kindness which were shown to us by everyone we met.' . . .

'Our pilgrimage ended appropriately with the last of the Holy Mother's Centenary and we said our real good-bye at Belur Math, which, as the home of the Ramakrishna Order, seems to us the heart of today's new India, manifesting all that is noblest in Hindu culture. Here is the modern expression of the ancient ideal. Through its expanding veins and arteries, in schools and colleges, hospitals and hostels, dedicated souls are awakening people all over India and beyond, to a new social and spiritual consciousness. And so the great wave of power generated by the lives of Shri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother barely one hundred years ago sweeps onward and is carried forward by their sons, the Ramakrishna monks, whose example of renunciation and service, worship of God through service of man, transforms and blesses wherever it goes all over the world.'