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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

AMBROSIA

4. There is nothing more roughish than the mind. How many doubts and suspicions rise in it from moment to moment! But go on calling on the Lord and all doubts vanish—mind is purified.

5. It is far better to continue calling on the Lord devotedly than to know, speak, and preach thousand and one religions cants and shibboleths.

6. Do you consider religion to be of the class of sense enjoyment that you will get the results at once? One has to wait for the results of one's religious practices. One has to walk the path of morality and wait patiently for the results to appear.

7. Hunger is the best sauce, it gives relish to everything. You can take to the fill whatever you get then. Hunger is the thing required. Similarly a man who has developed love for the Lord does not have to depend so much on the forms and ceremonies of religions. He takes up any of the thousands and eagerly practises it to get to Him quickly. Love for

and faith in Him is the main gate to realization of God.

8. The saints and ṛṣis of Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa's time earnestly prayed to Him; so He made himself known to them—'I am the Lord Himself.' But the boys of the Vraja played and made fun with Him but knew Him not. If you want to know Him you have to pray hard, to undergo austerities. If you stick on patiently He reveals Himself and solves all doubts. You may travel all the countries of the world, all places of pilgrimage from end to end, still you will find Him not—all will be vain, you will have mere sufferings and tribulations. Instead if you sit quiet at a place, concentrate your mind, and devotedly call on Him He blesses you with His vision.

9. If you have no faith in the word of your *guru* you can never be religious. But how hard is it to have that kind of blazing faith in one! Weal or woe, one has to carry out the command of the *guru*—that is the way to salvation.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

BY THE EDITOR

SWAMI PREMANANDA

By 1910, as we have said, a number of branches of the Mission grew up and were functioning quite well. Workers were enthused with a new life and worked hard to reach their goal, as narrated in the previous article. But a few more personalities are to be understood to get a clear vision of the ideal and the actual working of the Mission.

Belur Math was under guidance of Swami Premananda (Baburam Maharaj) and Swami Shivananda (Mahapurush Maharaj) of whom the latter did not take full part in the activities up to the demise of Swami Brahmananda (Maharaj), when he was made President of the Math and Mission. He was mainly absorbed in meditation and prayer wherever he might be. Once, when Maharaj sent to Mahapurush Maharaj a young man to be lifted up he passed the significant remark, 'Tārakdā (Mahapurush Maharaj) is busy with "hoarding", and is averse to "spending", spirituality. Please do something for this boy.' Something was really done to the boy; but this remark truly represented the attitude of the great soul during this period of his life, though he was the *de jure* monk-in-charge of the Math. We would return to him later.

Baburam Maharaj was practically in charge of the Math. The training of the young men was in his hands. It needed no resolution to give him the position. He was the soul marked and ready for the duty. Had he been then in a desert, people of the right sort would have gathered round him there. But he was in Belur Math itself, the headquarters of the Mission. To know what he did for the Mission one is to engage oneself in recalling to one's memory the acts and words that spontaneously flowed from him, unknown to himself and very little understood by others. And this has to be done with reference to the

Mission ideal and in the context of those situations in which the acts and utterances got expression.

According to Sri Ramakrishna, 'the boy is pure to the marrow' 'is a scion of the noblest family' (spiritual purity or holiness), 'is a chip of Śrīmatī' (Rādhā, the symbol of the purest love divine). Very few were allowed to touch the body of Sri Ramakrishna in his *Samādhi* state—it was the privilege of this 'boy' to attend to him then. These are enough to show the quality of this seraph. When he could hardly lisp out words, had no idea of what the world and worldly life were, he would say, in answer to jests of elderly people, 'Don't, don't talk of marriage. Oh! I shall die, I shall not survive!' He would utter these words so piteously, so imploringly, that jokes sometimes turned into tears. Let us meditate, if we can, on the wonderful *samskāra* of this little boy who could then hardly run—*samskāra* that used to formulate those words from the depth of his being. A product of marriage, having seen no monk nor having the power to understand and distinguish the two sorts of life, whence could he get the idea, how could the poor boyish brain's convolutions figure it? It passes human understanding. Yet it is a fact borne out by many eye-witnesses under searching cross-examinations, for that was an age of sceptics and agnostics. Sri Ramakrishna was so much enamoured of the boy that he begged of his mother, who was herself a great devotee of his, 'Do give me this child of yours,'—a strange begging of a mother! With a heavenly smile she replied, as mothers full of divine devotion alone can answer, 'Do Mothers give away their children', then with ecstatic blush, 'for nothing?' Sri Ramakrishna understood and fulfilled that maternal hankering of the great devotee. Baburam

stayed with Sri Ramakrishna to the last day. Sri Ramakrishna would drag the sleepy boy inside his mosquito-net despite remonstrances—a privilege which none except Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) ever enjoyed. It is needless to add what spiritual attainments could be his, of such a pure soul with so much spiritual hungering. Only one thing should be mentioned: When one day at the request of the boy, Sri Ramakrishna begged of the Mother Universal for endowing the boy with *bhāvas* (high spiritual fervours that express themselves in the body as tears, shaking, hairs standing on their ends, flushes and blushes, dances, etc.) the Mother replied, 'He will not have *bhāvas*, he will have *jñāna*'—a statement which we have not understood so far unless we add a last word to the sentence—'first'. This will mean that he will have *jñāna* first and then *bhāvas*. For if Baburam Maharaj, who was the very personification of *bhāvas*, could not have *bhāvas* then that word and its import would have vanished from the earth. About his *jñāna* there were but few guarded expressions, his *bhāvas* were hourly things—rather they were a continuous chain. It was a strange phenomenon that human body could bear the on-rush of such intense emotions. It is good that Mother gave him first self-knowledge, that heaviest ballast in a spiritual ship, and then allowed the natural current of *bhāvas* to sweep the boat withersoever they like; otherwise the physical frame would have burst long ago. He was truly Premananda, all love and bliss. He infused at least to last a few days, these two heavenly qualities into all who met him even casually.

Most of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples had athletic bodies and some of them, for example Swami Vivekananda, were very beautiful. Swami Premananda was the only exception whose body was soft and delicate like butter and it was extremely beautiful. Swamiji's was masculine beauty, Baburam Maharaj's was truly feminine. It was tender and glowing. His feet and palms were ruddy. His was an

exceedingly light body. When he walked the outlines of his feet grew ruddier as if they were going to burst. But for the light body they perhaps would have. We have never seen another example of love and bliss transfiguring the material body to that extent. At his passing away Mother remarked, 'My Baburam used to keep the Math and the Ganges side illumined with his lustre.' It was literally true.

But what was more wonderful was his capacity to work on both the physical and mental planes simultaneously. It was something unbelievable that such a delicate body could stand the strain of so much activity. The body was so attuned to activities of all kinds that rest appeared to have lost its character of necessity. It was almost a daily occurrence in those days—much to the credit of the unthinking nature of people—that just after taking lunch at noon after hard physical strain throughout the morning he was about to go to his small room—other members, young and old, having already retired—when a batch of leisurely visitors would come, rarely for spiritual enlightenment, generally for sight-seeing or out of curiosity or sheer fun. But Baburam Maharaj's mind was blind to the purpose of their visit. It was enough for him to know the fact that they had come to the Math, which to him was Sri Ramakrishna; and it was his pleasant duty to serve them in every possible way. Asking them to wait a little and not to go away without taking *prasāda* (sacramental food) he would straight-away go to the kitchen to prepare a meal for them. So from lighting the oven with firewood and coal to the preparation of a Bengali meal would have to be gone through. And he would not disturb others' leisure, for had they not worked hard the whole morning? he would think. Of course a few of the inmates would always keep themselves alert on this point and would invariably come up and would do the cooking themselves, not without a quarrel of love though. So the meal would be prepared and the visitors would be fed and then allowed to leave the Math. In the

mean time, released from the cooking, Baburam Maharaj would come and sit by the visitors and spiritual talks flowed on with such fervour and enthusiasm that the least prepared minds also had to take in something. None ever returned from the Math without being enriched and turned friendly to the Math. How could it be otherwise, for had they not seen with what spirit of service mellowed with unearthly love the inmates cooked their meal and fed them? This was the man who was put in charge of training the newcomers.

What was the peculiarity of his teaching? By acts and words he would teach the presence of the Lord in every speck of dust of the Math. The inmates could not disbelieve it as they actually saw before their very eyes a living example of this truth in Baburam Maharaj's personality. Every act was to be regarded as done for the Lord—sweeping, cleaning, carrying water from the Ganges, tending cows, reading scriptures, worshipping in the shrine, everything was sacred and holy. And to be accepted by God they are to be performed with due purity of body and mind, without idleness and carelessness. They were warned against praying to the Lord for any worldly things for the Lord in the shrine was not a picture or a photo but the very living, watching God who truly granted prayer. The only prayer that was allowed was for devotion and self-knowledge, for dispassion and discrimination, for, they were taught, anything else would ultimately turn out to be a bondage. Whatever they would do or think should be offered to the Lord. After finishing their prayer, worship, meditation at the shrine they were to give it over to God and not to keep even the *sāttvika* effects of these spiritual acts, for they too lead to bondages of many kinds. To sing devotional songs in chorus was an item in the daily routine. But they were strictly prohibited from diverting their minds from the thoughts and sentiments of the songs to the musical excellences of singing, though wrong tuning etc. were strictly deprecated. And at the end the fruits of singing, together with songsters themselves, were to be dedicated

to Sri Ramakrishna. To attend to visitors was an important item, as has been narrated before. But the slightest display of egotism, arrogance, or superiority of any kind, or show of learning or spirituality would get terrible upbraiding, the language of which was so sharp and cutting that the poor offender felt he was all but dead. In the afternoon he would gather the newcomers in the 'Visitors' Room' and ask one of them to read a scripture and explain and he would be sitting close to him, as a picture of devotion and *śraddhā*. Unless the reader and the entire audience were all attention and devotion they were sure to get snubbed afterwards. So everyone tried to put his soul into the study. During question hours or even sometimes during the reading Baburam Maharaj himself would take up a topic and in a minute would be off himself, when would flow from his lips words of wisdom and devotion and the hall would be vibrating with a presence too palpable to remain unaffected. During choruses also when he was present people had vision on many an occasion. To feel the presence of the Lord in every act, thought, and feeling and in everything around, and to regard every man as Lord's devotee irrespective of his present attitude was the gist of Baburam Maharaj's training and it was done more by example than by precept.

But the stress on physical household duties of the Math was so great and exacting that meditation and study of scriptures suffered considerably and those who got training from Swami Vivekananda would feel a difference too obvious to be ignored. Elders like Swamis Shivananda and Brahmananda also felt it and tried to correct it. Baburam Maharaj would not stand against the orders of Maharaj whom he regarded as Sri Ramakrishna in person. Still his own attitude, his actual experience, was that this endeavour to feel the presence of the Lord everywhere and to go on dedicating oneself, one's thoughts and acts, to Him daily and hourly were not different from, or in any way less efficacious than, meditation or prayer. Hence when Maharaj would be

away from the Math, which always happened, the old routine of Baburam Maharaj would automatically be found working. Not that anyone ordered the inmates to deviate from Maharaj's routine or that anyone did it consciously but that, like water finding its own level, the old routine of Baburam Maharaj would unknowingly make its reappearance in the familiar way.

There was another point of difference between Baburam Maharaj and Swamiji. Beyond sending men for relief activities at the request—which Baburam Maharaj would take as Sri Ramakrishna's orders—of Swami Saradananda he would not so much as talk of those activities. With him activities having spiritual value are those which are connected with the shrine because in doing such works human mind gets directly joined to the highest manifestation of spirituality. This attitude lasted until 1910, when at Banaras he went through Swamiji's *Complete Works*. It then appeared to him as if somebody lifted a lid from his mind. A new vista of wondrous beauty, a new *tila*, was opened. His life took a new turn. The walls of his activities, within which they used to move, were removed, worship veering round the shrine took the shape of service to suffering humanity, service of all kinds—physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Then started, what might be called, his missionary life, using the word in its noble original sense. Invitation poured in from various parts of East and North Bengal. Few people are left who heard Swamiji's speeches. But we have heard from many that they were not mere orations, people felt lifted up spiritually, a sort of force used to penetrate into the hearts of the audience, they felt overwhelmed, which lasted several days. Those who heard Swami Premananda during this period of his life exactly felt like that—the only difference being the Swami spoke in English and Baburam Maharaj in Bengali. Once the Swami told Baburam Maharaj that East Bengal was reserved for him. This proved historic. For the whole of East Bengal, Hindus and Muslims, became his devotees—

Muslims calling him their *pīr*. People's attraction towards him was so great that many compared it with their attraction for the Mahatma in its peak. His activities, however, were not limited to speaking only. Fighting malaria, cleaning tanks of hyacinth, and the like were personally done. The candle was burning both ways. He fell a victim to Kālā Azar and then to influenza and passed away in 1918.

Let us stop to inquire if his later day activities were philanthropic in the generally accepted sense of the term. They were definitely not. For the spirit that enthused the young men, his numerous workers, who were ready to lay down their lives with a smile at his word, never felt, while working with him and engaged in the so-called philanthropic activities, that they were doing 'good to others', 'benefiting humanity'. Everyone of them felt that he was serving the Lord, the Darling of his heart. Even when engaged in the arduous work of cleansing tanks of hyacinth people were swept off their ordinary level of consciousness by his presence and enthusiasm and worked in an atmosphere surcharged with spirituality. By precept and example, in time and out of time, he inculcated this true spirit of Swamiji's new *Karma-yoga* in the minds of his young assistants. Work turned into actual worship when people worked in his company. They felt in the depths of their being the significance of the too glibly uttered expression: Work is worship. Really speaking Baburam Maharaj's 1910 revelation was not anything new. It was but an extension of his old attitude. What was limited within the boundaries of Belur Math, what was confined within the circle of devotees of Sri Ramakrishna and visitors to the Math expanded beyond all limits. Sweeping of the Math premises turned into cleansing villages; feeding the devotees and visitors took the new shape of feeding the poor. The form changed, the spirit remained unaltered; for it is unalterable, being of the essence of Truth. To exemplify pure love and joyous service divine he incarnated; and these two are his contribution to

the Mission. And this is the essence and all of the Mission, which will last as long as it remains true to the twin ideal.

SWAMI SARADANANDA

When Swami Vivekananda passed away there were enough activities, both of the permanent and temporary relief types, and new centres of both the types were fast growing in different parts of the country. Somebody must be found to shoulder the grave responsibility, to guide and consolidate the work and keep it oriented to the noble ideal, to face difficulties and remove obstacles from day to day. We have seen both Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj were so constituted that this vital kind of work could never be managed by them. Nor was Swami Shivananda of the required type. But when the Lord wants to initiate a great movement He brings His men for it. Swami Saradananda (Sarat Maharaj) was the man for this type of work. We have mentioned he was mystically weighed by Sri Ramakrishna and found quite up to the mark, and Swami Vivekananda, who knew him best, made him the first Secretary of the Math and Mission.

He was peculiarly fitted by nature and training for the task. From his early boyhood he was grave but active. He was never in a hurry about anything but neither was he found slow in any work. Himself a man of a few precise words, he had infinite patience to hear and question and try to understand the other's point of view. Sometimes he seemed not to understand an obvious point and the audience, more than the speaker, would get annoyed, but when he finished hearing and questioning he surprised all including the irritated persons with the best solution of the problem. His was a typical English brain—slow to understand, quick to decide, and never to let go what is once grasped.

His control over his body and over his power of understanding and discrimination was amazing. Once the carriage that was carrying him was going down a precipice to sure death; it was followed by a big boulder

coming straight on the carriage. The horse had died in the accident, the driver lay on the ground unconscious. The carriage left to itself with this one passenger on it was gaining speed as it was nearing the chasm. And Sarat Maharaj was calculating how to catch that low branch of the yonder tree when the carriage came near it. True to his calculation in one bound he caught hold of the branch and jumped on the ground, by which time the carriage had been smashed below. Next he came up and nursed the wounded driver back to consciousness and both reached the nearest village. Another time his ship was caught in a storm all passengers, panic-stricken, were scampering about and he was standing calm and unperturbed, which attracted scowling from others. A third time his boat was seized by a storm on the Ganges and while others were howling and crying and calling on all the gods of the Hindu pantheon he was seen calmly smoking. Enraged at this, an admirer shouted out, 'Strange man . . . !' and threw the pipe into the Ganges, which drew out the calm remark from Sarat Maharaj, 'What's the idea? Should one jump into the water before the boat capsizes?' Both the times the boats reached the destination safely. Swami Vivekananda tried all his tricks, investives, abuses on him but failed to irritate him.

The above are examples of cool calculation accompanied by reliance on God. The following is of pure resignation displaying cool bravery. Once Swami Saradananda and Swami Turiyananda visited a temple on a mountain peak near by in the afternoon. Devotion stole away their sense of time. When they started back it was too late. Darkness overtook them and they lost their way in that jungle infested with wild animals. Sarat Maharaj said, 'Haribhai, it is no use both of us losing our lives together. Let each choose his path and accept fate bravely.' So they parted company and Hari Maharaj soon found an *āśrama* and passed the night there. Early morning he went out in search of Sarat Maharaj and found him near the spot where they had parted immersed in meditation on a

block of stone. Amazed he called Sarat Maharaj repeatedly. When he opened his eyes he was asked the reason of his strange behaviour. His short answer was, 'When death is sure, is it not wise to die in meditation?' Wisdom indeed! But death wasn't sure.

The *Udbodhan* Office was a veritable Kailāsa, Siva's abode of all kinds of eccentrics. Those who found it too difficult to stay at the Math and were asked to go home or away would come, as their last resort, to the *Udbodhan* Office and would find a shelter protected against the disciplinary measures of the Math. One can well imagine the atmosphere of such a place where so many ill-tempered stay. It was worse than a bedlam. Here in the midst of uproars Sarat Maharaj carried on, quite unconcerned, his writing books, meditation, etc. One day when noisy quarrels reached an unusually high pitch Golap-ma shouted out, 'Fie upon you. Mother is there upstairs. Sarat is writing his book below. And in the next room you are brawling. Have you lost all sense of the becoming?' Now Golap-ma's voice too was in a pretty high pitch. Having scolded the young men when she was passing by Sarat Maharaj's room, the latter told her, 'Golap-ma, they are youngsters, they will brawl. But why should you feel disturbed at that? Here in the next room I am working. I have told my ears not to heed any word that is not serious. And I don't hear any noise at all.' Golap-ma silently went away. Yes, one may shut one's eyes and prevent them from taking impressions of undesirable scenes. But poor ears have no such device to save themselves or their possessors from troubles. This is what is meant by mastery over the senses and the mind. Once being told that he should introduce some discipline there he replied, 'They are not babies. They have the power to discriminate between right and wrong. If they do not exercise the power I am unable to take a rod in my hand and play the school master.'

A relief operation was to be started immediately. A good organizer was needed. Only

one was available, others having been engaged already. But he was a bit domineering and had severe criticism from the Math authorities. So he refused to go point-blank. When the matter was reported to Sarat Maharaj his rosary was in his hand. With that in hand he stood with joined palms before the young *sādhu*, who looked upon him as his *guru*, and entreated him pathetically to take up the work. You can well imagine the plight of the *sādhu*. But to teach us an unforgettable lesson, something more astounding happened. Just when Sarat Maharaj was in that supplicating mood there appeared Baburam Maharaj on the scene. It was too much for Baburam Maharaj to witness Sarat Maharaj humbly petitioning to a young *sādhu* like that. 'What Sarat,' red with gushing emotion he cried out, 'you to supplicate to these lads? Am I dead? I will go myself. Ah Lord! I am to witness such a scene!' And his eyes glistened with holy tears. But wait, something more was to happen. Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) was pacing up and down the adjoining room. He came out smiling and consoled Baburam Maharaj—with what words? They are to be treasured in the depths of each brother of the Mission, and for the matter of that, of each true organization. Said he, 'Baburam-da, Sarat has done the right thing. We have the same loving relation with them as among ourselves.' None will understand the significance of the last sentence except those who have seen what heavenly love existed among the children of Sri Ramakrishna. That very day the young man started to organize the relief work.

This is how Sarat Maharaj got work from the young *sādhus* and it is not for nothing that the hardest heart melted at his words, the most refractory nature bent low in obeisance. At the mention of Sarat Maharaj's name these proud heads, now grown grey, nod in deep reverence. But it is not the young people alone with whom Sarat Maharaj had difficulties. His co-disciples (*gurubhāis*), as we have seen, had accepted the Mission activities with degrees of mental reservation; and

Sarat Maharaj had, sometimes, to bend their stiff wills to the purpose of Mission activities. A pundit had been appointed only recently to teach *Nyāya* and *Vedānta* to the young *sādhus*; and the routine was just started to be followed strictly to the great disadvantage of other activities of the Math. Baburam Maharaj was determined not to allow any kind of laxity in following the routine. Sarat Maharaj was fully aware of all these, but he required men for starting a new relief work. So he came to the Math and, sitting near Baburam Maharaj, narrated the heart-rending scenes of human sufferings. Baburam Maharaj's feelings were worked up. Classes were closed and young men sent to start relief operations. This is how Sarat Maharaj got his point carried by unwilling persons. He was too thorough a gentleman to order a person, however young or obedient, to do anything against his will. He would win the heart first. His courtesy to all alike was proverbial and in America he got the epithet of 'the most courteous Swami'.

When Sarat Maharaj came to Sri Ramakrishna the latter asked him to meet Naren (Swami Vivekananda). Sarat Maharaj met him, and was full of praise for him. They became very intimate, passing hours in devotional talks and songs. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'The housewife knows which lid fits which vessel.' Swamiji had an unconscious vision of him and his house. When he went for the first time to Sarat Maharaj's house, he was surprised to find all rooms, passages, furniture so familiar to him. Sarat Maharaj was to be his most faithful co-disciple to carry out his work, hence the intimacy at the super-conscious plane. From his early childhood Sarat Maharaj used to be deeply affected by others' sufferings. He would pass hours in nursing neglected people sick of infectious diseases at the cost of his studies and to the dismay of his parents. To Sri Ramakrishna's inquiry as to what he wanted in spiritual life his answer was 'to see God in all creatures.' Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said, 'But that is the last word in religion, my boy. Still, I

say, you will have it.' And he had it. Meet him any time you like and you will see a peculiar sadness on his face. It is the same sadness that used to draw profuse tears from the Swami's eyes in solitude—sadness at man's sorrows. To talk with him and not to be infected with a dose of this sadness was an unknown phenomenon. He was indeed the man divinely entrusted with the entire burden of the Math and Mission. He passed into *samādhi* when he saw the statue of St. Peter, and Sri Ramakrishna had seen him in a vision in company of Jesus Christ. To found and manage spiritual organization of the Mission type was natural to Sarat Maharaj.

Mission, to Sarat Maharaj, was again a bit different from what is generally accepted as its ideal and activities. To understand this we are to enter a little deeper into this too grave and yet too soft personality. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna the leadership fell to Naren, too complex a personality of many moods and quick turns—too dangerous a leader for young souls of high but as yet unsettled potency. Having accepted Narendra as the ideal of his life, as none other of his *gurubhāis* did, he found himself dazed at the variability of Narendra. It was a terrible cross to him. He divulged his heart's trouble to Swami Yogananda who brought him to Mother, to whom he resigned completely. Thenceforward it was Mother, Sarada Devi, who acted through him, even as the Universal Mother, *Kālī*, acted through Sri Ramakrishna. To Sarat, as to all children of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi was *Kālī*, only in an especial way. Ever since Mother's acceptance of him, this child of hers lived in perpetual adoration of and resignation to her. She became his whole being from the core to the periphery. In those days when they could hardly meet the ever increasing Mission expenses, Sarat Maharaj, of all her children, took upon himself the heavy burden, to him the pleasantest duty, of looking after the comforts of Mother and her big retinue. Not a farthing of the Mission funds was touched. He had to find money from other sources. To

the last of her days Mother remained hidden from the public. To find money for such a personality was a tough job. And Sarat Maharaj was to collect it not only for the ordinary maintenance of the family cum devotees but also for the many ceremonies, *śrāddha*, marriage, *annaprāsana*, etc., for building for her a house in Calcutta and another at Jayarambati, for the annual celebration of Jagaddhātṛī Pūjā, etc. Mother once said, 'Who could bear my burden? Sarat alone can. There may be many *Brahmajñās*, but to bear with patience the troubles of ladies is too troublesome for *sādhus*.' Sarat Maharaj truly felt and behaved as Mother's door-keeper, though to Mother he was her representative in Calcutta. To anyone coming to Jayarambati from Calcutta or the Math her first inquiry was, 'Did you meet Sarat before starting? How is he?' To get a negative answer was a painful surprise to her. She could not conceive that her Sarat would not be consulted on any serious matter. But, for the final identification of these two souls, Mother and Sarat, the latter had to undergo the rigours of formal *Tāntrika sādhanā* under the expert guidance, just as Mother herself had to undergo the *pañca-tapas* to allow the tawny ascetic female figure (the ascetic Umā) to get merged in her.

It is not a useless point that we are inflicting on our readers. It has public interest, not theological, not esoteric, but psychological and of all-India interest if India is not to renounce her spirituality and turn into a brute. Spirituality or spiritual outlook is not an empty word or a mere abstract idea or a principle. To pass the whole life in a solitary cave in one unbroken meditation on Brahman is one type of spiritual life; there abstraction is enough for the purpose of realizing Brahman and getting merged in That. But those who will have to work in the sense plane, have to come in daily and hourly contact with persons who dwell on the sense plane alone, mere abstract realization will not do. That highest abstraction must come in concrete form to guide and protect the child on the sense plane, to soothe when harried, to

encourage when drooping, to pull up by the hand when sunk or sinking. In the Roman Catholic church the need is served not only by the Christ but by many saints living in person or in spirit. In the Buddhist churches by the Buddha and their saints; similarly in the Hindu faiths by the Incarnations of God and their *Saktis* and by *gurus*. These aids are living powers palpably felt and communicated. When these powers are available in flesh and blood what incalculable towers of strength do they become to the devotees of true resignation! The living presence of such souls within and around is a perennial source of infinite strength, wisdom, holiness, and blessedness. Imbued with this the devotees scatter peace and bliss wherever they go, whatever they say or do. Acceptance is commensurate to resignation. Sarat Maharaj's resignation was complete and the acceptance by Mother was whole. Being ceaselessly bathed in this blessedness Sarat Maharaj carried on the Mission activities as her charge with her energy and under her direct promptings, knowing all to be her and hers.

In *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master* while Sarat Maharaj is describing the various phases of *Vaiṣṇavic* devotion he has made a casual remark that the *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas* have assigned to *śāntā bhakti* (calm devotion) the lowest place; but in reality it is not so low as that. He has put euphemistically. Really speaking there are two kinds, if we may say so, of *śāntā bhakti*, one being the beginners' and the other the fully ripened one. The latter comes when one, having passed through all the gradations of the other kinds, having enjoyed them sufficiently, gets identified with the Impersonal All and emerges out as a devotee. Out of this *śāntā bhakti* issue forth all the other types as occasions arise in later times. This is what we find in *Sri Ramakrishna* in the fullest measure and in Maharaj and Sarat Maharaj next. Usually these two Swamis were calm and grave when left alone. But on rare occasions when they wanted to go off other types of *bhakti* gushed out of them in amazing expressions. Many had occasions to

notice these rare phenomena in Maharaj, but very few had the opportunity to observe Sarat Maharaj in such moods. That they were in a high measure in him can be testified by a few. And there is reason for this difference. Having been mostly busy with multifarious duties and having had to deal with all kinds of people generally far removed from spiritual life, Sarat Maharaj had to keep special guard over letting himself off. People with spiritual hankering and understanding sitting near him for some time, especially when topics on bhakti were being discussed, would find him a veritable ocean of *bhakti* where there were finest gems of all variety. Piercing through the almost impenetrable gravity of his would come out flashes of *bhakti* of unique charm and beauty. Emotions of all types would be so strong that they would shake that too heavy body—there would be quaking, horripilation, and all that. He was, however, generally seen in the *sānta āpatya bhāva*, the calm devotion of a child toward its Divine Parent, which swelled into mountainous breakers when he came to meet Mother—scenes that every observer would cherish for life.

The heavy ballast of *jñāna* and *karma* kept his personality on an even keel while *bhakti* was blowing high all the time. Working or talking, eating or resting, smoking or cutting nails, this personality never for a moment got detached from the central realization that 'all is Brahman indeed'. It was so natural with him that this high realization of spiritual life lost, so to say, its element of wonder and surprise. We see chairs and tables, birds and animals, as a matter of course; it is not a fact that we do not enjoy the charm and beauty of things around, but they are factors of our life. With Sarat Maharaj the highest subject-object-less intuition, in a most familiar way, took forms as things and creatures and played around him in joy and sorrow beckoning him to join them in appropriate manners.

Whoever had occasions to study him philosophically with a calm unbiased mind had this great surprise of his life to find a man so

firmly settled in the calm of Brahman that circumstances, terrible or joyous, never succeeded in throwing him off it. There was, however, one circumstance in which both he and Maharaj allowed themselves to be swept off in a current of bliss—it was Mother's presence. Still, here too, 'allowed' is the word. Or perhaps it is not. They could not contain themselves. 'What a sweet defeat!' was perhaps the thought, and they were off. What's this Mother who moved these Himalayas so helplessly though blissfully? Perhaps they themselves did not know her fully. Who else will? This ever calm and unperturbable character then was at the helm of affairs of the Mission.

Another fine point is to be noted in connexion with this deep personality. With him the whole world was saturated with God's presence, every thing and being was his object of worship and this silent worship was being performed without a break. But within this there was a difference, though too subtle for casual eyes. In the midst of his extremely busy life where exactly was his mind dwelling? After the passing away of Mother and Maharaj, especially after the formation of the Working Committee for conducting Mission activities in 1926, he virtually withdrew from all activities and was diving ever deeper within the inner Lord till at last he merged in Him. This is the case with everyone of these great souls. Why should it be so? we ask in wonder. If the Lord is everywhere why should men, especially the *Brahma-jñānins* who feel the Presence every moment of their life, seek to find Him within? Yet this is a fact, undeniable, in the lives of all saints—they pass off in *samādhi*. Even those who prayed to be born again and again to serve the least creature on earth tarried not a moment to remove the heaving sighs and cries of infinite number of creatures that ceased not, despite their noble attempts to improve the situation. Sarat Maharaj was no exception to this; in fact there cannot be any exception. They serve not the creatures but the Creator in them, whose beauty and charm,

splendour and sweetness are all within. There they find Him in truth as He is in Himself; and in our outer world what they see and serve are His emanations. And as reality is sweeter than shadows or appearances the natural urge is towards the headquarters of reality, which explains the final *samādhi* or *parinirvāna* of these *mahātmās*.

The truth is the Lord is *jñāna*, consciousness—not its discursive variety but the intuitive one. And nothing of the outer world, the world of senses, is consciousness and therefore God. To the highly developed saints it is not our world of matter that appears, it is something different, though with the same names and forms, which also sometimes differ; it is what they call *cinmaya*, made up of this intuitive consciousness. It is why the scriptures say, they see and see not, hear and hear not. Their senses, even minds, function in the ordinary way, and yet what they sense are materially different from what we do. These great souls serve knowingly, consciously, this world of theirs. In spite of what we might see them doing, their minds and senses are engaged in something else, are somewhere else. Hence is it that when they are called upon by ordinary people to do something they take a little time to adjust themselves to what might be called a new situation. By practice the time for adjustment may be reduced to a few seconds, as was the case with Sarat Maharaj. While writing a book he was the writer, while directing Mission activities he was the organizer. But like an iceberg the seven-eighths of his being were elsewhere in the Lord within and only one-eighth was in the act. And this one-eighth is more skilful than all our skills put together, for it is so near the Source of wisdom, in direct contact with It. Suppose Mother is standing before Sarat Maharaj and he is going to bow to Her, or Maharaj has arrived and he is going to receive him or Sarat Maharaj is witnessing Lord's worship in the shrine or an act of real devotion to the divine in man, e.g. Swami Turiyananda's

prostration to Maharaj, what portion of Sarat Maharaj's mind is in that act? Why, the whole of it. Why is it so? The within to which he was joined fully is now there without in as great splendour and sweetness as within his heart. This ordinary world of nature and individuals is the Lord in play, hence a little veiled, whereas in our self He is fully unveiled. And this fully unveiled Lord is present before our eyes when we see the divine incarnations. Unregenerate people also see them but they see the flesh and blood in motion and not the spirit. Those alone who have realized the Lord in their Ātman can truly see the incarnations as the Lord. This explains the difference between our seeing and touching Mother and Sarat Maharaj's doing so. For people like him the inspiration received from within and the words heard from Mother's lips are absolutely one. So this Mother's departure, closely followed by those of Maharaj and Hari Maharaj, had a far deeper significance to them than to us. It was a definite call to close the play—their play was done. Their last days' behaviour is the clue to the understanding of where their minds used to dwell throughout their life of ministration. They, their senses and minds, ever dwelt in the Lord; in Sarat Maharaj's case, in the Lord in the form of Mother.

It is not surprising that when these three unique personalities, viz. Swamis Brahmananda, Premananda, and Saradananda, with a perfect union of heart under the direct guidance, inspiration and perpetual blessings of Mother combined to put the Mission squarely on the solid foundation of such spirituality that the results will be too deep for human comprehension, but, as is usual with things spiritual, will never be spectacular. And let us be on our special guard that when anything of the Mission tends to be spectacular we are to know we are going wrong, for if the Lord hates anything it is advertisement, spectacularity.

THE VEDANTIC VIEW OF LIFE

BY DR. MAHENDRA NATH SARKAR

Life is to be lived. It is every moment being lived but not always with circumspection and judiciousness. Philosophy has its value that it gives an intelligent prospect of life and helps its adaptation and guides its evolution in the right channel. The greatest adventure in life is to live rightly. Right living follows right understanding. But understanding is not enough, understanding should develop itself into a habit, and foster intuition. Life makes its way through light and darkness. And although it can occasionally catch the glimpse of light and be secured in the strength of silence, it cannot always stand the dazzling light, for it is at times drawn to the earth. Life shoots out like a star from the Immense and passes back into it. The romance of its struggle and ease, success and defeat, depression and elation begins with its nativity and occupies the entire lease. No problem faces it before its orientation; no problem can face it after it has reached the silence. Life is a mystery at its source, it is a profounder mystery at its silence in death, but should we say, it is a still greater mystery in its orientation, evolution, and history through time? If the silence before birth and after death mystifies us, the flutter of life charms and attracts us.

This flow of life has for us intense joy. It allows the adventure of thinking, it gives us the delight of living, it acquaints us with the joy of stirring, it gives the richness of experience, - the flush of victory, and the chastening of defeat. It has hundreds of experience in its store to amuse us, to delight us, to chasten us, to purify us. Is not thus life a blessing? And why then this sense of defeatism, this weight of pessimism? Why this flight from the battle of life? This defeatism, this pessimism can only come from

the false sense of life, from the extreme shrinking of nature which refuses to see, to fight and to conquer. Can there be any greater victory than the conquest of life? And death, is it not also a conquest when the life has been lived fully and bravely?

Vedānta is the gospel of life. It is the gospel of death too. It enables us to face death because it is the full and complete understanding of life. Privation, death, sufferings, it welcomes cheerfully, because it knows life fully.

It does not admonish us to follow a code of life, it does not give us a formula, a routine, and a discipline. It mainly admonishes us to live the life consciously; and understanding follows from living. If Vedānta has any philosophy to offer, it has to offer it from the experience of life. Its philosophy is to live more and more intensively. Intensive living gives complete knowledge.

It will indeed be a sorry picture of Vedānta if we confine it to a code of philosophical thinking or ethics. Vedānta transcends thinking, because it is essentially conscious living. The more intensively we live the better we know.

Life has its own philosophy, but it is not always conscious of it. It has harmony and music in the deep of its being. And the more they rise to self-consciousness, the better do we understand life.

Vedānta is philosophy told by life, revealed by its history, and sanctioned by its silence. Vedānta gives the great conquest over life. Life tastes its sweet as well as its bitter cup, but undaunted and unaffected it rides over the crest of life's waves. Vedānta teaches us to value *life* more than its fruits: its blessings or its curse. To get over this relativism of life is the admonition which Vedānta gives, for

relativism confines our attention, thought, and will to the exhibition of life and not to *life* itself. It confines life to parts and fractions and shuts off its fulness. But parts and fractions are not to be neglected, they too are to be lived out; they will then reveal these half or lower truths and prepare us for the reception of higher truths. Alertness can wean us away from partial truths to the integral. Inertia in any part of our being is dangerous and detrimental to the full flaming life. Vedānta admonishes us not to be false to life, not to ignore its professions, but to know them in their true value and meaning. It demands infinite courage, unlimited plasticity of being to enter into the throbbing of life and evaluate their claims upon us. The great joy is the joy of life, but life's intoxication is not to be identified with life's delight. Life's delight is the greatest when it is lived without passion, without attachment. Life reveals its infinite phases. They can be enjoyed if our interest lies in life and not in them. But Vedānta does not totally deny them. They have their place and value, not in themselves but as expressions of life. Vedānta is the gospel of courage, it is the gospel of freedom, it is the gospel of life; life because it believes in intense living, courage because it transcends the fruition of life, freedom because it denies limitations and promises completeness. It enables us to play the game of life in every field undaunted and undefeated. It teaches us to rise above defeat and victory in the life's struggle to understand and enjoy it better. Life, no doubt, blossoms into victories as it withers into defeat, but unshackled by either it marches on to the tune of freedom.

II

Life is conceived in Bliss, it is sustained by Bliss, it returns to Bliss, so says the text of the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads strike this note of originality in the conception of life. It is unique. It really differs from the *vitalistic* or the *mechanistic* conception of life. Mechanistic conception traces the life back to the lifeless. It conceives Energy behind the

universe, life is an impact of this energy. The vitalistic conception makes the spontaneity of life the basic principle of Existence. So such is the conception of life by the moderns. The ancients like Plato and others conceive life to be a plant rooted in the super-sensible world, and not to be traced to energy or vitalism. It is the offshoot of psyche wedded unto God. The Vedānta conception is that life is Bliss; it is the expression of Bliss. It is neither mechanistic energy nor a vital flow. It is the *spirit-force*. It is that which is behind energy, mechanistic or vital or psychic. It can take expression through them, but they are crude forms of the spirit-force, and when their inertia is removed, they are seen to contain in them the radiation of this spirit-force. It is luminous, transparent, and subtle and often manifests through the cosmic vibrations and cosmic colours. Even then its nature is not fully grasped, for nothing can characterize it properly, it being the ultimate Existence. But its main expressions are transience and bliss.

Bliss is the ultimate reality and *life is bliss*. The conception is unique. It is original. Life is generally defined as the principle that sustains the organism and shows certain element of order, harmony, and environmental adjustment. It is the principle which reveals an immanent teleology. And in this self-directed and self-regulated activity, it is distinguished from mechanism. The more we ascend the scale of life, the more the life is exhibited in its complexity. Life in its basis seems to be very simple. The moderns conceive it to be originating out of unicellular bodies but they cannot tell us how life appears in these bodies except through the conception of force and impact. Mechanistic conception occupies the field when the vitalistic theories fail. Though Haldane and other vitalists make vitalism the world principle and thus make the world process more akin to a psychological system, still it leaves a gap between life and the psyche, just as the mechanistic conception leaves a gap between the mechanistic nature and life. Vitalism indeed explains away the latter gap

by denying the mechanistic forces and making the world a vital-organism.

Human attempt will always fail to determine the origin of life, especially if it proceeds on the scientific line of observation. It can only give us certain analogies but it cannot give us the truth. The Vedāntic method lies essentially in an appeal to intuition rather than to observation or reflection; and by intuition the Vedāntic teachers find out that life is conceived in bliss. The ultimate reality is Bliss. Science has reduced the whole world of matter to electrons and protons with negative and positive charges; but the Upaniṣads have conceived them as the positive and negative forces of creation, the polarity of the same force or reality, namely Bliss. And in bliss there is a tendency to multiply itself, and in the process of multiplication the creative energy, which is itself shapeless, takes shapes through polarity and limitations. How the original force comes to divide itself into the positive and negative forces of creation none could envisage. But Absolute Bliss being the perfect fulfilment of infinite desires, it is but obvious that the urge to be many, when it spontaneously rises, will produce infinite varieties by self-limitations. If bliss is the principle that lies behind creativeness it also

transcends it. This transcendent bliss is the bliss of silence, while the immanent bliss is the bliss of creativeness; but the two are not different. Bliss is the ultimate reality. It appears to be creative, to be moving, without really being so. So long as the latter aspect is not clear to us, and that cannot be clear without the metaphysical vision and understanding, we cannot but take bliss as creative energy only.

Here lies the unique conception of life as rooted in bliss. Science may explain creation in its own way but it does not go far. It does not face the difficult question of emergence of the creative order out of the Absolute. The Vedānta accepts the dynamical aspect of the Absolute, which it characterizes as energy or *śakti* and it underlies all forms of force physical, chemical, biological, psychological, etc. Vedānta accepts the unity of creative principle, for the differences are of forms and qualities, of modes and expressions, due to self-imposed checks and limitations, inasmuch as bliss is freedom—freedom to expand and to contract. Its dynamism lies in this. Absolute bliss, absolute freedom, and absolute dynamism are identical. Life whirls in and out of this ocean of bliss.

SYNTHETIC IDEALISM AND THE FUTURE OF MAN

BY DR. GOVINDA CHANDRA DEV

Rightly or wrongly, idealism has been associated in the modern mind with all that is retrograde and conservative. It has been looked upon as an enemy of human progress, more precisely, of the material and economic progress of the common man. One of the greatest exponents of idealism, whose Philosophy remains yet to be understood in its proper dimensions, I mean Hegel, has said that the real is rational, and the

rational is real. This has been interpreted by critics to be a rationale of the existing order with its obvious inequities. He has also been found to be most eloquent in his defence of the Prussian State, of which he was an important member. Curiously enough, he finds in it the highest political fulfilment of the Absolute. To the adversaries of idealism, this is nothing short of an idealization of the real. Over and above, there is a host of

idealists who have laid great stress upon other-worldly values and made light of material values which mean so much for the multitude. What is strange is idealism, misguided and misdirected, occasionally lent its support to an exploitation of the weak and the poor. For this the idealist himself is no doubt greatly to blame. Nevertheless on deep deliberation, it is difficult to hold idealism as such responsible for this undesirable state of affairs. Idealism, rightly understood and viewed, appears to me to be the *élan* of a better world and a better existence. An all-absorbing idealism based on the contributions of sense, reason, and intuition is the imperative need of the hour. A steady vision and a complete view are the long and the short of idealism and this is what the modern man lamentably lacks and badly needs.

In an intense idealism, matter and spirit, the subject and the object coalesce. For it, they are but the same reality viewed from two distinct but compatible standpoints. Contemporary partiality for material values seems therefore not less misunderstood than the partiality for spiritual values in traditional religion and idealism. From a correct perspective, matter is no other than movement and spirit is no other than stability. The Sāṅkhya equation of matter with movement and of spirit with stability seems to be the legitimate corollary of the 'dematerialization of matter' in modern science. The merger of matter and spirit in reality therefore implies that spirit is as much static as dynamic. As such, all genuine attempts to transcend appearances must lead to a release of action accompanied by love: the dynamic urge of reality will lead to the former, its basic unity to the latter. If the most ideal form of earthly existence lies in ceaseless action promoted by universal love, idealism can legitimately claim to be as much worldly as other-worldly, as much ego-centric as cosmocentric, as much concerned with here as with hereafter.

It is extremely unfortunate that, often enough, an attempt has been made in specula-

tive philosophy to reach idealism through a selective approach. This makes it a narrow gospel and mars its synthetic character. Berkeley, for example, attempts to give us an idealism based solely on the verdict of sense. He ignores the patent distinction between perception as a mental process and the percept as a presented fact. This is not really idealism but 'ideaism'. Such idealism is a strain on our imagination, far less on our sense of reality. Normally at least, we cannot dispute the validity of our senses. The historic example of this is furnished by Descartes who questions the validity of sense in order to submit ultimately to it on an alleged theological sanction. We believe in our senses because we cannot help believing in them. We disbelieve an illusory experience not out of any *a priori* consideration but because of a subsequent experience to the contrary. Similarly while in dream, we believe in it. But we disbelieve it only when we are awake. It is therefore preposterous to suppose that by a logical analysis, we can throw sense overboard as an organ of knowledge. Zeno says that the moving arrow does not really move since its movement is illogical. But the obvious fact is that the moving arrow continues to move in spite of all logic to the contrary. Our sense-awareness stands as a rock. Objective reference is its very essence. It is hardly possible to believe in sense-experience minus its object. Perhaps this is what Stout characterizes as 'objective coercion'. The same idea is conveyed by Russell when he contends that even though logically irrefutable, solipsism cannot be accepted. It is based on a distorted analysis of the role of experience in philosophy and of its relation to logic.

Not only this. I fear by an empirical analysis alone, idealistic metaphysics cannot be formulated. William James rightly observes that empiricism is too 'tough-minded' to deny the plurality of facts and to reduce them into a spiritual unity. Our experience does not place before us a universal mind but a panorama of changes. Sense invariably

refers to changing particulars, neither to things nor to minds, which are supposed to be relatively stable. Contemporary realism, whose preference for reality as a process is more than obvious, experiences therefore much difficulty in accounting for the common-sense notion of the thing. For sense, reality, rightly analysed, must be a process, call it by whatever name you like, space-time point-instants or events. It reveals not a stable world but an evanescent process. The Sanskrit word for the world, *jagat*, means that which passes away. Needless to add that this is more true of the world of thoughts and feelings, desires and aspirations which we designate by the term 'mind'.

An attempt has also been made to formulate idealism exclusively on the verdict of reason. The Fleatics believe that being alone is real and relegate the world of sense to the sphere of non-being. Zeno spares no efforts to establish the unreality of change on the strength of his abstract logic on dialectic. It is somewhat doubtful whether the scheme of reality as conceived by Parmenides and Zeno can at all be characterized as spiritual. Some interpreters no doubt hold that Fleatic being is material. Being as conceived by Zeno, at least, is not sensible and as such is more likely to be spiritual. The Fleatic being has some resemblance, however distant it may be, with the Vedāntic absolute. It is well known that a particular school of Vedānta maintains that the world of sense has no existence beyond the perception of the individual. This does not seem to be very far from the denial of the reality of the world of sense in Zeno. The approach is obviously different but the conclusion is nevertheless much the same. Be that as it may, even this contrivance does not seem to suffice. Absolute identity or pure being is at most a necessary abstraction. To adapt the familiar phrase of Kant, it has 'regulative but no constitutive validity' whatsoever. For sense, the stable identity is a cent per cent fiction.

Hegelianism attempts to escape from this difficulty through its concept of identity in

difference. It proposes to be as much loyal to sense as to reason, as much to unity as to multiplicity, as much to permanence as to change. The concept of the all-inclusive absolute perhaps means nothing more, nothing less. Hegel leans upon thought in his logic, upon sense in his Philosophy of nature, and attempts to adjust the conflicting claims of both in his philosophy of the absolute spirit. Idealism of the Hegelian brand has, often enough, been characterized as speculative, in order to lay emphasis upon its apparent partiality for reason. But, on deeper analysis, its equal allegiance to sense can hardly be ignored. There is an undercurrent of empiricism below its professed rationalism. It attempts to engraft a logical brain upon an empirical heart. Its preference for sense constrains it to accommodate somehow or other the world of sense in the unity of reality. Bradley's oft-repeated reference to a 'somehow I do not know how' in determining the status of appearances in reality is as much a confession of his allegiance to sense as of the conflicting claims of sense and reason as roads to reality. Hegelianism cannot cry halt with sense because of its speculative preference for self-consistency. Again, owing to its unconscious preference for sense, it finds it also difficult to rest content with self-consistency as an abstract principle and therefore tries its level best to give it a sensitive colour by making it an all-inclusive principle. Judged by an empirical standard, this all-inclusive principle must be hollow, and judged by a speculative standard, it must be devoid of the changing particulars of sense. It is in a word a 'Jacob's ladder' based on imagination pure and simple.

Empiricists have invariably tried to divest Hegelianism of its partiality for reason and through that for spirit. This seems to be the upshot of the refutation of Hegelianism in the Marxist camp. Marx and his followers have tried to give the Hegelian dialectic an empirical colour through and through. Of the three spheres of Hegel's philosophy, logic, nature, and spirit, they have eliminated the first as a

projection of misguided reason. The second according to them is a simple discovery of the law of experience of which the third, the realm of spirit, is nothing short of a shadow. Thus by an elimination of reason and by a persistent appeal to sense, the theory of 'matter first and mind next', has been formulated. Dialectical Materialism seems therefore to be a specimen of extreme empiricism with a materialistic bias which has an almost universal appeal because of the great role of matter in man's normal life. In its unqualified antipathy to speculative reason, it resembles most other thought-currents of contemporary philosophy. They are pre-eminently anti-Platonic in their outlook. Often enough, they find no reality in the stable. With them, being is a misnomer since it has no being whatsoever. At most, it can claim to have a derivative existence. The empirical element in the Hegelian philosophy does not therefore seem to fit in with its more important aspect, viz. its preference for reason and through that for the stable and spiritual.

Let us now pause to consider the full implication of the speculative idealist's preference for reason. It need not be mentioned that this is the nucleus of his philosophy. The all-inclusive whole of the Hegelian Philosophy differs qualitatively from the particulars of sense which it aims at absorbing as well as accommodating in it. The passage from the facts of experience to their supposed substratum is not a transition from 'less' to 'more', but from one quality to another. It is a specimen of emergence and not of repetition. The advocates of emergent evolution rightly hold that we can accept emergence on account of experience but not on the strength of reason. It is a gift of nature and not of logic¹. Speculative idealism has in fact made

¹ 'The existence of emergent qualities . . . is something to be noted, as some would say, under the compulsion of brute empirical fact, or, as I should prefer to say in less harsh terms, to be accepted with "natural piety of the investigator." It admits no explanation.' (Alexander: *Space, Time And Deity*, Vol. II, pp. 46-47).

an imaginary fusion of the world of sense with a spiritual unity demanded by reason. On the point of objectivity, this harmonious whole is as much a pure form of reason as pure identity. Its alleged affinity with sense does not make it more real than the latter, which it systematically tries to repudiate because of its remoteness from the world of sense. Naturally enough, notwithstanding its problematic affiliation to sense, throughout Hegelian philosophy, thought is the measure of reality. In a word, traditional ontological argument has been the uniform sheet-anchor of Hegelian philosophy.

From a purely logical standpoint, the limitation of the ontological argument can hardly be ignored. Even a necessary idea cannot, Kant rightly observes, be the guarantee for its existence. Yet from a far deeper standpoint, the ontological argument seems to be highly significant. This brings in the extra-logical implication of speculative idealism, though it fights shy of a clear extra-logical appeal. This perhaps makes its position weaker. In spite of his extreme intellectualism, Hegel has been characterized as a mystic. Some even maintain that this mystical aspect of his philosophy, is of the utmost importance in his whole system². Bradley wavers as much between Kantian agnosticism and Hegelian overlogism as between intellectualism and mysticism in his clean confession that thought can reach reality only by voluntary self-destruction.

Our antipathy to extra-logical intuition is perhaps not so strong today as it was a few decades before. The discovery of the great role of the unconscious in our mental life opens up in fact a vista of experiential possibilities beyond the grasp of the conscious and through that of the natural and logical. There are aesthetic and moral intuitions and religious experiences, which only a narrow intellectualism can brush aside as trivial. Some admit on the basis of a scientific enumeration

² *Philosophy*, July 1953—W. H. Walsh: *On The Philosophy of Hegel*, pp. 227-228.

even the possibility of dreams that are an indication of what will come to be. This shows that our immediate awareness is not limited to sense as we are apt to suppose. But this also adds to our difficulty in our attempt to determine the nature of existence. Extra-logical experience as they stand is a confused mass and we are at a loss to understand how they can be fitted in with our logical demand for consistency and coherence. A consideration of the fundamental presupposition of thought will, I believe, throw a flood of light upon this vexed problem. We calmer for consistency throughout. This is the common point between Hegel and Aristotle and also between Bradley and Śaṅkara. Instances can be multiplied. But do we at all find consistency in the world of facts or facts of experience as we are apt to call them? A bit of logical analysis yields a negative answer. The contradictory character of facts of experience is a familiar doctrine of philosophy. Bradley and others spare no pains to demonstrate it. Realists seem to have gone the other way when they find fault with the concept of non-contradiction because of its disparity with facts. Perhaps this is a wrong step. Non-contradiction is really an absolute criterion, as Bradley would have us believe. To give it up is to give up logic altogether. This is perhaps as bad as giving up experience for the sake of logic. Consistently with our allegiance to logic, we must therefore go beyond it in search of self-consistency in its existential aspect. The mystical intuition of the basical identity of the universe alone can fulfil this demand. Mystical literature is replete with references to it³. Though an extra-logical experience, its logical character can hardly be disputed. As demanded by logic, it has universality and necessity, and, as an experience, it can claim to be objective. In its reality lies the much-needed meeting-ground of logic and intuition, of the sensible and the super-

sensible, of idea and existence. This is, in fact, what the ontological argument and its metaphysical counterpart, speculative idealism, seem unconsciously to drive at. In view of its logical necessity as distinguished from other extra-logical experiences, it should better be characterized as supra-logical. Pure identity as revealed at the highest altitude of mysticism must be a self-shining reality, since it does not brook the distinction between the subject and the object, the two inseparable poles of our normal awareness. In other words, it can be characterized as spirit in a distinct sense. It thus leaves scope for an idealistic view of the universe.

To be a sound, cogent, and comprehensive view of reality, idealism must traverse the whole path from sense to supra-logical intuition through the intermediary of reason. Organic unity of our spiritual life rebels against an exclusive allegiance to one aspect of it at the cost of the rest. This is neither desirable nor feasible. The watchword of true philosophy is synthesis. It consists neither in an over-estimation nor in an under-estimation but in a proper assessment and adjustment of the contributions of our different organs to the knowledge of reality. Both realism and idealism seem to admit it in a general way. Alexander systematically pleads for 'natural piety' which ensures as much the validity of sense as of reason and intuition as organs of knowledge: sense cannot, he observes, claim a monopoly of knowledge. He is thus an empiricist in the broadest sense of the term. When rightly analysed, Bradley's doctrine that reality must satisfy us leads to the same conclusion. Where sense fails, intellect comes to our aid and where intellect fails, intuition helps us. Reality cannot possibly satisfy us merely through our intellect. If realism has on the whole erred in over-estimating sense and under-estimating reason⁴, idealism has erred in doing just the reverse

³ William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (p. 419) calls this 'the everlasting and triumphant mystic tradition hardly altered by differences of clime and creed'.

⁴ William James: *Pragmatism, Lecture I*. Alexander: *Space, Time And Deity*, Vol. I. pp. 205-206.

Russell: *An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 308.

of it. This accounts for their general indifference, if not antipathy, to supra-logical intuition which alone can receive the conflict between sense and reason and thus prepare the path for a synthetic philosophy. In other words, a balanced and legitimate allegiance to sense, reason, and intuition gives us, as against empirical idealism of Berkeley and pre-eminently logical idealism of Hegelians, a new type of idealism, which may aptly be called, because of its comprehensive character, synthetic.

Synthetic idealism, as I understand it, believes in loyalty to sense in a never-ending process. This is another name for matter rightly understood and also as analysed by contemporary physics. But this is only one facet of reality. Reason supplemented by supra-logical intuition brings into bold relief its other facet viz. pure identity, self-shining and stable in character. The philosophy of sense is a philosophy of unmitigated pluralism; the philosophy of reason supported and strengthened by a corresponding extra-logical awareness is a philosophy of identity, pure and simple; and the quintessence of the philosophy of synthesis is the recognition of the unadulterated one appearing as many and of many of sense finding its reality in the unadulterated one. The relation between the two is mysterious, if we can at all call it a relation, since unlike in Hegelian dialectic, here the two contradictories, appearance and reality, matter and spirit, many and one resolve their conflict by themselves and not through the intermediary of a *tertium quid*, a third something. This is an insoluble 'how' which baffles precise categorization in terms of logic but nevertheless in its recognition lies perhaps the secrets of reality which we can attempt to decipher best through the joint operation of the three distinct dimensions of our spiritual life, sense, reason, and intuition. The advocates of change like ancient Buddhists and Heraclitus, and also Bergson very recently, have shown with great precision that facts of experience are nothing but series of changes and there is nothing permanent in the midst

of changes. Heraclitus treats the permanent as an illusion of sense, Bergson with better insight as an illusion of intellect. Logical analysis carried to its furthest limit does not reveal a principle of permanence that retains its intrinsic character in the midst of changes. Sense gives us matter, i.e. process, many or difference. Intellect in its freedom from sense demands identity, stability or spirit. Both considered and taken stock of side by side does not leave scope for a *via media*. A synthetic view gives 'one as many' and 'many as one', the stable as the dynamic, spirit as matter and also *vice versa*. Russell rightly observes in one of his earlier writings that for philosophy to recognize a problem as insoluble is the best that can possibly be offered. The advocates of modern mathematical logic maintain that of the many *a priori* possibilities of thought only that one should be taken as real which is consistent with our scientific knowledge. To me it appears that reason has before it only one *a priori* possibility, namely the concept of pure identity. When validated by supra-logical intuition, it becomes a content of experience and gets a metaphysical status, the sole objective of philosophy is reduced to an effort to adjust the claims of the plurality of sense and this self-shining identity of reason evenly in the balance of metaphysics. The best possible answer of this puzzle perhaps is that though for us reality and appearance, one and many, matter and spirit, sense and intuition constitute two separate spheres in reality, they constitute one basic stuff just as the illusory snake and the rope do. The way we know reality and appearance is not necessarily the way in which reality and appearance exist as such. Here I plead for an emancipation of metaphysics from epistemology as does the modern realist. Can we not, by the help of aesthetic imagination, conceive the possibility of a rope appearing as a snake without forgoing its own nature irrespective of a cognizer who views it from outside? If we can, as we believe we should, this will be a clue to a human understanding,

however limited, of the relation of reality with appearance. Judged from this perspective, matter and spirit and, through that, spiritual and material values and also materialism and idealism merge. Edward Cavid has in one place said that matter is spiritual without ceasing to be material. If our analysis of the nature of matter and spirit is correct, we may very profitably supplement his significant formula by the additional assertion that spirit

also is material without ceasing to be spiritual. Though it may sound paradoxical, synthetic idealism makes materialism spiritualistic and spiritualism materialistic. Judged from a correct perspective, the over-emphasis upon matter in contemporary philosophy will defeat its purpose just as the over-emphasis on spirit has failed humanity miserably through centuries, if not millenniums.

MAHATMA'S UNIQUE MESSAGE

BY SRI CHUNILAL MITRA

Gandhi is not an avatar like the great Buddha. He is not an elect like Swami Vivekananda. Nor is he a sparkling genius like Tagore or Shaw. Nevertheless, from a very ordinary and even humble beginning he rose to the peak of glory, so much so that he passed as a Prophet. His is therefore an exception, a deviation, from the common run of the history of mankind. It is meet and timely and never too late that our Government is contemplating to introduce Gandhian Philosophy in the course of studies from the school right up to the university stage.

It is worth while, therefore, to recapitulate his voices in the context of the outstanding problems affecting free India and the rest of the world. To start with, we vie with one another in placing our claim as lovers of our fair land. But, of patriotism he said: 'I want to identify myself with everything that lives. I want to live at peace with friend and foe. So, my patriotism is for me a stage on my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace.' Patriotism and cosmopolitanism have been synthesized in him. His patriotism was never exclusive. In his opinion a patriot is so much less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. His life was an indivisible whole and all his activities ran into one another; and they all had their rise in his in-

satiable love of mankind. 'What I want to achieve (through all my activities) is self-realisation, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha. I live, move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. And all that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field are directed to this same end'.

He not only headed a political revolt of the Indian people against the foreign rule but also led a crusade against the mechanistic and urban civilization of the West. He really transformed the Congress from a debating body of the politicians mainly drawn from the upper middle class into a powerful combative organization of the masses.

The foundation of his belief was soul force and his ideal was to enjoy through sacrifice as enunciated in the Upanishads. The key-note of his philosophy, if philosophy he professed any, was plain living and highly moral and spiritual thinking.

He believed that economic freedom is possible only through political freedom. In his ideal economic set-up each village will be a small yet self-contented Republic. In his conception there is no possibility of competition. As a result, class struggle and civil war are ruled out. He held that by virtue of ideal education people will cease automatically and

as far as practicable from doing any anti-social and subversive works.

The greatest cowardice, which is unpardonable, is explicitly expressed when in knowing Truth full well we fail to recognize the same. For the realization of this Truth the Mahatma considered no price not worth paying. Verily had he made his life co-extensive with 'Experiments with Truth'. In his own words: 'If it is a good work to sacrifice several lives to measure the height of Mount Everest, if to court death one after another to instal a flag to the farthest pole is glorious, then to sacrifice millions of lives for the searching and exploration of that all-powerful Eternal Truth is hundred times far more glorious'.

Non-violence and yet fearlessness are the two basic principles on which his whole message and philosophy rest. He abhorred cowardice and timidity by which, he felt, we are strangulating each other. 'The Hindus disbelieve the Muslims out of fear; cowardice and imaginary fear are at the root of the Muslims' distrust for the Hindus.' For him, therefore, without non-violence and fearlessness knowledge of the Truth is impossible. Again, Truth and non-violence are inseparable. Yet, without fearlessness Truth cannot be explored. The way to God-realization is the way of the brave, not of the weak and the timid. Only the brave are free from fear. 'Sword is not the expression of heroism, it is the very mark of cowardice.' For a noble cause he preferred total death to slow death. In his words 'To push millions of men towards death step by step is worse than to court death all at a time.' He exhorted men saying: 'To kill and to be killed by the enemy in a battle field is bravery; but to forbear the attack of an enemy without retaliation is a greater bravery.' He warns his followers against a possible misunderstanding that non-violence very easily takes the form of hypocrisy. But, he opines, love and fear are self-contradictory. Love never hesitates to sacrifice. It is disinterested in having anything in return.

We must not delude ourselves into thinking that our hard-earned and much-protected independence has come to stay for ever in spite of all our shortcomings. We are being reminded by the sage of Sabarmati that every nation loses her independence for some weakness or other; the moment she overcomes the weakness, that very moment she gets independence once again.

Gandhiji is the 'Eternal Man' of Emerson like Buddha and Christ, Ramakrishna and Tagore. He attained tremendous success in politics because of the strength and depth of his personality which itself was born of confidence and self-reliance. For the first time in thousand years politics was renovated and rejuvenated by his unique introduction of religion in it. Yet, politics was not the be-all and end-all of his life. True to his philosophy he could not conceive that the Hindus and the Muslims were two separate nations and that a country could ever be partitioned, her limbs dismembered, on the issue of religion. Quite consistently, again, he could not put up with the British proposal of 3rd June, 1946. Only on the 6th May, 1947 when partition became almost indispensable, his lieutenants still accepted it as an unavoidable crime, a contingent curse, and the Mahatma warned all concerned in November, the same year in an address over the AIR, Delhi that both India and Pakistan would be ruined if the refugees were not rehabilitated.

It is now an established fact that the political history of India for long thirty years (1917-1947) is the life history of Gandhiji, and the newly earned independence is greatly the result of the Mahatma's leadership and sacrifice. In achieving national prosperity and international peace he could never accept that retaliation was the only way. Thus, to the corrupt, unjust, power-sick, and violent militant civilization the message of the Mahatma is a harmony, a concrete synthesis of religion and politics.

The alternative to annihilation is survival. Accordingly, the alternative to the atom and hydrogen bomb is non-violence, *sarvaseva*

service of all and *sarvodaya* prosperity of all. Peace and survival lie in the Gandhian way and Gandhian way alone. No amount of Summit Talks or Four Power Disarmament Conference will save us from devastation and destruction that stare civilization in the face. The formulae of the Four Powers, viz., joint inspection of forces (British), exchange of blueprints for peace-plans (U.S.), budgetary control of weapons (France), and prohibition of atom bombs (Soviet) have only touched the fringe, leaving the deep problem unsolved. Gandhiji's way of disarmament and peace on earth is to apply truth and non-violence even in the international spheres. He cultivated the quiet courage of dying without killing and asked his followers to cultivate likewise the same spirit. For he believed that non-violence is the law of our own species as violence is the law of the brute. Nevertheless, he asked us to risk violence a thousand times rather than to have the emasculation of the race. To the world of duplicity and hypocrisy, dissension and suspicion the Mahatma heralded, 'Cunning is not only morally wrong but politically inexpedient.'

His religion is principally and basically ethical. To him there is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness, and no action

can be called moral unless it is prompted by a moral intention. For, according to Gandhiji, the end must never attempt at justifying the means however noble it might be. Times without number he emphasized: 'Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil.' True religion is identical with morality. In his catholicity, magnanimity, and universality living the life of Puruṣottama of the *Gītā*, the Mahatma proclaimed that even disobedience might be deemed a virtue only when it was resorted to in response to a higher call.

Free India's policy—home and foreign—is in consonance with the ethics and philosophy of the Mahatma. Still it is left for the stalwarts of our nation to demonstrate to the world that only through the Gandhian way of conduct and character, policies and creed lies the solution of all the ills of the world in spheres economic, social, political, and cultural. Statesmen, politicians, and custodians of big nations are to prove their sincerity of purpose in bringing about lasting peace to the world. They are to believe as the Mahatma did that 'It is million times better to appear untrue before the world than to be untrue to ourselves.'

LOGIC OF BEING IN VEDANTA

BY DR. P. S. SASTRI

The knowledge of reality which is the basis of all logical inquiry is grounded in the character of a self or consciousness. This leads us to enquire into the nature of the self and its relation to the objects.

1. I see a table and I touch it. These are not two different subjects doing two distinct acts. They belong to the same agent referred to as 'I', and this is strongly corro-

borated by an act of recognition¹. The two activities emerge from the same subject. If the subject is a fleeting, perishing existence, we can never be certain about the identity of the subject, and we cannot then refer the cognitions to the same subject. Whenever we identify an object as that which we saw pre-

¹ See NS 3.1.1.7; BBV 4.3.269; PVA 298.9-12; PBV 44.

viously we are having a recognition. In the present cognition of x we have also the operation of certain traces or impressions derived from past experiences. Then arises a single cognition which involves the relation of two moments of time². 'The object I touch is the same that I saw'. Such a judgement acquires its validity not merely because it is based on perception, but because it is also supported by an inferential argument³.

How can this recognition establish the identity of the subject in different cognitions? We need at least two occasions when the self has become an object of a cognition. The first occasion must give rise to certain impressions which may enable us to recognize the self. Even to have a cognition of the self, there should be an entity other than this self to cognize it. That other entity is at least beyond cognition and recognition. Further, I see a patch of blue and I apprehend it as blue. The apprehension of this patch arises from the form of image apprehended. The awareness of the patch of blue implies the self-awareness of the subject.

One may argue that this is an impossibility since objects like a jar which are revealed by light cannot manifest themselves; and that the self cannot reveal itself and the other also. But the jar that is revealed is revealed as external to the lamp. The light does not reveal the jar as its image or idea. Consciousness, on the other hand, does not manifest the object as external.⁴ The object as revealed to an apprehending consciousness is never external. It is an essential element in the felt awareness. That which is not apprehended is that which is outside consciousness, and it is, therefore, unknown. There is no self-contradiction when we argue that the self reveals itself and also the other. Self-contradiction actually arises from the emergence of two mutually exclusive properties or activities at one and the same time for the same object. In the case of manifesting itself and the other, the

self does not have mutually exclusive activities. When we say that the self reveals itself, we are not even referring to any activity of the self, since self-revelation is the very nature or form of the self.⁵ In revealing the objects, the self does not stand in need of something to reveal it, since such a necessity would lead to an infinite regress and since it would always require the existence of that which reveals the object.⁶ A subject then presupposes an object; and an object is an object for a subject. The conscious mind apprehends the objects; and apart from the mind there is no cognition.⁷ To speak of the existence of an object is to admit that there is an apprehension of the object. Consequently we cannot speak of the existence of the objects without any reference to an apprehending mind. Consciousness is an ultimate datum apart from which we cannot have a subject or an object or a cognition.⁸ Thus when I have a knowledge of the table, my knowledge does not have its ground in the table but in me. The table is the object about which I have the knowledge.⁹

This explanation would make my desire an object when I have a knowledge of my desire. A desire which is an object has a more intimate relation with the subject. It cannot exist apart from the subject, while there can be a subject without such an object. It is the subject that has a knowledge of the objects. As the objects vary, there is a corresponding change in the knowledge and in the means of cognition. But is there a corresponding variation of the subject? If there is, then experiences like recognition will have no place. If the subject does not vary, then its relation to the object is purely accidental. One may argue that knowledge by nature has a transitive reference. Then my knowledge of A is one relation. When I have the knowledge of B , does the prior relation come to an

² See PPV 75.23-24; PPVT 273.

³ cf. PVA 435 on II. 230; 298.22.

⁴ PV II. 328-329; PVA 353, 10-24.

⁵ cf. PVA 354.1-4.

⁶ See BBV 4.3.501.

⁷ PVA 388.27-28.

⁸ BBV 1.4.282, 286-289.

⁹ IS 56.6-10, cf. KKK 607.11 ff.

end? If it does, I should cease to have any recollection. If it continues, knowledge ought to admit an infinite number of relations. A single subject can have an infinite number of relations only when it is a member of a coherent system; and as a member of such a system, the number of the relations is never infinite. If it is outside the system, it cannot have any relation to that which is in the beyond. We cannot conceive of a relation in which a subject can stand to any other; and yet we have to admit the reality of an abiding self-identical consciousness.

2. We cannot attribute a momentary existence to the self because of the fact of recollection.¹⁰ Recollection is the emergence of something subsequent to an earlier knowledge or perception. Such a recollection is possible only if it belongs to the same subject who had the earlier perception. The object of one person's perception is not what another can remember. To say that I have seen earlier what I am now seeing is to admit that there is only one percipient who had the earlier knowledge and the present one.¹¹ If the percipients are distinct, I should say that I only remember though it was someone else who perceived it; and this is contrary to our experience. Where the percipients are different, I can only say that I remember that x had seen it. If one and the same subject is in touch with the moment of perception and the moment of recollection, we have to reject the momentary character of the self. One may argue that it is not the identical subject running through all these moments, but that it is a similar subject. But similarity is a relation between two entities and it is cognized by a subject. To say that two subjects are similar, we need a third subject cognizing this similarity. And this in turn falsifies the argument from my awareness of myself *now* as being similar to myself *then*. The subject that apprehends these two similar subjects must have more than a momentary character because in one moment the subject can attend to

one only, and because the cognition of similarity arises at a moment subsequent to the moment of the cognition of the two. x is similar to y implies two distinct factors which constitute the material for the judgement of similarity. If the similarity were to be a distinct cognition which does not require such a material, then there can arise only the judgement 'this is similarity'.¹² Recollection then involves the indubitable consciousness of the identity of the self in different moments. This identity is apprehended in recognition. Recognition is not based on a similarity between the two entities observed, but on the identity of the same entity in different moments and places.¹³ It refers to entities conditioned by factors like space, time, and causality. And when I am able to recognize the identity of the self in different cognitions, I can refer only to the conditioned or determinate self.¹⁴ Such a self may not be an object of my experience and yet it can be an object of my recognition. I recognize its identity in spite of differing stages and circumstances.¹⁵ It is here that we find the validity of the principle of identity.

3. I cannot deny the existence of the self simply because I do not find an object called self. How do I know that I do not apprehend the self? When I know that I do not apprehend the jar on the ground, I have a perceptual apprehension of the ground on which the jar rests. Similarly for the non-apprehension of the self, there must be a ground. If the ground is the self, my denial is meaningless. If there is no ground, how can an ungrounded property or quality establish anything?¹⁷ The self as the ground of all experience is affirmative. It is logically prior to all categories; and as such it is a self-evident entity. This self-evident character can be treated as exis-

¹² See VSB 535.16-537.1.

¹³ VSB 704.7-12; B 536.1-2; 704.1-3; PPV 76-77; PPVT 274-9.

¹⁴ PPV 76.6.

¹⁵ PPV 76.13-14; VPS 76.

¹⁶ Sigwart II. 26.

¹⁷ NV 342.16-22.

¹⁰ See VS 2.2.25.

¹¹ cf. SV Ātmavāda 138.

tence or as that which reveals itself in all that we do.¹⁸ In other words no valid means of cognition can be directed to establish its existence.¹⁹

If I speak of the non-apprehension of the self, what is it that I establish by this act? I cannot say that I have no object, because the absence of an object implies the absence of experience. But this non-apprehension is certainly an experience.²⁰ As an experience it has an object contained in it; and this experience cannot deny the object without at the same time denying itself. Fire, for instance, cannot negate its own heat. The experiencing subject likewise cannot negate the self without negating his own being. And this being is always present as existing here and now.²¹ Even the apprehension of non-existence presupposes a consciousness that apprehends it. In the absence of such a consciousness this non-existence would cease to be non-existence.²² This consciousness or self is apprehended immediately. Though it has no form, it is apprehension directly much in the same way as light.²³ In other words the true character of the self is immediacy.²⁴ It is not that which can be cognized by any means of cognition.²⁵ It is a witnessing consciousness, a transcendental unity.²⁶

4. The true nature of sleep excludes the true character of the waking life; and the self that experiences both must then be unconnected with the characteristics of any of these states. In sound dreamless sleep, moreover, the self is free from all relations to the world, and yet it remains the self. This self must represent the true nature of the self as that which is unrelated to the world and its problems. But it is a self which exists in a way in which the world does not exist. The exist-

tence of the self is not something other than the self; it is only its self-revealing character.²⁷

5. It is a serious fallacy to treat the self as a totally non-existent entity like the horn of a hare. Such a horn is unreal; it is not a fact of experience, hence it cannot afford any analogy. When we reject the horn of a hare as unreal, it is not because we deny the existence of horns or of hares. We only negate the relation of a horn to a hare, because this relation is, on the basis of our prior experiences, an impossibility. A similar impossibility is not found in the consideration of the existent self.²⁸ Yet that which exists may appear as shifting its character with reference to a percipient. Such entities have an inexplicable reality because they are self-contradictory and yet are experienced. These entities then presuppose a ground, a basis that is not subject to these changes since a change is inconceivable without reference to the unchanging. This unchanging entity must be an explicable reality.²⁹ That which changes is a particular; and consequently the real has to be viewed as other than a particular. It is the other, like clay, which gives rise to the particulars called jars. But the jars are never seen to bring forth the clay into existence.³⁰

6. The real as the ground of all change is no other than the self. I have the knowledge of the I that persists as the same in different experiences. This is an immediate or direct apprehension. If the self is not the object for my cognition of the I, what is the object? I do not equate forms, colours, and the like with the I. But if the self is the object, what is the subject which apprehends this object? Here at least we find that the self and the knowledge of the self cannot be different.³¹ Every one cognizes his own existence. No one cognizes that he does not exist. If the existence of the self is not known, everyone should be

¹⁸ B 585.5.

¹⁹ VSB 585.2-5; BBV Sambandha 188-190.

²⁰ NV 342.22 ff.

²¹ VSB 585.6-9; BBV 1.2.10; B 588.12.

²² BBV 3.4.199; B 134.1-3.

²³ PVA 407.27-31.

²⁴ VSB 618.23; B 618.13-14.

²⁵ BBV 3.4.126-127.

²⁶ VSB 134.2; B 134.9-11.

²⁷ VSB 445.2-3; B 18.1-2.

²⁸ cf. NV 340.9 ff.

²⁹ B 588.13-589.1.

³⁰ See VSB 589.1-2.

³¹ IS 88.18.

aware of his non-existence.³² This knowledge of the identity of an abiding self is an act of recognition.³³ This self is a conscious entity. Consciousness, as a quality would spatialize the self. But space itself is a category which cannot be applied to that which is prior to the categories. Consequently consciousness has to be accepted as constituting the very nature of the self.³⁴ Such a consciousness is revealed as apprehension. In the epistemological situation we refer to it as knowledge, and the same viewed ontologically is existence. This is the starting point of any logical inquiry.

7. It is not possible to deny the self, since that which denies is the self. Even for him who denies it, there is the character of the self present.³⁵ The denial of this kind presupposes a self to be denied. If there is no positive existent, we cannot deny or negate. Negation operates on an affirmation. When I deny the existence of a jar, I do not deny its existence completely but only its existence in this place and at this time. A denial of the self cannot refer to space or time because these are the basic ideas with which the self constructs to itself an intelligible world. Space and time are ideas emerging from a self; and as such they cannot be applied to their ground. If, on the other hand, the self were to be treated as an object, as a product, like any other ob-

ject, the consequences would be highly inconsistent. An object like a jar is at times present, at other times far away, sometimes gives room for doubt, at some other times leads to erroneous apprehensions. The self as an object must give room for doubt and error; and all this must happen to someone who cannot then be a self.³⁶

It may be argued that the self is a construction, an idea. I see an object and construct the idea of the table. My idea presupposes an existent entity with which it has some similarity though not identity. If the self is a mental construct, it must be a construction from something existing externally. This construction must have similarity with some entity and therefore also different from that entity. If I construct it as existent, its counterpart in the world may have to be non-existent, because there is always some difference between a construct and that to which it refers. If I construct it as non-existent, it must exist in the world. I cannot construct a totally non-existent entity.³⁷ But whether I infer, recollect, doubt, or fall in error, I am always present. I do experience here and now even in recollection. I may doubt, but I that doubts is not a doubtful entity. I may err, but there is something which is not an error and which errs.³⁸

(To be continued)

³² VSB 81.1-2.

³³ B 305.8; IS 89.21-23.

³⁴ B 609.7-610.1.

³⁵ VSB 13.1.

³⁶ B 604.1-2.

³⁷ See NV 337.17-21.

³⁸ B 604.2-3.

FLOWERS OF SPRING

BY A. ISWARAN

Familiar things have a new manifestation of glory in the light of *rasa* just as in the spring trees put on fresh and fair and fragrant flowers. . . .

—Anandavardhana

The beauty of the Himalayan scene is spread out in all its splendour. Nature chose this spot to carve the throne of Beauty. Tier

upon tier of heaped-up mountains in varying shades of jade, emerald, and sapphire, crowned with sparkling snow, rear their heads in

incomparable majesty. The tall *chirs*—each tree a giant chandelier, and every shimmering needle a lighted candle—are lifted up to the pure heavens in mute adoration. The spires of graceful pagodas of the *deodars* pierce the azure tent, standing sentinels over the sacred region. What magic is this? The dividing line of matter and spirit vanishes. The freedom of these volant creatures, tiny birds and animals, warbling, frisking in the tangled mass of green—is this freedom a physical fact, or a symbol of the superior freedom into which the spirit leaps, at the touch of the scene, breaking the fetters of matter and mind?

* * *

In a world that is growing noisier every day with ever increasing mechanization and rattle of arms, it is feared that man is losing the true sense of Beauty, the aesthetic taste, which is a capacity to receive and expand under the stimulus of the Good, the Beautiful, the Lovable. To choose a less severe word I say 'lovable' instead of the 'spiritual', for both mean the same thing in the ultimate analysis. Love is nothing but the adoration of the Spirit, a projection and adoration of one's self in a medium called Beauty. So, whenever the soul comes across this medium in a palpable, rich form it excites it towards this communion. Thus Beauty of Nature exerts a tremendous influence on man's spirit-life.

These days when the utilitarian worm is eating its way through every field of human endeavour, and novelties under the pretence of creating new standards of art are influencing the very architecture of our dwelling houses, one might despair of ever having a sight to soothe the eyes, not to speak of inspiring Beauty. But with all this, Beauty does exist not only in the splendours of the Himalayan scene but everywhere and reveals itself to the seeing eye. Every human being, even the most sordid or commonplace, possesses this seeing eye. Only it sleeps in the busy tide of the work-a-day world and, in a psychological moment, opens and beholds a new light shedding a heavenly charm over the

most insignificant objects—the notes of an ordinary song-bird, the evening light falling on way-side grass, or the shining beads of sweat on the face of a child returning from play. Everyone of us has received this light some time in life. With most poets it is a continual inspiration, the sustaining core of life. But it is through the mystic experience of saints that this influence has created landmarks in human history.

Moses on the heights of Mt. Sinai heard his God speak through the thunder and in the early hours of the morning when the shrubs of the desert were touched with flame by the rising sun, he beheld Him face to face in the burning bush. Again, it was on the top of a mountain, but in the deep mystery of night, under the burnished stars, Muhammad had the call from the Supreme, saw the Heavenly scroll unroll before him and read the flaming words. And was not Jesus Christ greatly influenced by the wild beauty of the valley of Jordan, where he had the stupendous spiritual experience at the time of baptism by John, the 'lilies of the field' and 'fowls of the air,' all of which left impressions on him and opened the door to deep insight into spiritual laws? A host of similar instances can be quoted of lesser personalities, saints and mystics, the world over. Sri Ramakrishna, assuredly the paragon of mystics our age has produced, had his first spiritual ecstasy, while a boy of seven, at the sight of a flock of snow-white cranes in flight across a dark sombre thunder-cloud that loomed in the sky over the green fields. The shock of joy was so sudden and intense that he fell down unconscious. What was the particular idea that the scene conveyed to the mind of the tender boy is not clear. But the experience as it manifested affords a striking demonstration of the powers of aesthetic feeling. The play of colours and mood of the beautiful setting impinge on the sensitive nature with great force bursting open a flood of joy. This flood breaks down all physical and psychological barriers, lifts the man up, and carries him far into a new realm where all the powers of the senses rush in at

the same time and concentrate on a rosy pinpoint perception of Beauty, to the exclusion of all else, an experience that made Dādu cry out:

'My whole body has become an eye to see His beauty,
My whole body has become a tongue to taste His flavour
And a voice to speak to Him.'

When the intensity of joy of this communion is extreme, the physical functions of the body are suspended and the person becomes unconscious. A similar experience is recorded of Swami Vivekananda. When he was still a boy travelling with others through a jungle he became absorbed in a profound abstraction as he gazed at a huge honey-comb high in the crevice of a hill. So it happens that spectacular colours or proportions are not always necessary to lift one into the realms of redeeming joy. The sight of a mere leafless tree filled Brother Lawrence with an overwhelming sense of God's beneficence and transformed his life that very moment.

In all these cases people exhibit the power of projecting their own richness on to the medium offered by the occasion and this projection or creation, sustained by an impulse of joy throughout, is the secret of human blessedness—man's freedom from the thralldom of animality. It is the sacred duty of every human being to attain to this freedom by exercising this power of superior creation which is his birthright. How rich and godly would be human life if everyone of us had this power developed to some extent! Indeed in this alone would have been fulfilled the purpose for which man was evolved on earth. For it is the bridge to Immortality, the bridge between the sensuous and the spiritual.

When two pieces of wood are rubbed against each other fire comes out. The sensual is the lower piece and the spiritual the upper; the fire emanating is the all-consuming, life-transforming, pure bliss.

It is told in the Upaniṣad that when the will to create arose in Brahman, the Absolute

Spirit, It 'swelled' with exultation. Conception is always a thrill of joy, though it entails travail. The subjective experience, in spite of pain, is joyous, and to the experiencer the pain is but a prelude to a crescendo of ecstasy. The deaf Beethoven wandering the Austrian forests driven by the agony of unformed symphonies haunting his mind was actually in the grip of a rapture in the culmination of whose frenzy the notes gained their proper sequence and measure and the composition was complete. Such experience is not exclusive to extraordinary genius alone. Every person has tasted it in varying degrees according to his capacity; for man is essentially a creative being, a spark from the fire of the Divine Creator. Who has not felt the bitter sweet struggles of a timid writer venturing on his virgin poem or article, of the affectionate labours of the farmer raising a neat fence round his new garden, or of the jeweller carving at a gem with minute care and precision?

Now, there comes a stage for certain souls in their determined march towards perfection, where they have to abandon the physical beauties of Nature as unfit media for the sort of communion they seek. In his introduction to Dr. Tagore's *Gītāñjali*, the great poet W. B. Yeats asks, 'What have we in common with St. Bernard covering his eyes that they may not dwell upon the beauty of the lakes of Switzerland . . . ?' As one choosing to cry against renunciation and feeling 'the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight', his approach may differ from that of Bernard. But if he means to deny a new order of the aesthetic sense in the mystic, then we are not sure if he is right. The saint is aesthetic and much more. The very fact that he had to bind his eyes betrays the strong influence such beauty wielded over him. He was only struggling to sublimate it to a higher plane for a particular kind of realization of the same Beauty whose outward gross manifestation so dazzled his eyes and distracted his attention. We do not know what private *sādhana*s he was practising. But we understand it clearly in a similar and more drama-

tic demonstration of the same attempt in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Nobody can doubt the aesthetic temperament of this Super Artist. He realized and revelled day and night in the Divine Mother, the ocean of Beauty and Bliss ineffable. Yet, when he took up *advaita sādhanā*, the monistic practice, to commune with the Supreme Spirit in Its pure, unconditioned aspect, he found the very same Divine Mother an obstacle; and he had the courage to cleave that blissful form into two 'with the sword of discrimination' and soared high towards Nirvikalpa Samādhi. We must note that the cutting does not mean a complete destruction of the sense of Beauty and the capacity to enjoy it. For his bliss never abated but only increased and made him speechless about it. Previously he could sing and dance in a sea of bliss. But in this state he remained motionless, completely enveloped, lost in its fathomless depths. This is a realm where all our standards, even the most sublime, fail to measure the state of the soul. Along with the salt doll, the measuring rod of salt also has dissolved in the ocean. Our readings are lost. In a sense the soul's aesthetic sense does disappear *in that particular state*; but then there is no *other* sense also, nothing except its own pure form, *swarūpa* which is the real ultimate source of all these senses. And inasmuch as the soul is in true and full possession of itself, it contains and transcends all the richness of the aesthetic. Those who shrink from or decry this transcendence betray the small-mindedness of the prisoner who when questioned why he always managed to return to the jail every time he was released at the end of his term, replied that he relished the prison food better than any that his depravity could fetch for him

outside the jail. The most ravishing beauties of the earth, the highest happiness that can be drunk through the senses, mind and intellect, are but crumbs fallen from the table of the Most Holy. Because the winds blow sweet, flowers and stars bloom sweetly on earth and sky, the sun and moon shed their sweet radiance, and sweet smiles play on human faces when unclouded by worries, and because people say sweet words once in a while, shall we make this mundane the be-all and end-all of our existence? The wise man reads the sign and takes the hint. He follows the ray back from the reflecting mirrors and gains the vision of the True Light.

* * *

The sun is bidding farewell and with his last lavish touch transforms the impeccable snow-peak into an image of molten gold. In between the deepening shadows of the mountain folds the dust of light is settling down. An indescribable hush, deeper than the deepest silence, falls upon the scene—it is the footfall of the Spirit, the great 'Lovable', loved through all life but as yet unbeheld; those familiar footsteps are drawing closer and closer. From the cistern of light beyond the western range a broad, divergent, rose-coloured ray shoots forth in a final signal and vanishes at the zenith—the night has come, with the purest of gems for stars, and draws its purple veil over the human sight. But the inward eye is opened and then, then . . . the snow melts away in silence, in silence the mountains crumble down, the stars fall silently like petals of flame burning up the forests below—the scene is effaced; only the Beauty remains. The symbol is pierced, peeled, and cast off as a snake sloughs off its skin; the symbolized alone remains, shining pure and naked.

'What is after all really required of us in this (Bhakti) Yoga is, that our thirst after the beautiful should be directed to God. What is the beauty in the human face, in the sky, in the stars, and in the moon? It is only the partial apprehension of the real all-embracing Divine Beauty. "He shining, everything shines. It is through His light that all things shine".'

—Swami Vivekananda

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Among the papers left by the late philosopher, Dr. Mahendra Nath Sarkar of the Calcutta University, were found about 80 typed pages of a manuscript dealing with Life. It seems he wanted to write a dissertation on Life from the Vedāntic point of view. It is not quite clear if he finished the work. But these pages do give a very beautiful philosophic interpretation of life, which, in a way, may be considered complete. His devoted widow has very kindly sent the manuscript to us to see if at least some portion of it can be published. We find the pages quite illuminating and propose to share the great savant's thoughts with our readers. It is a pity that the whole thing cannot be published in the columns of a magazine. Hence we would publish some portion of it, taking care to preserve the continuity of thought as far as possible. This issue contains the introduction under our caption, 'The Vedantic View of Life.' Readers, we are sure, will enjoy the depth of the Professor's thoughts expressed in his picturesque language. . . .

Dr. Govinda Chandra Dev, M.A., Ph.D., of the department of Philosophy in the University of Dacca, Pakistan, has voiced in his thoughtful article, 'Synthetic Idealism and the Future of Man', what many philosophers, after an almost interminable wrangling over millenniums, have realized that Idealism and Realism in their extreme forms have failed to show mankind the way to the Ultimate Truth or to give a consistent view of Reality. And over the last hundred years there has been quite a spate of compromise theories of Reality with varying degrees of emphasis on either side. Dr. Dev's plea is: 'Synthetic Idealism . . . believes in loyalty to sense in a never-ending process. This is another name for matter rightly understood. But this is only one facet of reality. Reason supplemented by

supra-logical intuition brings into bold relief its other facet, viz. pure identity, self-shining and stable in character.' This double character of reality, this unity and diversity, no theory of reality has ignored so far; nor is there any system of philosophy which has not taken into account the contributions of both the senses and reason in the building up of theories. The difficulty, however, has arisen and will continue arising when human mind unable to remain satisfied with sitting on the fence, presses the impertinent question of resolving the contradiction inherent in the veracity of the senses and reason. Dr. Dev, in spite of his lucidity of thought and expression, has not been able to remove this contradiction. The reason is simple. The senses must give us plurality; reason must lead to unity. In the final judgement both cannot be retained. Man chooses according to his bias for either—following reason throughout he repudiates reason and upholds the veracity of the senses; again starting with sense data he refuses to be bound by them! When reason and the senses are at the bar there is no universal standard to judge them by. Still Dr. Dev's synthetic idealism, like synthetic rubber, serves a purpose in our work-a-day world where everything has its legitimate importance. . . .

Professor Chunilal Mitra, M.A. has given us in the 'Mahatma's Unique Message' a lucid exposition of the philosophy of life of Mahatma Gandhi. 'Gandhi is not an avatar like the great Buddha', 'not an elect like Swami Vivekananda', 'nor a sparkling genius like Tagore or Shaw. Nevertheless, from a very ordinary and even humble beginning he rose to the peak of glory, so much so that he passed as a Prophet.' In these four strokes the writer has beautifully brought out the unique character of the great personality. As to his message and activities Sri Mitra writes: 'He not only headed a political revolt of the Indian people against the foreign rule but also

led a crusade against the mechanistic and urban civilization of the West.' And this is the key to the Mahatma's philosophy, if ever he preached a philosophy. His *ahimsā*, his non-violence, his passive resistance to evil, his taking scrupulous care of the purity of means, his vicarious atonement of others' sins and crimes, his *tapas* (austerities), even his nature cure are all directed against the mechanization of humanity, are a call to humanity to live in loving tune with nature, which to him was an expression of the Divine. . . .

'Logic of Being in Vedānta' by Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D. of the University of Saugar is an extremely closely reasoned article, every line of which, as is evident from the numerous references, indicates the tremendous amount of labour the author has bestowed on it. Most probably the paper forms a chapter of a book our humble Doctor proposes to bring out soon. If we are near the truth we can safely predict that no student of Vedānta can possibly be without a copy of the book. This paper by itself is a comprehensive survey of the logic of Being and is a masterpiece of translating Indian Philosophical Thought of highly polemical character into Western philosophical terminology in simple lucid sentences. There is a large section of Indian philosophers who hold the task to be impossible. This performance of Dr. Sastri's will be an eye-opener to them. The article is fairly tough reading so far as the arguments are concerned. But the lucidity of the writer's language will sustain the reader throughout and bring him to the end. We are sorry, paucity of space has compelled us to break the article into three parts and distribute them over three consecutive issues beginning with the present one.

SOURCES OF THE VEDA AND OTHER SCRIPTURES

Knowledge may be true or false, for before a false knowledge is falsified it is regarded and used as true and its falsification is also by knowledge, another piece of knowledge. All the items of knowledge, every bit of each, are

knowledge. The object, 'tree', a factor of knowledge, is also knowledge. For the momentary bits of perception, even though pieced together, are not the tree we know of, which is within. Again every bit of perception, which is not the tree but something else, is not something over there but over here, within; hence is knowledge. And the process of perception, or for that matter, any action, is knowledge, an item within it. That which we do not know or which we cannot know, even to its furthest limits, is knowledge, as the unknownness or unknowability is also knowledge. The very fact of assertion, negative or positive, indicates that we know what we feel and assert. There is of course a vague *outside*, an unspeakable *beyond*, an eluding factor, which lends a sort of uneasiness to our ordinary and uncritical knowledge and leads us to believe that there is something outside knowledge. But deeper analysis shows that this vague sense is due to uncriticality, due to our natural tendency to identify ourselves, not with the whole knowledge including the object, but with the subject portion of it. If knowledge is taken to be what it really is, knowledge and being are one and there can be nothing beyond.

Hence we cannot logically ask about the source of knowledge. The source of knowledge is knowledge. We cannot even say that one bit of knowledge gives rise to another because if we go on tracing the previous ones further we invariably come back to whence we started. This *samutpāda*, production, is *pratītya*, through appearance, i.e. it is *pratīyamāna*, apparent. Else how can a cause be its nth effect? And when the imposing chain of cause and effect is dissolved what remains is knowledge, *jñāna*, *bodhi*. The divisions and processions are all apparent due to our uncriticality. All questions about the beginning or the end, or the process of knowledge are really inadmissible. But the doubting man remains dissatisfied. And he shall be so as long as he keeps himself identified with a portion of this being-knowledge and not with the whole. By such questions as these man

is only giving expression to a psychological necessity of his. But the necessity being psychological, a psychological answer, which is bound to be *pratīyamāna*, apparent, should satisfy man. But he is not prepared to be so satisfied. This aspiration for a logical reply to a basically psychological question can only be satisfied when psychology merges itself in logic, or in other words, when man identifies himself with knowledge and not with a part thereof.

This *pratītya-samutpāda*, however, serves a useful purpose. It helps us, by drawing us inward, to come in direct contact with knowledge, rather with how it works to produce the world we live in. This psychological search within reveals how we, as centres of knowledge, come by the bewildering bits of knowledge, how concepts and judgements are formed, how laws and principles are discovered, how new inventions and combinations are made. In fact the entire science of mind and, when yoga is added to it, its art too, appear to us rather vividly; and the stage is set for the plunge from the phenomena to the noumenon, to knowledge itself. But let us confine ourselves for the present to the ever changing phenomena, appearing as a long but limited chain of causality.

Then every man with his limited but ever expanding range of knowledge puts to himself, at every accession of knowledge, the question about 'whence'. From where does the new knowledge come? To one, similar to those we are familiar with, we attribute a similar source; we say it has come from outside the range we call ours, i.e. from the outside world. In case of an unfamiliar or extraordinary piece of knowledge we seek a different source, the reason being the uncommonness of this knowledge, which needs a different explanation. When the receiver of such knowledge looks up and out and at the same time automatically excludes the visible world, naturally the only source that is left open turns out to be something transcendent, the case appearing to be a communication from something, this something is dynamic, and its

unusuality lends extraordinary powers to it. To this dynamic transcendent consciousness of extraordinary, unlimited powers we give the name of God, and to the uncommon process that of revelation. Our scriptures then become a mass of revealed knowledge, knowledge revealed by God. When the receiver has not learnt abstract thinking this God, in the similitude of the receiver himself, is a personal God. When he has learnt abstract thinking, i.e. to think and conceive of abstract principles, God is impersonal. When, however, he does not look up and out but deep within, as in the case of trained yogis, these voices and visions appear to well up from there and we call the process intuition, and the source our deeper Self, which is knowledge infinite. Hence according to such people the source of the Veda and other scriptures throughout the world is intuition—'Veda' means intuitive knowledge about phenomena and the noumenon, a probing deeper than what the senses do.

In these scriptures, beings and the so-called inanimate nature and natural phenomena have been treated not merely as such but as connected together and guided by a universal purpose, not by mere universal laws that are inexorable but by a deeper force, loving and blissful, that may loosen the inexorability of laws through the apertures of statistical exceptions. By revelation or intuition the scriptures invite man to enter into this kingdom, which appears new and strange to us but in reality which is our own selves, nearer than egoity, which we mistakenly regard as our selves. This kingdom appears other than ourselves because we have chosen to convert ourselves into subjects of enjoyment through the senses, at least through the intellect or understanding, which is limited. Scriptures require us through the revelation of moral and spiritual principles, through their injunctions and prohibitions, to transcend the self-chosen limitations and come out in the wide open and share in its amplitude and immensity; in a word, to come to our own infinitude.

Scriptures are our own talks to ourselves, of our real selves to our apparent limited

selves. Their contents are revealed or intuited as long as we do not succeed in breaking our shackles. When we succeed, with the help of these scriptures, we comically smile at the amusing sport that assumed such terrible seriousness. The source of knowledge, as we have said, is knowledge itself; and scriptures, being but a kind of knowledge, are no exceptions to that. Ordinarily we say they are intuited or revealed. In fact they are embedded in us; they are we. They are eternal, are being written through eternity, because we are eternal. All arts and sciences, all literatures and philosophies, are but introductory leaves to these books of spiritual, the innermost, life.

MATERIALISTS' SOCIETY

Conclusions are based on data. But all data are not universally accepted as facts. Human minds are so widely different that what appear to some as fundamental facts do not have any appeal to others. Spirit, soul, or *ātman* is one such fact. Even believers in it differ so greatly in their conception that rational minds have a legitimate right to discard the concept altogether. Human society, however, is a glaring fact, whose frowns and smiles no man can ignore. To base such a reality on a flimsy ground like spirit appears irrational, if not preposterous, to many. To such people matter alone is true, and what others would like to call spirit is a by-product or mode of matter. Spirit apart from brain is denied. Thoughts, feelings, and other mentations are functions of the brain. When brain is destroyed all mentations vanish. Death is the end of human personality. Hence such people base the structure of society on facts produced and gathered between one birth and death. For the individual man there is no past or future beyond this one birth and death. The history and destiny of the species, however, are not denied. Past and future are of the species. Individuals, it is argued, must work for the improvement of the species. Morality derives its meaning and sanction from this improvement. There is no

spirituality other than morality. This is the framework of the materialists' society, within which everything is fitted.

Now if human beings are bodies, and personalities are their natural developments, preservation and improvement of bodies, including brains, should be the goal of society. Sacrifice, which is an admitted fact, is for this purpose alone. Prevention from going to excesses of all kinds is there because excesses spoil bodies and bring about disease and early death. Improvement of society means greater facilities for enjoyment. Discoveries of laws of nature and of health and invention of machinery have this end in view. If enjoyment is the goal, production of children goes contrary to it, for the income is divided and with it the objects of enjoyment. Children are unwanted compulsions. If state takes care of them that is ideal. Individual enjoyments remain unhampered. Savings, old-age pensions, infirmaries, and other institutions of like nature will make old age as happy or bearable as possible. Children are not needed for the purpose. And sons and daughters after marriage lead independent lives with energy spent in meeting their own multiplying needs. If the state does not take the responsibility of bringing up children till they become independent, then of course parents are compelled. This is a sacrifice they are forced to make by their act of enjoyment. But if they can devise safe means, as they are increasingly doing, of avoiding producing children they will gladly do so. They cannot be censured for that, for enjoyment is the goal of society.

There is a snag, however, in this scheme. Society requires young people to work and keep it going. Hence children must be produced, and the state or society must take care of them, for, in the modern circumstances, society is more directly concerned with children than the parents, who, in their retirement, fall back on their own savings, children starting new homes and becoming earning members of society. But if parents are not primarily concerned with upbringing of children who can force them to do so? Society's sanction,

being moral, is ineffectual. State alone is in a position to enforce it. In red countries it is possible. In countries where government have to depend on votes of the people men in power would not dare to lose the confidence of the voters by enacting unwanted laws. How then will society go on? If future generations remain unborn for whose sake is the building of culture and civilization? On the materialist hypothesis society, if people follow reason, must come to an end in, say, two generations.

But society goes on and there is no sign of its early or even late death, barring natural catastrophes. How to account for this? *Māyā* does the trick. It is love which compels parents to undergo terrible hardships for the life and education of their children, even when they know they cannot count on their children's help in old age. Materialists take advantage of this love, which, according to their own preaching, being an emotion is irrational, hence a weakness to be discarded. Whatever it be, if man is educated to think of love as an emotional weakness, which is inevitable on the materialist hypothesis, today or tomorrow, it is bound to vanish from human heart. Force alone can keep society going by compelling people to produce child-

ren, not for themselves, but for a few others, viz. the state represented by the few privileged. How long can such an unnatural state of affairs go on? Rising against it is inevitable. Love flows naturally for mutual benefit and keeps society running. But men cannot and do not love matter. Love is impossible where the chances of personal perpetuity are nil. If the inevitable dissolution of my body be the end of my personality, love loses its charm for me and it goes. Sex and infatuation will of course remain. They are however fleeting. And their urge will not lead to procreation, which stands against enjoyment. So the cleverness of taking advantage of love coupled with the foolishness of preaching love as a weakness will not work long, however hectic the try may be. And force begets revolution even in the midst of luxury. The spirit of independence cannot be killed. It is the very core of being. Logically, materialism cannot build and maintain society. It is however a lucky fact that man is not rational. On his irrationality materialists can safely build their society. If, however, some prefer to be rational and bring in spirit, soul, or *ātman* and place it at the hub of the universe reverentially our opposition friends may kindly permit themselves to be a little liberal towards them.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE HEART OF BHAGAVATAM. BY SUSARLA SRINIVASA RAO, B.A. Published by Susarla Sreenivasa Rao, M.Sc., Lecturer in Physics, Govt. P. R. College, Kakinada. Pages vii+197. Price Rs. 2/-.

Like other Vedānta treatises, the *Bhāgavata* also fixes its competent students. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava, 'You must not communicate this message to one who is haughty, atheistic, deceitful, unwilling to listen, wanting in devotion, and wicked.' Hence a man of the world seldom understands the sincerity and realization of a true Paramahansa. Śukadeva criticizes the vain disputation

and struggle of the unsatisfied in many memorable passages in order to instil into the mind of the hearers a real dispassion for the transient sense pleasures.

The present compiler has intelligently collected many relevant passages and arranged them under separate headings. There are not many books of this nature.

The stately and scholarly stanzas of the *Bhāgavata*, however, do not easily yield to translation into another language, especially English. Therefore the author has unwittingly twisted the meaning of many verses. Let us consider a few in-

stances. *Sloka* No. 138: The reference is not correct. It ought to be IX.vi.51 and not IX.vii.52. The meaning and the reading do not seem to be well-accepted ones. 'Mithunavr̥jinān mumukṣah' has not been found in many editions. The reading 'Mithunavr̥tinām mumukṣuh' appears more common and correct. Also in the last line 'tadvratīṣu' is better than 'tadratiṣu'. The author's rendering of the *sloka* is this: 'A person striving for final beatitude should completely rid himself of desire for sexual joys that lead to sin, should not allow his organs of sense to interest themselves in objects external should go about singly and in solitude fix his mind on the eternal Lord, and should associate himself if association is sought, only with the pious people who find delight in God'. The intended meaning of the *sloka* is probably this: One who is desirous of liberation should give up the company of the worldly, addicted to sexual pleasures; he should by all means stop his senses' wandering over externals: he should move alone in solitude (and) join his mind to the infinite Lord. Let his association be only with the Godward saints.' *Sloka* No. 226 is not found in that form in three editions of the *Bhāgavata* which the reviewer consulted in Sanskrit and vernaculars. Similarly it is difficult to make out how the author got 'Śaṅkara, Garuḍa, Brahmā, and Vāyu,' in stanza 349 (V. xviii. 37 of *Bhāgavata*) for 'dravya, kriyā, hetu, and kartā'. Many illustrations of this kind can be shown. It would have been happier if Śrīdhara Swāmī were followed in difficult places.

It pains one to see that a book of *Bhāgavata's* stature is printed and got-up so poorly. There are innumerable mistakes which could have been easily avoided if the press and proof-readers were more careful. It is hoped that the next edition of the book will be better printed.

B. R.

A HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS.

EDITED BY VERGILIUS FERM. *The Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, 16, N. Y. Pp. 642. Price \$6.00.*

The editor of the book, who has to his editorial credit about a dozen books, has blazed a trail in the planning and execution of this new type of History of philosophy. The book comprises forty-seven learned papers from the pens of forty-one eminent professors of philosophy of America, Canada, Europe, and Asia. Each paper, dealing with a particular system of philosophy, is a masterly delineation thereof supplying details in brief and omitting nothing of importance. This dealing of philosophy system-wise gives a finer grasp of the subjects to the readers without burdening their minds with many dispensable details, repetitions,

and circumlocutions that are inevitable in the usual system of dealing with philosophers. It would not have been possible to give such a wealth of philosophy in a single volume of the size had the editor attempted to do it in any other way. It is, in a way, a higher study of philosophy beneficial for those who are already acquainted with the systems of different philosophers. This is, by the way, our Eastern method of teaching philosophy, which pays greater attention to the content of thought than to the teacher of thought. Another peculiarity of this book is that it has included in itself the systems other than the Euro-American. We find here, for example, Indian philosophy, Zoroastrianism, Buddhist systems, Chinese philosophy and the Ancient Jewish philosophy; though, it must be admitted, they are there more by way of courtesy than as a serious study. For to include all the Indian and Chinese systems in but two papers is, to say the least, to carry a wrong idea about them to the West. The paper on Indian philosophy could not deal with the vast field of Indian Epistemology which in its depth and richness compares very well with its latest development in the West. Still we have nothing but praise for the writers of these two papers for what they have given us in such a short compass. The addition of 'notes' and 'bibliography' to each paper has enhanced the importance of the book. We have not the least hesitation to recommend the book to all lovers of philosophy, especially to our University students.

B. P.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF UNION BY DEVOTION. BY SRIMAT SWAMI NITYAPADANANDA ABADHUTA. *Published by Mahanirban Math, Nabadwipa, Nadia, West Bengal. Pages 213. Price Rs. 2/8.*

This is the translation of Sri Nityagopal's *Bhakti Yoga Darshana* from the Bengali original by his disciple Swami Nityapadananda Abadhuta. Sri Nityagopal was a contemporary of Sri Ramakrishna and used to go to him often. 'The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna' also refers to the fact that Nityagopal, then a young man of 23 or 25, highly revered Sri Ramakrishna and was probably a recipient of the Master's grace.

It is well known that of all the diverse paths that lead a spiritual aspirant to the vision of God, Bhakti-Yoga or union through devotion is the simplest and the sweetest since *bhakti* is itself the way and the goal. Therefore, a treatise like this, which is a devotee's outpouring of his understanding of *bhakti*, deserves attention. Constant references are made to such authoritative texts as the *Nārada Bhakti-Sutras*, *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā*, *Gītā*,

and even the Bible. There is no trace of bigotry or narrow sectarianism, nor is *bhakti* confused with mere sentimentality. The writer holds all religions in great respect and is laudably liberal in his views.

A glossary of Sanskrit terminology and explanatory notes on terms rather technical appended at the end will be found useful by those who may be strangers to Sanskrit lore.

B. M. C.

THIS WAS BAPU. COMPILED BY R. K. PRABHU. *Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.* Pp. 180. Price Rs. 2/-.

'The true greatness of a person lies more in small deeds than in big achievements. It is the small things that count most in a man's life and show the stuff he is made of'. The ordinary incidents contained in this small book serve to give a faint foretaste of the greatness of the Father of the Nation. It is, as it were, an introduction to the study of volumes available on the more important and colourful anecdotes of Gandhiji's life.

Like other *real* leaders of India, Gandhiji was extremely religious, and this gave him the unanimous following of the nation. His short and crisp definitions of virtues and their convincing exemplifications in his life are well drawn in this selection before us. His words have at their back the practice of years and therefore are captivating. 'To serve is my religion. I do not worry about the future.' This answer to a query of a young American missionary on his religion, and its practice (Anecdote 115 and Frontispiece showing Bapu personally tending a leper at Sevagram) show how his thought and deed coincided. 'Gandhiji,' says Kaka Kalekar in his learned Foreword, 'the inheritor of the achievements of saintly India, the interpreter of India's synthetic culture of ages, and the prophet of a new humanism that embraced and appealed to the whole world, assumed the leadership of the country and gradually collected all the scattered forces; spiritual, intellectual, economic and cultural, to guide them into a great national movement for the rediscovery and reassertion of the soul of India.'

The book is nicely got-up and printed.

B. R.

THE MEETING OF THE EAST AND WEST IN SRI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY. BY PROF. S. K. MAITRA, BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY. *Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1956.* Pp. 451 +xxxii. Price Rs. 8/8/-.

Professor S. K. Maitra has been one of the ardent and best exponents of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. He has given two volumes earlier on the subject; and this is his third. This work is a collection of eleven essays written at different times.

They are brought together. Almost all the essays offer an exposition and a critical evaluation of Sri Aurobindo's thought in the light of a critical comparison with such leading European thinkers as Plato, Hegel, Bergson, Plotinus, Goethe, Hartmann, and Whitehead.

The Eastern and the Western traditions have blended in the thought of Sri Aurobindo; and this thought is not merely a synthesis of varied traditions, but it points to the further developments. Basing his thought on the traditional systems of India, Sri Aurobindo tried to assimilate the best that can be found in the West, and he thereby succeeded in offering a truly spiritual humanism. Reality for Sri Aurobindo is not merely existence but value; and the chief problem of philosophy is to discover the ultimate value. This implies that Reality must necessarily be consciousness. Such an axiological approach enabled the seers of the Upanishads to consider Reality as Saccidānanda; and this consideration eliminates the distinction between the theoretical and the practical, a distinction which is at the very heart of the European thought. By providing a spiritual standpoint to the Western tradition, Sri Aurobindo was able to modify its existential outlook and its hyper-intellectualism. And by introducing a dynamic and cosmic character, he was enabled to transform Indian thought considerably.

Prof. Maitra considers Sri Aurobindo's handling of the concept of evolution as one illustration of the new outlook introduced by Sri Aurobindo. Here like a majority of the critics of Sankhya, Professor Maitra fails to grasp the real nature of the Sankhya evolution. To the Sankhya thinker, evolution is an inward process. Even intellect is a character of the evolute arising from Prakriti. It does not belong to Purusha. Such a view is more akin to the modern Behaviourist conception. The principle of evolution in Sankhya and the *Pratītya-samutpāda* doctrine of Buddhism were originally intended to bridge the gulf between matter and mind, by equating them. This cannot be the same as that evolution endorsed by the European thinkers. Even Sri Aurobindo's conception of evolution is more akin to the Indian; and it is an evolution which envisages the transmutation of matter into mind. It is in this direction that Sri Aurobindo brings in his dialectic involving the Supernals. These supernals provide a spiral movement and offer a continuity of consciousness. But as the Sankhya could not say why Prakriti should evolve, Sri Aurobindo too could not. He takes recourse to the concept of Lila which is not a rational answer. Till we are told why the Absolute should evolve, we cannot brush aside the magnificent principle of

Adhyāsa offered by Śaṅkara. Prof. Maitra considers, like Aurobindo and like Rāmānuja, that the world for Śaṅkara is unreal. This is the grossest misreading to which Śaṅkara has been subjected by many a critic. Śaṅkara declares that the world is *neither real nor unreal*; and it implies that it is both real and unreal. This at least comes out prominently in Śaṅkara's *Prapañcasāra-tantra*.

This apart, Professor Maitra has succeeded eminently in his comparative study. His examination shows clearly the failings of the European thinkers and how these drawbacks can be overcome by a purely spiritualistic and axiological approach to the problems of Philosophy. It is here that the value of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy lies.

P. S. SASTRI

SOCIAL AND MORAL ATTITUDE. BY S. BRAHMACHARI, PH.D. (LOND.). *Orient Longmans*. Pp. 113. Rs. 5/-.

This excellent brochure is a doctoral thesis for the degree of Ph.D. of the University of London, and stands out as a pioneering work in the application of scientific and experimental methods of study to the elucidation of certain attitudes influencing the lives of men and women. It has the additional merit of combining the psycho-analytic method with the sociometric. The author administered five sets of *questionnaire* in 1. Conditions of Upbringing, 2. Personality Types, 3. Social Atti-

tudes, 4. Moral Attitudes and 5. Neurotic Inventory, to 80 men and 40 women drawn from different countries, but living in London, mostly as students of the London University. The responses were treated quantitatively and coefficients of association between the ingredients of social and moral attitudes were worked out. Certain very significant conclusions have been drawn by the author from his valuable data. For example, Dr. Brahmachari observes, 'the influence of parents is tremendous in the case of moral attitudes only' (p. 109), while 'the role of teachers in moulding moral attitudes is not very important' (p. 87). These are facts, and is not the latter observation significant in the light of what is happening in our educational institutions today?

The author also notes at p. 110 that 'harsh training at home does not compel the child to accept or live up to high moral ideals' and that social and moral attitudes are entirely unrelated and seem to belong to two different universes of conduct. Are these conclusions true of conditions in our country too? Here is a problem for research.

Apart from its being a source of inspiration for sociometric research in our own country, the book is a most valuable contribution to the advancement of psychological knowledge, and should be in the hands of every post-graduate student in psychology and sociology.

P. S. NAIDU

NEWS AND REPORTS

TEMPLE AND PRAYER HALL IN LONDON

The lack of a Temple and Prayer Hall in London is most keenly felt. The Moslems have a few Mosques in U.K., the Buddhists have a Vihāra, and the Sikhs have a Gurdwāra; but there is no Temple for the Hindus and Western followers of Vedānta. At the Ramakrishna Vedānta Centre at 68 Dukes Ave., Muswell Hill, London, N.10, there is a Shrine with a small Prayer Hall; but these are inadequate to meet the wide demand for satisfactory facilities for congregational worship, as well as for prayer and meditation.

The acuteness of the problem arising from lack of such facilities is evident, especially on such occasions as the Durga Puja, Deepali and the Birthdays of Sri Rama, Sri Krishna and Sri Ramakrishna, when the small Shrine Room and Prayer Hall are found to be totally inadequate not only for the large Indian community who hold such occasions as sacred, but also for the steadily increasing num-

ber of Western devotees and followers of Vedānta and its ideals, who meditate in the Prayer Hall and listen to the universal teachings of Vedānta.

The following is a tentative estimate of what is required :

Temple with a Prayer Hall for 500, heated centrally or by electric radiators	£20,000
Additional accommodation	3,000
Allowance of 10% for rise in costs after two or three years	2,300
Cost of site suitably situated and suffi- ciently large to allow for extension	4,000
Services of a structural engineer, quantity surveyor, etc.	3,000
Initial deposit, the interest on which will go solely towards the cost of main- tenance—at least	5,000
	<hr/>
	£37,300
	<hr/>

Thus, in view of the heavy cost of purchasing a suitable site in London and of building, a sum of approximately £37,300 or over four lakhs and ninety-four thousand rupees will be required.

We, therefore, appeal for contributions for the erection of a Temple and Prayer Hall, able to accommodate at least 500 people, which will be the first Temple and Prayer Hall not only in U.K. but also in Europe. We earnestly hope that this urgent need will be fulfilled before long and that all sections of people will contribute liberally.

The names of contributors will be suitably displayed in the Prayer Hall. Persons who contribute £500 or more, or £1,000 or more, shall be considered Benefactors or Patrons respectively. If any person subscribes the cost of an entire building, then that building shall be named after the donor.

All contributions should be made payable to the RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: TEMPLE AND PRAYER HALL ACCOUNT. They will be thankfully received and acknowledged by any one of the following :

- (i) Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Howrah Dt., India.
- (ii) Lloyds Bank, 29, Netaji Subhas Road, Calcutta, India.
- (iii) Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, 68 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N. 10, England.

(sd.) B. G. Kher,
Alaka, Khar, Bombay 21.

(sd.) Swami Ghanananda,
President, Ramakrishna Vedanta
Centre, London.

(sd.) N. C. Chatterjee,
President, Hindu Mahasabha.
27th June, 1956.

Hon. Solicitors:

T. L. Wilson & Co.,

6, Westminster Palace Gdns.,

Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

Acknowledgments

An Indian devotee £1,208 3s. od./Rs. 16,008.

Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Chandler £500.

An Indian businessman and devotee (earmarked for site) £1,000.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA SILCHAR

REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1952 TO 1954

This Sevashrama, recognized as a branch centre of the Ramakrishna Mission in February 1939, now enters its forty-first year. Flood-relief has been a persistent and prominent activity of the Ashrama. Workers of the Mission took very active part in alleviating the distress of people during all the

floods which visited Cachar since 1915. During the exodus from Pakistan in 1950 when the uprooted people began to arrive in Cachar by hundreds, the Mission was placed in charge of two camps. The number of refugees in the camps reached as high as 1011, and 758 were fed daily on an average. The camps were opened on 12.3.50 and closed on 5.5.50. Efforts were made to introduce cottage industries among the refugees and they were helped to start trades according to their respective family traditions and avocations. The sick, the invalid, and the widows were helped with money, clothes, and blankets; and children were given milk. A sum of Rs. 750/- was disbursed for purchase of books to students. 1391 pieces of saris and dhotis, 200 pieces of blankets, 6300 yds. of shirting and 89 pieces of garments were distributed free.

Cash doles were given to deserving sufferers up to June 1953 beginning from February 1950.

From November 1952 to February 1953, 36 lectures were given with the help of slides about Indian Culture and the teachings and ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, in different parts of Cachar, besides a series of 11 lectures at various High Schools.

A Students' Home attached to the Sevashrama has been in existence for over 25 years. It endeavours to give the boys social, moral, and spiritual training along with their studies. There were 13 students on an average every year in the Home. Because of the introduction of compulsory primary education in this region by Assam Education Board, the Sevashrama Committee did not think it any longer necessary to continue the Vivekananda Night School which was accordingly closed from May, 1954. It is hoped it will be converted into an institution for giving practical vocational training. Religious discourses were held at the Sevashrama for 40 days in 1952, 63 in 1953, and 51 in 1954. The Holy Mother Centenary was celebrated from 4th to 7th November, 1954, in a solemn and serene atmosphere.

Our needs and appeal:

	Rs.
1. Repaying of debts incurred in land acquisition	4000/-
2. Raising the site of Sevashrama above flood level	5000/-
3. Construction of permanent building for Students' Home to accommodate 20 students	20000/-
4. Purchase of books and repair of flood-damages to the Library	2000/-
5. Construction of a <i>Nat-Mandir</i> to make more space available for worshippers in the temple	20000/-

We fervently approach the generous public, firms, associations, and limited concerns to come forward to contribute their mite to keep up the Sevashrama and help in the expansion of its Seva-work.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA CHERRAPUNJI

Reports for the years 1951-54

High School, Cherrapunji : This institution was started in 1931 as a Middle English School and was gradually raised to the status of a full-fledged High School in 1938. Since 1948 it is permanently affiliated to the Gauhati University. So far 82 students have passed the Matriculation Examination from the institution. The staff consists of 17 qualified and experienced teachers of whom 6 are graduates.

Matriculation results, 1951-54 :

year	appeared	passed
1951	5	5
1952	7	6
1953	4	4
1954	10	9

Statement of rolls, 1951-54 :

year	boys	girls	total
1951	246	131	377
1952	268	159	427
1953	278	185	463
1954	307	210	517
1955	327	195	522

The people of the Hills are mostly poor. During the years 1951-54 the Mission spent Rs. 19,000/- in granting scholarships, stipends, books and fees to the students in addition to the scholarships they received from the Government.

Weaving, Tailoring, and Typewriting are taught as vocational subjects. A music class has been started this year since the tribal students have a great taste for it.

To compensate the loss incurred under the head 'Income from fees' during the years 1953 and 1954 the State Government gave grants amounting to Rs. 3,300/- The school received non-recurring grants of Rs. 45,233/- from the State and Central Governments during the years under report. With the grants received this year a Library and Reading Room wing is being added to the building.

The Technical School, Cherrapunji: Has Weaving, Tailoring, Sewing and Needle Work, and Typewriting Sections. The School is housed in a building of its own, the foundation of which was laid in October 1952 by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister. It was opened by Sri Bishnuram

Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam, in December 1954. In addition to the High School students who come for vocational training, there are 25 students. The technical School received Rs. 50,000/- as non-recurring grant from the State and Central Governments.

Lower Primary Schools, Cherrapunji : At the end of 1949 the Mission opened two more branches of the Lower Primary School in two other parts of the village. There are five teachers for all the three schools. The monthly expenditure is Rs. 150/- borne entirely by the Mission. One of the Schools has a building of its own, built with a Central Government grant received during last year.

The Students' Home, Cherrapunji : Attached to the Ashrama is the Home run under the direct supervision of the workers of the Mission, serving the purpose of a boys' hostel for the High School, the Technical School and the Lower Primary Schools. The Boarders themselves do by turns most of the work of the Home. Some teachers of the school also live in the Home. The following statement shows the roll strength of the Home during the years under report and the number granted concessions in fees :

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Roll of strength	26	23	17	19	26
Number of students with concessions	16	13	10	9	17

The present Students' Home block can accommodate only 20 boys. So the Mission is now building a new hostel to accommodate 50 boys. A grant of Rs. 10,000/- has already been received for this purpose from the State Government. During the years under report the Dining Hall and kitchen were rebuilt at a cost of Rs. 20,000/-. The Central Government have given Rs. 19,000/- for walling, levelling, terracing and water supply ; and Rs. 500/- for bee-keeping.

Attached to the Ashrama and the Home is a Gosālā with 14 head of cattle. It gives about 15 seers of milk for use in the Home. Last year the Central Government sanctioned a grant for the improvement of the Dairy Farm and repairs of the shed.

Charitable Homeopathic Dispensary, Cherrapunji: As the Government Dispensary is a little far from the main village the Mission started the Dispensary in order to help the poor people of Cherrapunji and the neighbouring villages. At present about 40 patients attend it every day. The Central Welfare Board gave last year a grant of Rs. 1,000/- for purchase of medicines, equipment, and furniture.

The Middle English School, Nongwar : Out of 19 students who appeared in Middle English School Leaving Certificate and Scholarship Examination during 1951 to 1954, 16 passed. The Middle English Section receives a monthly grant from the Government. The Mission has also received grants from the Central and State Governments for starting a free Reading Room and Library at Nongwar.

The Ashrama and the Middle English School, Shella : The Ashrama activities including service in the shrine are conducted by local Khasi devotees. In 1952 the Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with Sri Jairamdas Doulatram, Governor of Assam, in the chair. In 1954, a three-day function was organized to celebrate the Birth Centenary of Sri Sarada Devi. In 1953 Sri Bishnuram Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam, paid a visit to the Ashrama.

Attached to the Ashrama there is a free Reading Room and Library. In 1954 and 1955 grants were received from the Central and State Governments for the improvement of the Library and its building.

The Middle English School is recognized and aided by the Government. It has at present 4 teachers. Of the 4 students who appeared in the Middle English School Leaving Certificate and Scholarship Examination during 1951-54, 3 passed. The School received during the years 1954 and 1955 grants from the Governments.

Our Needs :

	Rs.
1. Repairs and extension of the High School	40,000/-
2. Completion of new Hostel at Cherrapunji	45,200/-
3. Prayer Hall at Cherrapunji	25,000/-
4. Electricity and Water Supply	15,000/-
5. Quarters for teachers at Cherrapunji	25,000/-
6. Completion of Dispensary building at Cherrapunji	12,000/-
7. Purchase of land for the Lower Primary Schools	3,000/-
8. Improvement of the Dairy Farm	5,000/-
9. Night School and Social Education	25,000/-
10. Playground for the High School	5,000/-
11. Guest House at Cherrapunji	25,000/-
12. A girls' Hostel at Cherrapunji	25,000/-
13. Nongwar School and Hostel buildings	40,000/-
14. Nongwar Free Reading Room and Library	10,000/-
15. Shella Hostel and Playground	25,000/-

16. Shella Lecture Hall and Culture Centre	25,000/-
17. Publication of books	10,000/-
18. Wiping out accumulated deficits	60,440/-
Total	4,20,640/-

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, SHYAMALATAL

REPORT FOR 1954

With the end of 1954, the Sevashrama has completed the fortieth year of its useful service. Nestled in the deep Himalayan forests, with groups of hamlets here and there, the Sevashrama, with its 12 beds, has been the one and only source of permanent medical relief to the helpless hill-people within a radius of 15 miles. Being located near the trade-route between Tibet and the plains, this charitable hospital has to serve many Bhutias and members of other communities, who, falling ill in the jungles and utterly helpless, come for treatment here. Sometimes the accommodation for 12 indoor patients proves very inadequate and arrangements have to be made for extra beds on the floor, to the inconvenience of the patients and the staff.

A distinctive feature of the Sevashrama is the Veterinary Department which treats various diseases of domestic animals and also performs surgical operations.

The Sevashrama has treated 1,52,154 patients in its general department since its inception up to date. Out of the total number of 6,751 patients treated for 1954, 137 were indoor and 5,486 outdoor, with 1,128 repeated cases. The total number of animals treated in the Veterinary Department during the year was, 8 indoor and 1,888 outdoor with 190 repeated cases.

We propose to add 4 more beds and make other necessary improvements for which Rs. 25,000/- will be needed. Besides we are in urgent need of: 1. a permanent fund of not less than Rs. 50,000/- for maintenance and general expenses, and 2. a permanent fund of Rs. 25,000/- for the treatment of animals. We make an appeal to the generous public, in the name of the afflicted, to help us fulfil the above-mentioned schemes.

We offer our hearty thanks and best wishes to all our kind donors, subscribers, well-wishers, and friends who have helped us in serving the afflicted and helpless people of these parts, as also the dumb creatures.