

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LXIII

JANUARY 1958

No. 1



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

REALITY

BY MRS. LOIS L. DAHL

This is God's Playground!
—His creation;
Evil and Good
in recreation,
and we are His toys.

This is God's Playground!
—His profusion;
the Real obscured
by our delusion,
and through us He plays.

We come
from Him,
and when
we Know;

Back
again
to Him
we go.

Our playground souls
are in disguise,
only seen clearly
through His eyes.

When we give way
to His direction,
our performance
reaches perfection.

This is God's Playground!

MENTAL PREPARATION FOR EFFICIENT SERVICE

BY THE EDITOR

I

Actual work gives the best training. Every work implies the overcoming of some resistance, obstacle, or unfavourable factor present in the environment. Whatever theoretical knowledge we may have of these resistances, we do not realize their exact nature or strength unless we put our own force into the environment and mark the reactions. It takes some time even for a diligent experimenter to co-ordinate his theoretical knowledge with his direct awareness of the play of forces about him. In many cases, what is practised in a controlled area constitutes only a bare preliminary step. It must be followed by quite different steps, taken in more and more open areas where one may encounter unexpected forces at every turn. Everyone knows that it is one thing to learn to drive a car round and round in a vacant meadow, but that it is a far more complicated matter to be able to drive it safely and with ease along crowded streets during 'office hours', when traffic, as they say, usually reaches its 'peak'. Herein comes the need to take the help of a competent guide,—the need to watch his actions and listen to his verbal instructions till they enter the mind of the student, penetrate into his habit level, and without fail suggest to him the right course to adopt in all contexts. All skills come under this category,—particularly those related to activities affecting the time and energy, the progress and fortunes, of large sections of the public.

We may take the example of a trained school teacher, to begin with. He has to finish a certain set of subjects or topics in the course of the year. He may lecture, give home exercises, or take other measures, as he chooses, but the net result must be to bring his students to the required standard of proficiency before the twelve months are over.

His one advantage is that every student is ordinarily anxious to come up to the expectations of his parents at home, of his companions in the classroom, and of the teacher himself. What happens, however, is that this initial anxiety or eagerness becomes dissipated by a number of factors which the young man may be unable to control unaided. Depressing influences, antagonistic to studies, can come from the knowledge of the family's economic difficulties or from irritations caused by unsympathetic neighbours. They can also come from conflicts originating in the playground. When left unresolved, they have a tendency to rankle in the minds of the opposing parties and to distract their attention even while listening to the lectures in the classroom. Lastly, there is the onrush of tremendous energy at puberty, creating serious problems unless properly canalized.

The successful teacher is he, who takes note of every factor and gently puts in a word here and an explanation there in the midst of casual talks. If he can help his students to get a better perspective, they will alter their conduct of their own accord in due course. Many who rose to great heights started their careers from very humble beginnings. They were either poor, or had to fight against severe odds to complete their education. They had to struggle hard to create the facilities for doing research or producing works of art. Physical disabilities like blindness could not daunt them, nor could financial handicaps like huge debts, or persecution, religious or political, dry up the springs of their enthusiasm. Greatness came to them, because they called it forth from within themselves. Adversities only made the calls more insistent, and the inner responses abundant and creative. The wise teacher knows how to present the lives of eminent men and women to his students in

such ways as to stimulate their imagination and make them frame 'heroic' ideals suited to their inborn tastes. He knows also the value of taking active interest in their games and outdoor activities. Desire to develop a powerful physique, to excel in singing or painting, or to become impressive on the platform or the stage is as strong in growing minds as the impulse to master the prescribed text-books. That teacher alone serves most who discerns the total range of the student's personality and emotionally plants himself at its very centre. To the extent he can do this, his words and suggestions will become capable of awakening dormant virtues. There can be no greater source of encouragement to his students, no better incentive to the re-grouping of mental powers, than the consciousness that their revered teacher taps them only on their bright sides even though he knows all their failings as they themselves do. The energy needed to hold steadfastly to the idea of their all round progress, as if it were an accomplished fact, is not much more than what is needed to detect and accurately hit the sore spots of their character. Surely, they would not be cunning enough to hide them from the experienced eyes of elderly men.

There is, however, a world of difference between the results of the two efforts. To the teacher, it must be the most enjoyable of disciplines to dwell in confident expectation, and to be the actual witness, of the steady unfolding of his students' inborn gifts. In due course his whole inside would become so charged with positive thoughts and active good will that Nature would respond by bringing to him individuals of different types to be benefited by his benign influence. As for the students themselves, his trust-inspiring presence would constitute an unfailing source of strength at all times. It would reinforce their self-reliance and suggest to them most original ways of tackling their problems. They may get into troubles owing to faulty observation or hasty judgement. Or some emotions may prove to be turbulent, and in a misguided frontal attack on them, they might miss

precious opportunities to develop skills which could balance them from the start and ultimately neutralize them altogether. But whatever might be the nature of the discord, the teacher's talks and example would instil into them the habit of returning with redoubled vigour and determination to the task of mastering the forces involved. To those who are thus trained, defeat can never be the cause of fear or shame. It must ever be the signal for greater vigilance and more intensive effort.

II

The home is as good a training ground as the school. In some respects it is even better. Corresponding to the teacher in the school, we have in the home the father, the mother, or some other member who stands at the helm of affairs. In the school there is some homogeneity since the students in a class fall more or less into the same age group and have common subjects to learn within the prescribed time. In the house, on the other hand, we have people of different ages, temperaments, and capacities or willingness to work. The complications caused by this very diversity tend to call forth a greater variety of abilities from the head of the family than the problems of the school do from the teacher. While the school is meant only to teach and not to maintain the students, the family as a whole has to function as an earning unit all the time. Each adult has to carry out regularly a certain number of services connected with the supply of food and other amenities for the entire group. The head has to infuse his own zeal into the others and make them work, earn, and save as much as possible. One member may work in a government office or in a private firm. His salary means a steady income, though probably small. Another may grow food crops if the family has lands of its own. Adverse weather or pests may affect this type of work, as all cultivators know. Or, if there is the necessary talent, the family's surplus may be invested in a business concern of their own. But whatever course is adopted, it is clear that the education of the children and

the improvement of the prospects of the family depend on the creative output of all the members put together. If one works less, or falls ill, the burden on the others proportionately increases. Love is a factor that can smoothen rough edges and render hard work pleasing. But it is easy to see that if the head of the family is unable to combine his love with a reasonable measure of sternness and discipline, the team spirit will be broken by the undue laziness of some of the youngsters and a general discord among the rest.

To achieve the best results the parent has to play the part of an educator within his small circle. His talks and actions must be such as to rouse the enthusiasm of the rest and centre it round some powerful symbol like the prestige of the family, love for the community, one's own perfection, or devotion to God.

As each class is related to others in the same school, and as schools themselves are related to one another, so houses too are connected by various ties to other houses to form villages, towns, and bigger groups. Through friendships with people living in different localities, through social gatherings and festivals as well as through business dealings, these ties become so strengthened that the consciousness of belonging to bigger and bigger groups gradually dawns on every member of any household. It is the duty of parents to speed up this process and to devise measures to see that their unit stands abreast of others in respect of general culture, if it cannot actually form a model for them to follow.

If we go round the country, we shall come across a few families which for generations together produced a series of eminent personages,—artists, industrialists, social workers, political leaders, or saintly characters. It must have formed part of their family 'tradition' to introduce in the ways of thinking and feeling,—naturally of talking and acting—of its members certain elements of refinement and of higher values which formed an effective mould to shape the lives of its children from their earliest years. Continuous efforts in this direction produced, as it were, an invisible 'suction'

area that regulated not only the training of the family's members and attendants, but even their entry into it through the apparently simple processes of marriages, births, and the appointments of tutors or guides. The Hindu mind will easily see in such phenomena clear vindications of the law that steady aspiration exerts an irresistible pull, and brings into the area of the aspiring person those entities and situations that fairly correspond to the essence of the aspiration.

If the heart is moved by a passion for loving service, there is no reason why students, patients, customers, and assistants should not flock to a teacher, doctor, merchant, or social worker. What happens is that in most cases the mind of the serving person is not thoroughly purified. While extending a cordial welcome to those who join his party or come for his help, he entertains feelings of suspicion, jealousy, and enmity towards other 'leaders' in the field, whom he regards as his rivals. The formation of a well-knit organization for service of any kind is delayed or prevented to the extent that the attractive power of love is nullified by the opposing pulls of base emotions. How can the flow of favourable forces be continuous if the virtuous inclinations implied in the attitude of service are constantly marred by the oscillations of personal likes and dislikes?

III

Let us now turn to a much vaster type of training ground, viz. groups of villages situated in out of the way places. Thoughtful people have all along recognized that greater care should be bestowed upon them and that active measures should be taken to carry the benefits of education to them as a first step. But formidable obstacles stood in the way.

Those who got higher education had a natural disinclination to remain in villages. They wanted to be in places where they could enjoy the conveniences to which they had got accustomed when they stayed as students in fashionable cities. This meant that they

should earn enough money. They could do it only by working in towns where government offices were located or big commercial firms transacted their business. The movement was not, therefore, into the villages, as desired. It was rather away from them. For village youths who could afford to defray the necessary expenses started moving into important towns, first for gaining education, and later, to settle down permanently to earn wealth like others, as well as to enjoy the facilities which they could not easily have in their distant homes. Those, however, who had extensive lands for cultivation did go back to the villages. They became instrumental in establishing schools and creating various other amenities for the benefit of themselves and the people living all around.

In pre-independence days in India, it was not easy to carry on constructive work in villages. Those who represented the alien rulers were a few local men. While one kept a list of the lands and collected taxes, another settled disputes by holding a miniature court. Some villages had no policemen; they did not need any. The cultivators, weavers, smiths, washermen, and petty shop-keepers who formed the bulk of the inhabitants knew the advantages of living in amity with one another. There were many things to be done to make their lives more fruitful. In fact one could draw up a pretty long list of them arranged under such convenient heads as medical aid, irrigation facilities, cheap agricultural loans, better opportunities for marketing their produce, and so on. As against these there were a few improvements made here and there by the people themselves. For example the main street was kept in repair by the village association (Panchāyat) with the free labour available locally. Some pumping engines and transport lorries had come into the area. They were purchased for personal use by the richer men who were also willing to rent them out for the use of others who were able to pay, and so on. These heralded something better to come next. But there could be no substantial advance on all fronts

unless there was a radical change at the very top and a passion for service descended from there right down to the lowest layers where the masses lived and toiled hard. The result was the struggle for national freedom.

During the days of the struggle, the leaders of the village had a difficult part to play. The house of the rich or influential person who had spent his time, energy, or money to set up a school or a dispensary or owned an engine, a lorry, or a car kept its doors open for a variety of guests. National workers went there for food, shelter, and even for funds and moral support. Officers who had the total welfare of the nation at heart but whose loyalty to the government prevented them from openly showing it out in all respects, invariably halted there-on their rounds to push through whatever plans of improvement were sanctioned from above. On the other hand, there were also detectives and officers of an unsympathetic type who camped in the very same house, received hospitality like others, and tried their best to crush the national movement even if it meant imprisonment of the host and forfeiture of his property a few days later. Patriotism is a force that inspires men and women irrespective of their social status. Officials and non-officials, the rich and the poor, may respond alike to its influence. The difference lies only in the ways in which their respective sacrifices and services express themselves in tangible shape.

IV

With the attainment of independence, one main obstacle to the improvement of villages is permanently removed. The question now is one of patient constructive work. There is no need to discuss here details of the various schemes meant to increase agricultural production, start cottage industries, improve marketing facilities and so on. The government machinery can be trusted to do all that is necessary in these directions, subject to its two serious limitations,—lack of funds, and of an adequate number of trained persons to expedite, economize, smoothen, and co-ordinate

the different stages in the translation of schemes into actual service.

One wise step that has been taken is to utilize the services of school teachers who evince exceptional powers of leadership. If they are able to rouse the enthusiasm of their students through formal teaching combined with a careful planning of extra-curricular activities, why should they not be able, with a little training, to put an altered stress in their general approach, and succeed in stimulating the creative efforts of the adult population of villages as well? What will be demanded of them will be a harmonization of the attitudes of a teacher, a parent, and an officer with the emotional identification of themselves as men born and bred up in the villages they visit. That should not be a difficult task to an educated man (or woman) who loves his less advanced countrymen. The National Extension Service is so arranged that he can get the necessary facilities for taking up a number of villages and organizing there Youth Clubs, Adult Schools and Women's Associations, or for conducting Rural Libraries and giving periodic Film Shows. The variety and extent of his programmes and work depend upon his resourcefulness and his ability to handle the masses in every context.

The Trainees are usually graduates with Teacher's Diploma. Some are Masters of Art or Science. They are drawn from a number of States and grouped in convenient Centres. It goes without telling that their mother tongues differ from one another. They also belong to different religions and creeds. A batch of sixty, for example, may contain Arya Samajists, Brahmo Samajists, Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, and Sanatanists as well as Shias and Sunnis, coming from Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Kerala, Mysore, Orissa and Tamilnad,—to put them alphabetically if one is interested in such analysis.

This free mixing of 'leaders' of constructive work on an all-India basis, cutting across the barriers erected by language and religion, is pregnant with brilliant possibilities. It is

bound to be one of the most potent forces to achieve national solidarity. It stands in striking contrast to the harm done by misguided elements in the political field, who exhibit, here as well as elsewhere, an uncanny originality in singling out points of difference and emphasize them with a perverse tenacity till splits appear where oneness prevailed before. It is a crude way of looking at things to imagine that unity can be 'forged' by heaping discordant elements and hammering them with bitter arguments, violent denunciations or hostile mass demonstrations. Unity must be of hearts. The real leader must have a special eye to see in what respects it already exists. Without damaging these, he must get the clue from them as to the new areas into which it could be extended with the full glow of enthusiasm of all concerned. Before the will of the majority enforces painful cuts and divisions, he should be able to notice if any agency would be left in the minority or outside it to secure its whole-hearted love and co-operation afterwards. If there is none in sight and he cannot improvise one, the damage would indeed be irreparable for the country as a whole.

Many more problems will raise their heads and demand solutions from the social worker when he is actually in the field. Religion too will be one of them. The Government, for its own reasons, may have declared itself to be secular in its outlook. But the worker has his own particular religious background which must influence his judgements in various subtle ways. The Government school where no religion is taught and the home where a certain uniformity of religious belief is natural differ very much from villages where families belonging to many religious sections live in friendship side by side. When villages grow in importance they will attract the attentions of disruptionists as well as aggressive proselytizers. When faced with such conditions, what is the duty of the educated organizer posted there after special training? It is clear he must have a firm philosophic background if he is to weather all storms and at the same

time stimulate creative activity along all the healthy channels that true religious faith opens up in the minds of the masses. How can such a background be formed? We hope wise people will have their own valuable suggestions to make.

WHAT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MEANS TO ME

BY REV. ANDREW B. LEMKE

Man is born to suffer over the meaning of life and, by deep yearning, to realize God; and the scriptures are both the record of that suffering and the revelation that comes in answer to that yearning.

Each generation of mankind is a repetition of the preceding generations. Therefore, the suffering, the yearning, and the revelation are a continuing process. The record is never closed, the revelation is never once and for all time delivered unto the saints.

In the fullness of this modern day the agelong record has been amplified and a brilliant revelation has illumined the heart of man in the person of Sri Ramakrishna.

The record of this remarkable man's life and sayings is contained in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and in the writings promulgated by the Order of monks which bears his name. Many others, as well, have put their hand to the loving task of creating a record of appreciation, among them such notables as the great Orientalist and Sanskrit scholar Fredrich Max Mueller, and the popular French author Romain Rolland.

The record came to my attention fifteen years ago when Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York city, published his thousand page translation of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. *Time*, a weekly newsmagazine, carried a review which hailed *The Gospel* as unique in the field of hagiography, and in the review presented pictures of Sri Ramakrishna and Kāli the Divine Mother of the universe.

What can one say about these pictures of

Sri Ramakrishna and the Divine Mother? It is as though one were stopped dead in his tracks. The sensation of abrupt and sudden stillness after years of inward turmoil! The overwhelming conviction, "I believe this is it you have found what you have been looking for how strange that the answer to yearning should come so unexpectedly and casually, and from such a great distance as India you had better send for this book promptly and verify the impression."

Immediately an order was posted in the mail to a Boston bookstore for a copy of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. In due time it arrived, and in the subsequent reading came the fulfilment of every expectation.

Anyone who is attracted to Sri Ramakrishna will feel an instant kinship with Mahendranath Gupta, known as 'M', the author of *The Gospel*, on the very first page of chapter one when he describes the first time he met the Master—this chapter bears the title, 'Master And Disciple':

It was on a Sunday in spring, a few days after Sri Ramakrishna's birthday, that M. met him for the first time. Sri Ramakrishna lived at the Kālibāri, the temple garden of Mother Kāli, on the bank of the Ganges at Dakshineswar.

M., being at leisure on Sundays, had gone with his friend Sidhu. . . . They arrived at the main gate at dusk and went straight to Sri Ramakrishna's room. And there they found him seated on a wooden couch, facing the east. With a smile on his face he was talking of God. The room

was full of people, all seated on the floor, drinking in his words in deep silence.

M. stood there speechless and looked on. It was as if he were standing where all the holy places met and as if Śukadeva himself were speaking the word of God, or as if Śrī Chaitanya were singing the name and glories of the Lord in Puri with Rāmānanda, Swarūp, and the other devotees.

. . . . M. looked around him with wonder and said to himself: "What a beautiful place! What a charming man! How beautiful his words are! I have no wish to move from this spot."

The Gospel is a record of the conversations which the Master Sri Ramakrishna held with people of all walks of life on every conceivable subject that is dear to the heart of the religious man. He speaks of the most profound things with utter simplicity and clarity. His parables, anecdotes, and imagery are incomparable. The body was fragile, but the fragile body housed a spirit that was sheer compassionate strength. The Master in his life and teachings created a reservoir of grace that will resolve the doubts and conflicts of the honest seeker of truth, and allay all his fears. He is indeed the modern saviour of mankind.

This is the place to illustrate the truth of what we have said about Sri Ramakrishna. We live in an age of scientific wonders, and very likely are troubled about mechanistic philosophies that explain everything in terms of law, and we ask the question, "Can God violate law?" Or, we see all about us examples of apparent inequalities of wealth and suffering, and we ask the question, "Is God partial?" And we observe in God's creation that everything that is born must die, and we ask the question, "Though creation may be God's pleasure, is it not death to us?" These are the very questions which a seeker of truth named Nanda asked the Master. His answers penetrate to the heart of the matter:

Nanda: "Can God violate law?"

Master: "What do you mean? He is the Lord of all. He can do everything,

He who has made the law can also change it.

"But you may very well talk that way. Perhaps you want to enjoy the world, and that is why you talk that way. There is a view that a man's inner spirit is not awakened unless he is through with enjoyment. But what is there to enjoy? The pleasures of woman and gold? This moment they exist and the next moment they disappear. It is all momentary. And what is there in woman and gold? It is like the hog plum—all stone and skin. If one eats it, one suffers from colic. Or like a sweetmeat. Once you swallow it, it is gone."

Nanda remained silent a few minutes. Then he said: "Oh, yes. People no doubt talk that way. But is God partial? If things happen through God's grace, then I must say God is partial."

Master: "But God Himself has become everything—the universe and its living beings. You will realize it when you have Perfect Knowledge. God Himself has become the twenty-four cosmic principles: the mind, intellect, body, and so forth. Is there anyone but Himself to whom He can show partiality?"

After singing a song about the Divine Mother's sweet will, Sri Ramakrishna Continued: "The Divine Mother is full of bliss. Creation, preservation, and destruction are the waves of Her sportive pleasure. Innumerable are the living beings. Only one or two among them obtain liberation. And that makes her happy. Some are being entangled in the world and some are being liberated from it."

Nanda: "It may be Her sweet will; but it is death to us."

Master: "But who are you? It is the Divine Mother who has become all this. It is only as long as you do not know Her that you say, 'I', 'I'.

"All will surely realize God. All will be liberated. It may be that some get

their meal in the morning, some at noon, and some in the evening; but none will go without food. All, without any exception, will certainly know their real Self.

“Try to find out what this ‘I’ is. Is this ‘I’ the bones or flesh or blood or intestines? Seeking the ‘I’, you discover ‘Thou’. In other words, nothing exists inside you but the power of God. There is no ‘I’, but only ‘He’. That ego is to be renounced.”

(pages 817-819)

Is not non-duality the heart of the matter? God is indeed the One-Without-A-Second. In this unity all questions are resolved.

A few moments of honest introspection will make this abundantly clear. Let the aspirant mentally review his autobiography and then ask himself if his ego-centric experiences are worth preserving for ever, if immortality is desirable for the ego-centric self. In the light of this honest insight, he will rejoice to say, “Thou! Thou!” To die to the little self, and to merge in the Supreme Self, is surely pure gain. “That thou art.”

Then let him mentally review the secular biography of mankind which bears the caption ‘history’, and readily he will see that historical events are “like the grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourishes, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.” Nothing exists but the power of God.

However, Sri Ramakrishna did say that there is no harm in retaining the ripe ego, only the unripe ego must be renounced. One must retain a little ego if one wishes to enjoy the glory of the Lord. Sri Ramakrishna expressed it this way, “I do not want to be sugar, I want to taste sugar.” It is the unripe ego that must be renounced—“That ego is to be renounced.”

What an amazing book *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* is! A thousand pages of inspiration and wisdom. And, behold the man revealed in these pages! Is He not the Lord of the universe? Is he not the modern saviour of mankind?

This is what Sri Ramakrishna means to me.

There remains to say a closing word about the need of a teacher. In order to assimilate the sayings and life of Sri Ramakrishna a teacher is essential. The Master Himself said that one can never really know what butter is by merely hearing about it, or even seeing it, that to know what butter is one must taste butter. On his own the student can read the Gospel, and rejoice in beholding the Lord, but to assimilate the profound instruction a teacher is necessary.

By the grace of the Master it has been my great good fortune to have for teacher the same Swami Nikhilananda who translated *The Gospel*, a dedicated monk of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna, completely at home in both Eastern and Western cultures.

During fifteen years of instruction, he has imparted knowledge of Vēdānta, stressed the importance of an intimate familiarity with the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, and Spiritual Talks of the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, the Brahma-Sūtras; introduced the great epics Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata; taught methods of meditation and concentration; held up the ideals of renunciation and continence; and, in frequent visits with him at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York city, and Vivekananda Cottage at Thousand Island Park on the St. Lawrence River, Swami Nikhilananda has shared his environment of holiness and devotion to the Lord.

So far no mention has been made of Sri Sarada Devi known by all followers of Sri Ramakrishna as The Holy Mother. This is not an oversight. Her sweet presence is never absent from the mind that dwells on the Master. To think of the one is to think of the other. They who were Rāma and Sītā, they who were Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, they have incarnated in modern times as Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi The Holy Mother. That which is called Brahman in the attributeless state, that which is known as Mother Kālī or Brahman-With-Attributes, that has appeared

in the flesh in this modern day as Sri Ramakrishna-Sri Sarada Devi.

He is the Lord of the universe who has created in this modern day holy communion for the devotee.

What does Sri Ramakrishna mean to me?

HOW TO DO REAL GOOD TO THE WORLD

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Our best work is done, our greatest influence is exerted when we are without thought of self. All great geniuses know this. Let us open ourselves to the one Divine Actor and let Him act, and do nothing ourselves. 'Oh, Arjuna! I have no duty in the whole world', says Krishna. Be perfectly resigned, perfectly unconcerned; then alone can you do any true work. No eyes can see the real forces; we can only see the results. Put out self, lose it, forget it; just let God work, it is His business. We have nothing to do but to stand aside and let God work. The more we go away, the more God comes in. Get rid of the little 'I' and let only the great 'I' live.

Get rid of this puny 'I'; kill this diabolism in us. "Not I but Thou," say it, feel it, live it. Until we give up the world manufactured by this little ego, never can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. None ever did, none ever will.

Those who give themselves up completely to the Lord do more for the world than all the so-called workers. One man who has purified himself thoroughly, accomplishes more than a regiment of preachers. Out of purity and silence comes the word of power.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

It is a joyous sight to find people lending a helping hand to others and trying to do their neighbours a good turn. In life everyone has to pass through trials and tribulations and bear crosses. Even amidst these struggles of ours when we try to help others, it indicates that there is a spark of Divinity within us.

This divine spark is latent in each and every one. But does it always manifest completely as we go on in life? If it does not manifest, why does it not? That is a question we should ponder over very seriously.

There is the spirit of sacrifice more or less in all. The world is not so bad. Parents sacrifice so much for their children. A friend sometimes sacrifices his best interests for the sake of his friend. There are many such illustrations. But here also the divine spark does not manifest itself completely because there may be or is some amount of selfishness lurking beneath. In many acts of charity there is a great deal of selfishness involved. Nevertheless, one should say, they are good

because it is just our human duty to think in terms of the welfare of our neighbours. But if one wants to bring out the Divinity within oneself completely, one should always be alert and watch the motive behind one's actions, behind even the so-called acts of sacrifice. In this way only, the best result will come.

The first problem in our life is the problem of bread or bare material existence. That being solved, we think of problems which are not so essential or may even be of the nature of luxuries. There are luxuries of different kinds and varieties. There are physical luxuries, there are also intellectual luxuries—they are sometimes of the worst type. After getting education one may simply kill one's time in reading, studying and enjoying books. One may forget that one has duties to others—that one owes it to oneself to share one's intellectual wealth and advantages with others. Swami Vivekananda said with reference to the condition in India: "I consider every educated man a traitor who, after getting education,

does not try to do good to others. He is a traitor to the country."

There is a great deal of talk in the air about doing good to the world. But if we are to do real good to the world, we should consider how best we can do that. Doing good to the world involves two factors: first, compassionate and kind acts as a part of the development of our inner life, secondly, works done objectively without any reference to our inner growth. Usually one thinks of doing or even goes out to do good acts to others with different motives but not necessarily one relating to one's inner development.

What is ordinarily meant by doing good to the world? It is meant to do some charitable deeds such as giving money to the poor, distributing food to the hungry and so on. Or those who have power, influence and resources think in terms of starting hospitals and dispensaries, giving free education, solving grievances of labour unions, making good parks for the city and the like. But one simple question. Suppose all these and many other similar things have been accomplished, will that solve the problems of an individual being? Will that give one real happiness or the security of peace with himself? Man is ever restless and dissatisfied. That is the fundamental problem of life. Until that is solved, no one can be happy.

What has been the outcome of ordinary human efforts to bring happiness or to do good to the world? Let us think boldly and clearly and let us see the facts. Take the problem of bread. Even in very rich countries there are persons who are poor and have not enough of what they want. If we take the population of the world as a whole, vast numbers of persons are ill-fed and ill-clad. This is due not simply to circumstances. The selfishness, avarice, and greed ingrained in human minds and economic exploitation are greatly responsible for this. Yet, for several thousands of years people are hearing or talking of doing good to the world.

Let us take the case of education. In the last two or three centuries education has spread

rapidly. But what has been the outcome of that? A professor of Sociology by elaborate research recently gathered statistics and came to the conclusion that educated men are not necessarily much better ethically than persons belonging to the rank and file. The number of criminals has increased in the last few centuries. When modern education is spread by outside agencies, however benevolent, in backward countries among those who have not so much wealth and resources, it has been observed that some of the vices of modern civilization such as alcoholism, venereal diseases, etc. crop up. People become sophisticated, more criminally minded, cynical and dishonest. If the spread of education brings in such deplorable results, there is something wrong with the system of education. One writer said, "The whole trouble with education is that we want to spread ideas but do not take pains to build the inner life." Education does not always give moral strength. It gives us power, for knowledge is power. But that power does not bring in peace or happiness. Even highly educated persons are sometimes found wanting when a serious problem arises in life. They just give way. But those who get education not through books but from the book of life can cope with difficult situations much better. Swami Vivekananda said that education is the bringing out of the perfection which is already within each man. The perfection is within, but our education does not bring that out. It gives us a lot of information, but the accumulation of information does not help us to face life. Willy-nilly we have to face the trials and tribulations of life, and sometimes we have to face them all alone. From that standpoint one cannot say that education has been a great success.

A new situation has arisen as a result of scientific knowledge and scientific discoveries. Science has given more power in the hands of man than he is morally or ethically equipped for. Not that scientific knowledge is bad, but the tendency to utilize it for destructive purposes has become almost pathologically great.

According to one report in the 19th century there were 8,527 scientific discoveries. In the 18th century the number was 1,574. Statistics indicate that with scientific discoveries war casualties have been greater and greater. War casualties in the world from the 11th to the 19th century were something like 15 million, in the First World War the number was 20 million and in the Second World War the number of casualties rose to 50 million.

It is a crime against humanity that mass slaughter goes on this way. We call it nationalism. But nationalism has become a kind of disease, as a great thinker said. When we become frenzied by the thought of nationalism, we do not care if millions of people are sacrificed. We become proud of it. We have won the war. It is not the question of which side is aggressor or which side is at fault. Let us look at the problem from the standpoint of humanity and the world. If a person commits a murder, he is hanged. If that murder is done on a mass scale, a very, very large scale in the form of war, it is accepted as inevitable or praised as victory when successful. And still the world has not grown wiser by the bitter experiences of the past. Is there not something fundamentally wrong in our outlook and thinking in spite of our so much crying, "Let us do good to the world?"

In order to do good to the world one should first know what will do real good to the world and how to achieve that. The very first thing to be considered is that one must have or acquire strength enough to shoulder the burden of others—the burden of society or the burden of the nation or the world. Unless one has strength of one's own, how can one take upon oneself the burden of others? When there is a fire, if you simply cry, "Fire! Fire!" that will be no help in the matter. You must know where water can be found, where the actual fire is, and then should try to extinguish it. Don't go after the smoke, reach that point where the heart of the fire is.

A saint speaking about the difficulties of many religious preachers said, "Their case is

like that of a person who without getting medical education goes out to give medicine to others." And the result is disastrous. In the same way, unless one has solved one's own problems, how can one expect to solve the problems of others? In our desire to remove the miseries of the world, we may give some physical relief, some form of education, but that does not give the final solution. The problem lies much deeper. The real problem is how to build up the inner life of a man or woman, so that one can have right outlook and the strength to follow that in practice. The difficulty with almost all men is that they do what they do not want to do, or they cannot do what they know to be right. This was the anguish of Duryodhana, this was also what even St. Paul once felt and said.

The development of intellectual acumen is the field of education, the development of inner strength belongs to the sphere of religion. To this an immediate reply may come from those who do not believe in or have no experience of real religion. They will say: The history of religion has not been very happy either. Religion has been given a trial for so many centuries, but it has been found wanting. It has not been able to solve even the economic problems of life. And there are many things to the discredit of religion. Many irreligious acts, many inhuman deeds have been and are perpetrated in the name of religion. In Christianity there was the Inquisition. Because of that many innocent persons have been burnt, saints have been imprisoned, prospective saints have been put to death. So there is something intrinsically wrong in religion. Let us keep clear of that.

George Bernard Shaw said, "Christianity has not been a failure, it has not been given a trial." Similarly one may say that religion has not been a failure; it has not been given a trial. Real religion means the establishment of our relationship with the Eternal. If we can achieve that, we find abiding peace and unflinching strength. Those who were successful in that, could climb up the Cross with equanimity, face death without fear and

dedicate their lives wholeheartedly to the service of humanity. Are there not shining examples of such great souls in the history of the world?

But does not religion make one selfish and self-centered? If one is to think so much about the development of one's inner life, has not one any duty to those who are suffering in life? The development of the inner life does not necessarily mean a sort of selfishness. Compassion, sympathy, kindness—they help one in developing one's inner life. Trying to help or serve others is itself a method of developing inner life. But the help to others should be given in a right spirit. An act of compassion should really be an expression of sympathy and not the outcome of pride or patronising attitude. One of the Upanishads says—

अद्वया देयम्, अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम् ।

—When you render any help to a person, do that with reverence; a help should not be given with irreverence. In the case of a help given with irreverence, it does harm to the giver, because it does generate pride and conceit in him. And it does harm to the receiver, for it hurts or destroys his sense of self-respect. So Swami Vivekananda would say that giver should give as an act of worship.

Real religion does not interfere with the work of humanitarian service. It only advises one how to do that in the right way. It is much easier to give than to give in the right spirit. So religion gives a warning. We cannot be too careful about this. It is not so easy to be really unselfish in life and give disinterested service to others. So be humble, know your shortcomings and go to work in a spirit of prayer. That is what real religion says. If emphasis is put on the attitude of work rather than on the forms of work, every work will be better. The worker will be transformed, and the works will have tremendous influence on society or the world.

In every religion two things are advocated: prayer or meditation and service. Christ said, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind." And

the second commandment was, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Sufism says, "Man's duties are to live abundantly in God and the next thing to be at peace with others." Swami Vivekananda said, "Devote your life to the liberation of your self and the welfare of the world." So two things always go together.

But the question is, which is first or more important? Anyone will know from experience that it is not possible to love a neighbour as oneself unless one's spiritual life has been built up to a great extent. Unless one's love for God has been developed one cannot have unselfish love for others. One may have a little sympathetic feeling at best. But that is not enough. Most often it spends itself in words and can stand hardly any test. Really disinterested works cannot be done in a dilettante, cavalier fashion or merely by enrolling oneself as a member of a philanthropic organization. Constant vigilance and heart-searching, hard persevering struggles are necessary for that. When one has developed genuine love for God, the struggles become easier.

It is said that Lao-tse, who had mystic vein in his philosophy, once met Confucius, who talked in terms of doing social good. Lao-tse told him, "Come, Sir, leave off your prond airs, conquer your desires, get free of this show and fuss. Such things add nothing to your worth."

Now, how to conquer the desires? Lao-tse said, "Act without striving, try to do good to the world, yes, but without making fuss about it. First, get rid of your pride and desires." He spoke of action but it must be without striving. What did he mean by action without striving? He meant that killing arrogance and conceit, stilling the forces of the scheming mind, surrendering the self to the keeping of the Spirit, paradoxically, will lead to the achievement of the greatest deeds. It seems selfish and paradoxical that one who concentrates all one's energy on the development

of these things, will be led to the accomplishment of the greatest deeds. But is it not very true?

Swami Vivekananda said that a person who

has touched the feet of the Infinite will be a power. If there are half a dozen such persons, they can shake the whole world and revolutionize the thoughts of mankind.

A HINDU SANCTUARY ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

BY SWAMI RITAJANANDA

Among the many rivers in the United States the St. Lawrence has a special fascination. Although it is not a celebrated river like the Mississippi, yet it is an important waterway connecting the great lakes with the ocean. Starting from lake Ontario it flows northwards and enters into the Atlantic ocean through the Gulf of St. Lawrence. For a distance of thirty miles below the lake, the river has a mean width of six miles and is filled with beautiful rocky and wooded islands, known as the Thousand Islands. Actually the number of islands in the river is more than 1,800. Island after island rises into view above the water's surface, when we travel along the river, many of the islands showing broad acres of cultivated farms and palatial homes, some very small with a couple of pine trees and some others remaining as wild as nature has made them. This area is noted for its scenic beauty and attracts hundreds of tourists from the United States and Canada. It has been called the "Venice of America". During summer months one can see numerous boats going round the islands like the gondolas in the canals of Venice. When the Red Indians were inhabiting this part of the country, they called this wide expanse of the river and isles as "Manatoana" or The Garden of the Great Spirit. Of the two large islands, Wellesley island is more than twelve miles long. It has a number of villages and State parks, where people can go and camp during the hot season. The international bridge between the United

States and Canada connects this island with both countries. Hence it is easy for people to visit the island by car. At the Western tip of the island is the place called Thousand Island Park. It is not exactly a park as the name would suggest, but a neat nice village with all modern conveniences. With the river on three sides of it and shady trees all around, the village is like a community center in a big garden. Some sixty years ago, even when the bridge was not built and travelling was difficult, it was a flourishing village during the summer months. It was chosen as a summer camp by members of the Methodist Church for leading an intense religious life. Though at present it is no more a religious camp, yet the place seems to retain an austere outlook on life and even today one does not find any cheap places of entertainment or bars for the sale of alcoholic liquors. Being away from the main traffic route, the village is free from the noise of cars and trucks. Behind the village is a highland with big boulders and woods where people can commune with nature without any disturbance. Besides these charming factors, the visitor discovers that the pure atmosphere of the place adds to the enchantment.

People in India became aware of this place as early as 1908, when the famous book called "Inspired Talks" of Swami Vivekananda was published from Madras. The illustrious Swami came to the place during summer 1895 after a hard season's work of lecturing in New

York. He had been conducting numerous classes, giving private instructions, preparing the book on Rāja Yoga, besides lecturing; all this had completely exhausted him. Just then, one of the students, Miss Elizabeth Dutcher, invited him to Thousand Island Park as her guest and he gratefully accepted the invitation. The cottage of Miss Dutcher was built on a hill at one end of the village and commanded a good view of the river. In the evenings, the ruddy rays of the setting sun reflected in the waters left charming impressions of the place. Miss Dutcher was an artist. She chose a place suitable for her work and her little cottage was amidst huge boulders in which she made rock gardens with bright flowers. The cottage was very small and so in order to accommodate her guest, she had to add a new wing of three storeys. The topmost room was exclusively for the Swami's use. The one below it was used for the classes and the lowest one was occupied by a student. The porch in front of the Swami's room presented a charming view of the river and the surrounding country. Sitting near his door he used to talk about the ideals of life with suitable illustrations from the epics of India. The students sat completely absorbed in listening to him. This upstairs veranda played an important part in the lives of the people who were there with the Swami, for the words he uttered were highly inspiring. Miss S. E. Waldo, one of the students with the Swami, writes about the place: "At our feet, like a sea of green, waved the leaves of the tree-tops, for the entire place was surrounded by thick woods. Not one house of the village could be seen; it was as if we were in the heart of a dense forest, miles away from the haunts of men. Beyond the trees, spread the wide expanse of the St. Lawrence dotted here and there with islands, some of which gleamed bright with the lights of hotels and boarding houses. Not a human sound penetrated our seclusion; we heard but the murmur of insects, the sweet songs of the birds or the gentle sighing of the winds through the leaves."

To such a peaceful atmosphere the Swami was invited to spend the summer. But he did not go there for rest. It was his wish to give practical training in religious life to those who were earnest about it.

On the 18th of June 1895 the Swami started from Percy in New Hampshire to Thousand Island Park. At that time people used to come by railroad to Clayton and reach Thousand Island Park by steamer. The Swami was followed by just twelve students and these twelve were not with him all the time. Here the work was completely different from the work in the big cities. He was not a lecturer addressing a large audience, but a spiritual teacher interested in moulding the lives of a few persons in the higher life. He was a friend and guide of the earnest seekers of Truth and he presented himself here in a unique aspect not noticed by people elsewhere. The wooded lands and the serene atmosphere, made the Swami very introspective. He felt free from the restrictions of urban life of the Western countries and was able to relive the life he led in India. He spent his free hours either in roaming in the woods chanting the verses of the *Gītā*, studying the books of Indian philosophy or in deep meditation in his room undisturbed. Whenever he was with the students he was extremely lovable and gentle, and the students felt that his words were the outpourings of a heart in touch with the Divine. In spite of his young age, by his extraordinary words he made himself accepted as their teacher by all those who had gathered around him, even though many of them were older than he. There were many who had heard from his lips the ideals of a religious man and the qualifications of a teacher, but only those who were with the Swami in Thousand Island Park were able to see these marks directly present in a person in flesh and blood. They got glimpses of how a man of realization lives and how he talks.

The very next day after his arrival, i.e., the 19th of June the Swami started his classes.

There were not many students. But he wanted to make the best of the seven weeks and so he began with the few around him. His subjects were varied and he used all the great scriptures of the world for his instruction. The Bible, the Bhagavad Gītā, the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta Sūtras, the Bhakti Sūtras of Nārada, the three main schools of Indian philosophy, the Yoga aphorisms, the Epics of India and other books were used for instructions. He made many of those unfamiliar and abstruse subjects clear to the students. When we read *Inspired Talks*, which contain, after all, only brief notes taken in long hand by one of those students, we can see his clarity of expression. It appears that his purpose in bringing in such a variety of books was to impress on his students the importance of God-realization. "Find God. Nothing else matters" were words he repeated often. Sometimes, whenever the subject of liberation came in for explanation, he became very eloquent and made all his listeners long for that state, free from all bodily limitations and man-made laws. But this idea of complete freedom beyond all concepts of duty disturbed his host, Miss Dutcher, who felt it was too much for her religious up-bringing and she temporarily stopped attending his classes. But the classes went on whether it pleased or displeased some of the students. The enthusiasm of these people can be well understood if we remember that it was a group of people who had never lived together and that they were of different temperaments. It was really an ordeal to run a big household in that small cottage. Added to that was the constant hearing of a high philosophy which made one forget the world! But whenever the Swami found that everything was not moving smoothly, he would show his playful, fun-loving nature and start cooking some tit-bits of highly spiced Hindu food. When the food was ready, he would drape a napkin over his arm and standing near the door of the kitchen call like the negro waiters in the dining-car of trains, "Last call fo' the dining cah. Dinner served." These words were uttered with perfect intonation

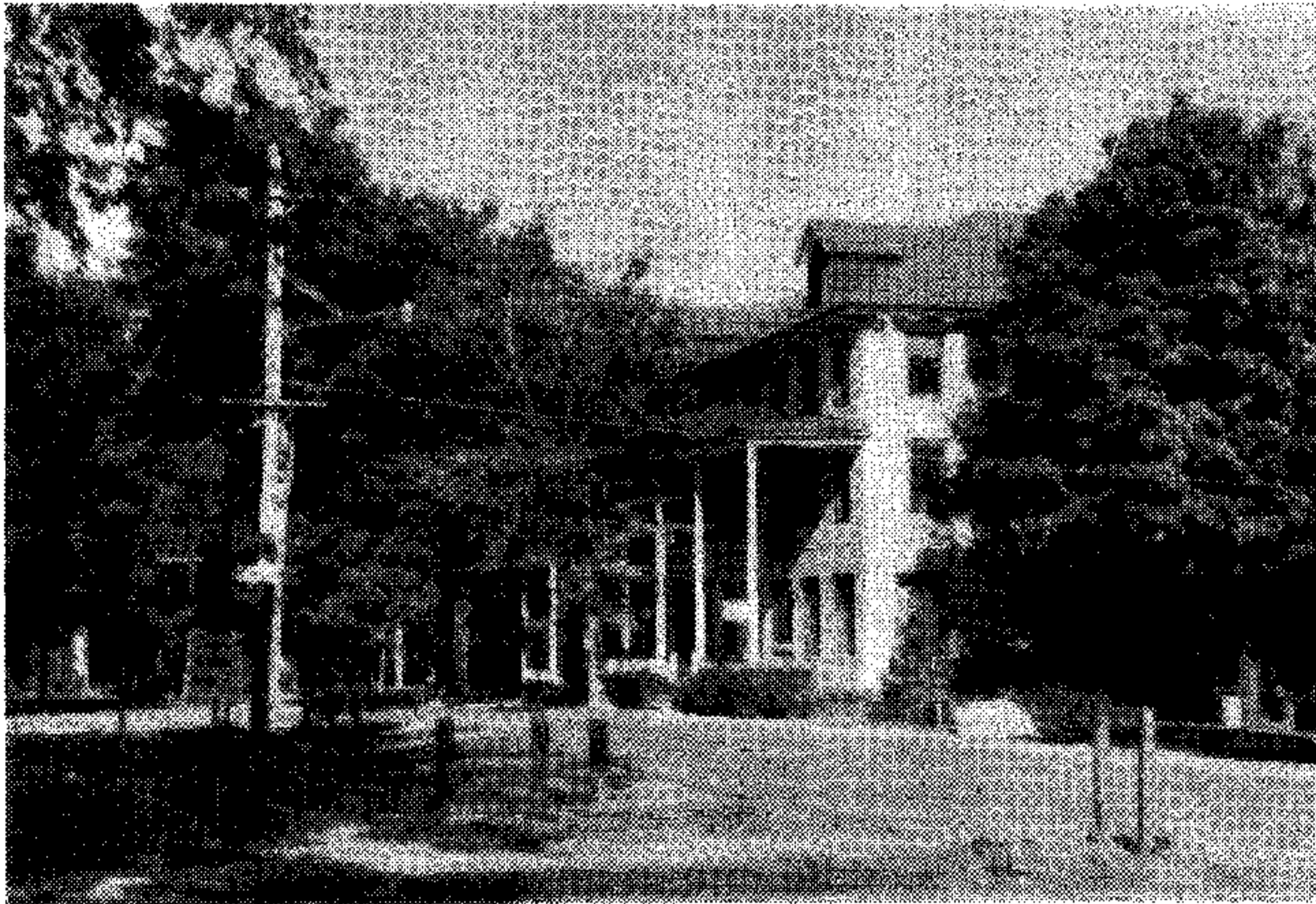
that the students would rock with laughter and the atmosphere immediately changed.

While he conducted his classes on philosophy in the morning hours in the second floor, his talks in the evenings were given in the third floor in the porch of his room. There he brought out all the best in Hinduism. His reminiscences of his master, Sri Ramakrishna, his own struggles with unbelief, stories from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, ideals of Indian womanhood and a variety of topics were all presented with such a charm, that the students were hardly aware of how time passed. None of these talks have been recorded. But as Miss Waldo writes: "They are all preserved only in the hearts of the hearers. None of us can ever forget the uplift, the intense spiritual life of those hallowed hours. The Swami poured out all his heart at those times; his own struggles were enacted again before us; the very spirit of his master seemed to speak through his lips to satisfy all doubts, to answer all questioning, to smooth all fear. . . . It was a perpetual inspiration to live with a man like Swami Vivekananda. From morning till night it was ever the same; we lived in a constant atmosphere of intense spirituality."

Besides conducting these classes and giving instructions to the students, the Swami kept himself busy with an intense study of the various philosophical systems of India. It was here he wrote his famous poem "The Song of the Sannyāsin". The period of the seven weeks must have been an extremely busy one for both the master and the students. At last the day for the departure arrived and the Swami left for the mainland by steamer. While taking leave of the beautiful islands where he had a very pleasant time, he said, "I bless thee, Thousand Islands."

II

All these happened in the year 1895. During the last six decades many changes have taken place everywhere. In the Thousand Island Park there were two devastating fires burning down many houses. Miss Dutcher died about thirty years ago. But her cottage,



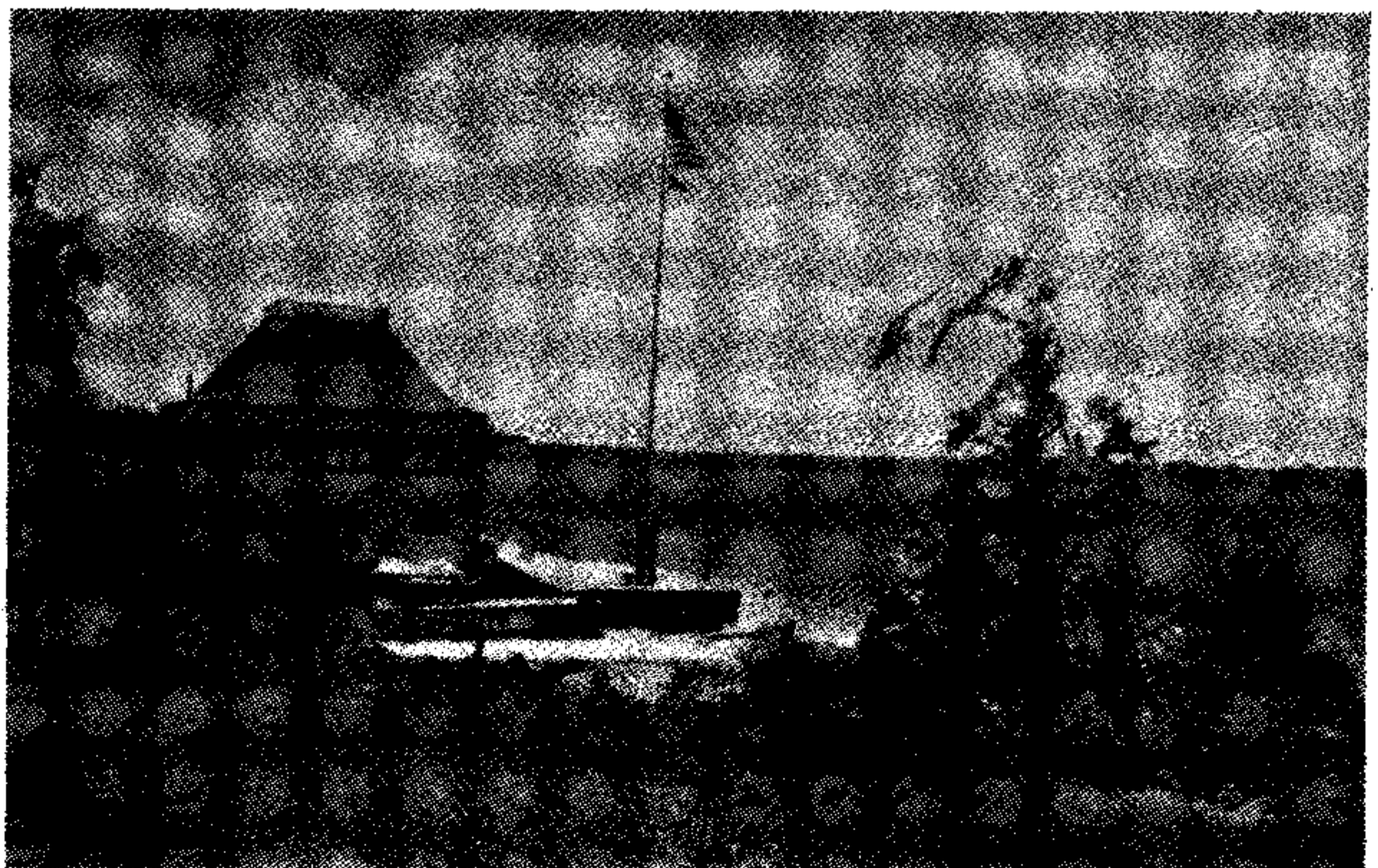
THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, N.Y. (A VIEW OF THE VILLAGE)

which she considered as a sanctuary for the honoured guest, Swami Vivekananda, remained practically as it was. For a long time it was unoccupied and as time passed by, the timber rotted. In the year 1947 the house was on the verge of collapse. Tall grass and bushes of wild plants grew all around the cottage as if to prevent intruders into that sacred house. Just then Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York was in the neighbourhood of Thousand Island Park and he wanted to find what happened to the famous cottage. With the help of a few friends he was able to locate the cottage which was in utter neglect and was leaning to one side. On enquiry it was also found that the cottage was under the charge of an old lady, Miss Otis, living near by. She had offered the building for five hundred dollars to a lumberman. If the Swami had gone there a few weeks later, perhaps there would have been no trace of the cottage, which would have been dismantled

for the timber. When the Swami offered to pay twice the amount she was expecting to realize for the ramshackle house, she was more than grateful and willingly sold it. Miss Otis was a remarkable woman and a good neighbour. She was highly gifted with doctorates in Latin, Greek, psychology, and Sanskrit. She had renounced all prospects in life in order to serve her ailing sisters. In 1947, she was an old woman, living all alone in

cottage next to Miss Dutcher's. Now and then it was a pleasure to hear her recite Sanskrit passages from Nalopākhyāna with perfect pronunciation in that small village in a corner of the United States.

From now on the fortunes of the cottage changed. It appeared that it was waiting all these years to fulfil the mission thought about by Miss Dutcher. Perhaps even she did not dream of all the changes that were awaiting her place. Immediately renovation work was started and the cottage was made to stand up



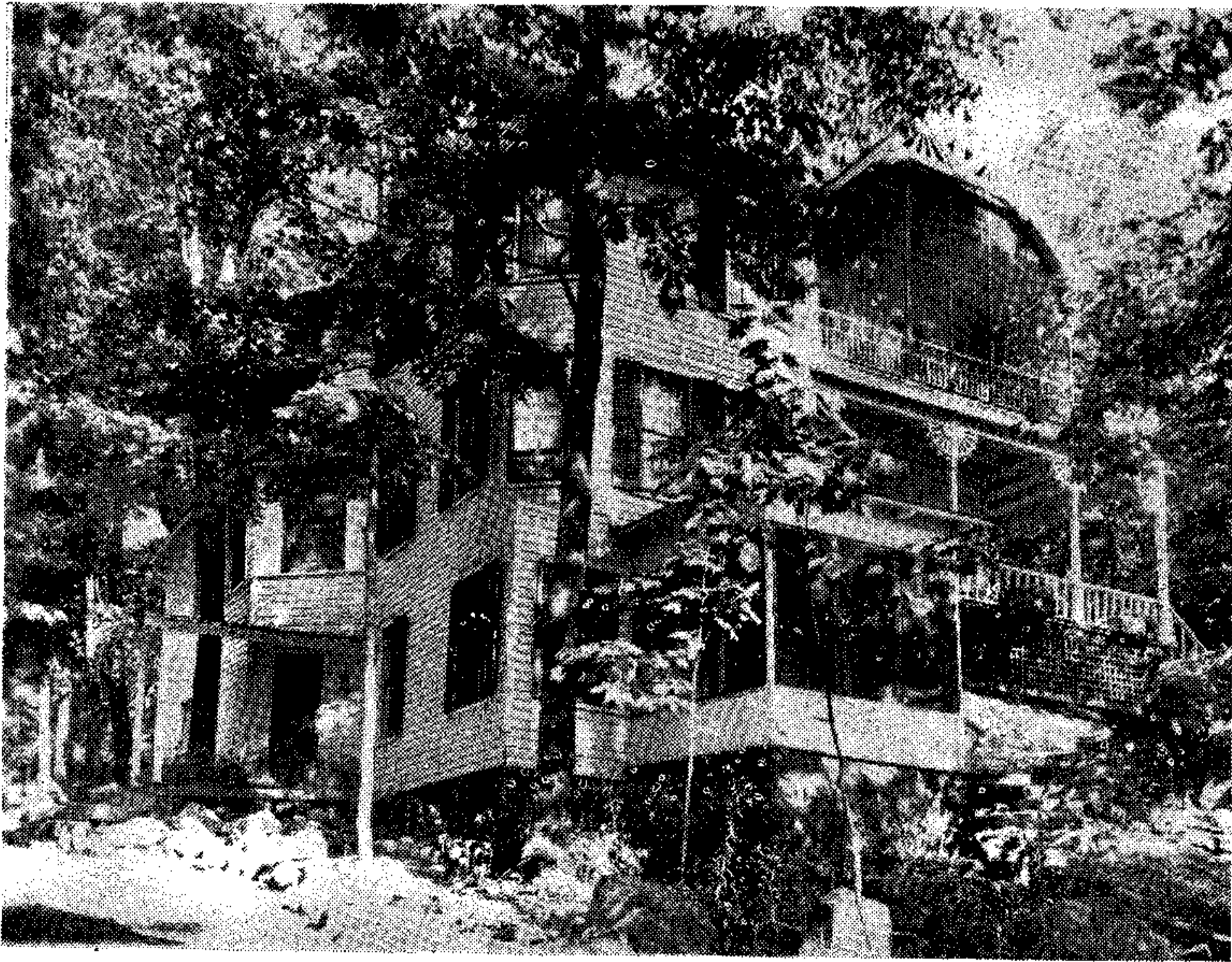
THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, N.Y. (MAIN DOCK)

once more very firmly. It is now made habitable with modern equipments and fittings, without any alteration of its original structure. After the departure of Swami Vivekananda, Miss Dutcher made a very slight alteration by building a couple of rooms adjoining the ones she had built for his use, to serve as her studio. But these did not interfere with the main structure.

Once more the cottage is full of life during the summer months. Brightly coloured flowers

his inspired talks and conducted the classes, is still the place where students gather for study.

In this manner a new era in the life of the cottage has begun. Every year a number of devotees go to Thousand Island Park to make use of the opportunities given at this cottage. Mrs. Elizabeth Davidson who was the Secretary of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, the work of which was most dear to her heart, gave her own small cottage in the village to



THE HOUSE WHERE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA STAYED (FULLY REPAIRED)

deck the rocks all around. The narrow lane that led to the cottage in olden days is now a clean road for automobiles up the hill with parking space. Every afternoon the air vibrates with the voices of devotees singing in chorus prayers and hymns. The room that was occupied by the Swami, where he silently communed with God and from the porch of which he spoke soul-stirring words, is now a shrine and a place for silent contemplation. In the morning hours the room where he gave

Swami Nikhilananda as her final offering, before she died. This cottage helps a number of devotees to find some accommodation in the neighbourhood.

There are certain seeds which take decades to sprout. They appear insignificant and people do not recognize the big tree hidden inside. Miss Dutcher built the sanctuary as her true offering to her teacher. She never imagined that thereby she was starting a place of worship, prayer, and study, in years to

come. As a matter of fact she could not even accept all his teachings. The students who lived there during the seven weeks went away to different places and never gave any importance to it afterwards. For a time it appeared to be the end of the cottage associated with

the Swami. None became aware of the fact that a tiny seed of spiritual work was left there to sprout years later! The blessings of Swami Vivekananda did not go in vain. The place had a great past and the future seems to be quite encouraging.

BASIC APPROACHES

The human personality is so constructed that it can ordinarily take in only sectional views at a time. But, when backed by proper effort, it can turn round, take in more views, and weave them into a comprehensive Whole. The understanding so arrived at is also capable of taking the essence of past human experience and of adapting it successfully to present needs. By following that model, it would be possible for more and more people, as days roll by, to assimilate all that is good and necessary for ennobling their own lives and the lives of those connected with them. Nature's economy is such that when groups of men and women try to eliminate political, social, and economic evils by their single-minded devotion and sacrifice, others specialize in relatively more silent ways, to develop a basic approach to life and human welfare itself. Philosophers, men of vision, and saints belong to this latter category. By the time the first group clears some of the obstacles originally listed by them, the followers of the second come up with just the ideas, institutions and programmes to tackle the surviving evils and the new problems that would have arisen in the meanwhile. Those who are skilled in shifting their attention, at will, from pressing questions to the relevant 'basic approach' for solving them can easily detect the significance behind even simple meetings of the two groups. They alone can utilize such meetings to draw the

attention of vast numbers of enthusiastic people to the full value of the institutions which have adopted 'basic approaches' from the start.

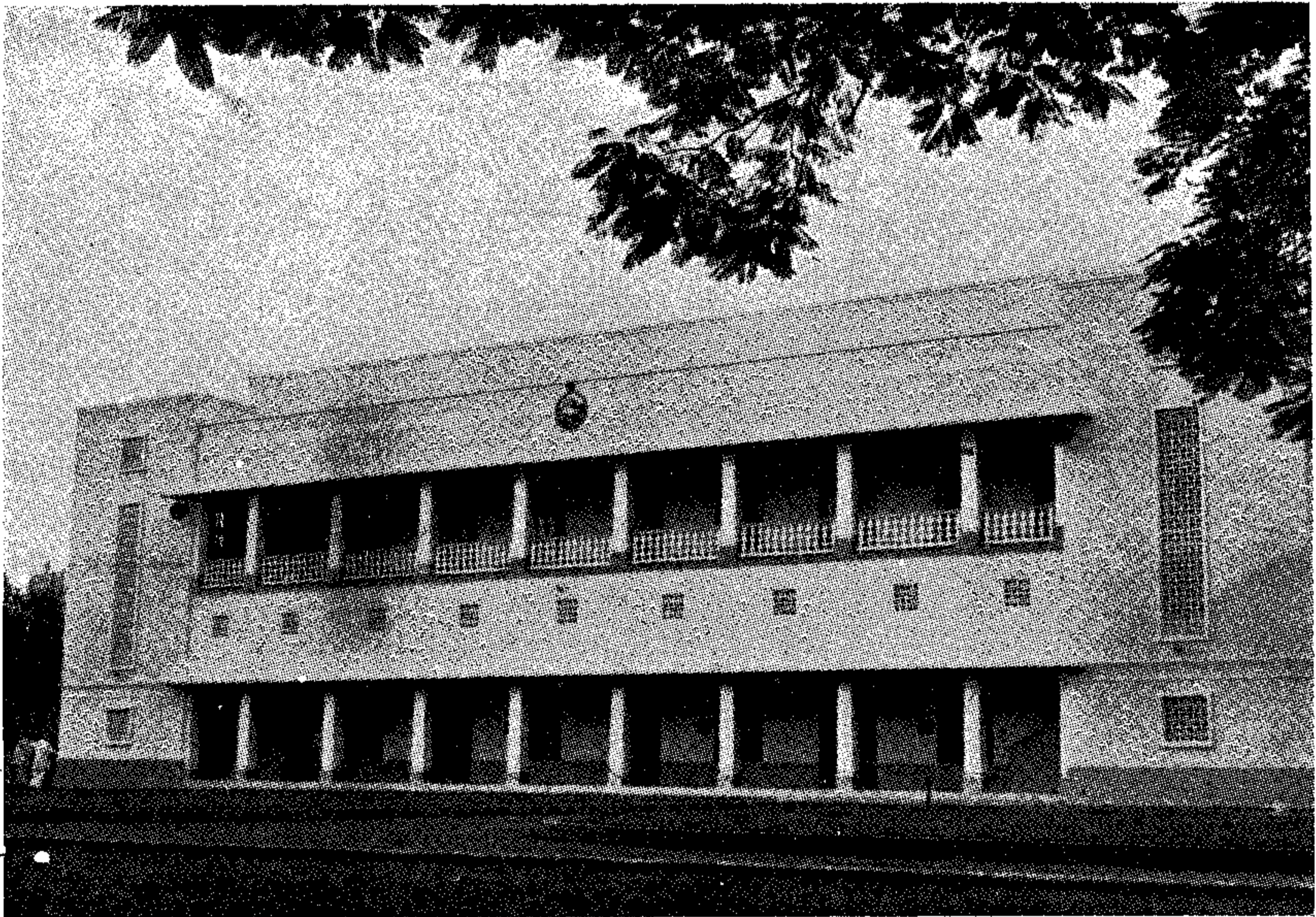
One such meeting took place in New Delhi on 23rd November, 1956. On that day Sri Jawaharlal Nehru formally opened the new Library and Auditorium of the local Ramakrishna Mission Centre. This building was constructed and equipped at a cost of a little over three lakhs of Rupees. The function, attended by about 2000 persons, commenced with Vedic invocations by the inmates of the Ashrama. After cutting the tape, the Prime Minister went round the Library below and the Auditorium above, making enquires about the equipments provided and accommodations available. He then addressed the vast expectant gathering and expressed his pleasure in being called upon to perform the dedication ceremony. His speech centred round the need for a 'Basic Approach' and the significance of Swami Vivekananda's message.

A 'Basic Approach', Sri Nehru emphasized, was essential 'if the world was to be saved from disaster.' Describing Swami Vivekananda as a great leader, who gave the message of peace, harmony, and fellowship, Sri Nehru said, that in this distracted world his thought and philosophy have a special significance. He said that if another world war broke out, not many people would survive, as the most destructive

weapons, which the world had not yet seen, would be unleashed, destroying all civilization and human progress. It was surprising to find that nobody wanted war, yet nations entered into it!

Sri Nehru also said that India had before her important problems to tackle. These, he added, could not be tackled if India's foundations were weak. No country could do big things if its people had no soul. India, Sri Nehru said, had survived through the ages

times. Swami Vivekananda moulded India's nationalism and India's mind, and became one of her greatest national leaders,' he added. 'There was depth in Swami Vivekananda's work and a nation developed and grew only if it was moved by thought and deed which had depth in them. India had many weaknesses, but there were many good points also which might not always be visible. It was for young men and women now to search out those good things and bring them to the surface.'



LIBRARY & AUDITORIUM (R.K. MISSION, NEW DELHI)

only because she had some basic qualities and she endeavoured to find her soul.

The Prime Minister called upon the youth of India to study the teachings of Swami Vivekananda who 'shook the soul of India and moulded India's mind and national thought.' He said that the writings of the Swami were full of deep meaning even today and the basic conception underlying them could be studied and assimilated with great profit by India's youth. 'Swami Vivekananda's works had a tremendous effect on the mind of India and they opened the country's eyes which were closed in those

Sri Nehru paid high tribute to the silent work done by the Ramakrishna Mission both in India and abroad and said that these Centres were the true abodes of peace, where people work with energy and zeal, silently. He did not know any other place where people served the general public so selflessly. 'The work done here is good no doubt, but it is also an example to others of how such work should be done.'

That was one year ago. This year the Ashrama at New Delhi had another important function which lasted four days. It was in

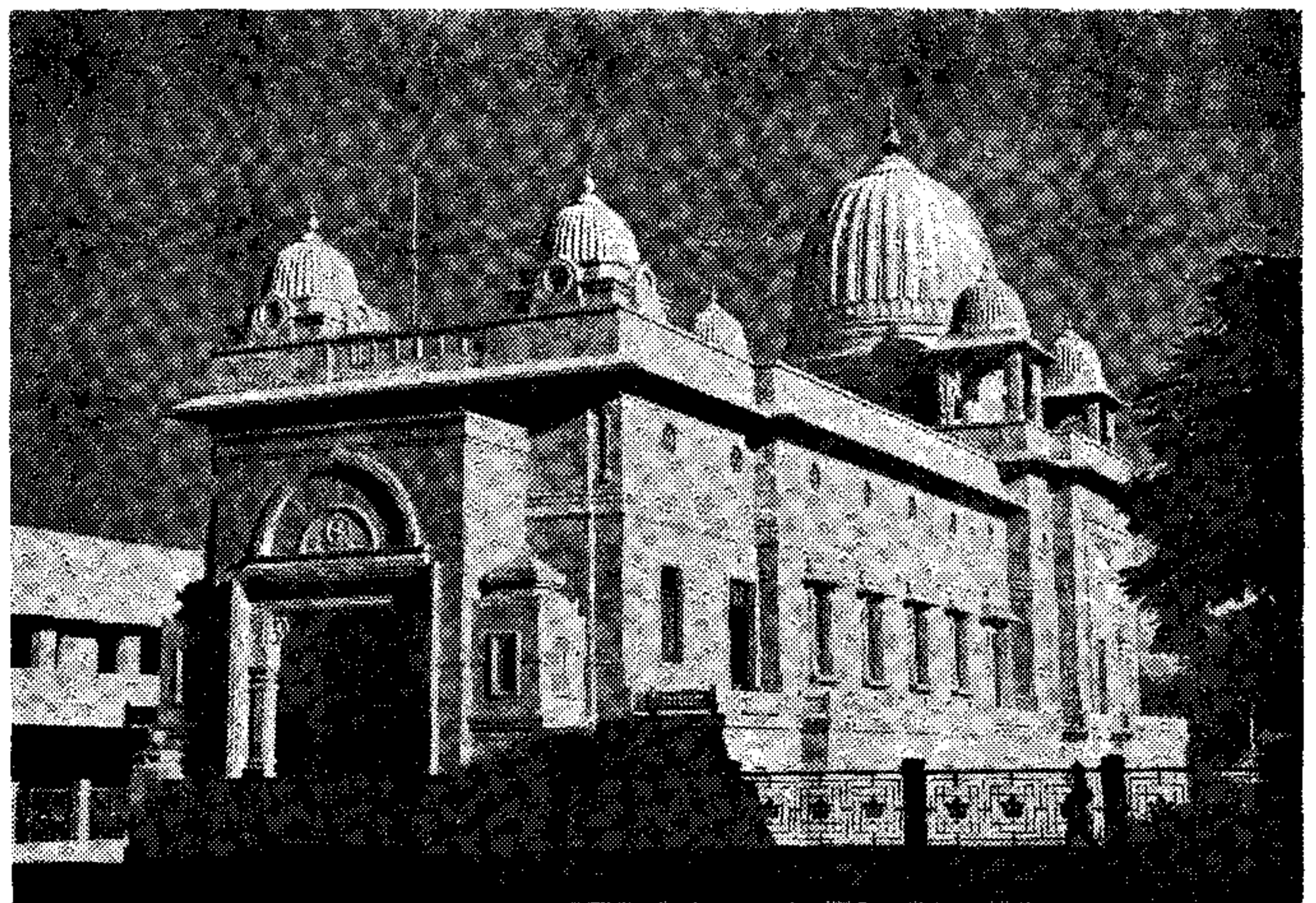


INSIDE VIEW OF THE TEMPLE (DELHI ASHRAMA)

connection with the formal opening of a Temple containing a life-size marble statue of Sri Ramakrishna. This is how one newspaper described it; and this may be taken as representing the view of the general public who attended the function: 'Amid the clanging of brass bells, the chanting of Vedic hymns and flicker of oil lamps, a party of senior monks of the Ramakrishna Order, headed by Swami Sankarananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, installed a life-size marble statue of the Saint of Dakshineswar in a new temple at New Delhi Mission Centre on Thursday. It was an unusual

ceremony. There was no red tape to cut and no preacher to exhort the congregation. Instead there was a group of Pandits to chant the Vedas sonorously and perform a Homa, groups of monks and devotees to sing Bhajans in the commodious prayer hall. All this lent a solemn atmosphere to the ceremony. At the inner shrine, the Mission's head and other monks performed the dedicatory rituals.'

remarkable fusion of Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian architectural features.' The foundation of this three-lakh Temple had been laid



NEW TEMPLE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA (N. DELHI)

by the Mission President on 5th November, 1954. The actual work of construction commenced in April, 1955, and the entire cost was borne by a generous businessman of Delhi named Sri A. R. Davar.

The public meeting in this connection was held on 30th evening. It was presided over by Rashtrapati Dr. Rajendra Prasad and attended by over 4000 people.

Welcoming the President, Swami Rangana-

had begun to show tendencies to forget the ancient culture and heritage of the country. He pulled the people out of the rut into which they were getting and also showed new light. The followers of this divine person, and incarnation dedicated their lives to social work in the name of God.'

'Ramakrishna Mission centres throughout the world were centres of service, centres relieving suffering.' 'It was the great fortune of the



RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NEW DELHI
(PRESENT PREMISES ON RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA MARG)

thananda, Secretary of the New Delhi Ashrama, pointed out in fitting terms that the new Temple was dedicated to the memory of Sri Ramakrishna 'who preached religious friendship, and harmony, and human unity through God.'

'Dr. Rajendra Prasad said, in a country like India, people such as those belonging to the Mission and imbued with the spirit of service were badly needed. Sri Ramakrishna was an acquisition not only for India but for the world. He came into the scene at a time when people

Capital to have a temple dedicated to him and having his image.'

At the end of the inaugural address three speakers representing three different religions paid their homage to Sri Ramakrishna. The speakers were Dr. K. M. George, Assistant Secretary, Sahitya Akademy, Prof. Trilochan Singh, and Swami Chidatmananda. The keynote of all the speeches was that Sri Ramakrishna's life embraced the multiplicity of men and Gods.

* * *

We give below a brief account of the early stages of the Mission's work in Delhi. They commenced in a humble way two decades before India achieved political freedom.

In May 1927, on the invitation of the local public, a centre was started in a rented house on the Garstin Bastion Road, Delhi. It was shifted to a second rented house on Mutiny Memorial Road in June 1932, before it was permanently established in its present premises on Ramakrishna Ashrama Marg, off Panchkuin

humble beginnings have grown up, thanks to the services of devoted workers and the help of an appreciative public, the present Library and Reading Room and the general Outdoor Dispensary functioning in the Mission premises, and the well-equipped and commodious Free Tuberculosis Clinic at Karolbagh.

Present Activities : In January 1950, the Secretary, Swami Ranganathananda, started a regular study class (in English) every Sunday on *Kātha Upaniṣad*. Its study was completed



FREE TUBERCULOSIS CLINIC AT KAROLBAGH, N. DELHI

Road, New Delhi, on the 16th October, 1935. Religious classes, lectures, and celebrations of the Birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Buddha, Christ, and other Teachers formed important features of the activity of the centre, while a Library and Reading Room, open to the general public, was there from its very commencement. A general Outdoor Dispensary was started in 1929; and in October, 1933, a Free Tuberculosis Clinic, the first of its kind in the State, was added to the Mission's activities. From these

in December of the same year, by which time it had roused a good deal of interest and attention among the intelligentsia of Delhi. This interest increased with the inauguration of the study of the *Bhagavadgītā* since January 1951. These regular Sunday discourses have now become a prominent feature of the Capital's cultural life, attracting a representative gathering of about a thousand citizens, a fair percentage of whom are students.

Among the Swami's important discourses, some are given on Sunday mornings in the

Vivekananda Hall of the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University. They are held under the auspices of the *Vedānta Samiti* of the University, formed in 1952 by some of its staff and students with a view to study Vedānta in all its phases.

The work among women is done through an association called the *Sārādā Mahilā Samiti*. This is an informal group of women in Delhi inspired by the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda. The

Samiti's programme includes social service work in the Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital for women and children. This work consists of monetary and other help to indigent patients, reading from devotional literature to the very sick and old among the patients, distributing books to those who could read, and teaching English, Hindi, etc. to the youngest children in the general wards. The *Samiti* among other things also conducts a creche at the Mission for the children of the labourers employed for the construction of various buildings at the Mission.

ON THE MYSTERY OF LIFE*

BY DR. HARLOW SHAPLEY

The professional religionist and theologian, as you all know, has in times past treated the scientist rather shabbily, and *vice versa*, perhaps. You middlemen who are neither wholly pagan nor wholly pious have borne the brunt of the confusion and the battle. But it is no longer a bitter or serious battle. We have established a sort of truce, which appears, however, to have been gradually written by the scientist with the pen of scientific technology. We all have faith in technology—even the theologian has. When he takes his anti-diabetes pill, turns on the auto's ignition switch, and steps on the accelerator pedal, he has more confidence in the results than he has in the authenticity of the Immaculate Conception or in the likelihood of his own *post mortem* bliss with Billy Graham. But he nevertheless cherishes his profound pronouncements about God, Faith, and the Eternals. We of the laity generally like facts, or at least a rational and logical approach to facts, more than we like myths, even pretty myths.

Some mythologists (metaphorologists) in the pulpit are quite honest and fair. This account, they will say, is a story, an allegory, and isn't meant to delude you. But some other pulpit mythologists are not fair. Claim-

ing that they have a direct pipe-line to deified truth, they utter profundities about nature, about levitation, about wine transmutation, about biogenesis—statements that are nonsense when viewed from the standpoint of high school physics, chemistry, and biology.

I look hopefully toward that future where we better harmonize our school science and our religious teaching. The latter is very important, especially when it emphasizes truth and the search for verifiable truth; when it does not resort to the presumption that there is a theological kind of truth that is not subject to the common rules of cause and effect.

Mythology, I insist, should be clearly labeled. We have a pure food and drug law. The contents of the dope bottle must be clearly indicated. How about the mental drugs? Let's do some honest labeling.

For example:

My own theory about the origin of the arms in a spiral galaxy could well be labeled: "This hypothesis is cock-eyed in the following respects:—the author is vainglorious, the measures are tentative, the ingredients do not include enough salt."

Here is another label:—"This program

*From an address to alumni of Princeton University, June, 1957.

for the reform of the management of labor unions is presented by a long-hair who has never done a lick of labor in his life; it is neither complete, nor workable, but it may be suggestive."

Another:—"This hypothesis about the Escape of the Chosen across the Red Sea is poetical in spirit and is inspiring, if you are in the mood for science fiction; its moral is that the Good may eventually be rewarded, and the Wicked, Ha Ha!—those that *by our definition* are wicked—they may get soaked."

Yes, I am in favor of a mental drug statute. I want my mental dope clearly labeled. Science is science, and mythology isn't. When I grow sodden, don't try to trick me into taking theological cathartics. Do not confuse physik with physics.

Especially in the important domain of the nature and the emergence of life has theological mythology hindered the advance of knowledge. Which remark brings me back to the title of this talk—The Sweet Mystery of Life—the now-yielding sweet mystery of the self-duplicating, the self-replicating molecules in the primeval thin soup of earth's shallow waters—the mystery of the primal syntheses in the Precambrian ooze, from which we animals have all slowly oozed.

There are new horizons in all directions—social automation, social tranquilizers, thinking machines, Martian weekends, brain laundries—too many foggy horizons; but the mist is now slowly clearing away. I shall choose for a little exploration the horizon mentioned above, namely, The Ambitious Molecule.

When about a year ago I began planning to write this essay, I was deeply concerned with Operation Chlorophyll, on Mars and elsewhere. Knowledge of the beginning of life seemed to be a sufficiently new horizon for us *nouveaux arrives*. Those early steps from the inanimate fiery star and hot-surfaced earth to the simplest of animate organizations appeared to be steps that we should examine. I read, I conferred, I thought. I shall now look toward new horizons where practical religion

and biochemistry overlap for here is a pattern of inquiry that should never be neglected. It is richly rewarding for horizon explorers.

The cosmic truths that science is now revealing are to many very strong medicine—bitter medicine; and is it necessary? Do we need such strong and bad-tasting therapy to cure the insidious doubts and bafflement that beset us? Do we need to be reminded by the Persian astronomer-poet that:

"The world will last when gone are we,

Without a trace of thee or me;

Before we came, there was no void,

And when we're gone the same 't will be."

But not quite the same, Omar, for we shall have bequeathed to the succeeding ages our thoughts and influence—vestiges of our personalities.

We are, to be sure, but temporary waves on the ocean of existence. But what an ocean!

To many the world picture that science paints is dismal. To us, however, to us the awakened ones, the cosmic facts are wonderful. How glorious that man is a part, no matter how small and brief, of the mighty play of the universe! How glorious that man is an item in a drama that can now to some extent be detailed, even by us who have no claim to omniscience!

Perched rather precariously on a rocky surface we have the God-given privilege of watching the world-wide display, and interpreting crudely the various byplays, such as the origin of organic life, the evolution of the stars and the terrestrial anthropoids, the course of the eccentric and will-less comets, and the rising and sinking of mountain ranges. Over such byplays we can exercise no power, and we have no responsibility. But with smaller items like terrestrial life we have some power and considerable responsibility.

If we should develop an over-all social plan, if we should set up one or more goals consonant with natural biological evolution, then we could well use foresight and materialize our new horizons.

There may be, of course, troubles as well as joys on those dim and distant horizons—the same as here and now. “These troublous times” is a phrase for this and all other ages. History is with despair for the future. In one way and another the present is bad, bad, bad. But stop grousing! A more constructive phrase, suited to the horizon hunters, would be: “These times of challenge and opportunity, and may the days ahead always have enough of trouble to maintain the challenge.” For when dangerous curves are eliminated and the road beds are wide and smooth, we most certainly doze at the steering wheel.

But before we can aptly turn the future’s wheel, we should see if goals, a few of them, can be openly specified. What do we want to happen to that segment of cosmic reality to which we cling?

If our basic goal is painless personal longevity, then our thoughts should turn to researches in geriatrics; they should turn to fallout and the health hints on the woman’s page.

If the goal is the persistence of the human species on this planet where a million other species have tried and failed, then we have important work ahead in world politics and economic and in social sensitivity.

If the human goal is the establishment all over the world of some particular set of spiritual myths, whether from Moscow, Mecca, Rome, Boston, or Canterbury, then we must work toward the shackling of science and toward the rigorous control of general education.

If our goal is the worldwide triumph of some one political creed—capitalism, socialism, monarchism—we have brain-laundering to do; we must study the art of washing in special suds, and drying stiff, the brains of the millions.

Finally, if our goal is the building of reverence and humility through knowledge of the magnitude and intricacy of the material world, then obviously we must build up the observatories and biochemical laboratories, and support the institutions devoted to research

into the hearts of the atoms and the nature of mind.

We must attend to liberal religious education.

For us as a group I propose a sample set of practical *preliminary* social goals—simple and obvious. We might hope for their attainment a century hence if we reach the horizons now hazily sighted.

(1) World peace; but not too peaceful. We need always the criticism that incites re-examination and revision of our current political creeds and customs.

(2) An approach to an economic world state. The approach should be designed to diminish large-scale human distress and suffering. Again a little distress can be instructive and constructive.

(3) General education, world-wide, suited more to the future than to the past. But the ancient blunders should be studied to keep us humble, and the old cultural triumphs should be exhibited as a challenge to future pace-setters.

(4) Religious (ethical) education and practice that is not on the defensive. It can lead to the development of the higher qualities of the human being.

Scientific facts and methodology will permeate all these approaches. In a small book bearing the title *Science and Common Sense*, James Bryant Conant sounds a warning to those who hope for an escape from what they may feel is an imposition by the scientists. He says:

“Whether we like it or not, we are all immersed in an age in which the products of scientific inquiries confront us at every turn. We may hate them, shudder at the thought of them, embrace them when they bring relief from pain or snatch from death a person whom we love, but the one thing no one can do is banish them—therefore every American in the second half of the century would be well advised to try to understand both science and the scientists as best he can.”

But back to religion and biochemistry. The problem of the emergence of the living

from the inanimate has rapidly attained top interest scientifically, and, I would add, it should awaken top concern theologically. It rivals in public attention the atomic transformations by fusion and fission, as well as the discoveries made by the radio telescope and the flying of the artificial satellite.

We have long been confident that the living on this earth developed from the lifeless with or without the assistance of "miracles". That surmise naturally follows from the chemical analysis of animal bodies. Our atomic composition is the same as that of the crust of the earth—common chemical elements, including hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon. We are of the earth earthy, but how did we get so unearthly complex in structure? And why did we start, anyway?

In the early 1920's the Russian biochemist A. I. Oparin began to think about life conditions when the earth was young. Life could not start today from inorganic molecules, he and others argue. The now existent bacteria would eat it up, and the abundant free oxygen would burn it into ashes of various kinds—that is, would oxidize the tender molecular aggregates that aspire to that self-replication that we term "living". But, Oparin observes, there probably was no free oxygen in the beginning; it largely came later as a byproduct of photosynthesis. And of course there were no murderous bacteria around.

Then J. B. S. Haldane in 1928 wrote an essay on the early days and surmised that the energy for the chemical evolution might have come from the ultra-violet radiation of the sun. In 1936 Oparin wrote his book, *The Origin of Life*, which contains a survey of the problem, some biochemical analyses, a consideration of the early role of the colloidal aggregates, and some rather inspired speculation. The book (translated by S. Morgulis of Nebraska) has become a classic—a starting point for the subsequent work in many American laboratories.

A paper by Stanley Miller of Chicago, published in 1953, reported his experiment of putting an electric discharge through a mixture of gases and thereby synthesising some of the

amino acids which are basic to the proteins which are basic to living organisms. The gases in the mixture were those believed to have been the constituents of the primeval atmosphere of the earth—methane, ammonia, water vapor, and hydrogen. The electric discharge simulated the primeval lightnings. Other energy sources, such as gamma rays and far ultra-violet radiation would probably have done as well.

The resulting synthesis, while not wholly unexpected by the wise, was rather sensational. This past year the experiment has been successfully carried out in other laboratories, especially by Abelson in Washington where several other atmospheric compositions were assembled. Carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide were used instead of methane. (The early volcanoes provided these gases amply.) Nitrogen was substituted for ammonia. The result: amino acids, and even simple proteins. A major step had been taken in the laboratory from the inanimate toward the animate.

The emergence of living organisms naturally, in the early history of the earth, now seems to have been not only possible but inevitable. Neither miracles nor supernatural activities are needed. It is a wonderful story, but much remains to be done in the laboratory if we are to go continuously from the amino acids to the complex self-replicating macromolecules; and much work if we are to fill in all steps from the simple carbon chains to the protoplasm and other constituents of the living cell.

At this point I shall venture a prediction. In a few years the brightest of high school students, whether at school or in the home laboratory, are going to be synthesising and identifying the simple amino acids. The techniques of biochemistry are very sophisticated, to be sure, but some clear trails will be laid out, and our brightest youngsters are themselves sophisticated. Long before the year 2000 the science students will, I predict, do much of the work that experts now do, and the experts will have cleaned up many of the problems associated with the origin of

organisms, and perhaps have successfully tackled the mechanics of thought!

Have we the foresight to grasp the bearing of such advances on our social and ethical problems? Or is the lag between pioneering and colonization so great that we shall not reach that horizon? Scientifically we rush forward; socially we drag our feet.

The situation is not a crisis so much as an opportunity. It does not toll the bell for religion. There is no need that methane and lightning should breed a ruthless mechanistic cosmology. The greater the understanding, the greater the Unknown. The more mysteries solved, the richer the *fundamental* mystery—the Why of the universe.

It is not only orthodox religion, confronted with science questioning its myths, that now calls attention to the value of horizon scanning. Foresight is needed, for instance, by capitalism confronted with the prospect of essentially costless energy all over the world. It is needed by socialism, faced with the diminution of the drive that is incited by the profit-and-power motive.

Foresight is needed by the minority white race, face to face with a large liberated majority of dark skins. It is also needed by the constructors of universal peace, confronted by the wolf that is in man and by the admitted strange joys of bloody combat; and by the New Era educators and social doctors, opposed by stupid but entrenched philosophies of

education, and concerned with the urgent "problems of the idle hours" in an economy where physical labor is increasingly less.

Foresight can make all the difference between a deliberately successful world for man, and a chaotic existence that holds on to civilization by the skin of its vanishing teeth.

I suggest, as others in their special areas have done, that we, an unspecified we, forthwith set up skilful councils that are composed of unspecialized thinkers and specialized technicians for the single-minded purpose of evaluating goals and progress, and proposing steps that will smooth the advance—proposing steps directed to the attainment of goals suited to the good of the whole human race. I visualize a council in continuous session, the recipient and evaluator of suggestions, always alert to the changing economy and sociology, always aware of the interlacing of hard facts and tender aspirations.

For both economics and politics, such long-range "foresight" panels exist, or might be evolved, in the United Nations organization (and elementary education is not out of its program). But in religion, advanced education, and the preservation of the species, the field is open. I should like to see the fashion of goal analysis less neglected.

It would, indeed, be a glory of our mid-century if they who are, in the year 2000, spokesmen for the progress of man, could look back to us and say: "There were wonderfully foresighted giants in those days."

THE REAL BASIS OF ETHICS

BY SWAMI AKHILANANDA

The contemporary world is full of conflict, confusion, and catastrophic disturbances. Some are of the opinion that the world is heading for destruction. A few years ago Spengler wrote his thought-provoking book, *Decline of the West*. Professor P. A. Sorokin has written several books in which he described not only the crisis of this era but

also constructive methods for humanity's reconstruction. In his works we find many challenging ideas and constructive suggestions. About three years ago, Professor Einstein sent a message to the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion requesting the scholars in America to try and establish a world government in order to avoid catastrophic destruc-

tion. Many of the outstanding thinkers in America are frightened not only by the political situation in the world but also by the threat of mental disintegration, psychosomatic diseases, and social problems of various types. Social scientists, philosophers, and religious leaders have formed many organizations in order to find a remedy for this crisis.

Many social scientists and others are proposing certain remedies which do not go to the root of the problem, even though Professor Sorokin in the field of social science and deeper thinkers in the field of religion have clearly diagnosed the situation and have presented proper solutions. It seems that many of the social scientists and others are trying to find a remedy without first getting at the real cause of social disease; they want to treat the patient symptomatically. For instance, when interpersonal problems arise, they try to alleviate mental tension, anxiety, or frustration by the immediate removal or changes in the superficial elements of the husband-wife and parent-child relationships. They do not consider the basic necessity of changing the attitude toward life or of striving for a co-operative existence. The same is true of the relationships between management and labor. They want to do patchwork without finding the real remedy for removal of the cause. Some suggest that religious ideas create unnecessary tension and disturbance, although they say that ethical principles are needed so that man can get along in the world and get more and more out of this physical existence.

This raises the following questions: What is the nature of ethics? What is the basic idea behind ethics? Is ethics a permanent principle in society or should it be changed according to the psychophysical condition of man, or any other conditions? Is there a permanent background in ethics or should it be developed out of expediency for the achievement of the "greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number"? In other words, should ethical principles be changed according to geographical area and historical necessity? In order to

answer these questions properly, we must understand the motive behind our life.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, an outstanding philanthropist, scholar, philosopher, and a noble person whose life is dedicated to the service of humanity, recently wrote an article, "The Problem of Ethics for Twentieth Century Man," published in the *Saturday Review* of June 13, 1953. The article is a matter of concern to us from various points of view. Dr. Schweitzer seems to conclude that post-Renaissance Christian ethics answers the problems of life. (In his other writings he also makes sweeping criticisms of Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions.) In the article, he makes confusing statements regarding the basic principles of what he calls "Brahmanism" and "Hinduism." He seems to feel that Hinduism is a reaction to Brahmanism. This is his own idea; no Hindu would accept such a conclusion. After a one-sided evaluation and sweeping generalization of the Oriental religions and criticizing what he calls the "Christianity of antiquity of the Middle Ages," he leads his readers to believe that the Christianity of pre-Renaissance, Hinduism, and Buddhism negated the world and life, so they could not furnish any real basis for ethics.

Our answer to this is that Hinduism does not negate the world as he imagines or interprets. Hinduism (or what he calls Brahmanism) accepts the world as a changeable entity with a permanent background consisting of the ultimate Reality or Brahman. Hinduism furnishes highly ethical principles and practices that have the highest motive in life.

Again, Dr. Schweitzer seems to feel that Indian thought consists of "metaphysical theories; it demands only abstention from evil" and not "the activity which is inspired by the notion of good." He seems to utterly misunderstand Hindu and Buddhistic viewpoints. Hinduism is not mere metaphysics. In Hinduism, philosophy, religion, and psychology are interrelated. It has developed a high type of various techniques for the realization of Truth. The teachings of the *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Patañjali's Rāja Yoga*, and

the writings of the mediaeval and contemporary teachers like Swami Vivekananda convince us that these techniques are verifiable by anyone regardless of racial or religious affiliation. They are as scientific as any empirical science. Then again, these techniques, especially the method of *Karma Yoga* or path of action as prescribed by these great teachers, teach us not merely what he calls "abstention from evil" but they also furnish the positive and dynamic side of religion and ethics, which are admired by Dr. Schweitzer. We admit that the Hindus do not end their religious pursuit by mere ethical living. To them, ethics is a step to the realization of the Truth or experience of God.

Buddhism is the only religion which can be regarded as ethical idealism, based on four fundamental principles: (1) Pain exists; (2) Pain has a cause; (3) It can be removed; (4) There is a method for removing it. Although the early Buddhists remained silent about the ultimate Reality, it is true that great Buddhists like Nagarjuna expounded the positive side of existence. There were, no doubt, various schools of Buddhism, but all of them accepted the four basic truths which included the highest form of ethical living in the fourth truth. Needless to say, the Buddhists were the first group of people who advocated what Dr. Schweitzer has been ~~doing—saving~~ suffering humanity.

Dr. Schweitzer's criticism of "Christianity of antiquity of the Middle Ages" is unnecessarily harsh and one-sided. Did not these Christians follow the commandments of Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"? Did not the Christian mystics and monks and nuns of the monastic orders, Franciscan and others, dedicate their lives for the good of humanity? It seems to us that the very Christians who are so severely criticized by Dr. Schweitzer are the only ones who really preserved the spirit of Christianity.

We admit that there have been some lapses during ancient, mediaeval, and modern Hin-

duism, and at different periods of Buddhism, as well as during the "Christianity of antiquity of the Middle Ages," but they are, unfortunately, due to human weakness. It seems that human beings, generally speaking, cannot always keep up the ideal. It is expressed in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* that whenever there is a rise of irreligion and a decline in the true spirit of religion, there comes a great spiritual personality to renew the true spirit of religion. But it is a mistake to say that post-Renaissance Christianity is the answer to ethical problems. If that were so, the problems we observe in the world today would not exist. In his books, *The Crisis of Our Age* and *The Reconstruction of Humanity*, Dr. Sorokin declares that the present Western civilization is sensate and is going through degradation and demoralization. He has sufficient evidence to make such statements.

In many of his speeches and writings Dr. Toynbee has prescribed Christianization as the solution of all social problems. However, recently he has stated that there will be a new universal religion, although he does not clarify the nature and source of it. In his last book, *The World and the West*, he states that the Judaeo-Greek tradition of Christianity has a background in common with the Islamic world, thus the two can have a harmonious relationship. He seems to feel that the Christian world cannot have the same understanding and co-operation with India and China. We wonder if such statements have a political undertone, as we know that real Christianity and real Hinduism have many principles in common. This was discussed in detail in *Hindu View of Christ*. The Christianity of the late Archbishop Temple which he expressed in *Men's Creatrix*, or of Dr. Niebhr in *Christianity and Power Politics*, or again of Karl Barth in *This Christian Cause* will certainly refute Dr. Toynbee's and Dr. Schweitzer's conclusions.

Let us further consider the original question of ethics. As to ethics being conditioned by temporal, spatial, and other external requirements, our position is that ethics has a

permanent value. We are to be ethical, not because of expediency, nor because of geographical or temporal conditions, but rather for the achievement of the goal of life at all times in all places. That is the very reason we find that all religions have a common background. The real motivation of all ethics is not merely what many of the social scientists declare today, for the establishment of better relationships between management and labor, removal of social tension, or for better interpersonal relationships. These conditions are to be fulfilled by ethics but they are not the main reason for ethical living. The utilitarian ethics of Mill, Bentham, and Spencer, of the "greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number," does not furnish the real background of ethics, nor can the pragmatic ideas of James and Dewey really furnish the background for permanent ethics. If this were true, they would have removed the most deplorable unethical activities of the last two centuries and would have removed the cause of destructive wars. Ethics based only on humanism without the higher values is bound to degenerate. An individual leader may keep up the ideal, yet the general public cannot maintain a high standard of ethics unless it has real spiritual value, namely, love or knowledge of God or realization of the Truth. We cannot blame any individual for his loss of ethical idealism in the course of time, because there is no dynamic power in ethical principles without the background of knowledge and love of God or understanding of Truth. Buddhism could keep up ethical idealism for centuries, as it emphasized an eightfold path of living which contains the highest form of ethical principle. It is interesting to note that the last step is right meditation, even though the steps leading to it are right thought, right living, right effort, etc.

Dr. Schweitzer seems to think that the will to live is the basic foundation of ethics. It is true, in spite of his confusion in interpreting the nature of ethics, he presents noble ideas in stating that this will to live is the basis of

the understanding of respect for life. This understanding of life, according to him, is:

In the world the will-to-live is in conflict with itself. In us, through a mystery which we do not understand, it wishes to be at peace with itself. In the world it manifests itself, in us it reveals itself. It reveals to us, among other things, that the world is our spiritual destiny. By conforming to it we live our existence instead of submitting to it. Through respect for life we become pious in an elementary, deep, and living sense.¹

We beg to differ from this noble soul in his interpretation of the will to live. It cannot really give us what he expects; nor can it bring peace to individuals or to the world; nor can it give love for mankind. If we understand correctly the commandments of Jesus to love God and neighbour, they cannot be fulfilled by the will to live, as Dr. Schweitzer advocates. If we accept this idea of his as an incentive to life then we can find no reason whatsoever to deplore the fact that man destroys his fellow beings in order to live more successfully and abundantly. We cannot understand why Mr. Lenin or Mr. Stalin were criticized when the destruction of thousands or millions of opponents was advocated for the release of the proletariat. Nor can we criticize Mr. Hitler for the destruction of Jewish and Christian opponents when he wanted to give his German people a better life by establishing an empire. Nor can we find fault with Mr. Churchill and others for their imperialism, if they sincerely believed that they wanted to give the abundant life to the British people at the cost of all their colonial subjects. On the basis of Dr. Schweitzer's statement, Archbishop Temple is thoroughly justified in his declaration that: "I think it should be accepted as a principle, however, that advanced nations in the future should have a definite say as to backward nations: otherwise equity is impossible."² However, we do know that if ends and means

¹ *Saturday Review*, June 13, 1953, p. 48.

² *Evening Bulletin* (Providence), December 24, 1935, p. 10.

are not homogeneous, the ends are not achieved. Almost all wars in the West were declared to establish peace; at least we know that is true of the last two World Wars. But every war has produced another war instead of peace. When labour leaders fight against management, they create more trouble for themselves than others. Similarly, when the husband fights with the wife or vice versa, he certainly becomes demoralized and does not get the peace he wants.

We feel that the real motive of ethics is not the will to live, nor the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number, nor pragmatic ideas of utilitarian value. Real ethics is based on what Jesus declared in His Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," and His new commandments to love God and neighbour. Real ethics is found in the realization of the ultimate Reality or experience of God, according to the Hindus, or in the manifestation of the divinity that is already in man, as Swami Vivekananda declared. According to the Hindus, this search for Truth or Reality is based on the inherent desire for abiding bliss and peace. In fact, the urge for life is really and truly based on this desire. Ethical living is a means to the ultimate realization of Truth: and when one reaches the Truth, ethical living is no longer a struggle but it becomes an *actual fact* and a *natural state of being*. In the Hindu scriptures it is declared that we must first know God; then we feel His presence in all. So, ethical living is not conditioned by any requirement other than it is the basis of the ultimate goal of life—realization of God. It has a permanent value so far as our existence is concerned. In fact, without ethical living, we cannot reach the goal of life—abiding peace and happiness. In the Hindu scriptures—Upaniṣads, Vedānta Aphorisms, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*—it is said that the goal of life cannot be understood or reached without psychological training. Before the Christian era, Patañjali declared in his Yoga Aphorisms that ethical living is the primary step for the realization of the highest goal. The positive

aspect of ethics is emphasized in Hindu scriptures through the cultivation of love, patience, endurance, forgiveness, in order to overcome human emotional frailties, as a step toward the attainment of the real goal of religion.

We wonder how Dr. Schweitzer could come to the conclusion that even the teachings of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* could not give ethics to the Indian people. The *Gītā* definitely teaches that every man has his duties to perform, as the mere performance of duty can also lead one to the realization of the highest Truth. These duties are toward God, toward great teachers, parents, fellow beings, and lower beings. An elaborate understanding of the performance of duty will certainly answer Dr. Schweitzer's problems regarding the love for man and animal. All Hindu leaders emphasize that ethical living is essential, although Dr. Schweitzer misunderstands their viewpoint. When we go to the basic teachings of all religions, we find that ethical principles are the necessary condition for the attainment of the real goal of "life". If we follow Dr. Schweitzer's advice, following the post-Renaissance ethics, we are bound to be in difficulty, as already explained.

Dr. Schweitzer certainly expressed love for living beings; but that love can be real and true only when we feel the presence of Brahman, God, Absolute in all. The life of St. Francis justifies this statement. In the lives of the Hindu saints, too, we find that men and women expressed love and respect for living beings because they felt the presence of God in all, or were striving toward that goal.

In the beginning of spiritual life, we have to cultivate ethical principles in order to make the mind free from inordinate tendencies and destructive urges and drives. But as we proceed and as the mind becomes quiet, the Truth reveals itself and we become real lovers of mankind. During the period of struggle for ethical living and the cultivation of the thought of God, we go through a change; and as we

gradually realize the ultimate Reality we become thoroughly established in love and peace, which Dr. Schweitzer really advocates. Then we know the real nature of life, the world, and all existences. We not only manifest love and peace but we can transmit these qualities to other living beings. So, the real ethics comes, not from the will to live but from the understanding of the real nature of life and the real nature of Truth, God, or the Absolute, and from the desire for abiding joy and peace.

BEAT THE DRUM ! *

Beat! Beat the drum!
Beat the drum of Victory!

Having vanquished the demon Fear,
and killed the reptile Lie,
We've embraced the Veda's path
that leads to Brahma-Knowledge.

Having bathed in the Sun's bright rays,
and basked in the light of Truth,
We've scared away the spectre Death
that takes so heavy a toll of life.

Beat! Beat the drum!

Beat! Beat the drum!

The crow and the sparrow are of us,
the sea and the mountain are of us;
'Tis ourselves everywhere we see,
and the heart dances with delight.

Beat! Beat the drum!

* A free rendering by Miss S. Prema, B.A. (Hons.), of a Tamil song by the late Sri Subramania Bharati.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE MODERN WORLD

BY MR. C. E. STREET

Sri Ramakrishna is a saint of the modern age; anyone over seventy-one years old was born while he was still alive and teaching. And yet there is an apparent world of difference between the modern world and the quiet God-centered life he lived. What has he to say to an industrial civilization? Not only are western people overwhelmed by mechanical

gadgets, but a new industrial revolution is made at least every generation. And this is rapidly becoming the ideal of Asian planners. The modern scientific intellectual climate tends to regard all questions of ultimate reality as meaningless, all questions, in fact, not capable of objective solution.

Moreover, the modern mind does have its

idealism, which is adapted to an objective view of things, and which is not yet materialism. Many have high ideals of service to others, and devote their lives to that. Few churches lack persons with genuine religious feeling and saintly character.

What pertinence, then does Sri Ramakrishna have for us, close in time and far distant in culture and way of life? And if his life and words do have meaning, how is that to be adapted to different conditions and problems?

To begin with, it must be seen that there are problems which are problems of the modern outlook, and not simply challenges from outside. This is, in fact, a time of far reaching changes, of clashes of old and new, and an age without an accepted goal of life. The past complacency has been destroyed, first by two world wars, and also by the totalitarian extremes of fascism and communism, both products of the modern west. Many traditional religious views have been overturned by science, while science, in its turn, has failed to take the place of that which it has destroyed. It offers an austere methodology, which is the final court of appeal for questions of fact, but it cannot answer questions of meaning. Even worse, it has unleashed terrible powers which society is scarcely able to control and direct; that which promised emancipation now threatens destruction. The resulting frustration, born of internal contradictions, hardly seems able to cure itself.

To seek help from a different way of life, then, is more reasonable than a superficial glance might indicate. Let us look at three areas in which the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna may help to resolve modern difficulties.

I

First of all, he gives us a rational mysticism. This involves two things: a goal of life and a means to reach that goal, both free of dogma and in accord with a rational frame of mind. This is of the utmost importance, for the modern temper is one of violent reaction against mysticism. An extreme

scientific agnostic will accept nothing that cannot be explained by objective means, and hence finds a mortal enemy in mysticism. He will give hypnotism and hallucination as explanations, and if that does not suffice, the whole armory of abnormal psychology is put into action.

The churches, while not formally opposed to mysticism, are usually indifferent. The ultra-orthodox wing emphasizes faith rather than direct experience, and is dogmatic rather than experimental. The liberal wing tends towards humanism, and emphasizes social idealism rather than spiritual seeking. Most lie somewhere in between, and only a few consciously engage in the mystical quest, although it must be admitted that there is a growing interest.

The center of attention is more often fixed without, in science, in the historical side of religion, in the scriptures, in personal morality, and in social idealism. Seldom is the searchlight turned within. In consequence, as the external things are overthrown or prove insufficient, the shallow foundations are exposed, and the result is disillusionment and lack of faith.

Sri Ramakrishna went straight to the heart of things. He directly said, "He is born in vain, who, having attained the human birth, so difficult to get, does not attempt to realize God in this very life."

This, then, is the goal. Ramakrishna expressed it in a hundred different ways, and it underlies everything he said. It is not enough to put God first in an intellectual way, or merely through faith. That may be the beginning, but He has to be realized and made one's own. All activities, then, must be related to this goal, and are valuable to the extent that they lead towards it.

Sri Ramakrishna also would often say, using the ancient Vedānta expression, "Brahman is true; the world is false."

This expression, if carefully analyzed and related to scientific concepts, may well have more modern appeal than talk of God. The formulation, however, is not the important

thing. What is meant is that there is an ultimate reality, an ultimate experience of Truth, and there is nothing else to compare with it, nothing else by which we may evaluate it. One may define as rigorously as he pleases, and Sri Ramakrishna will not object if one admits that state beyond all definition, which is to be realized and realized in this very life. That is the goal of life.

Further, nothing else has meaning except in relation to that One. Sri Ramakrishna's illustration was of the zero. It has no content in itself, nor does a long string of zeros. But when they follow the 1, the result is thousands and millions. Similarly, this multiplicity in the universe means nothing in itself, only in Brahman.

One path, then, is discrimination, with its companions dispassion and renunciation. Sri Ramakrishna taught the necessity of these on many occasions. For instance, he used the illustration of rice boiling in a pot. One can determine the state of the pot of rice by examining only a few grains. Similarly, one may know the nature of this world by examining a few objects in it. By doing so, it is seen to be ephemeral, with all objects lasting but a short time. This is discrimination. Seeing this to be true, the mind turns from such transitory objects and directs itself to thoughts of God. That is renunciation. By such illustrations, Sri Ramakrishna sets forth the nature of spiritual practice in a vivid way.

He gives a whole course of spiritual practices, geared to individual requirements, and fully acceptable to the rational mind. At every point, one is surprised at his flexibility in meeting the particular needs of an individual seeker.

His exposition of the four main Yogas is well-known, and need not be described in detail. It may be mentioned how they are likely to impress modern seekers of truth. The practice of Jñāna Yoga by means of discrimination will especially appeal to the modern mind. Even the most rigorous of scientific thinkers will be able to ask, "What is true? What is real?" Thinking and

analyzing along that line will be sufficient, if done sincerely, and if the actions match the conclusions.

Rāja Yoga, or meditation, will also appeal to moderns, as the value of concentration is evident, and as the subject of meditation is a matter of individual choice. The approach is experimental and rational.

Bhakti Yoga will, perhaps, appeal more to the person of religious temperament, dissatisfied by conventional creeds, but untroubled by scientific and intellectual difficulties. Even there, however, Sri Ramakrishna maintains balance and rationality, and complete adaptation to the individual nature. Further, as one begins to think more deeply, the necessity of controlling the emotions and making them co-operate in the search for truth, begins to become evident. Also, such practices as japam, when considered carefully, will be acceptable to the modern mind.

Karma Yoga is important to all, since activity is common to all, even the contemplative. Naturally, in an action conscious society, the right use of action is a major concern, and will be taken up at greater length in the next section. Here, it is sufficient to note that the practice of non-attached work is fully acceptable to the modern mind. It deals with attitudes, not beliefs, and is immensely challenging, as it entails an unending attention to the task.

Sri Ramakrishna's flexibility in meeting individual needs is also illustrated in other ways. Most religious teachers, for instance, would require some belief in God from their students. But Sri Ramakrishna accepted an agnostic, and instructed him to pray in this manner, "Oh Lord, if you exist, reveal Thyself to me." This resulted in the transformation of the man's life. Sri Ramakrishna thus had the most tender concern for each person, and a complete lack of dogma or sectarian spirit.

These teachings of Sri Ramakrishna speak to the situation of the contemporary world, and go to the very heart of the problem. What we have is a rational mystical path, a

goal and a means, well adapted to modern conditions. People of diverse temperaments, even the skeptical, will find something, some path that will help them to grow spiritually, that is rigorous, yet God-centered. This is the contribution of Sri Ramakrishna.

II

In the second place, Sri Ramakrishna gives us a balanced view of action and service. Here, too, the modern scene is confused. Action justifies thought, and there is an almost universal tendency to be practical, to ask, "Does it work?" Intelligently applied, this is a valid attitude, but all too often an idea is considered good not because it is true, but because its acceptance gives some desired results. On the idealistic side, we find that doing good to others is the supreme virtue.

This also tends to be true in the churches. An excessive lack of concern in the past brought a reaction, the so-called social gospel, which puts the highest religious value on social idealism, combating poverty, eliminating war, relieving the oppressed, and so on. These are all necessary, indeed, compelling objectives, but that is not what religion means.

The orthodox wing of the church takes a somewhat different view. The emphasis is more on personal morality, which, except for temperance, seldom results in any social concern.

Most people would fall between these two extremes, but there is still a strong tendency to justify theology by action. There is seldom a real reconciliation between spirituality and action, between worship and work, and this easily leads to superficiality.

In Sri Ramakrishna, however, we get a better understanding of action and service, and of the conditions in which they may be of utmost value. As was pointed out in the preceding section, the goal is always God Realization. Even the best work, the most idealistic service, is of slight value if it does not help those concerned, the helper and the helped, to come closer to God. Therefore, the performance of such activities, while it *may*

reveal a spiritual nature, can never be a *test* of spirituality. Action is always a means, never an end.

Sri Ramakrishna said this to one devotee, "Work is a means, if done unattached; but the end of life is to see God. Let me repeat that the means should not be confounded with the end—that the first stage on a road should be taken for the goal. No, do not regard work as the be-all and the end-all, the ideal of human existence. Pray for devotion to God. Suppose you are fortunate enough to see God. Then what would you pray for? Would you pray for dispensaries and hospitals, tanks and wells, roads and almshouses? No, these are realities to us as long as we do not see God. But once brought face to face with the Divine vision, we see them as they are—transitory things no better than dreams."

Sri Ramakrishna emphasized two things as necessary for one to do any kind of action safely. First, it must be done without attachment. An illustration which he often gave is that of the servant girl who took care of her employer's children. She would show them great love, and even speak of them as, "My Ram. My Hari." But still she would know that they were not really her own, and her mind would be fixed on her village home. Similarly, those working in the world should not claim or think of any objects in it as their own, and should fix their minds always on God.

Again, Sri Ramakrishna said, "You cannot get rid of work, because nature will always lead you on to it. That being so, let all work be done as it ought to be. If work is done unattached, it will lead to God. To work without any attachment is to work without the expectation of any reward or fear of any punishment in this world or the next. Work so done is a means to the end, and God is the end."

However, work without attachment is a subtle and difficult thing, and this leads us to the second point. All work or service should be preceded and accompanied by devotion, by cultivation of love of God.

Sri Ramakrishna said, "In this age work without devotion to God has no legs to stand upon. It is like a foundation of sand. First cultivate devotion. All the other things—schools, dispensaries, etc.—will, if you like, be added to you. First devotion, then work."

It was for this reason, then, that he often advised householder devotees to spend some time in solitude, doing spiritual practices. With a firm spiritual foundation laid, they could safely go into the world and do any work.

It will be seen that Sri Ramakrishna did not condemn work, or social service, for he saw that this was necessary and unavoidable for most people. What he insisted upon was a firm recognition of what is the means and what the goal.

He put this clearly when he said, "Do you talk of social reform? Well, you may do so after realizing God. Remember, the R̥sis of old gave up the world in order to attain God. This is the one thing needful. All other things shall be added to you, if indeed you care to have them. First see God, and then talk of lectures and social reforms."

It remains to point out that, whatever the value of work and social idealism, there is also a place for worklessness. Some, a few, will be able to spend their time ceaselessly in contemplation of God. Indeed, the value of such a state cannot be gainsaid, if realization of God is the goal.

In this connection, Sri Ramakrishna said, "Renunciation of work comes of itself when intense love of God swells up in the heart. Let them work who are made to do so by God. When the time is ripe, one must renounce everything and say, 'Come, O my mind, let us watch together the Divinity installed in the heart.'"

Here again, in the question of action, we see the individual emphasis. There is no "party line" on work and service, for the needs and capacities of no two persons will be exactly alike.

The modern stress on action does have great value. Much has and will be accomplished because of it. It remains, however, to put it in its true perspective, and to see that

it is not frittered away in aimless busyness. This will be accomplished by an understanding of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings on the subject. There is a goal, and there are ways to reach that goal. The right use of action is one of those ways.

III

The third lesson that Sri Ramakrishna has for the modern world is what is usually called religious tolerance. The word tolerance does not express the idea well, as there are important shortcomings in the ordinary belief in tolerance.

It should first be understood that ordinary tolerance, or the freedom to practice the religion of one's choice, is not a small thing. There is too much intolerance in the world today for tolerance to be regarded lightly. So the remarks that follow are not intended as criticisms of something which is essentially good. They are aimed, rather, at its improvement.

Belief in tolerance, or religious freedom, does not eliminate the sectarian spirit, and may even go hand in hand with outright fanaticism. This sort of tolerance is of the live and let live variety. Most real fanatics and sectarians are minorities, and therefore might be in danger of persecution themselves. It is safer to allow others to exist, even though they are considered to be dangerously in error.

Even where there is no sectarianism in any narrow sense, there is often a tendency to generalize, to conclude that truth is truth, and therefore applicable to all. The corporate nature of western religions encourages this tendency. This is probably more due to ignorance of other faiths than to actual exclusive attitudes. Even so, the superiority and finality of Christianity is usually taken for granted, even where it is not openly proclaimed.

There is a third support for ordinary tolerance in the religious indifference which is a mark of modern times. Those who have no faith in religion are perfectly willing for anyone to be religious in any way he chooses.

Sri Ramakrishna provides a needed cor-

rective to these ordinary ideas of tolerance, and gives a solid foundation for the relationship between faiths and religions. The basic statement of his view is, "All paths lead to the same goal." He gave two main emphases to this statement.

In the first place, the goal is the same, however it may be understood, whatever the name that may be given to it. He gave many illustrations along this line, showing that the substance is the same, though with many variations of name and form.

One of his favorite illustrations dealt with the different names given to water. He said, "As one and the same water is called by different names by different peoples, some calling it 'Water', some 'Vāri', some 'Aqua' and some 'Pāni', so the one Saccidānanda—Existence-Intelligence-Bliss Absolute—is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari and by others as Brahman."

He also used similar illustrations with clay, sugar, and gold, in each case showing that it is the same God that is worshipped in diverse ways, under diverse names.

In the second place, he gave a series of illustrations in which the great variety of paths is set forth, each leading to the same goal. For instance, he said, "As one can ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder, a bamboo, a staircase or a rope, so also diverse are the ways of approaching God, and every religion in the world shows one of the ways."

The paths are various, but all have the same purpose, the same function, and all lead to a common goal. Another favorite illustration of his was of the great variety of bathing ghats leading to a large tank. They all lead to the same Eternal Bliss, and therefore it is useless to consider one superior to another.

If this is once accepted, the relationship between various religions will become a healthy one. As Sri Ramakrishna said, "A truly religious man should think that other religions are also so many paths leading to the Truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions."

Another aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's thought on this is his complete recognition of individual needs and requirements. He often told the story of a mother cooking for her various children. One child, perhaps, could only take soup, while another would like a well spiced curry. Each would need a different dish, which the mother would lovingly cook. Similarly, each person has his own individual spiritual nature, and what serves for another may not be helpful to him. This can be regarded as both the explanation and the justification of his teachings about the fundamental truth of all religions.

Here, again, Sri Ramakrishna gives help for the solution of a current difficulty in modern life, and gives a new dimension to ordinary ideas of tolerance. This, in fact, is probably the most distinctive of all of his teachings, and certainly is one of the most important. If tolerance can be replaced by respect for all faiths, and the individual nature of spiritual yearning recognized, it will be a giant step forward for modern western religions.

IV

It should be noted that much of the power of his teaching, in all three of the areas mentioned here, comes from the fact that there was an absolute identity between his words and his life. He did not teach a mystical theory; he taught what he had experienced. His life was an object lesson in non-attachment. And not only did he respect all religions, but he actually practised them and realized the truth of each. It was thus that he could speak with such authority and power that his words bear fruit in the modern world.

These three contributions, three among many, are indeed pertinent today. More than pertinent, for if understood and applied, they will provide correctives and solutions to many of our modern dilemmas. They deserve deep study and meditation. Then, indeed, there will be that true meeting of east and west, and we may march on together towards the Goal.

RELIGION AND HISTORY

BY DR. VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

The Nature of Religion

The problem of the origin, growth and influence of religions is one of the most important themes in the philosophy of history. Sporadic reflections on this problem we find in Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Vico and others. But systematic reflection on this problem is a product of the French rationalistic philosophy and the growth of the social sciences since the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In quest of the assignment of the place of the historical religions in the total evolution of man, different theories have been advanced about the origin of religions. According to Hegel religion is "the consciousness of Absolute Being in general." Engels traced religion to the persistence of old savage beliefs and superstitions. Lenin saw the roots of religion in fear of the blind forces of capital. The Marxist theory about religion being an ideological superstructure bears the influence of the notion of Ludwig Feurbach that man creates his own deity out of his own mind. Ecstatic experiences are considered the sources of religious experiences by Haner. Bergson distinguishes the intuitional and the institutional phases of religions, the first being primarily the individualistic and the second the social and historical. Anthropologists trace the origin of religion in clan or tribal solidarity and consciousness.

Evolution of Religion according to Aurobindo and Hegel

Sri Aurobindo distinguishes three stages in the evolution and growth of religion.¹ The primitive stage might have been "a mass of animism, fetishism, magic, totemism, taboo, myth, superstitious symbol, with the medicine-man as priest, a mental fungus of primitive human

¹ *The Life Divine II*, pp. 702-'04.

ignorance,—later on at its best a form of Nature-worship", but it had also some basis in a crude unsystematized occultism.² After some time came the second stage, the national or tribal religion. It adhered to a polytheistic belief and made some systematic attempt at the formulation of a cosmogony, cosmology, eschatology and also social ethics. Behind it lay a strong occult tradition and esoteric spiritual knowledge but the main factors were sacrifices and social ethics with the vague beginning of a spiritual philosophy. The mystic or the incipient occultist has everywhere been the creator of religion and even if the anthropological theory of the origin of religion in the "sub-conscious mass-mind" is accepted, it (religion) was expressed and formulated by the mystics and the occultists. The third stage marked the emancipation of the spiritual experiences and gnosis and attempts were made not only to make the spiritual element the basis of religion but also to make that element universally available.

This threefold evolutionary typology of religion as formulated by Sri Aurobindo has some similarity to the Hegelian triad. Hegel gives two accounts of the evolution of religion in *The Phenomenology of Mind* and *Philosophy of Religion*. In *The Phenomenology of Mind* the chief divisions of religion are : (1) Natural religion at the level of consciousness, further subdivided into (i) religion at the level of sense-certainty—"light"—the Parsee religion (ii) religion at the level of perception—"life" e.g. primarily the religions of India and (iii) religion at the level of understanding—primarily the Egyptian religion; (2) Religion in the form of art, at the level of self-conscious-

² Cf. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* Vol. I, p. 352.

ness; (3) Revealed religion or religion at the level of reason and spirit—Christianity.³ Aurobindo's account does not bear much resemblance to this account but to the second Hegelian version as found in the *Philosophy of Religion*. The first stage is the stage of magic and natural religion. This corresponds to Aurobindo's primitive religion. The natural religions conceive God as a power or substance and there is no consciousness of the importance of the individual. The second stage is marked by the religions of spiritual individuality in which God is looked upon as subject. We find examples of it in the religions of Judaea, Greece and Rome. In Judaism, the religion of sublimity, the deity is conceived as full of power and wisdom as a dignified subjectivity; the Hellenic religion is one of beauty, the Roman religion is one of utility or of understanding and conformity to design. This stage corresponds to Aurobindo's national or tribal stage. The revealed absolute Christian religion establishes a reconciliation of God and the world. Christ or the God-man shows this unity. God is to be conceived as the self-externalising (incarnate) idea, which from this externalisation eternally returns back into itself, i. e. as the triune God. This corresponds to Aurobindo's third stage or the spiritual religion.

Hegel tries to construct a *historical* typology which would simultaneously reveal also the *logical* development of the idea but the weakest point in him is that he had to leave out Islam altogether because it historically comes later than the absolute religion of Christianity. Aurobindo's typology escapes this because his scheme is conceived in terms of a spiritual evolution and is not necessarily identical with the spatio-temporal evolution of the historical forms of religion. Hegel conceives of Christianity as the highest or the absolute religion. Aurobindo, though in his earlier writings he wrote in the most exalted terms about Hinduism as the perfect revealer of the subliminal depths and the superconscient heights,

³ G. W. F. Hegel: *The Phenomenology of Mind* (E.T. by J. B. Baillie), pp. 684-785.

stated later that real gnostic supramental spirituality was not exhausted even by Vedic and Vedāntic Hinduism and hence he introduces a more liberal, tolerant and moderate note and does not appear as a nationalist trying to construct a scheme of religious philosophy to justify his own particular sect. Moreover, the basic principle in the Hegelian scheme is the conception of the deity whether as a power of nature or as spiritual individuality or as the self-externalising idea eternally returning back into itself. In Aurobindo the dominant concept is the release and emancipation of the spiritual power from magic and inconscience and the attainment of the fullness of mystic supramental splendours. Hence, whereas Hegel's scheme appears theological, Aurobindo's scheme is metaphysical. Furthermore, according to Aurobindo there is the possibility that the primitive stage could have been "a fall or a vestige, a relapse from a higher knowledge belonging to a previous cycle of civilization or the debased remnants of a dead or obsolete culture."⁴ But Hegel considers the first stage to be one of the slumber of the spirit. There is no conception in him of that multiple cycles of creation and destruction (Manvantaras and Sargas) which is an important theme of Hindu religious mythology. But the generalised notion of a triadic evolution, Aurobindo could have derived from Hegel since the latter is the great formulator of this methodology, and could clothe it in terms of his own conceptions and ideas. It is remarkable that both Hegel and Aurobindo accept the origin of ethics in the second stage of religion and they are similar also in their view that the first stage of religion is characterised by an affiliation with or immersion into nature.

The Role of Religion in History

Religion has had tremendous influence in history. Even the sub-conscious and vaguely realized intuitions of early man gave him a power and source of subsistence. He turned towards a dynamic utilization of the power of supraphysical beings whom he could contact

⁴ *The Life Divine II*, p. 702.

and could obtain thereby some subliminal and supernormal experience. Behind the amorphous mixture of old intuitions, occultism and magic could be discovered a religio-social ethical sense and a mystic longing. While magic tends sometimes towards anti-social and egocentric individuality, religion tended to make men social and collectivistically-oriented. Therefore, religious ethics and occult mysticism in the ancient period of humanity produced the priest, the just men, the wise men referred to in the Vedic and Greek traditions and created a powerful and dynamic culture in several countries. But the full efflorescence of the spiritual man is attained with the coming into prominence of men like the Yogis, the saint and the prophet who initiate the foundations of the spiritualised community and create the traditions of ethical and religious culture in the highest sense.^{4a} Of course, the rise of European rationalistic enlightenment and the repercussions of Galilean-Newtonian science have introduced the reign of a materialistic secularism and atheism first in Europe and then also in other parts of the world but in the "older natural societies" the influence of religion was colossal.⁵ In those days religion could be equated with life and it governed almost all the departments of social and individual activity. In India and in Asia generally one can notice the great influence of religion. The all-comprehensive character of religion sometimes led to the endeavour of creating state-religions. "But a state-religion is an artificial monstrosity, although a national religion may be a living reality."⁶

The different historical religions have made their specific contributions to human history. The old pagan polytheistic symbolism, although to the modern man it may appear only as an intellectualised animism, did contribute a sense of many-sided delight in life.⁷ It empha-

sized the notion of a large harmonious and extended capable manhood. Christianity emphasized the vision of divine love and charity, but it failed to spiritualize Europe because its medieval patristic and scholastic forms with their asceticism and dogmatic theological outlook ran counter to the European emphasis on life and reason which had been left as legacies of the Graeco-Roman civilizations.⁸ Hence since the Renaissance one finds in the occident an exhaustion and decline of religions because of an unholy war between intellect and spirit in which the triumph of the former led to the growth of secularism, atheism and materialism. The rise of European culture has been marked by the growth of a ratiocinative and later on a scientific philosophy, but there have been also some brilliant spiritual creations as for example, Pythagoreanism, Stoicism and the medieval sect of the Franciscans. Too great an emphasis on the purification of religion by reason has almost led to the death of the religion in Europe in the sense of spiritual power.⁹ Perhaps this appraisal of the role of religion and of Christianity would not pass unchallenged by critics. Aurobindo would distinguish between the early moral and spiritual teachings of Christ and the apostles and the later politicisation of Christianity after Constantine and as he says: "the victorious religion became a militant and dominant Church and a more fanatically persecuting power than the creed and the empire which it replaced."¹⁰ Vivekananda also spoke harshly about the social and political role of Christianity. Dayananda had declared war on Christianity according to Rolland.¹¹ Contrary to the views of Gandhi, Rama Tirtha, Vivekananda or Aurobindo who only criticise Christianity as a spiritual and religious movement but have the highest regard for the lofty teachings and

^{4a} *The Life Divine* (American ed.) p. 783.

⁵ *The Ideal of Human Unity* p. 229.

⁶ *The Ideal of Human Unity* p. 229.

⁷ Sri Aurobindo: *Thought and Glimpses* 39-40; "A Defence of Indian Culture," *Advent*, 1948 p. 147.

⁸ *Advent* 1948 p. 145.

⁹ Sri Aurobindo: "A Defence of Indian Culture", *Advent*, 1948 p. 152.

¹⁰ *Essays on the Gītā* (American edition), p. 40.

¹¹ Romain Rolland, *The Life of Ramakrishna* p. 150.

character of Christ, Dayānandā had only slender regard for either. On the other hand, although Aurobindo is critical of the dearth of spirituality in Europe, he thinks that Christianity was a link in the transmission of some basic spiritual ideas like fraternity and humanitarianism from Indian Buddhism to the West.¹² Buddhism, according to Aurobindo preached a noble way to wisdom and purity. He repudiates the negativistic and nihilistic interpretations of Nirvāṇa of whose spiritual authenticity he claims to have personal experience.¹³ He considers Buddha the most dynamic personality in the history of the world although he seriously condemns the exaggerated emphasis on negativism, asceticism and monasticism of later Buddhism. Along with Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Gandhi, he offers a positive metaphysical interpretation of Buddha's teachings and like them wants to affiliate ancient Buddhism to Upaniṣadic Vedāntism with some conceptual variations.¹⁴ The rise and growth of Indian nationalism has seen a pronounced growth of pride in the achievements of Buddhism in India and eastern Asia and Indian nationalism has immensely benefited from the historical truth that even Japan which was the first to hurl the spirit and sword of defiance against Western imperialism got its Buddhism from India through China. Hence the claim of the spiritual fatherhood of India (especially with regard to eastern Asia) has been used in the services of Indian nationalism. Indian nationalism considered Christianity as only a modified form of Buddhism on the historically not substantial and perhaps rather inadequate evidence that the sects of the Essenes and the Therapeutae in Palestine and

Alexandria were Buddhist groups powerfully influencing the genesis and teachings of Christianity.¹⁵ Aurobindo also accepts that the Buddhist way of life powerfully influenced the birth of Christianity.¹⁶ Judaism and Islam, according to him, taught man how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God.¹⁷ Hinduism, he thinks, opens the profoundest religious possibilities.

Sri Aurobindo is in favour of a comprehensive spiritual discipline which could integrate the insights of the different religions because all of them have led mankind to some good. He would stand for something like Vivekananda's "Universal Religion."¹⁸ But Vivekananda as also Ramakrishna taught that all religions were equally valid and efficacious methods of God-realization and hence they stressed that peoples should practise the ethical and religious teachings and try to be better men. Aurobindo, on the other hand, does not merely say that one can get spiritual illumination by the devout practice of any religion but would want that "all these God-visions could embrace and cast themselves into each other".¹⁹ This attempt at the spiritualization of mankind would involve prolonged efforts at spiritual self-evolution. He wants a spiritual fusion of the teachings of the great religious leaders. Christ taught the gospel of purity and human perfection. Mahomed was insistent on surrender and obedience to God. Ramakrishna taught that all religions are true and also the divinity of man. Caitanya stood for divine love and ecstasy. Aurobindo wants

¹⁵ Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, pp. 158-163, 192; D. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka*. The Therapeutae are equated with the Theraputras. Perhaps it may be too speculative to identify the Essenes with Śramaṇas.

¹⁶ Vivekananda also accepted the indirect influence of Buddhism on Christianity, *The Complete Works of Vivekananda* (ed. of 1945) Vol. I, p. 389.

¹⁷ Sri Aurobindo: *Thoughts and Glimpses*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁸ *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* Part II (Mayavati ed. of 1943) pp. 357-394.

¹⁹ Sri Aurobindo: *Thoughts and Glimpses*, pp. 39-40

¹² Sri Aurobindo: *Ideals and Progress* p. 60.

¹³ A Peace, stupendous, featureless, still
Replaces all,—what once was I, in it
A silent unnamed emptiness content
Either to fade in the Unknowable

Or thrill with the luminous seas of the
Infinite.—Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems and Plays*, II p. 298.

¹⁴ V. P. Varma, "Sri Aurobindo's Interpretations of Buddhist Philosophy", *Journal of Bihar Research Society* (Buddha Jayanti Special Number), 1956.

the "gathering" of all these streams into a "redeeming Ganges" for pouring over "the death-in-life of a materialistic humanity".²⁰

This comprehensive catholicity with regard to all religions and sects has been one of the main tenets of Indian political thought. Ram Mohan Ray was a man of wide tolerance and a keen student of comparative religions. Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Aurobindo have taught the existence of the same fundamental truth in all religions on the basis of mystic experience.²¹ Gandhi taught the equality of all religions on the basis of his view that the same lofty ethical idealism characterized all the great religions of the world.

The notion of the equality of all religions which has been given a spiritual and ethical foundation in modern political thought had been an imperative necessity for Indian nationalism which had to rely on a population professing different creeds and cults. Hence there was also a strong political implication behind the idea of the equality of all religions. Indian teachers like Vivekananda and Gandhi have claimed that they are going beyond the Western idea of tolerance which assumes an attitude of superiority of one's own religion which condescends "to tolerate" others. They teach not only the toleration of other religions but the cultivation of an attitude of reverence for all great religious leaders and scriptures. Indian nationalism has benefited from the historical truth that all the great religions of the world — Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, arose in Asia and therefore it was often said that although the Europeans might have excelled in the realms of politics and intellect, the Asiatics excelled in the realm of spirit and even Gandhi at times used to refer to Jesus Christ as a great Asiatic.

²⁰ Sri Aurobindo: *The Yoga and its objects*, p. 34.

²¹ *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* Vol. IV (1945 ed.), p. 183: "He left every religion undisturbed because he had realized that, in reality, they are all part and parcel of the One Eternal Religion". ('He' refers to Ramakrishna).

Although Aurobindo is a mystic and a seer he is against the irrational prejudice of the ethical or religious mind in condemning all kinds of power. He thinks that every type of power is "spiritual in its origin and divine in its character"²² and therefore he has been critical of the illusionism, pessimism and acosmism of certain Indian philosophical and religious systems. As a man of historical vision he acknowledges that the old religious cultures declined because they had serious defects. They isolated and confined their action to the betterment of the individual and sometimes tolerated gross cruelty and barbarism in the social sphere. He also refers to the want in the old religious cultures of sufficient intellectual clarity and culture which could be used as a means of social experiment and political progress. He thinks that although the highest aim is to transcend the will to power, in the early stages of individual and social development the will to life and power should be exercised and exerted. The highest aim of man and society is to transmute the world's life and consciousness into the divine spirit but this task which mankind seems to have set for itself since the beginning of its early aspirations and speculations, has not consummated so far, because the dogmatic and the rigidly credal and rational pursuits of theologies, religions and philosophies have failed to generate the necessary spiritual power. The plethoric growth of churches and creeds and the sanctification of outworn social folkways, morals and customs have led to a "false socialization of religion"²³ and hence instead of guiding and regulating society religion has become a function of social and political structures and processes and therefore it has failed to redeem mankind. But Aurobindo makes a distinction between the spiritually oriented "true religion" and the credal ceremonial "religionism".²⁴ He is critical only of the latter. Being a believer in supra-rational spheres of reality he would not stand for any purely rational religion which could

²² Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* p. 154.

²³ *The Human Cycle* p. 279.

²⁴ *The Human Cycle* p. 220.

only be a Voltairian deism unavailable for the spiritual regeneration of society which can be only achieved by bringing down the powers of God, "the infinite who is not an abstraction but a Being".²⁵

Conclusion

Aurobindo's views on religion in its social aspects are fundamentally opposed to all the atheistical and psycho-analytical attempts to consider it (religion) a stupefying opium or a rationalization of some unknown fear and prostration. On the other hand, he will not concur with the attempts of the fanatics of the different religions, like the French post-Napoleonic conservatives like de Maistre with reference to Christianity, to make religion the basis of society. Radhakrishnan analyses the several substitutes of religion in our times—scepticism, atheism, agnosticism, humanism, socialism, pragmatism, etc; and thinks that they all indicate a craving for the eternal and the abiding and hence he pleads for a 'religion of the spirit'.²⁶ Aurobindo's basic aim being a total transfiguration, he is not satisfied with a mere religious solution but wants the descent of the supramental powers for changing man's consciousness.

²⁵ *The Human Cycle* pp. 165, 160.

²⁶ Radhakrishnan : *An Idealist view of life*, chapter I, pp. 309-10; Ibid; *Eastern Religions and*

It is very difficult for me to make forecasts about the role of religion in the future history of mankind. By and large we find that religion is retreating to the inner world. The external spheres are being left to the control of science, sociology, physiology and secularism. The great prophets are, on the other hand, preaching a return to the intimations of the hidden depths. I myself have no religious experience. But I have an emotional desire that it would be nice if somehow the religious truths could be proved to be true. As a student of political and social philosophy I am keenly interested in the sociological and historical background and implications of religion. Religion is a great power and has tremendous potentialities for the social and moral regeneration of mankind. Hence I think that there is great wisdom in what Vivekananda, Dayananda, Tilak, Gandhi and Aurobindo have said about the moralization of our political life. In the name of mistaken secularism we are refusing to listen to the pregnant and vital message of our scriptures which teach the inner purification of our life and thereby aim to sanctify the structure even of the social and historical universe.²⁷

Western Thought, pp. 16-17; Ibid; *Kalki* pp. 68-98; Ibid; art in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* p. 285.

²⁷ V. P. Varma, *Rajniti Aur Darshana* (in Hindi), the last chapter.

'A buried treasure is not uncovered by merely uttering the words "come forth". You must follow the right directions, dig, remove the stones and earth from above it, and then make it your own. In the same way, the pure truth of the Atman, which is buried under Maya and the effects of Maya, can be reached by meditation, contemplation, and other spiritual practices such as a knower of Brahman may prescribe—but never by subtle arguments'.

—Vivekacūdāmaṇi

SELF-INTEGRATION

BY DR. MOHAN SINGH

(1)

Surveying the facing armies, friendly and
inimical.

Only heaven itself can make a heaven of
earth
Only the butterfly can give a caterpillar
wings,
Only the Guru can transform a disciple
into a Guru,
Only a sun can give off an earth,
Only the omnipresent *Ākāśa* can fill every pot,
Only a million-volt beauty can magnetize
blood and bone,
Only the awakened prince can rouse the
sleeping princess,
Only death can shake stolid life,
Only the Divine Universal integer can
integrate the mind individual.

It is taking the middle-going
The middle, the central, the cardinal,
The mastery-displaying, the Self-confident,
Upon the eight petals of the lotus of the heart.
In eight directions
The mind moves, flits from one to other,
As if split, as if frustrated;
Stop it in the centre
And then press it into the flame—
White, of the size of the thumb
The finger cardinal.
The smokeless-flame is the Super-I.
It is Integrity and Freedom.
In the flame thy mind is purified, not burnt,
Stabilized, not melted,
Not pushed but drawn in embrace.
Place the mind in the spaceless, timeless,

(2)

Disintegration-Motion in directions ten,
Space-time.
Integration is standing at the centre-Self
Like the very Hero in the Chariot,

causeless;
And it is integrated
Into the Infinite Whole, Integer,
The one Lord.

SHEIKH FARIDUDDIN ATTAR

BY DR. M. HAFIZ SYED

Sheikh Fariduddin Attar was born probably in 513 A.H. There is a great difference of opinion about the exact date of his birth. It is safer to assume that he was born in 627 A.H. as chronicled in *Nafahatnl Uns*. His birth place was Kadkan, a village near Nishapur and hence he was generally called Nishapuri. The name Attar signifies one who deals in perfumes or drugs, especially Itr or

otto of roses. The poet's father had followed this profession and the son succeeded to his business. He was particularly attached to his mother who was a great source of satisfaction and inspiration to him. His father having died when he was a little boy he inherited his strong leanings to the religious life from his mother. In addition to his trade in the sale of perfume he had a sort of a pharmacy where

he prescribed medicine to the ailing patients. His clinic was so popular that he had to treat not less than five hundred patients in a day and it was in the midst of this preoccupation that he found time to compose some of his poems.

Almost all the memoirs of saints are agreed that he had a long span of life and became a martyr at the hands of a Tartar. The story of his martyrdom is pathetic. During the onslaught of Tartars he was caught hold by a soldier and he was about to be put to death when a passer-by implored the soldier not to put him to death but to release him on a ransom of ten thousand *asharfis*. The Sheikh said to the soldier, "Take care and do not sell me away for this amount. My life is more valuable than this amount." Thus they passed on. They met another man who was a grass cutter and offered his release for a sheaf of grass. On this Sheikh remarked "Make me over to him for this bargain as I am much less valuable than this sheaf of grass." The Tartar soldier not taking the Sheikh seriously thought he was jesting and beheaded him.

The story of his complete renunciation of worldly affairs is rather touching. During his early days he owned a druggist shop where he was so busily engaged in dispensing medicine one day that when a Faqir called on him and begged for some alms, the Sheikh paid no attention to him as he was too busy with his own affairs and could not reply to the mendicant who caustically remarked, "How will you give up your life when you are so deeply engrossed in your business?" The Sheikh in a piqued mood retorted, "I shall give up my ghost as you would do." The Faqir once again said, "You would not follow my way." Having uttered these words he laid himself down with bowl of alms under his head and repeating the Kalema "There is no God but God", breathed his last. This incident touched Sheikh's heart so deeply that he gave away in charity all that his shop contained and from that moment onward he lived like a Darvesh.

As a man of great renunciation and detachment he spent several years in the company of a saint named Sheikh Ruknuddin Akaf. Thereafter he visited the sacred places of Islam, Mecca and Medina and associated himself with several saintly people. At the end of his travel he had himself initiated by Sheikh Majajuddin Baghdadi and was recognized as one of the greatest saints of his time. He occupied such a high position in the spiritual realm that the prince of mystics Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi acknowledged him repeatedly as his guide and spiritual leader. His name has been mentioned several times in the famous *Masnavi*.

He had to his credit quite a number of books both in prose and poetry. Some of his outstanding books are *Asrar Nama*, *Diwan*, *Pand Nama*, *Manteq-ut-tair* which has recently been translated into English under the caption of 'Conference of birds'.

In the course of his travels Attar made acquaintance of a large number of men of God, Sufi mystics; and for thirty-nine years he occupied himself in collecting the verses and sayings of Sufi saints and gathering information about their lives and spiritual practices so that he was reputed to have more knowledge of the mysticism of Islam and the Sufis themselves than any author of his time. At the end of his life Attar was living in complete seclusion and was accessible to none but those who sought his spiritual guidance.

His biographers have recorded of him that he was submerged in devotion of the knowledge of God and plunged in the immediate experience of the Divine. Thus he came to the end of mystic's quest which in other words is nothing short of the annihilation of personal self in the consciousness of the Divine, when a human soul becomes one with the Eternal Self.

Attar's tomb was outside the gate of Shadbakh, the original shrine over it later fell into ruins, but the Amir Ali Sheikh restored it and built a beautiful monument over the grave.

ATTAR'S TEACHINGS

Mysticism, according to Attar, is a constant awareness of the all-pervading Presence of God, but it seeks to go farther still, it aims at a direct experience of the One Reality. The mystics claim that this is possible because the soul is itself divine in origin; only the real can know the Reality, and only those who have acquired divine qualities can comprehend God. Concerning the nature of the Godhead, Attar says that the Divine Essence is beyond human conception, and all that men say of God is but the result of their own imaginary ideas of Him for He is Incomparable and therefore Unknowable and Incomprehensible by the human reason, which knows little enough about itself and how then can it hope to know the Ineffable Essence.

He is a hidden treasure and the visible world is a means whereby we may discover Him. Those who take pains really to understand the true nature of the Universe will find that God is the underlying power behind it. What we call good or evil are both from Him. Therefore nothing should be regarded as evil, for everything comes from Him. Therefore everything is good.

Attar was deeply convinced that man is made in the image of God and that the human soul is derived from the Divine Essence. Man is in truth the only reality in the Universe or else he is unreal, for he alone has divinity hidden in him. Attar held that there is a

great possibility hidden in man. His soul is capable of highest progress. He was capable of attaining the Light of lights. All else, according to Attar, was perishable but the human soul is immortal and shall abide for ever in God.

On the path of spiritual realization, according to Attar, the greatest obstacle is one's desire for name, fame, and high position. Some people undergo severest austerity and lead a pious life with the sole object of winning people's goodwill, approbation, applause and respect. This tendency is detrimental to the life of an aspirant.

The greatest emphasis laid down by Attar was on full detachment from worldly pursuits. Love of worldly things was disastrous for leading spiritual life. Attar's view was that a neophyte, however sinful and morally degraded he may have been, should not lose heart but depend on God's mercy and grace to forgive him and transform his moral life.

Whatever may be one's mode of worship God judges him from his inner motive and purity of heart and not from the outer profession and action. Attar finally believed that every devout Muslim should scrupulously and punctiliously observe injunctions and prohibitions laid down by the religion of Islam. He should not move even by a hair's breadth from the laws of spiritual discipline laid down by the Prophet of Islam. Therein lies his security and success in his spiritual aspiration.

ŚRĪ-BHĀŚYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

CHAPTER I

SECTION IV

In the first Section Brahman, the object of inquiry by those longing for Liberation, was defined as the First Cause. It was then shown

that this definition refers only to Brahman which is different from the sentient and insentient world and thereby the rest like Pradhāna etc. were excluded from the category of being the First Cause. After that in the three Sections, the possibility of any-

thing else than Brahman being the First Cause was taken up for discussion. In this connection of Section two, Causal texts of doubtful import referring to animate and inanimate beings rather indistinctly, and in Section three such Causal texts more or less clearly referring to sentient and insentient things as the First Cause, were taken up for discussion and it was shown that all these texts refer to Brahman only and not to other things. In this Section very clear references in Causal texts to other things as the First Cause is taken up for discussion and refutation.

In certain scriptural texts the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhyas seems to be mentioned as the First Cause. This Section refutes such a view and confirms that Brahman is the ultimate Cause of everything.

In the last topic of the previous Section it was shown that Brahman is different from the individual soul whether in the state of bondage or freedom. The objection that there is nothing like Brahman different from the individual soul was refuted. This topic is begun to refute a similar objection raised from a different standpoint. It also refutes the view that the Pradhāna is the First Cause.

TOPIC I

THE MAHAT AND AVYAKTA OF THE KATHA UPANIṢAD DO NOT REFER TO SĀNKHYAN CATEGORIES

भानुमानिकमप्येकेषामिति चेत्, न, शरीर-
रूपकविन्यस्तगृहीतेः, दर्शयति च ॥१४१॥

1. If it be said that in some (versions of the Vedas) that which is inferred (i.e. the Pradhāna) (is) also (mentioned as the First Cause) (we say) no, because (the word 'Unevolved'—Avyakta—in the Katha text) is mentioned in a simile referring to the body (and means the body itself); (the text) too explains (it).

In the *Katha Upaniṣad* we have, 'Beyond the Great (Mahat) there is the Unevolved (Avyakta), beyond the Unevolved is the Being (Puruṣa). Beyond the Being there is nothing, that is the end, that is the supreme goal'

(1.3.11). Does the word 'Unevolved' (Avyakta) here refer to the Sāṅkhyan Pradhāna or not—this is the doubt that arises here. The opponent holds that it refers to the Pradhāna; for the principles, Great (Mahat), Unevolved (Avyakta) and Puruṣa are identified to be the Sāṅkhyan categories inasmuch as they are mentioned in the text in the order enumerated in the Sāṅkhyan Philosophy. This is further confirmed by the text when it says that beyond the Being (Puruṣa) there is nothing, thereby denying the existence of anything beyond the Puruṣa, the twenty-fifth category of the Sāṅkhyas. So the 'Unevolved', the Sāṅkhyan Pradhāna, is the First Cause.

The second half of the Sūtra refutes this view and says that by the word 'Unevolved' (Avyakta) the Pradhāna independent of Brahman is not referred to but the body represented as the chariot in a simile of the body in a previous text. 'Know that the soul is the rider of the chariot and the body as the chariot' etc. (*Kaṭha*. 1.3.3). This text mentions in the form of a simile the various means of meditation as the chariot-rider, chariot etc. in order to teach their control. From the standpoint of control which one is superior to which is described in, 'The objects are superior to the sense' etc. (*Kaṭha*. 1.3.10-11). Now all the things mentioned in *Kaṭha*. 1.3.3-4 are found in *Kaṭha*. 1.3.10-11, being designated by their proper names. Only the word 'chariot' in the earlier text and Avyakta in the later text remain. So we have to understand that what is described as the chariot, viz. the body in the earlier text, is denoted here in the later text, by the word 'Unevolved' (Avyakta). Hence there is not the least trace of any reference to the Sāṅkhyan principle in these texts. The text under discussion refers only to those entities mentioned previously in the simile. In 'Higher than the Unevolved is the Being (Puruṣa)', the word Puruṣa (Being) does not refer to the twenty-fifth category of the Sāṅkhyas but to the supreme Brahman that is to be attained by meditation and self-control prescribed in these texts.

सूक्ष्मं तु तदहत्त्वात् ॥१४१२॥

2. But the subtle (cause of the body is meant by the 'Unevolved' Avyakta) on account of its capacity (to attain the end of man).

As the body is gross how can it be described as 'Unevolved' (Avyakta)? In reply it is said that the fine uncompound elements under particular conditions become the body. These elements in their fine state are what is called the 'Unevolved' and these later on evolve into the gross body. It is the 'Unevolved' as the body that is called the Unevolved (Avyakta). The 'Unevolved' insentient matter, when it assumes gross states and forms, serves the ends of man. It may be said that if the 'Unevolved' is taken here as subtle matter why not accept the Sāṅkhyan Pradhāna, as it also means the same thing? The next Sūtra answers it.

तदधीनत्वादर्थवत् ॥१४१३॥

3. (Matter in the subtle state) serves an end (of man), on account of its dependence on Him (the Lord).

The Lord is the cause of everything and the subtle matter subserves an end in so far as it is dependent on Him. Subtle matter is not denied by the scriptures but its existence as independent of the Lord is denied. It constitutes His body and He is its Self. It is only on account of this relation between the two that the Pradhāna is capable of accomplishing ends. The Sāṅkhyas do not accept this dependence and that is why their view is refuted in this topic. Everywhere in the scriptures where the creation of the world or the greatness of the Lord is described the Pradhāna and individual souls are declared to be His body and to have their Self in the Lord. Vide *Subāl, Up. 2 & 3; Gītā 3.3-7.*

ज्ञेयत्वावचनाच्च ॥१४१४॥

4. And because it is not mentioned (that the 'Unevolved') is to be known (it cannot be the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhyas).

If the Pradhāna was meant, then the text would have declared it as a thing to be known,

for according to Sāṅkhyas final Liberation results when the difference between the Puruṣa and the Unevolved (Prakṛti) is known. So the 'Unevolved' with them is to be known. But the text does not declare that the 'Unevolved' is to be known and so it cannot be the Pradhāna.

वदतीति चेत्, न, प्राज्ञो हि प्रकरणात् ॥१४१५॥

5. If it be said (that the Śruti) does state that the 'Unevolved' has to be known and therefore it is the Pradhāna; (we say) no, for (it is) the intelligent (Supreme) Self (which is meant), since this is the topic.

'He who has perceived that which is without sound, without touch... beyond the Great (Mahat) and unchangeable, is freed from the jaws of death (*Kaṭha. 1.3.15*). The Sāṅkhyas hold that in this text the Śruti says that the Pradhāna has to be known to attain Liberation. This Sūtra refutes this view and says that what the text declares as the object of meditation is not the 'Unevolved' (Avyakta) but the intelligent (Supreme) Self as that is the subject-matter of that Section, which is inferred from the two previous texts—'He who has intelligence for his charioteer' etc. (*Kaṭha. 1.3.9*); 'That Self hidden in all beings' etc. (*Kaṭha. 1.3.12*). For the same reason, 'Higher than the Puruṣa there is nothing' does not refer to the Sāṅkhyan Puruṣa but to the supreme Lord. That the supreme Lord is without sound etc. is declared by *Mu. 1.1.6*. 'And beyond the Great' (*Kaṭha. 1.3.11*) declares the Lord as beyond the individual soul c in the previous text (*Kaṭha. :*

त्रयाणामेव चैवमुपन्यासः प्रश्नश्च ॥१४१६॥

6. And of the three only there is this mention and question.

In the text under discussion there is the mention of three things only as objects of knowledge viz. the object of the meditation, the nature of the meditation and the person meditating, and questions are only with reference to these three. There is no mention of or question relating to, the Pradhāna. In the

third boon Naciketa inquires about the final Liberation and this inquiry includes the nature of the goal or object to be realized, the means to it and the nature of the person wishing for it. Yama replies, 'They know the ancient effulgent One through knowledge of the Self obtained by concentration'—this is the elucidation of the question, 'When a man departs from here there is this doubt: Some say "He exists". Some again, "He does not" etc.' (*Katha*. I.I.20). So there are references and questions only with regard to these three and therefore the 'Unevolved' cannot be the Pradhāna.

महद्ब्रह्म ११४।७॥

7. And like the Great (Mahat) (the word 'Unevolved'—Avyakta—does not refer to the Sāṅkhyan category).

In the text, 'Higher than the intelligent is the great Self', as the word great is co-ordinated with the word Self, it was shown that it does not refer to the Sāṅkhyan category, the 'Great' (Mahat). So the word 'Unevolved' which is said to be higher than the great Self cannot mean Pradhāna but the supreme Lord.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Prabuddha Bharata has now completed sixty-two years of useful service. We take this opportunity of expressing our gratefulness to all those eminent men and women who have enriched its pages with their thoughtful writings. Every country has a good number of persons who sincerely try to realize the highest ideals pointed out in their respective faiths. It has been our good fortune to contact some of them. They too have spontaneously responded to our call for co-operation. There is no point in describing large-hearted people as belonging to the East or to the West. Large-hearted people stand in a class by themselves. They belong to the world of knowledge, of understanding, and of unlimited sympathy and good will. They constitute a United World even now. The problem is to find the means for persuading others to see and evaluate things as these wise ones do. Herein lies the value of their well thought out articles which we have had the privilege of publishing all along. The starting points have necessarily been different in each case. In accordance with the field of specialization of the contribu-

tors concerned, they have been science, education, economics, art, religion, and philosophy. But the drive behind them all has been invariably the desire to uphold the highest values, to promote understanding and brotherhood, and to widen the channels for fruitful service. We hope that while old friends will continue to extend their co-operation as before, new friends will come forward to work with us in this noble cause as the months roll on.

In this month's Editorial we have referred to some arrangements that have been made to train Social Workers. With appropriate Government help, the Ramakrishna Mission itself is conducting a 'Social Educational Organizer's Training Centre' (S.E.O.T.C.) at Belur (Howrah District). From the Mission's standpoint, it is a natural extension of the educational work that Swami Vivekananda planned for the nation's uplift. The Bulletin sent out from this Centre very often reminds its readers of this fact by inserting relevant passages from Swamiji's utterances. In one issue we read: 'The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does

not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs.' The Bulletin for that month ends with the following extract: 'My hope of the future lies in the youths of character—intelligent, renouncing all for the sake of others, and obedient—who can sacrifice their lives in working out my ideas and thereby do good to themselves and the country at large.'

The Preamble to Bulletin No. 1 had this significant para: 'In pursuance of a unanimous desire expressed by the first batch of trainees on the eve of their departure from here after the conclusion of their training, this monthly Bulletin is published to keep up contact with ex-trainees by supplying them news of the various activities of this Centre, as also to be acquainted with their work in turn. A publication of this kind will, we hope, be useful to our sister Training Centres as well.'

Here are two items taken at random from some Bulletins. They will give us a glimpse of the type of work undertaken during the training stage. i. 'The trainees are attending the full certificate course in First Aid which has been started in collaboration with St. John Ambulance Corps.' ii. 'The trainees are now working in seven villages, all in D....N.E.S. Block. Each batch goes twice a week to the allotted village. By this time they have made contacts with the villagers. Some night schools, youth organizations, children's activities and library work are being conducted by the trainees.'

The question naturally arises: What do these trained men do when they go back to their original places in the educational field? We quote extracts from one Bulletin to answer this. i. 'Sri R. K. Gupta, S.E.O., Parasayer N.E.S. Block, Bankura, writes that the Block organized a Youth's Camp there very successfully.' ii. 'Sri T. N. Samal, S.E.O., Bali-patna N.E.S. Block, Orissa, writes that he has organized two Children's Clubs, two Adult

Literacy Centres and one Mahilā Samiti in his Block.'

As days pass and fresh experience is gained, the men and women who take up this work will carry the benefits of their general education and special training to every nook and corner of our country. The result must be a new Strength and Unity suited to the present day.

To what extent is a philosophic background needed for those who train themselves for this type of service? During the few months of their formal training, what should be the ground covered as a result of which they can later on, as occasions arise, acquire further knowledge by their own studies and learn to tap the energies that faith in spiritual principles easily generates in the mass mind? In very general terms we have introduced this question in this month's Editorial. We shall be grateful if scholars who have thought along these lines will share their ideas and experience with us. . . .

Mrs. Lois L. Dahl is the daughter of Rev. Andrew B. Lemke, Minister of the First Congregational Church, Allegan, Michigan. Both the writers have been intimately connected with Swami Nikhilanandaji, Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. The poem on 'Reality' has a delicate Vedāntic note in every one of its lines. How we wish that we could in every context 'see clearly through His eyes', as the composer puts it, that our friends and foes are in reality 'our playground souls in disguise'! . . . Rev. A. B. Lemke's introductory comments are worth remembering. Says he, with the force of conviction, that 'The suffering, the yearning, and the revelation are a continuing process. The record is never closed', and that 'the revelation is never once and for all time delivered unto the saints'. The remarks he makes before and after quoting relevant passages from the *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* are simple, direct, and pregnant with meaning. For example, after quoting the passage, 'There is no I, but only He', the Minister remarks: 'Is

not non-duality the heart of the matter? God is indeed the One-Without-A-Second. In this unity all questions are resolved. A few moments of honest introspection will make this abundantly clear.' . . . May this catholicity of outlook, based on genuine introspection and firm conviction, become more widely prevalent than it is now!

In 'How to do Real Good to the World', Swami Pavitrananda, Head of the Vedanta Society, New York, raises one of the most intimate questions affecting the modern thinking world. He answers it in his usual simple, clear, and charming way. The Swami discusses all aspects of the question threadbare and provides the correct motive that should form the basis of all service when he says, 'Unless one has solved one's own problems, how can one expect to solve the problems of others? . . . The real problem is how to build up the inner life of a man or woman, so that one can have right outlook and the strength to follow that in practice.' 'Anyone will know from experience that it is not possible to love a neighbour as oneself unless one's spiritual life has been built up to a great extent.' Everyone of us, if we should search our own hearts, is sure to feel, whether it be in our own domestic life or life in an organization, the truth of the many observations the Swami has made in the article. . . .

As Swami Ritajananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, rightly says, 'There are certain seeds which take decades to sprout. They appear insignificant and people do not recognize the big tree hidden inside.' The Swami's statement is equally true of the words and activities, even the apparently most insignificant ones of the great seers and saints. The 'tiny seed of spiritual work' left by Swami Vivekananda in the small cottage of Miss Elizabeth Dutcher at Thousand Island Park on the river St. Lawrence in U. S. A., more than sixty years ago, is no exception to this great truth. The Swami in 'A Hindu Sanctuary on The St. Lawrence' gives charming, vivid, and most inspiring descriptions of the beautiful location of the place and 'of those

hallowed hours' in which the Master and the few disciples 'lived (there) in a constant atmosphere of intense spirituality', yet not without its lighter 'playful' moods. The Swami also gives up-to-date and very interesting details of some recent events which led to the acquisition and renovation of the cottage by Swami Nikhilananda, which changed the fortunes of the cottage from the state of collapse in which it was into 'a place of worship, prayer and study for a number of devotees. . .

Dr. Harlow Shapley, who is one of the greatest astrophysicists of the world, was the director of the Harvard Observatory and also professor of Astronomy. Since his retirement over a year ago he has been lecturing all over the country. He will lecture in about thirty universities, colleges, and theological seminaries during this academic year, not only on science and astronomy but also on 'Religion in the Age of Science.' He is not new to the readers of Prabuddha Bharata. His interesting article on 'Mankind in the World of Stars' appeared in the January issue of 1956. In the present article 'On the Mystery of Life' he refers to the great advances recently made in the scientific laboratory to arrive at a solution of this greatest of all mysteries, and makes a strong plea for the 'use of foresight' in 'evaluating goals and progress' and 'developing over-all social plans' 'suited to the good of the whole human race', if we wish to build up a 'successful world for man' in the place of a 'chaotic existence'. . . .

We are thankful to Swami Akhilananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of Massachusetts, Boston, U.S.A., for sending us for this special number the article on 'The Real Basis of Ethics' and also the thought-provoking article by Dr. Harlow Shapley. The Swami makes a clear analysis of the 'crisis of this era' as manifested in the 'conflict, confusion . . . catastrophic disturbances, . . . threat of mental disintegration, . . . and social problems of various types' with which the contemporary world is faced. As the Swami rightly points out, the remedies proposed by many of the social scientists and others 'only

treat the patient symptomatically.' They 'do not go to the root of the problem. . . . They want to do patchwork without finding the real remedy for removal of cause.' He also discusses how the different ideologies such as 'the will to live, the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number, and pragmatic ideas of utilitarian value' are insufficient to 'really furnish the background for permanent ethics.' 'Ethical living is a means to the ultimate realization of Truth; when one reaches Truth it becomes a natural state of being.' . . .

Miss. S. Prema, B.A. (Hons) is a research student in the Andhra University, Waltair. She has been recently translating a number of beautiful poems from Tamil into English. The last line "Tis ourselves everywhere we see" which sums up the poet's song is as nicely worded as the rest. . .

Ours is 'a time of far reaching changes, of clashes of old and new, and an age without an accepted goal of life.' 'Many traditional religious views have been overturned by science, while science, in its turn, has failed to take the place of that which was destroyed.' It has also 'unleashed terrible powers which society is scarcely able to control and direct.' In such a context, 'what pertinence' has Sri Ramakrishna for us? asks Mr. C. E. Street. He takes up 'three areas in which the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna may help to resolve modern difficulties. In a strikingly simple and thorough manner Mr. Street analyzes the problems posed by the modern scientific outlook as well as the orthodox view in these three areas, and shows how the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna 'go to the very heart of the problem' and 'speak to the situation of the contemporary world.' . . . 'What we have' in them 'is a rational mystical path, a goal and a means, well adapted to modern conditions which will help people of diverse temperaments, even the skeptical to grow spiritually.' . . . These are the days when the emphasis is too much laid on a life of 'activity', and every activity judged in terms of the material comfort and enjoyment it

brings to mankind. A calm and tranquil life of contemplation and meditation is condemned as leading to idleness. The writer gives a timely warning and 'provides the needed corrective' to this tendency. He says, 'Whatever the value of work and social idealism, there is also a place for worklessness. . . . Some, a few, will be able to spend their time ceaselessly in contemplation of God. Indeed, the value of such a state cannot be gainsaid', and adds, 'Sri Ramakrishna gives a balanced view of action and service. Here, too, the modern scene is confused. . . . The modern stress on action does have great value. . . . It remains however, to put it in its true perspective, and to see that it is not frittered away in aimless busyness.' . . . 'The third lesson that Sri Ramakrishna has for the modern world is what is usually called religious tolerance. . . . Sri Ramakrishna provides a needed corrective to the ordinary ideas of tolerance, and gives a solid foundation for the relationship between faiths and religions.' . . .

Dr. V. P. Varma, M.A (Patna), M.A. (Columbia), Ph.D. (Chicago), Professor of Politics, Patna University, in 'Religion and History' makes an interesting study of the 'historical', 'spiritual' evolution and growth of Religion as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo, and the tremendous influence, the religions of the world, even the primitive and paganistic forms have had on the social, ethical, and political life of mankind during the course of history. The concluding remarks of the author are timely and worthy of due attention by all concerned. 'Religion is a great power and has tremendous potentialities for the social and moral regeneration of mankind. . . . There is great wisdom in what Vivekananda, Dayananda, Tilak, Gandhi, and Aurobindo have said about the moralization of our political life. In the name of mistaken secularism we are refusing to listen to the pregnant message of our scriptures which teach the inner purification of our life and thereby aim to sanctify the structure even of the social and historical universe' . . . We believe that, apart from difference in

terminology, the transformation implied in ascent into, and descent from, the supramental means precisely the same as what the Upaniṣadic seers meant when they described it as 'beyond mind and speech': *Yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*. In the area of the personality there may be a 'fusion' of gifts, but the 'experience' of Unity or the Infinite (*Bhūmā*), beyond the strictly mental plane, cannot mean 'fusions' in any quantitative sense to constitute an advance over what ancient seers attained. . . .

Dr. Mohan Singh, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., is the Head of the Panjabi Department in the Panjab University. He had sent us a longer poem in the place of an article. It was not included in any earlier issue as we wanted to reserve it for this special number. We are sorry, due to want of space, we have been able to publish only the first and last portions of this beautiful poem...

Sheikh Fariduddin Attar was a saint whom 'the prince of mystics Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi acknowledged repeatedly as his guide and spiritual leader.' We are thankful to Dr. M. Hafiz Syed for contributing this second article on the life and teachings of a Muslim saint. True men of God, to whatever religion they might belong, have always taught: 'Whatever may be one's mode of worship God judges him from his inner motive and purity of heart and not from the outer profession and action.' Does not the Hindu tradition say that a wife can realize the highest summum bonum of life even by merely serving her husband, looking upon him as God Himself?

WOMEN SAINTS

Saintliness has been no bar to efficient service. It has rather been the greatest incentive to it. By breaking down the barriers of the ego it has ever tended to widen the scope of love and of helpfulness. It may be asked: Why then are there no 'historical records' of the day to day plans or achievements of saintly people? One reply is that saints were

too humble to keep the kind of record we have in mind, or to claim any credit for themselves for the benefits others derived through their ministrations. Their purified vision showed them clearly that the power to help on one side and the ability to gain by it on the other were both equally adorable expressions of the same Force, Cosmic Power or God's Grace,—it is immaterial by what name we call it. Old world etiquette made them omit the introduction of personal factors from every act of loving service. What they held to be the essence of service was the glow of sacredness in the giver as well as the receiver. Does even an earthly mother publish an autobiography describing the details of how she fed, clothed and nursed her children with the means supplied by her husband all the time? She will fulfil her function, ideally and ungratefully pointing to the unfailing source of all asked, by doing all that is needed and by gifts. How much more, then, will the saintly heart feel it to be its *normal course* to keep itself ever in the background and the Lord's Grace in the foreground in all the acts of service for which it becomes the blessed channel!

Every country has had women saints. Seated on a throne or vacating it of one's own accord, staying in the midst of domestic work or leading a retired life, they have in different ways harmonized love for the Highest with service of the lowly, wherever possible and necessary. Some, specially gifted, have also sung or written, in addition.

So far as India is concerned, 'between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries'* 'there arose a large number of eminent poet-saints,

* The extracts are taken from *Women Saints of East and West*, published from Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, 68 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, London, N. 10, 'in honour of the sacred memory of Śrī Śāradā Devī, the Holy Mother, the consort and first disciple of Śrī Rāmakrishna, on the occasion of her first birth centenary.' The book has brief, brilliant Foreword and Introduction by Śrīmatī Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Mr. Kenneth Walker respectively. Pp. 274. Price: Sh. 16-d.6, Dollars 3, or Rs. 10 (net).

religious teachers and mystics who profoundly affected the life and thought of the people. They were leaders of men in their own times, and are living influences even to this day. The great Rāmānanda, who lived in the fifteenth century, is held to be the first in this line, and he was followed by Tulsīdās, Mīrābāi, Nānak and Kabir in the north, Chaitanya, Chandi Dās and Vidyāpati in Bengal, and Vallabhāchārya in the south. But Lalla, although it is not known whether her influence spread beyond Kashmir, preceded them all.' And this brings us to the lives of 'Women Saints' of India and of other lands.

Lalla Yogīswarī 'roamed about the country singing and dancing in divine ecstasy; and innumerable tales that are told of her greatness testify to the love that the Kashmiri bears in his heart for her.' 'Kashmiri literature is very limited and the sayings of Lalla not only hold a very important place in it, but they could also be favourably compared with the devotional and philosophic literature of any other language.' 'Duty for duty's sake, performed without hope of reward and as an offering to God, is the famous doctrine of the *Gītā*.' Among other things, 'Lalla teaches the same truth in her songs:

Yet if I toil with no thought of self,
All my works before the Self I lay,
Setting faith and duty before self,
Well for me shall be the onward way.'

'In popular verse she conveyed her religion to the masses.' 'Sir R. C. Temple was led to a study not only of Śaivism but of the whole structure of Indian philosophical thought through his interest in the songs of Lalla.' He writes:

'Lalla, though nought but a devotee,
Daughter in truth of thy race and time,
Thine is a song that enslaveth me,
Son of an alien kin and clime.'

If we turn to Ireland, we see the same story repeated with slight modifications due to place, time and other circumstances. About the year A.D. 453 there was born in the king-

dom of Leinster, 'to one of the minor pagan princes, Dubthach, a daughter, whose mother was a Christian bondwoman, and she became St. Brigit of Kildare, a patron saint of Ireland and the foremost woman of her day.' 'In an age when prowess in battle was highly regarded, Brigit stood alone not only in her spiritual desire for peace, but by actively pursuing an end to strife and warfare.' To a warrior who wished to conquer a neighbouring chief, her blessing ran thus: 'I entreat the Omnipotent Lord my God that in this instance you neither inflict injury on anyone nor suffer it yourselves; wherefore lay aside your diabolical emblems of warfare.' We need such a blessing much more at the present day; but are we in a mood to accept it? When pressed for a marriage with 'a poet, one of the most revered members of society', she 'insisted on dedicating herself to monasticism' and finally 'took her vows as a nun.' But for her, 'this did not mean a life of dedicated retreat and isolation, but a life of spiritual retreat in the midst of great activity; in an age when women took no part in society, she became the pioneer, drawing her countrywomen of all classes from the sheltered life of the family into a life of service to the community.'

Turning to Burma,—to take a third example—we come across the glorious life of Mi Cao Bu. 'Her calm and saintly manner in quietly occupying herself with the welfare of others even at a time when her heart was torn with grief, gives us courage and strength in our own dark moments. In hours, lonely and dismal, when pain and sorrow weigh themselves heavily on the heart, she seems to appear as a beacon light, summoning us to gather strength through suffering and restraint, which is the only way to growth. Neither name nor fame, nor wealth, nor progeny, nor anything the world has yet to offer, may be compared to strength. In its absence, the most beautiful things of the world lose their beauty. Its presence lends grace and charm to the most common and ordinary things of life.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

FROM THE WORLD OF THE CABBALAH:
THE PHILOSOPHY OF RABBI JUDAH LOEW OF PRAGUE.
BY RABBI BEN ZION BOKSER. *Philosophical Library,*
New York. Pages 210. Price \$3.00.

The Jewish thought has had a strange career in the west for a number of centuries. Apart from its central monotheistic doctrine, and from its rigorous conception of the moral law, the Jewish thought had a central humanistic bias; and this was often revealed in the religious mysticism represented by the wisdom of the Cabbalah. The best and the clearest statement of this mysticism appears in the work of Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague, the great spiritual individualist of the 16th century. The present work is devoted to an exposition and evaluation of the rich heritage bequeathed to posterity by Rabbi Judah.

The Cabbalah is a body of teachings about God and the universe. In this system God's contact with his creation is conceived in terms of immediacy. The philosophy of the Cabbalah is then the exploration of the path of mysticism. It is naturally opposed to the dialectical method. Rabbi Judah himself was originally trained in the dialectic since that was the only way to get entrance into the learned circles of the day. Opposing consistently and vehemently the dangerous customs and practices of his day, he evoked a lot of opposition to himself. Still he was undaunted.

All creatures, the Rabbi held, were created because of the good which they embody. Since everything was created for the sake of man, man must live up to his purpose; otherwise all becomes void. Man must be good in relation to himself, to his God, and to his fellow being. Human perfection is a process of continuous becoming. This implies that man must be for ever active to preserve and perfect his freedom. And in his individualistic approach, Rabbi Judah allows the freedom to dissent, a freedom which was later to find a famous exponent in Mill. At the same time Rabbi Judah held that in reaching for life's ultimate reality we must go beyond nature and beyond reason. This spiritual individualism admits a broad spirit of toleration which appears in the statement that the elimination of the opinion of those who are opposed to religion undermines religion and weakens it. This was of course directed against the Christian persecutors of the Jewish community. But it holds good of any other. There may be institutional religions; but the central basis of all religion is an individual experience.

Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser has given a persuasive and stimulating account of this great thinker and

mystic. The publishers have been a little overconfident in bringing forth this remarkable book; for, pages 85 to 116 have been arranged in the binding in a shabby way. After 84 we have pages 87, 88, 85, 86, 91, 92, 89 and so on.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

UNDERSTANDING THE JAPANESE MIND.
BY JAMES CLARK MOLONEY, M.D. *Philosophical*
Library, New York. Pages 252. Price \$3.50.

Dr. Moloney as a psycho-analyst studies the Japanese mind in this book drawing his materials from anthropology, history, sociology and religion, besides his own personal observations and experiences. Each society, he argues, has its own implicitly assumed goal; and this gives it a culture-pattern differing from that of another society. The hierarchic authoritarianism of the Japanese culture tends towards categorical conformity to a given or imposed pattern. In such a context there can be little place for the humanistic spirit. It is the analysis of the socio-politic history of Japan that is said to reveal the inner spirit of the Japanese. The main thesis of the book is that the Japanese try to disindividualise their citizens even from their childhood. This may be true of Japan when it was completely subjected to the dictatorial trends. But even then it can be true only of a small fraction of the population in Japan. The humanistic influence of the Zen masters cannot be ignored; and this is the very thing ignored by Dr. Moloney. The mere fact that Japan attacked the Pearl Harbour has misled the Doctor here to go all the way to defend implicitly the devastation of the living cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA: *Publications*
Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,
Govt of India, Delhi 8. Pp. 330. Price Rs. 30.

Published on the occasion of the 2500th anniversary of Buddha's Parinirvāṇa, this is an album narrating in pictures the story of the life of Buddha and the evolution, spread, and influence of Buddhism.

Recently, with the awakening of the peoples of Asia, there has been a noticeable revival of the spirit of Buddha. Burma even declared Buddhism its state religion. In China too Buddhism occupies a lofty pedestal. Apart from the political aspect there is another aspect to this rather sudden revival. People all over the world are gradually becoming conscious of the fact that the way of violence has

got to yield to the way of peace. Attempts are being made in many quarters (Pañcaśīla is an example) to introduce this idea into practical politics also. The way of the Buddha which is essentially the way of peace requires to be broadcast far and wide. The Govt. of India have been very active recently to do all they can in this respect. Several useful volumes have been already published. The present album—a companion publication to 2500 *Years of Buddhism* (earlier reviewed in these columns)—is a worthy attempt to make the way of the Buddha popular through pictures.

Divided into 7 sections, it gives a good idea of the Background against which the life and teachings of the Buddha have to be viewed (Sec. 1); the life of Buddha until the Enlightenment (Sec. 2); his grand mission in life (Sec. 3); the spread of Buddhism in India, more especially under Asoka and Kanishka, and the development of Buddhist art under the Gupta rule (Sec. 4); the Buddhist Pantheon (Sec. 5); the spread of Buddhism abroad (Sec. 6); and the final section which tries to explain how the basic teachings of the Buddha gradually permeated Indian life and how through a succession of saints and seers the Way of the Buddha has become an integral and indestructible part of life and thought in India.

In each Section the best specimens of art from different countries have been grouped together among which the splendid ones from Borobodur deserve special mention.

The colour illustrations, specially those of the famous Ajanta, are faithfully reproduced and are perhaps comparable in beauty only to those of the Chinese art of the 7th-8th century A.D.

At the beginning of each Section select quotations from the original Pali and Sanskrit are given with English translation. They have a direct bearing on the material that follows. The Notes at the end supplying brief information about each picture will serve as a useful guide to the student of art.

The appropriate Introduction by Gandhiji, collected from his various writings is a sincere tribute paid to the Buddha by one who was his great admirer and who successfully put into practice some of the sublime teachings of the Buddha.

The get-up is beautiful, and considering the quality of paper and binding materials used, the price is quite moderate.

B. M. C.

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE DREAM.
BY FREDERIC I. CARPENTER, *Philosophical Library, New York. Pages 220. Price \$4.75.*

The early colonisers of the American States were activated by the idea of a Utopia, of a golden age in the new and unexplored continent of America. They may or they may not have had the awareness of such

an impelling idea consciously. But at the back of their minds they had this principle. This is the American Dream, according to Mr. Carpenter. All typically American literature expresses this dream. There are writers who espoused this dream fervently, or they were disillusioned in their endeavours. Yet the basic principle at work seems to be the dream, the vision of a promised land, an El Dorado. Mr. F. I. Carpenter analyses this dream in the early chapters of this book; and after providing for himself a philosophical basis, he offers an interpretation of the great literary figures of America from Emerson to Hemingway. After the work done by Wellek and Warren, it is happy and stimulating to find a philosophical approach to literature. The histories of literature have been great failures precisely because the historians have not realized the necessity of a philosophical approach. It was with the History by Legouis and Gazamian that we have the first attempts in this healthy direction in the field of Literature. This approach has been considerably analysed and examined by Wellek and Warren. Now Mr. Carpenter has followed this new line with considerable success. His approach brings the reader closer to the various authors.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

BARUCH SPINOZA AND WESTERN DEMOCRACY. BY JOSEPH DANNER. *The Philosophical Library, New York. Pp. 140. Price \$3.00.*

This slender volume is an excellent study of Spinoza's life, of his metaphysics and political thought, and of the value of his thought to the present day. Though avowedly the book is concerned with the contribution of the great Jewish thinker to the practical realm of politics, yet its real value lies in the second part of the treatise devoted to the evaluation of Spinoza's philosophy. The author shows, fairly frequently, true and penetrating insight into Spinoza's conception of God and man, of evil and freedom, and of immortality and resurrection. '... God dwells in whatever exists. ... God's breath is in all His creation—the acorn, the rock, the leopard, the moron, and the wisest man or woman' (p. 72). Thus the author rises very nearly to Vedantic heights, but so great is the downward drag of Western heredity, that he fails to understand fully the mystic element in Spinoza. Spinoza the mystic is greater than Spinoza the metaphysician and Spinoza the political thinker. We cannot agree to the statement that 'Spinoza's major interest was not at all in metaphysics, but rather in the development of a modern political science' (p. 90). However, the last chapter dealing with Spinoza's legacy for the twentieth century, is of real value, specially those parts of it which expose the hollowness, barrenness, and futility of Communism. The reviewer would

like to recommend the book, not only to the ordinary cultured citizen, but also to the serious student of philosophy who is likely to miss in the ordinary text books the significance of Spinoza's thought for practical life in a troubled world.

(PROF.) P. S. NAIDU

TANTRARAJA TANTRA: A SHORT ANALYSIS. By Sir John Woodroffe. With a preface by Yogi Suddhananda Bharati. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Ltd. Pages XIX+117 with a coloured plate of Śrīcakra. Cloth bound. Price: Rs. 6/-.

Tantrarāja Tantra is one of the important Śākta Tantras in Sanskrit with a Sanskrit commentary called 'Manoramā' by Bhāskaraṛāya. The book gives the substance of the original in English by an analysis of each chapter. It is particularly useful for the advanced student of Tantra Śāstra who wishes to study the original in Sanskrit. The printing and get-up conform to the high standard of the publications of Messrs. Ganesh & Co.

S. S.

J. C. KUMARAPPA AND HIS QUEST FOR WORLD PEACE: BY M. VINAİK. Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pp. 171. Price Re. 1-8-0.

Introducing this fine book, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who knew Kumarappa intimately, writes: "He was one of the few, like our Prime Minister, who could dare to argue with Gandhiji and not give in unless and until he was completely convinced that Gandhiji was right. And once having been convinced, he followed the pattern laid down not only in the letter but also in the spirit." The author has given an impressive account of the Kumarappa family, and the way in which J. C. met Gandhiji and "was turned by him into a constructive worker." "His background, education and training centred round large scale industries, but he rose to be the President of the All India Village Industries Association." How strict he was in the use of public funds, how he would not deviate from his programmes even if Gandhiji sought an interview with him without prior notice, how thorough he was in making enquiries and drafting his Reports, when commissioned to do so,—all these are worth reading and pondering over. The picture of Kumarappa now residing in the Gandhi-Niketan Ashrama at Kallupatti is sure to be associated in the reader's mind with the remarkable advice he gave when asked to work for the Gandhi Memorial Fund. What was needed, he said,—with a forthright directness characteristic of him,—was not exactly money, but "a lakh of souls, imbued with the ideals of non-violence and truth", "to go

forth into the world, expounding these doctrines, not merely by word of mouth, but by their everyday life." It was his firm conviction that Shri Nehru, Sardar Patel, and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur should take the lead in this work, and "hand in their resignations" from office, as the "first donations." Of course his advice was found unacceptable, and "Kumarappa returned a disappointed man leaving behind Shri J. B. Kripalani to look after the money bag only"!

THE HOLY NATURE OF MAN: BY MIGUEL F. GODREAU. Published by the Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. Pp. 40. Price \$2.75.

This smallest of books bears the dedication: For the Glory of Perfection—'Know Thyself'. Its special features are, as the author says, 'maximum simplicity with precise ideas and descriptive drawings.' There are no arguments but only brief statements to explain various diagrams to those interested in meditation.

THE UGGLIANS: BY L. M. FALLAW. Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. Pp. 90. Price \$3.00.

This is, at the surface, the story of an African savage, Ugg I, 'descended directly from the Great Black Father', in fact, 'his only Son', born 'to save the whole lost world', through 'the proper Word.' Accompanied by Uggla, 'the finest of the taxpayer's daughters', he goes to America 'to bring them the Word of Ugg'. 'But what about the millions, the billions who lived and died before you arrived here with the Word?' 'They no count. Like animals. Dogs. Pigs.' 'Well, we had a satisfactory god before you arrived.' 'White god is false god. All foreign gods are devils and mislead and lose souls.' 'The Ugglian way' of life was 'the best way on earth'. 'They had no other way.' 'They did not wish to know any other way.' They knew, of course, how to use the Word profitably on all occasions, even burials! The more the sheep paid, 'the more Words they got'! They realized 'a nice profit from coffins, 400 per cent and better.' Among the Americans, lots 'had already been psycho-analyzed.' Their entire order was built on variety, pretence, deception, egotism.' 'I called them heathens in my sermons every night.' 'As a matter of professional courtesy', 'I more or less co-operated with the native saviours.' 'Their economy of useless possessions has made the Americans a race of salesmen.' 'The Americans will sell anything, from dirt to religion.' 'The heathen reproduce, as well as produce, at an amazing rate.' 'For the unnecessary dishes used, dish-washing machines become necessary.' And so on; the reader can laugh heartily, but search his heart quite often, *he must*.

SEXUALITY, LOVE AND IMMORTALITY:
By J. P. GRIP. *Published by the Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y.*
Pp. 121. Price \$3.50.

'Since man is in the infinite and the infinite is within him, as exemplified by his thoughts and his desires, it follows that the resources of the infinite are also within him and that he acquires command of them in the measure he can muster intelligence and courage and skill to make them subject to him.' 'How many of us realize the tremendous amount of energy continually wasted on trifles and nonsense?' If all that energy 'were saved and made to work in proper channels,' it 'would raise man to a super-human level.' Behind the 'abuse and misuse and non-use of energy' lie 'fear, moral cowardice, fear of saying "yes" to life, failure to face reality.' This leads to a discussion of liquor, tobacco, and sex, and *the fall of man, 'Because thou hast done this'*. 'A curious feature of the myth is that the Lord is found guilty of being a story-teller, whereas the serpent told the truth.' 'The fall of man, or the rise, whatever we prefer, is the entrance of sex, a sex asserting itself and attempting to become the ruling factor in the life of humanity and the individual.' It is 'love of a higher order than that experienced by most' of which 'the poets have sung in all ages.' 'We may call it psychic love, to distinguish it from lust or physical love, and also from spiritual love, the love of God.' 'The highest and noblest emotion of which man is capable is the love of God.' 'Why we don't see and appreciate the big, the real things of existence' is because of 'our nature's littleness.' 'How can we overcome this littleness?' The answer is sublimation of the sex energy, which is the same energy, 'needed for making a philosopher like Plato, a sage like Gautama Buddha.' The author has a very engaging style and uses an abundance of quotations from good poems. We are not quite sure, however, whether he has succeeded in giving 'a knock-out blow to the many current teachings about reincarnation,' as he thinks he has.

KALYANA KALPATARU. SRIMAD BHĀGAVATA NUMBER IV, JULY 1957. *Published by The Gītā Press, Gorakhpur (India).* Pp. about 240. Price Inland—Rs. 2-8; Foreign—5 sh. per single copy.

This Special Number contains the running translation of the first half of Book Ten of Śrīmad Bhāgavata along with the original Sanskrit text. The arrangement is the same as followed in the earlier numbers,—the verses containing a definite idea being grouped together and followed by the translation. The 'Invocation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa' at the beginning of the book and the inclusion of a number of beautiful tri-coloured illustrations add to the attractiveness of

the book. 'It goes without saying that the story' will immensely benefit the reader no less than the editor, whose time has been most profitably spent in dwelling on the thrilling exploits of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the utterance of whose very name is enough to eradicate all one's sins in no time.' The printing and get-up are excellent, as is the case with all the publication of the Gītā Press.

S. K.

MEAN YOU. BY SWAMI PRATYAGATMANANDA SARASWATI. *Published by P. Ghosh, & Co., 20, College Street Market, Calcutta-12.* Pp. 32+8. Price Indian: Rs. 2/8/-; Foreign: 3shillings and 6 pence.

This small booklet contains a garland of thirteen poems, with explanatory notes to three of them by the Swami himself. In a sequence they describe the unhappy condition of man thirsting after enjoyment in this miserable world, and the glory of a life dedicated to the realization of the Lord.

S. K.

ŚAIVA SIDDHĀNTA. BY KALAI PULAVAR K. NAVARATNAM. *Published by Sivathondan Circle, Jaffna, (Ceylon).* Pp. 54. Price Rs. 1/50.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of the paper on 'Man: His Nature and Destiny, in the light of Śaiva Siddhānta' read by the author at a Theological Conference in 1943. To the non-Tamil knowing public it serves as an introduction to the study of Śaiva Siddhānta, the religion of a large section of Tamils in South India and Ceylon.

S. K.

(1) RAMDAS SPEAKS, Vol. I. Pp. 106. Price Re. 1. (2) SWAMI RAMDAS AND KRISHNABAI, 2 Vols. Pp. 206. Price Rs. 2. *Published by Anandashram, P. O. Anandashram, via Kanhangad, S. India.*

The first contains the complete report of the discourses and talks of Swami Ramdas during his stay in Geneva in August 1954. Before leaving Bombay on his world tour, Swami Ramdas said in a lecture: "The trouble today is due to the fact that the world has forgotten the Divine dwelling within everyone of us, the Divine who is all-pervading. We must lay emphasis on that aspect of our life which is all-pervading. Then it is that we shall attain real inner freedom and peace and, thereby, real outer harmony in the world." That is the keynote of all his utterances, whether in India or abroad. "Your life," says he, "should be like the candle that burns and wears itself away in giving light to others." Even when "crushed and crippled", "the touch of the flame made it bright with light. The match did not deny its fire to the candle because it was broken, and the candle

threw full light in spite of its broken condition." "Truth to speak, it is not that we have to love God. But it is to know that God who is love is seated in our hearts." We shall then "become the very images of love." The "Diary" contains some more matter than what appeared serially in the "Vision". It presents various aspects of the daily life at the Ashrama, serious, of course, but also humorous. Of the many practical hints we find in these volumes, here is one: "Wherever the mind goes, try to see God there. It cannot go where God is not, because God is everywhere." "The least you can give another is a smile,—a smile full of love and joy."

SECRETS OF YOGA: BY YOGI SUDDHANANDA BHARATI. *Published by Ganesh & Co., (Madras) Ltd., Madras. Pp. 165. Price Rs. 6.*

This volume was brought out in 1956 in honour of the saint's 59th birthday. Its get-up is fine, and it has a number of fine pictures,—of Suryanamaskar, of the six chakras, and of the author. In thirty chapters it covers various aspects of ancient wisdom. While discussing the teachings of the Upanishads, the stress is naturally on the vision of the Self in All and of the All in the Self. Referring to the Purusha Sūkta, it is said: "The teacher, the hero, the trader, and the worker were one body in the cosmic Purusha." Functions of each were "decided by the individual nature." The style is poetic and forcible, with a tendency to use rhymes. E.g. "We are nil without Divine Will. We are dust without Divine trust." The fling at politics is mixed up with autobiographical strokes thus: "Politics (in which S. himself "organised national schools... commanded platforms... spent his money and energy in public benefactions) was a field of party quarrels. Two leaders put together made cold weather." "So he renounced all and steeped himself in silent meditation in mountain caves... till His introspective vision became cosmic vision",—the Pure Yoga, Suddha Yoga, described in this volume. "Do you want to live such a (glorious) life? Then come",—an invitation in the purely "modern" style! Integral Yoga, Pnrushottama, and descent of the supramental are the main keynotes. In common with such expositions, we find a profuse display of harsh expressions to condemn, as every modern "discoverer" must, an imaginary Yoga that has been teaching "withdrawal into the Absolute in a worldless, life-shunning samādhi", into an "inactive Brahman", missing thereby "the pulse-beats of active life" and abjuring "the joys of life",—"a self-immolation" which is a "terrible loss for the race and its virile growth"!

BUDDHIST SCULPTURES AND MONUMENTS. *Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India. Price Re. 1/8 or 3 shillings or 50 cents.*

Published during the last Buddha Jayanti celebrations, this picture album aims to acquaint us with Buddhist sculptures and monuments. The title itself, we are afraid, is rather misleading since only five out of the twenty-one plates are really Buddhist. The rest are of Buddha's images belonging to different periods and schools.

The first ten illustrations, from *The Dream of Maya to Mahaparinirvana*, are chronological with regard to Buddha's life. But those who know something of Buddha and his life will find the selection very scanty whereas others who are strangers to the subject will find it unenlightening. Again, the plates ought to have been numbered and the Notes at the end should have been given on the respective plates. As it is, one is compelled to refer constantly to the Notes. This process certainly is inconvenient and tedious and diminishes the interest and enthusiasm of the reader.

On the whole the preparation discloses both haste and inexperience. The sponsors ought to have brought out the album less hastily and in collaboration with more experienced hands.

However, considering the materials used, the album is priced rather cheap, and the cover picture of the Bodhgaya temple in colour is really beautiful.

B. M. C.

BUDDHADEVA. BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE. *Published by Bidyut Ranjan Basu, Santiniketan Press, Santiniketan. Pp. 28. Price Rs. 1-8-0.*

This booklet contains a selection of Rabindranath Tagore's writings collected together and reprinted in the Viswabharati Quarterly Volume 22, Number 3. The selection is offered in its present form, say the publishers, to mark the 2500th Parinirvāna Jayanti of Buddhadeva.

S. K.

BENGALI

BHAKTI PRASANGA. BY SWAMI VEDANTANANDA. *Available at Model Publishing House, 2A, Shyamacharan Dey Street, Calcutta 12. Pages 174+v. Price Re. 1.25.*

Bhakti Prasanga is a Bengali translation of the *Bhakti-Sūtras*. Its authorship is ascribed to the great sage Narada who is universally respected in Hindu religious lore as an ideal bhakta.

The treatise is a standard work on the cult of bhakti. Narada here defines bhakti, explains its nature and its merits with reference to other forms of worship of God, prescribes courses of discipline

for spiritual illumination and describes the features of the ideal bhakta in terse, short and pithy aphorisms. As such it is difficult for a lay reader to understand and appreciate its contents. He has therefore to depend upon the interpretations of the commentators who usually give their own views to substantiate their particular standpoints making thereby the mind of the lay reader more confused. But the present translator—a monk of the Ramakrishna Order—has performed his task admirably well in giving a very lucid exposition of the cult of bhakti. Carefully avoiding the maze of controversies he presents the salient features of the cult as expounded by Narada. One is impressed by the fact that the translator is always conscious of the practical aspect of spiritual life.

The book has a special appeal of its own as the translator has taken up a novel and original plan in explaining the Sutras in the context of the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna who is himself, in our times, as ideal a bhakta as Narada was. This has made the book more valuable and easily comprehensible to the reader. Relevant references from Srimad Bhagavatam and the Gita have added importance to the book.

The Bengali reader should be grateful to Swami Vedantanandaji for bringing out an excellent translation of such an important treatise as the Bhakti-Sutras.

Of all the Yogas, that of bhakti has a universal appeal and as such the book should be a constant companion to every seeker of spiritual well-being.

S. V.

HINDI

MA SARADA: Pp. 409+4. Price Rs. 4-8.

BHARAT ME VIVEKANANDA: Pp. 498. Rs. 5.

VIVEKANANDAJI KE UDGAR: Pp. 83. Rs. 10.

SADHU NAG MAHASAY: Pp. 185. Re. 1-8.

Devotees and lovers of Hindi must ever remain grateful to the R. K. Ashrama, Nagpur, and to the learned Professors who have worked together to bring out these excellent books. The extent of the work they have done till now can be judged from the fact that *Sadhu Nag Mahasay* and *Ma Sarada* form Nos. 55 and 56 of the Sri Ramakrishna-Sivananda-Granthamala Series started by the Nagpur Ashrama some years back. The books under review

are, in order, translations of the 'Life' of the Holy Mother in Bengali by Swami Apurvanandaji, President of the R. K. Advaita Ashrama, Varanasi, of the 'Indian Lectures' of Swami Vivekananda; of 'Thus Spake, Vivekananda', published by Sri R. K. Math, Mylapore, Madras; and of the 'life' of Saint Durgacharan Nag, written in Bengali by Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarty who had the great privilege of coming into close contact with 'Nag Mahasay'. Each book has a brief Foreword explaining how its contents can help us to discipline ourselves properly and to face the serious problems that confront us at the present day. The get-up is neat and beautiful, as is usual with the publications of the Nagpur Ashrama.

KANNADA

AMRITAKUMBHA. BY PRABHUDASI NIVEDITA. Translated from the Marathi original and published by Sri Vineet Ramachandra Rao, Editor, Pradeepa, Dharwar. Pp. 150 Price Re. 1/-.

Here is a collection of some eight beautifully drawn pen-pictures of the inner sports of a devout heart with things divine and spiritual. Couched in the form of interesting stories, they provide a refreshing contrast to the cheap literature of the kind that is flooding the market nowadays. Prof. D. R. Bendre says in his foreword to the book, 'The Beauty and Elegance of Truth shines forth through the sayings contained in this book. . . . Every drop of Amritakumbha is indeed Amrita.'

S. K.

JOURNALS

We have received the following four magazines, published annually from the various educational institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission. They contain interesting articles, both in English and vernacular by the staff (monastic and non-monastic) and students of the respective institutions, interspersed with a number of illustrations.

1. VIDYAMANDIR PATRIKA. Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur Math, Howrah.
2. ASHRAMA. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Balakashram, Rahara.
3. TRAYEE. Ramakrishna Mission Silpamandira, Belur Math, Howrah.
4. SRI RAMAKRISHNA VIDYASALA PATRIKE. Sri R. K. Vidyasala, Mysore.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA VISA KHAPATNAM Report for 1956

In 1938 the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission sent Swami Nisreyasananda to Waltair to start the first centre of the Mission in Andhra areas. The Swami was able to secure a free site from the Government and by 1941 the main building of the Ashrama was constructed with the help of Sri Kancharla Ramabrahmam and his sons. During the period of the war activities were shifted to Tanuku, a place 150 miles away to the west. The presence of Srimat Swami Virajanandaji Maharaj, the then President of the R. K. Math and Mission, in the centre, for some months during 1946 & 1947 gave a new vitality to the progress of the Ashrama. Since then the Ashrama has made steady progress under the charge of Swamis Adidevananda, Sarvagatananda, Maithilyananda, and Avinashananda. After the passing away of Swami Avinashananda in December 1956, Swami Avimuktananda has been put in charge as the Secretary. The activities of the Ashrama at present are as follows:

Religious Service: Daily worship in the morning, and Aratrikam and prayers in the evening; Rāmanāma Saṅkīrtanam on Ekādaśī days; religious discourses on Sundays; and occasional lectures in the town and other places.

Free Reading Room and Library: The total number of (a) books in the Library: 1832; (b) Magazines in the Reading Room: 13; (c) Newspapers: 6; (d) books issued during the year: 141. The average number of readers who utilized the reading section: 20.

Students' Home: Fourteen students stayed in the Home during the year.

Middle School: At the request of the authorities of the Hindustan Shipyard, Visakhapatnam, the Ashrama started a Middle School there in June 1955. During the year under review there were 71 boys and 18 girls of whom 43 were full free.

Philanthropic: The Ashrama has put up a free water tap on the roadside for the supply of drinking water to the wayfarers and the poor people of the locality.

Cultural, Recreational, and Play Centre for the Children: The Ashrama has started a programme for children. They are taught prayers and devotional music every Sunday morning and stories from Purāṇas and Itihāsas are narrated to them in simple language. Regular lessons in Sanskrit are given by using 'direct method'. A Children's Library con-

sisting of illustrated books and journals, a small park with see-saw, swings and other equipments for outdoor and indoor games, educative documentary Film Shows, and free distribution of prepared milk are other provisions made for the benefit of the children.

During the year the Ashrama published a 'Prārthanāvali' consisting of prayers and *stotras* in Telugu script.

Following are some of the immediate needs of the Ashrama :

1. Construction of an Auditorium Rs. 25,000/-
2. Separate Shrine and Prayer Hall ,, 20,000/-
3. Equipment etc. for Library ,, 2,000/-
4. Expansion of Children's section ,, 7,000/-
5. Cost of transport to cater to the children's section & the Ashrama ,, 15,000/-

The Managing Committee is grateful to all those who have been helping the various activities by their contributions and services.

SRI R. K. ASHRAMA, MANGALORE
(CONDUCTED UNDER THE HOLY MOTHER'S TRUST,
MYSORE)

Report for 1956

A centre of the Ramakrishna Math was opened in a rented building at Falnir on June 3, 1947, under the Holy Mother's Trust. At the persistent demand for the expansion of its activities, a permanent site measuring about 7 acres with an extensive building situated on it on the Mangaladevi Road at Bolar was acquired through gift and the Ashrama was removed there in 1951. The Trust under which the Ashrama was started was created by the late Swami Srivasananda in 1938.

The Ashrama has endeavoured to spread among the people the ideas and ideals of Vedānta in the light of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna through discourses, lectures etc. During the year under review study classes on Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad, Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa and Bhāgavatam were conducted. Public lectures were given in different parts of the town and district. Brief talks on moral and religious subjects were given to the students of the Bālakāshrama run by the Mission. The Ashrama published 'Bhagavad-Gītā', 'Mānasollāsa' and 'Śaraṇāgati-gadya' in Kannada. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated with a

varied religious and cultural programme. The Ashrama Library issued 689 books.

Educational: Bālakāshrama maintains poor and meritorious students by providing them free board, lodging, stationery etc.

Medical: There is a Charitable Dispensary run by the Centre.

Appeal: From the income of the Holy Mother's Trust the Authorities were pleased to sanction Rs. 2,000/- in 1956 for the benefit of the Ashrama. Since the Trust funds have a far wider application, the amount available for this Ashrama will be much less than at present. Although the Ashrama has got a permanent place, suitable arrangements for maintenance etc. are very much needed. The management thanks all the devotees and friends who have enthusiastically supplemented the main source of income and appeals to all large-hearted people for their co-operation in all possible ways for the progress of this centre.

THE R. K. MISSION BOYS' HOME, RAHARA

Report for 1956

The Home is a residential institution for orphans and poor children. It had a strength of 346 boys in 1956. It provides them, free of cost, with food, clothing, lodging, books, medicines etc. The training given helps them to strive for the higher ideals of life and grow into self-reliant and disciplined citizens of the country. The Home has a Library with over 2000 books, several periodicals and dailies. A weekly hand-written bulletin and a quarterly manuscript magazine edited and conducted by the boys; music, drama; dancing; games; sports; excursions; gardening; and cinema shows are the extra-curricular activities of the boys. The Home runs the following five schools:

(1) *Multi-purpose School:* Classes from V-XI; present strength: Secondary School: 202 boys and 9 teachers; Technical School: 253.

(2) *Senior Basic cum Junior Technical School:* Boys between 11 and 14 admitted. Crafts taught: Fitting, Smithy and Carpentry. Strength: 64 students and 3 teachers. Classes from VI to VIII.

(3) *Junior Basic School:* Classes from I to V. Present Strength: 320 boys and 9 teachers.

(4) *Junior Technical School:* Enables boys to have elementary knowledge of industrial machinery as will make them fit for technical work. Fitting, carpentry and smithy taught.

(5) *Vocational School:* Classes held in tailoring, weaving, toy-making, bakery, and carpentry.

The "District Library" section, open to the

general public, has a mobile section also. It consists of 4125 books, 5 daily newspapers and 19 monthly magazines. Total number of books issued in 1956: 25,857.

THE R. K. MISSION SEVASHRAMA, LUCKNOW

Report for the years 1951-55

Founded in 1914 and affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission in 1925, the Sevashrama serves the Lucknow public in three different spheres: (i) Medical, (ii) Educational, and (iii) Religious and Cultural.

(1) *Medical:* The Outdoor Charitable Dispensary has two departments, Allopathic and Homoeopathic. The total number of patients treated in 1951 was 1,41,008; in 1952—2,02,578; in 1953—1,64,757; in 1954—1,12,011; and in 1955—1,09,742. In 1955, 6682 lbs. of powdered milk and about 96 lbs. of Butter Oil were distributed to undernourished children under 12 years of age.

(2) *Educational:* The Sevashrama maintains a public Library and a free reading room. The library has 6,210 books dealing with various subjects—Arts, Literature, Economics, Politics, Philosophy, Religion, Psychology, and Natural Sciences. The reading room is provided with 6 dailies and 29 periodicals. There are 212 members. The average daily attendance is 24.

(3) *Religious and Cultural:* Daily Puja and Aratrikam at the Temple; Bhajana and discourses on religious and philosophical topics for five days in a week by the Swami-in-Charge as well as scholars and gifted exponents of the Śāstras from outside; Rāmanāma and Shyāmanāma Sankīrtanas on special days; celebration of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda, and due observance of religious festivals, including Christmas Eve. During December 1954 the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother was celebrated at the Sevashrama.

The Management acknowledges with thanks the financial help extended by the U. P. State Government, and the Lucknow Municipal Board for the maintenance and proper upkeep of the Dispensary, the Library and Free Reading Room. It is also grateful to the doctors, friends and devotees for their unstinted services and kind contributions.

The immediate needs of the Sevashrama are:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| (1) A Kitchen block (with store room and a few residential rooms) | Rs. 25,000/- |
| (2) One Pumping Set complete with water reservoir and pipe etc. for supplying water to the Dispensary etc | 2,000/- |

R. K. MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, VARANASI
Fifty-sixth Annual Report (1956)

The activities during the year under review were as follows:

(1) *Indoor General Hospital*: Number of cases admitted: 2,996; cases cured: 2,204; relieved: 431; discharged otherwise: 115; died: 120; surgical cases: 758; ghat and roadside cases: 30; daily average number of beds occupied: 99.5.

(2) *Home for Invalids*: Inmates during the year: 28.

(3) *Out-patients' Department (including Shivala Branch)*: Total number of cases treated: new: 73,375. Daily average attendance: 860. Surgical Cases: 47,055.

(4) *Outdoor help to Poor Invalids and Helpless Ladies*: total number: 118.

(5) *Relief to School-going Children*: 30 students given monthly help in the form of school fees and food and occasionally books and clothings.

(6) *Special and Occasional Relief*: Food and cash relief given to 366 stranded travellers. Cotton

and woollen blankets, and dhotis given to 196 persons.

(7) *Milk Canteen*: Average daily recipients: 563. Total quantity consumed: 13 barrels and 20 cartons. Barley and sago to 255 persons.

(8) *Pathological Laboratory*: Details of tests: Blood: 3,798; Urine: 2,210, Stool: 2,295; Sputum: 190, Widal test: 295; Kahn test: 822; Aldehyde and Antimony test: 244; Blood sugar: 61.

(9) *X-Ray and Electrotherapy Department*: Cases examined: 987.

Financial Position: Total Income: Rs. 1,60,363-2-0: Total expenditure: Rs. 1,72,231-3-8. Deficit according to Balance Sheet: Rs. 60,843-0-3.

Some of its immediate needs:

1. Endowment for beds in the Indoor Hospital: Rs. 6,000/- or 5,000/- or 4,500/- for a bed in the Surgical, General, or Invalids' sections respectively.
2. A Ward for Male Department Rs. 1,35,000/-
3. Servants' Quarters ,, 10,000/-

Corrigenda

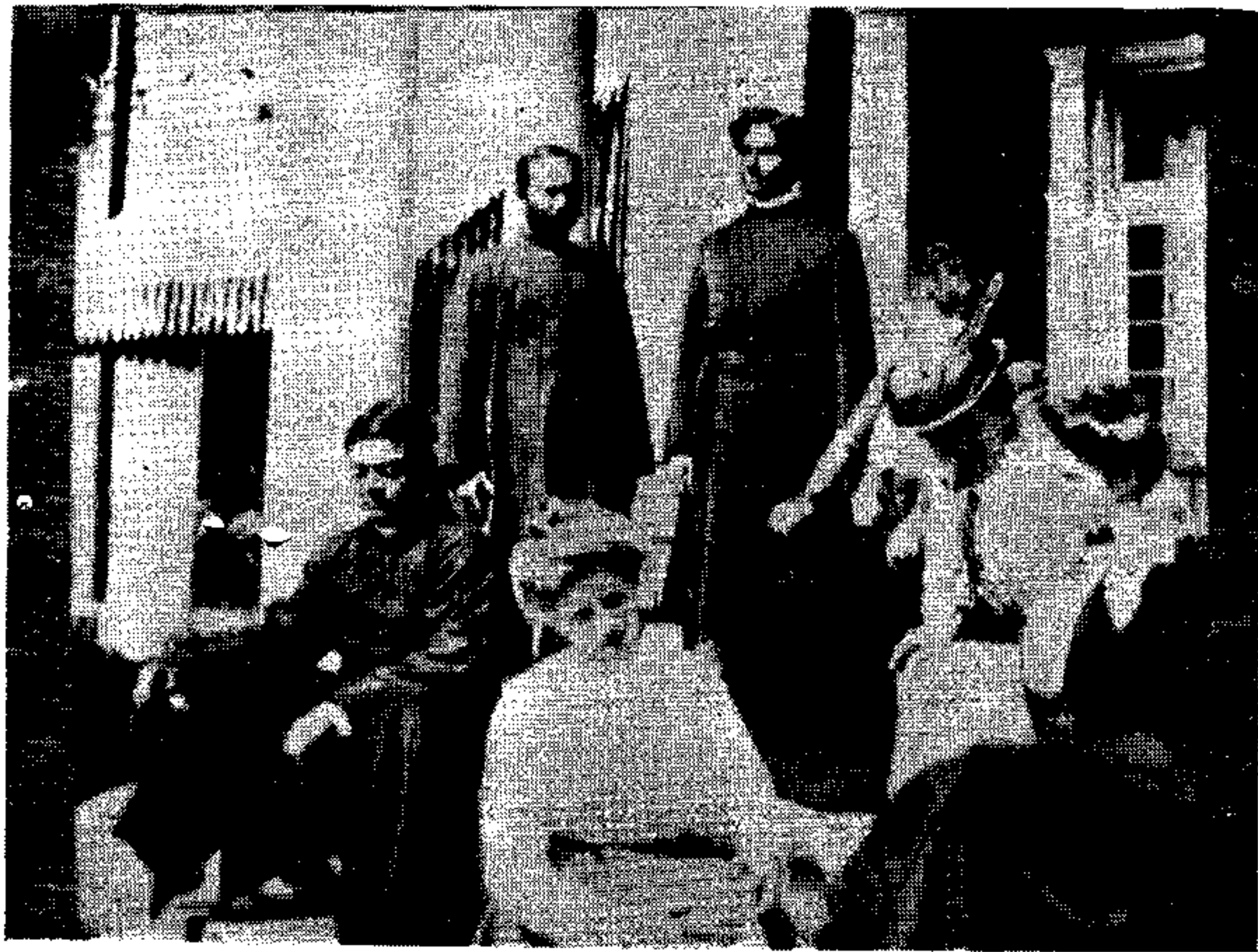
In the December 1957 issue

(i) on p. 498, column 1, para 2, line 15 for 'started' read 'start'.

(ii) on p. 499 the last sentence of the Editorial should be: 'Indeed, as she herself said once to assure a disciple, she made the 'mould' to enable' etc.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The 96th birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls on Sunday, 12th January 1958.



SWAMIJI AT RIDGELY MANOR, 1899 — *Top and Bottom Left.*

(1) Standing : Swamis Vivekananda, Turiyananda, Abhedananda.

(2) Sitting : Swami Vivekananda. Standing : Swamis Turiyananda, Abhedananda.

SWAMIJI AT THE CHICAGO PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS — *Bottom Right.*