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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

NIRVĀNA

BY PROF. SANAT KUMAR RAI CHAUDHURY.

The dreary and darkest night has passed over,
Gloom dispelled, sorrowful clouds no more
hover.

Joyous is the lonely vale, the horizon resonant
and clear,
Gay is the shady grove, bud and blossoms
smile and cheer.

The verdure of the green breathing sweetness
and strange bliss,
The murmuring of the flowing stream spread
heavenly peace.

Dust and din are far cry, in an unbroken
tranquillity,

The lone pilgrim meditating,—nay, entering
into deep ecstasy.

Hours, days, rolled away the long weary
years,

In the wheel of time marked often by the
moments of despair.

Life ebbd, withered away the frail frame,
Yet lit aglow in the cave of heart the flicker-
ing flame.

Shattered the house that bore endless desire,
Through the cycle of deaths and births, he
would no more hover.

The pangs and pains failed to smother
The undying spirit of the heroic traveller.
The winged desire has lost its wind,
The body motionless and still, unwavering
mind.

The tumult of passion has died for ever,
Gone all the fiery ardours and strifes, the
tempest is over.

In a hushed serenity, the Enlightened One
Passing into stillness of Nirvāṇa, radiant and
calm.

AMBROSIA

MĀYĀ AND AVIDYĀ (contd.)

6. Man suffers physically and mentally—sufferings are inevitable. But he suffers and wallows in them, and will not remember God and pray to Him to lift him up. The Lord is kind, His grace cuts through all pains. Prayers should not be given up during sufferings.

7. Do you know the nature of Māyā? It makes the existent appear non-existent, and the non-existent appear as true! This world is a gigantic show of Māyā.

8. Who is there that does not want to be happy? Hoax, perjury, forgery—what is there in the armoury of Satan that man does not take recourse to for a dribble of happiness? This too is a kind of Māyā. Māyā's tricks are so varied and numerous that it is difficult, almost impossible, to recognize them.

9. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'He who wants My Māyā courts misery. So beware of her blandishments. And he who wants Me gets happiness.' Many are His counsels for the good of mankind. Once He said, 'Have faith in Me and go beyond all miseries; else there is no end of doubts and shouts, of troubles and miseries.'

10. I told X, 'You have come to Banaras to improve your health. It is improving. Continue your stay for some time more in this special abode of 'the Lord of the universe'. He said, 'Brother, the management of the Math will suffer. Evils will crop up.' But see, now that he is no more, does the management suffer for that? Nobody is indispensable for any work. The Lord gets His work done by somebody. When one passes away another steps in. Swamiji (Sw. Vivekananda) passed away, did the Math go to the dogs? This idea, that one is indispensable, is also a trick of Māyā.

11. Through God's grace you have a child; very good. You may pray to God for his health and longevity. But you are sure

to come to grief if you develop the sense of ownership. On the contrary, if you regard it as the Lord's, you will not have grief even if it dies. For, you will feel that in His kindness He gave you the child to receive your service and in His kindness He has taken it away. Blessed you are to have that little opportunity to serve Him. If you can develop this mentality you are saved. Too much attachment is bad. All miseries stem out of it. If you have faith in, and devotion to, God and call on Him whenever you find time, you can tide over all difficulties safely.

12. Man forgets his past difficulties. There is the rub. If he remembers the past and compares it with the present, much of his miseries will be mitigated. But no. If, through the Lord's grace, better time comes he forgets all about the difficult times. He forgets even the good turns of others. This is his nature, the *Jīva's*. If he remembers his trials and tribulations he will have sympathy for others when they suffer. But man is so mean that he forgets his own past and hates sufferers. So did the Master say, 'Never forget the good turn of any. Remember it throughout your life and be grateful.'

13. The Master used to say, 'Never forget the man, be he great or small, who has helped you ever so little.' But man invariably forgets. This is all Māyā's play.

14. What is lost is lost. Brooding over it is vain. It only runs down one's health. The feeling of misery is due to the sense of 'mine'. Fling them all off and arise—they are all Māyā.

15. Would you falsify the Master's word? He said, 'Māyā makes the existent vanish and the non-existent appear.' If you want to free yourself from its clutches you are to take refuge in the Lord, who is Truth. Men renounce the world in order to be free from the baneful effects of Māyā.

16. However much you may try to be free of all worries, one or other of them will always be there. This is the world. No-one could be free altogether. It is the Lord's will, one may say. Such is the influence of Māyā the Creatrix. So has said Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 'My Māyā is inexorable. He alone is saved who takes refuge in Me.'

17. Policy, duplicity—these are inevitable in worldly lives. If you ever find a householder above these, know for certain that the Lord's special grace is on him.

18. In this world one is to pay for everything one does, the only exception being meditation and prayer. But the great Māyā is so tricky that one does not feel like praying or meditating.

19. We are chips of the Lord. Do you think that the Lord is not there in your heart? He is there to be sure. But you do not feel His presence. It is because of impurities accumulated through many births.

20. You see the dogs playing over there. How very loving to one another they appear!

But throw a piece of flesh in their midst and they will fall on one another. Similar is the case with men. They talk sweetly, show great affection. But tread on anyone's interest and he will not hesitate to murder you. This is the nature of the Jīva. How is it possible for a chip of the Lord to be so degraded and depraved? It is all the doing of Māyā.

21. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, 'It is all due to lack of spiritual practices that the baleful appears beneficent'—Māyā, Māyā!

22. People enjoying a little happiness for a moment think that that state will continue for ever. They cannot understand that they are in the jaws of death. This is Māyā.

23. Horrible indeed are the occult powers! The very earth shakes at their display, so baneful and destructive are they. Our Master had an inordinate abhorrence for them. But people are mad after them. They do not know that they are the worst tricks of Māyā. Nothing keeps one so forgetful of the Lord as they.

SEEDS AND SOWING FOR INNER HARVEST

BY THE EDITOR

Everyone is creative in his own way. Even a Flower Show or common Exhibition makes this clear. The cultivator who gets the first prize for the best rose, vegetable or fruit deserves it because of the hard work he has done in two directions. He has, first, carefully observed the peculiarities of the soil, manure and seeds at his disposal. Secondly, he has learned the art of combining them to evolve a progressively higher type of yield. What the Experimental Station, at the Governmental level, does is to carry on the same work in a more organized way. It has the advantages that a scientific training and a

well-equipped laboratory can give to the people concerned.

To start with, the research worker gathers all the 'facts' related to the elements and forces that account for the present state, form and qualities of the object under experiment. From there he extends his study to cover all possible developments that can be effected by deliberately altering the proportions of those elements and forces. Details of the past and present states are wisely fitted into a programme for making greater values available in the future. The results have been considerable,—for example, the evolving of

fruits with less fibre and more kernel, or of grains with greater power to resist the havoc wrought by floods or droughts. The limit to improvement is evidently imposed not by Nature herself, but only by our own inability to know what further qualities can yet be manifested and the steps we have to take to bring them out whenever we want. In short the given structure of anything is not final and rigidly fixed. It can be altered for the better along certain lines. Wisdom lies in discovering and controlling them.

When we come to human beings, the problem becomes complicated. A material object, a plant, or an animal stays or moves within a framework which is comparatively easy to control and observe. But it is not so easy to control and observe a man. His bodily conditions can be analysed with tolerable accuracy. This has led to spectacular advances in the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases. There is also an increasing awareness everywhere of the disastrous consequences of mental tensions and unworthy emotions on physical health. The result has been a growing interest in a planned alignment of thought-forms, including memories of past events, and of emotional drives. The main centre of attention, however, continues to be the retention of bodily vigour that permits reckless eating, drinking and pursuit of sense pleasures. Most people include in the last category the freedom to indulge, as fancy bids, in falsehood, misrepresentation, greed and rapacity. On the individual and domestic scale these, as we know, end in law courts or the prison, and on an international scale in wars and mass destruction. It is only when the movements of bodily limbs and of ideas fail to synchronize with the visible outcome of deeds and of accelerated ambition that anyone ordinarily thinks of resorting to mental analysis, either by himself or with the aid of others. Even then, as soon as minimum repairs are made and his personality-car is declared road-worthy, off he goes again into his accustomed ways with redoubled speed. For

he is eager to make up for the time 'lost' in the workshop! His so-called dynamic life is thus a re-enactment of the twists and turns for which his vehicle is not intended and which must cause a breakdown more rapidly next time.

II

We know the part played by sense organs. They register sights, sounds and so on. But what should be the essential worth of the experiences they help to produce in us? By looking into their structure we cannot find it out. Dazzling lights blind us for a time; so we should not with bare eyes look at unusually bright objects. Apart from such negative limits, there is nothing in the organs themselves to indicate positively the best way of utilizing their services. Here the mind steps in with its tastes, desires and plans, constantly suggesting what to see and hear. If we consider mind to be the sixth sense and continue the same argument, we can readily understand why the sheer ability to use the mind vigorously does not ensure uniform peace and good will. For there is nothing in this internal apparatus itself to show unmistakably what the best plans are. If there had been automatic indicators, like fixed guides, rollers, meters, or built-in view-finders, as in many modern machines, there would have been no failure anywhere, no breakdown, no wrong 'shot'. Each person would have not merely planned his life but actually lived it nobly and artistically. But the fact is that such planning and living can be done only by constant vigilance and supreme effort. To the extent that mind acts like an instrument, it does not of its own accord turn in the direction of all desirable plans and purposes. Even when shifted to any relatively correct angle, it has, as everyone knows, a most disconcerting way of slipping away from it. In such moments it exhibits a strange elusiveness and freedom which we did not consciously give it but which seems somehow inherent in it. No doubt it bends in accordance with our pull. But

when we relax our grip, it resiles from us without our knowledge and lets in a stream of ideas, familiar individually perhaps but surely in sequences unexpected and totally unpredictable. They come in from all directions, through ever-open doors as it were, and monopolize the entire stage for a time to enact irrelevant and even painful scenes. There would be no serious harm if the effects of the drama end in the mind itself. But unfortunately mental movement is a prelude to the physical; and the destruction that unchecked thoughts and selfishness can cause by a chain reaction in the world of human relationships can be so serious that it may take decades to repair the damage done. What shapes it has taken whenever it crossed the limits of families and excited passions within the same country or among different nations is writ large in the pages of recorded history.

Mind as we know it, however, is much more than an ingenious and tricky instrument. Just as energy exists in two states, potential and kinetic, so mental forces too function in two levels, the sub-conscious and the conscious. They are not two separate compartments, though for purposes of study at particular stages it may be useful to picture them to be so. For example, we may wish to know why our thoughts wander far away from any central idea or familiar 'scene' on which we decide to keep them fixed for a given time. Such an exercise, by the way, is quite helpful from various standpoints. For one thing, it teaches us conclusively that if our own mind repeatedly defies our own intention and control within a few seconds, the same phenomenon must be happening in the minds of other persons as well. What right have we to become unduly irritated when their thoughts show evidences of dodging and disobeying what, a little earlier, they said they would certainly carry out? The forces that deflect their inward currents from chalked out courses operate with no less power within our own personalities minute after minute. Systematic readings of these amazing jumps within ourselves must

confer on us a twofold benefit. First, we shall realize how difficult it is to co-ordinate right intention with actual performance, both in letter and in spirit. Secondly, the discovery of the absence of synchronization within us must knock down our superior airs and teach us true humility. For the first time, then, we shall begin to look upon the failings of others with the same sympathy and forgiveness we wish to see extended to us. Nay, as selfishness becomes attenuated, we shall learn to react in a uniformly gentle and creative manner to all discrepancies between earlier decisions and subsequent deviations from them, observed either in ourselves or in our neighbours. And that reaction will be to keep up a steady and fervent, though often silent, aspiration for the attainment of perfection.

III

Even in the matter of stepping up our aspiration, it is necessary to view thought movements from different helpful angles. It is natural to feel perplexed and discouraged when our ideas flit across the field of awareness, the transition from one to another being too quick for any preventive scrutiny on our part. If we like, we may compare them to a succession of tiny sparks, flying about in all directions in an otherwise pitch dark night. The spacing of the sparks, their formation, and the fantastic designs they trace are the inevitable expressions of the working out of a unit of force depending on burning coal and the atmospheric currents surrounding it. We know that they cannot but subside when that force is exhausted. So too, any of our emotions, aims, or values, when once rendered 'active', is capable of releasing a unit of energy that must continue to operate till it is completely spent up.

We may ask what it is that, relatively speaking, corresponds in us to the stirring of the dormant fire outside. It can be any sense impression from the external world. It can be our own bodily state or actual contact with

objects. For example, we may be digging in our garden to plant a rose. This simple act can suggest other bodily movements like going to the office an hour later, or other things to be planted like vegetables for the kitchen, or even other diggings by others elsewhere, say, in a churchyard after someone's death. The possibilities are almost endless. For the world of memories across which the wave of excited thrill may run its course is immeasurably vast. Thus, while the digging goes on without a break,—our hands, eyes and legs taking over the work like a 'transferred subject' and executing it as if under strict supervision—there may be enacted in our internal stage a strange drama in which any memory or emotion may join or from which it may drop out at any time without warning. Its plot need be nothing more than what can be developed with the extempore talks and moods of any actor likely to wake up from sleep on the slightest tremor occurring in his vicinity. Let us for convenience call this entire interlude,—unwanted, unplanned, and unpredictable—a 'succession' (*krāma*).

Since 'succession' is a single wave, we cannot undertake anything creative till it subsides of its own accord. When it moves off, we are ordinarily startled into an unpleasant realization that our mental energy had slipped out of control for some time. We had failed to supply it with a tight programme of absorbing interest. So it had exercised its little freedom to enjoy a short flight away from the field of physical work, without seriously hampering it. The only question that ought to arise next is about the best way of utilizing the calm interval that reigns before another side-tracking movement begins. There is no point in feeling unduly sorry for what happened. Time is irreversible and we shall never be able to relive those seconds in a better manner. Besides, dejection or self-deprecation charges the present moments themselves with an undesirable content. When repeated, this also would enter the sub-conscious and make the cleaning process more difficult.

Wisdom lies in recognizing that all pains of the past fall outside the category of those that can be 'avoided' by any kind of effort in the present.¹ This particular experience of being made to forget the Ideal, within a minute of honestly resolving to remember it, is no exception to this rule. What we have to do is to charge the present with only those values which we wish to see firmly established in the habit level, in place of the base and worthless 'associations' now operating there.

An objection may be raised that this seesaw of remembering and forgetting too will sink into the sub-conscious and get a permanent foothold there by constant repetition. And if the oscillations become more frequent, as they are bound to, with the passage of time, they might cause a chronic state of mental instability,—let alone the chances of strengthening virtues or attaining spiritual insight. The reply is that all correction of mistakes, as in grammar or in mathematics, in singing or in dancing, do exhibit the features of a seesaw to some extent. But we never cut a cross-section of our experience in those fields of knowledge in such a way as to imply that each correction compelled another mistake, or that the larger the number of errors eliminated the greater became the follies that stepped in to replace them. Every correction is always a new truth perceived, a new relationship learned. Hence repetition of this process must result in the growth of a habitual outlook that arrives at the truth in every context with a minimum

¹ This is in accordance with the principle given in Yoga Sūtra II.16: "Pain that is not yet come is to be avoided." Vyāsa explains: "The pain that is past has been spent up by experience. Hence it cannot fall within the sphere of the Avoidable. That which is present is being experienced at the time of its existence. So it too cannot be considered as the Avoidable with reference to any action to be taken a second later. Therefore that pain alone that has not yet come (but that may come within the field of experience in the absence of discrimination &c) troubles the yogi who is sensitive like the eye-ball; it does not trouble any other. Hence that alone is the Avoidable pain. It is the cause of this Avoidable pain that is discussed."

of effort. If we apply this principle to the problem of unwanted 'successions', we shall easily see that the internal movements must be put in a more reasonable order thus: first a unit of active remembrance; then the rest, viz. the fading of interest due to various causes like monotony; resultant waywardness in the shape of a wave; its disappearance owing to the absence of conscious steering; also owing to the persistence of the Ideal contained in the first act of remembrance, although in a submerged condition; and lastly, a deliberate and intelligent regrouping of old thoughts round the Ideal in newer and more attractive patterns. When looked at in this way, we shall be convinced that every wave that passed means one useless 'association of ideas' exposed and dismissed. We shall also see in every calm interval following it an excellent opportunity to rearrange available units of mental energy round the Ideal in more compact and significant ways. In the re-planting of the mental field, such intervals are the right times and the virtues described in religious books the right seeds.

IV

It is true that no two religions, teachers, or sacred books present desirable qualities in the same order. This by itself need not become a great stumbling block; rather it is as it ought to be. It is now being increasingly recognized that each person has certain inborn traits which should be kept in view in all matters connected with his development. In giving secular education, in enabling people to choose their vocations aright, and even while selecting drugs to cure diseases, the tendency is to study the peculiar characteristics different 'individuals' exhibit. We see that in some systematic, though to us at present unknown manner, a person takes from his food the pigment 'natural' for his body. What we have to do is to apply the same principle to matters relating to his intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual growth. Where the 'suggestions' given and the 'disciplines' prescribed match his inborn tastes, his reactions

will as a rule be favourable, and he will speed along the path of virtue and knowledge. Where, on the other hand, the proffered advice goes against the pattern of virtuous qualities ready to sprout up within him, it will blunt his sensitivity and hamper his growth. Thus, while every quality mentioned in a system is doubtless necessary for all round progress, adequate provision has also to be made for the individual's 'right of choice' regarding the order in which he would find it economic to cultivate them. When he is encouraged to experiment with them, he is sure, after some trial and error, to discover the one quality which, when strengthened, will give *him* a steady basis for the advancement of the rest.² Viewed in this light, all systems appear equally beneficial, though each step as it stands in any of them may not suit everyone in an equal measure at all stages of his onward march.

Some may have a predominantly devotional type of mind. Their programmes will be centred round the attainment of the grace of God. But even they have to 'exert' in a number of ways,—for example, by studying sacred books, by worshipping God with the aid of symbols, by learning to meditate on Him and, finally, by 'surrendering' themselves into His protecting hands. All these or other 'disciplines' mean intense 'self-effort', whatever the goal or the direction may be. This 'exertion' is not to be understood as a denial of

² After enumerating virtues to be cultivated by the earnest seeker, *Yoga Vāsishtha* says: "The practice of some *one* of these pure virtues leads to the gain of *all* the four (mentioned). Every one of these separately leads to the others. Therefore diligently apply yourself to *one* of these for your success in getting them *all*." (Mumukṣu Khaṇḍa, xvi, entitled Sadācāra-nirūpaṇam).

"Ekasminneva vai teṣāṃ

abhyaste vimalodaye,

Catvāro'pi kilābhyastā

bhavanti, sudhiyām vara! 21.

Eko'pyeko'pi sarveṣāṃ

eṣāṃ prasava-bhūr-ihā;

Sarva-sāmsiddhaye tasmād-

yatnenaikam samāśrayet. 22.

humility or of a spirit of dedication. It is the direct opposite only of the laziness and inertia that finds it convenient to invoke, in words, the gratuitous aid of outside agencies without doing anything positive or useful. Exertion is the spontaneous expression of the determination to plough one's inner field properly, select and sow right seeds, pull out weeds, and do everything else for raising an excellent harvest, helpful to men and pleasing to God.

Says the *Yoga Vāsishtha*: 'Had there not been the folly of idleness in this world, what man would fail to be either rich or learned? It is by reason of idleness that this earth is filled to its utmost limit of the sea with indigent and beastly men.'³ 'It has been seen, known, heard and experienced that success comes as the result of proper acts done from one's younger days onwards. They are indeed dull-headed who think of obtaining it from fortune or by chance.'⁴ 'The mind is the soul and cause of all acts which men call the doings of destiny. It is verily the mind that makes the man. It acts as it desires and enjoys accordingly the fruits thereof; it is the same thing as destiny. Know that the mind, heart, desire, action and destiny are synonymous terms, and applied by the virtuous to the 'unascertainable soul' (evolved into these forms). Whatever the 'so-named soul' undertakes to do *continually* and *with a firm resolution*, it obtains the fruits thereof accordingly. It is by means of the activity or exertion of this soul, and *by no other means*, that it attains everything.'⁵ 'If you will be

guided now by the pure desires of your nature, you will gradually be led by means of your good acts to secure everlasting welfare. But if your wrong inclinations tend to lead you to difficulties, you must try your best to overcome them by sheer force of will and unwavering determination.'⁶ 'The current of our desires is flowing betwixt the two channels of good and evil. By duly exerting our powers we must become its masters and turn it always to the right course.'⁷

Exertion should not involve haste or violence. For even in its wayward condition, the mind is sensitive and tender like a child. The pressure used has to be steady, no doubt, but gentle. It must be uniform and gradual, not haphazard and hurried. Control must have the characteristics of an adventure or an exciting game which children like, and which enables them to face all rigours in a sports-

Mano hi puruṣas-tasmāt

Daivam nāstīti niścayaḥ.

Eṣa eva mano jantur-

Yad-yat-prayatate hitam;

Kṛtam tat-tad-avāpnoti

Svata eva hi daivataḥ.

Manaś-cittam vāsanā ca

Karma daivam ca niścayaḥ,

Rāma! Dur-niścayasyaitāḥ

Samjñās-sadbhir-udāhṛtāḥ.

Evam-nāmā hi puruṣo

Dṛḍha-bhāvanayā yathā

Nityam prayatate, Rāma!

Phalam āpnotyalam tathā.

Evam puruṣakāreṇa

Sarvam-eva Raghūdvaha!

Prāpyate netareneha,

Tasmāt-sa śubhado'stu te! *Ibid*, ix. 18-22.

³ Vāsanaugheṇa śuddhena

Tatra ced-adya nīyase,

Tat-krameṇa śubhenaiva

Padam prāpsyasi śāśvatam.

Atha ced-aśubho bhāvas-

Tvām yojayasi saṅkaṭe,

Prāktanās-tad-asau yatnāt

Jetavyo bhavatā balāt. Ibid, ix. 26-27.

⁴ Śubhā'śubhābhyām mārgābhyām

Vahantī vāsanā-sarit;

Pauruṣeṇa prayatnena

Yojanīyā śubhe pathi. *Ibid*, ix. 30.

³ Alasyam yadi na bhavej-jagatyantarthaḥ

Ko na syād-bahu-dhanako bahuśruto vā?

Alasyād-iyam-avaniḥ sa-sāgarāntā

Sampūrṇā nara-paśubhiś-ca nirdhanaiś-ca!

Ibid, v. 30.

⁴ Ābālyād-alam-abhyastaiḥ,

Śāstra-sat-saṅgamādibhiḥ,

Guṇaiḥ, puruṣa-yatnena

Svārthaḥ samprāpyate yataḥ,

Iti pratyakṣato dṛṣṭam

Anubhūtam śrutam kṛtam,

Daivāttam-iti manyante

Ye hatās-te kubuddhayaḥ. *Ibid*, v. 28-29.

⁵ Yad-daivam tāni karmāṇi

Karma, Sādho! mano hi tat;

man-like spirit.⁸ It is faulty actions done in the past that appear as obstacles and temptations in the present. Judicious actions of the present, however, can help us to neutralize them and make the future bright. 'Actions

⁸ Jantoś-cittam tu śisuvat

Tasmāt-tac-cālayed-balāt. ix. 32.

Samatā-sāntvanenāśu

Na drāg-iti śanaiḥ śanaiḥ,

Pauruṣeṇaiva yatnena

Pālayec-citta-bālakam. ix. 33.

of the past and the present' may thus be looked upon as 'two fruit trees growing in the garden of humanity. Of these, the one that is cultivated best thrives and fructifies the most.'⁹ Hence the importance of the 'living present'.

⁹ Prāktanaś-caihikaś-cobhau

Puruṣārthau phaladrūmau

Samjātau puruṣāraṇye,

Jayatyabhyadhikas-tayoḥ. *Ibid*, vi. 25.

VEDIC MYSTICISM

BY DR. P. S. SASTRI

1. The Ṛgveda is primarily a collection of beautiful songs full of literary value breathing the devout fervour of mystic communion. It is a microcosm for the entire Vedic literature. The contents of the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upaniṣads are all found in Ṛgveda. Hence it is wrong to speak of an age of the Brāhmaṇas or of the Upaniṣads. These so-called ages, which the occidental pundits praise and enumerate did not exist one after the other; they had a simultaneous existence.¹ The same age that saw the rituals saw the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, the lofty poetic outbursts of the Ṛgveda. Even without a knowledge of the Upaniṣads it is quite possible to build up the philosophy of the Vedic age from a close study of the Ṛgveda alone.

There are many philosophical hymns in Ṛgveda, besides pregnant statements of speculative wisdom scattered here and there. An analysis and interpretation of these hymns and Ṛcs has been achieved many a time. But all such attempts are great failures in the sense that the scholars proceeded on two false assumptions. Firstly, each scholar had a preconceived idea of his own; and he tried to read

¹ Haug's introduction to his translation of *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*.

that idea into the text of Ṛgveda. Thus Ṛgveda came to be dubbed as polytheistic, pantheistic, monotheistic, kathenotheistic and so on. The second is a fallacy that is underlying the first. Each scholar implicitly accepted the unity of the Saṁhitā as fundamental and began to conceive the text as speaking in a single voice on the diverse aspects of the then known, and the then experienced, human culture. We must note at the outset that there was no unanimity in the Ṛgvedic times on any problem. Like the Upaniṣads, Ṛgveda also offers us varied views. The text is composed by nearly seven hundred Ṛsis and as such they cannot be expected to have arrived at a single conclusion on any ultimate problem. Even in our own day, we know, the ideas of God are as manifold as there are thinking beings. There is a gradation of thought from the man in the street to the speculative philosopher. The reasonings of the speculative philosopher alone do not represent the conclusions and beliefs of the age.

2. The denial of a God is not unknown in the Vedic age. Tradition tells us that when people went on denying Indra's existence, which is as much as saying God's existence, one seer propitiated Indra and made him

visible to the human beings. Thereupon he began singing the glories of Indra, and went on reminding the people of Indra's existence with the refrain: *Sa Janāsa Indrah*. (II.12)—
'Oh people! There is Indra'.

In the tenth Maṇḍala of the text we come across a beautiful hymn (X.155) which is an invocation to 'Faith' (*Śraddhā*). The seer has felt that people are losing faith, thus becoming irreligious. He has realized that faith is of the utmost value in realizing spiritual beauty. So he exhorts them, much in the fashion adopted later on by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to hold fast to faith, and thus achieve the religious experience. Here, we come across a definition of religion by implication. 'To be irreligious' is identified with 'to have no faith'. This implies that faith is the cardinal principle of religious consciousness.

3. The religion of the Vedic times can be said to be, in the felicitous phrase of James, 'Healthy-minded'. William James observes: "Happiness is congenital and irreclaimable in many. Cosmic emotion inevitably takes in them the form of enthusiasm and freedom. From the outset, their religion is one of union with divine."² Saint Augustine was unmistakably correct when he observed, "If you but love God, you may do as you incline." It is not the shuddering fear alone that lifts the soul. God is conceived by these Vedic people to be the vital inner principle of a beautiful and harmonious world, always beneficent, merciful, kind, and pure. Such a temperament, says James, "is fatally forbidden to linger over the darker aspects of the universe. The capacity for even a transient sadness or a momentary humility seems cut off from them as by a kind of congenital anaesthesia."³ In a funeral hymn of the R̥gveda we read:

"Divided from the dead are these,
the living;
Now be our calling on the Gods
successful,

² *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 79

³ *Ibid*, p. 83

We have gone forth for dancing and
laughter,
To further times prolonging our
existence" (X.183).

Death and the accompanying funeral is a sad and painful sight, a forced parting from the dear ones. It affects the feelings deeply and vitally. But the Vedic seer systematically eschews it from his healthy-minded religion. To forget the gloom that has overtaken him, to ignore it and be indifferent to the darker side of human life, and to falsify the "still, sad music of humanity", he indulges in dance and laughter. These are the only things that make him cheerful even then. The transient sadness is cut off and he no longer feels any pain.

These poets have an inherent inability to feel evil, to conceive sin and shudder at the idea of a Godhead. There is a "systematic expulsion of all contractile elements." "The sentiments of the expansive order alone are adopted" and claimed by them as their sphere. They speak subjectively and persuade us "that all things are divinely good".⁴ It is a voluntary and defiant optimism.

The fear-thought gives rise to the misery-habit, shunning exclusively the saner aspect of life. But as Dante says, one must not reason about evil, but give a glance and pass beyond. "It is something merely to be outgrown and left behind, transcended and forgotten."⁵

The controlling energies of Nature are personal. Man's personal thoughts are mighty forces that have complete sway over everything. The powers of the universe directly respond to the individual's appeal and needs. Such a religion offers serenity, moral poise, and happiness. Repentance and remorse are sickly and relapsing impulses. One must act and forget that he ever had sinned or witnessed sin. As Spinoza observes, knowledge of evil is an "inadequate" knowledge, fit only for slavish minds.

These R̥gvedic poets viewed their deity as a companion, a friend. They co-operated with

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 85.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 106.

each other. The poet invokes his deity as one does a mighty, helpful and better equipped friend in times of want. It is only Varuṇa that terrifies him and brought before him the idea of sin and the consequent shudder. Here our occidental Vedic pundits, probably reluctantly, admit a religious poetry of exalted fervour on a par with David's. But no deity was to be feared by his devotee. Varuṇa too is on an equal footing with his worshipper.

Vasiṣṭha observes: "When Varuṇa and I embark together and urge our boat into the midst of the ocean, we will sing within that swing and there be happy" (VII.80.3). Varuṇa placed the poet in the vessel and made him a seer deftly with his might. As Von Roth observes, "In a vision the poet sees himself translated into Varuṇa's realm, he goes sailing with the God, is called to be a Ṛṣi or holy singer to the God, and is in his palace with him".⁶

The poet is said to be the true ally of Varuṇa, he is the friend the God loved. The worshipper communes with him in his celestial abode and sometimes sees him with the mental eye. The deity was always kind to and co-operating with his devotee (VII.88.2-6).

In the songs addressed to Uṣas, to Parjanya, and to Soma especially, the poets reveal the true nature of worship which is manifested in their lyrical genius. There they soar high, move our souls and transport us into the divine realms. Everywhere it is warmth and sunshine, a delight in the beauty, an enthusiasm and rapture that fall in the category of mysticism.

Even in the ritual songs, we note that the mighty flames of fire, surrounded by many a human being dressed in lovely attire, come to breathe a heavenly atmosphere. Here is the richness which satisfies the imaginative and sensual visions as well. Just before the dawn the people used to wake up, kindle the sacred fires, engage themselves in the preparation of the Soma juice, singing many an inspired and inspiring song. The whole atmosphere brea-

thed an air of vitality, youthfulness and cheerfulness. Expectation was the main theme that occupied the minds. Slowly the glowing Immortal, the fleeting dancer, Uṣas, sent her rays and lustre to the mortal universe. The poetic spirit thrusts itself into the cavities of the human heart at such times. Here "richness is the supreme imaginative requirement. To the imaginative spirit used to the perspective of dignity and glory the naked gospel scheme seems to offer an alms-house for a palace." This "fire-cult" offers "a rich pasturage and shade to the fancy, and has so many cells with so many different kinds of honey."⁷ It is no longer a ritualistic environment. It is a garden of beauty and of rapture, infused by the poetic spirit. It is the worship of Beauty.

This worship of Beauty always demands the devotee to be a 'Sahṛdaya'. The devotee understands the nature of his deity and longs to be his companion. Hence it is that a poet invokes his deity to "come like the cows coming home from pasture in the evening, like the warrior approaching the horses, like the affectionate cow going to suckle its calf and like the husband moving towards his wife."⁸ The seers took liberties with their deities in the act of prayer and song. Another sings: "If I, Indra, were like thee, the single sovran of all wealth, my worshipper should be rich. O Lord of power, I should be glad to strengthen and enrich the sage, were I lord of herds and cows" (VIII.14.1,2). And another seer observes: "Son of strength, Agni! If thou wert the mortal, bright as Mitra, worshipped with our gifts, and I were the Immortal God, I would not give thee up, Vasu, to calumny or misery, O Bounteous one! My worshipper should feel no hunger or distress, nor, Agni, should he live in sin" (VIII.19.25, 26).

Whether this worship actually took the shape of the Idols or not in the Vedic age, it

⁷ James: *Varieties*, p. 460-461.

⁸ Gāva iva grāmaṁ yūyūthir-ivāśvān
Vāśreva vatsam sumanā duhānā
Patiriva jāyām abhi no'nyetu
Dhartā divas savitā viśvavāraḥ.

⁶ Note in *Siebenzig Lieder*.

is difficult to determine. Pargiter analyses the descriptions of the Maruts and arrives at an affirmative postulate. Of all the deities of R̥gveda, it is only the Maruts that obtain a detailed description of personality. Yet, the statement of Vāmadeva: "who will buy my Indra for ten cows and return him to me later on?" can be construed as referring to Idol worship. But it is too presumptuous to speculate theories on such meagre accounts.

4. It is said in R̥gveda that the number of Gods is 3333 and so on:

"Trīṇi śatā trī sahasrāṇi agnīn trīṣac ca devā" (III.9.9.

We come across Viśvedevas, who comprise all the then known divinities. The invocations to Viśvedevas, and to the dual divinities like Indrāgnī, Indravāyū lead one to conjecture that the Vedic people believed in the plurality of Gods. But it is a view which cannot be postulated, if we bear in mind the way in which Max Müller was led to his doctrine of Kathenotheism. A study of the characteristics of the Gods will enable one at the outset to a belief in the spiritual composition of the universe held by the Vedic seers.

All the Vedic divinities can be classified under three heads. Firstly, we have certain deities who seem to have been Idealized human beings, standing for certain virtues. Under this group we have Indra, Aśvins, R̥bhus, Tvaṣṭar and the like. Indra is of the type of martial consciousness and is too practical a divinity. The Aśvins are great aestheticians and guides of mankind. R̥bhus and Tvaṣṭar are the Ideal Architects.

The second group of deities are the vital principles behind the natural phenomena. They are Uṣas, Maruts, Vāyu, Parjanya, Ādityas, Sūrya, Savitar, Pūṣan, Agni and the like. Uṣas is frequently identified with the dawns. But in R̥gveda, we are often told that Uṣas and Savitar are great awakeners of mankind. This idea is clearly expressed in the celebrated passage:

"Tat Savitur vareṇyam
Bhargo devasya dhīmahi,
Dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt" (III.63.10).

Here it is the instigation of intellect that is spoken of as the supreme gift of Savitar. As it is understood by tradition, Savitar is the inner principle of Sūrya. Pūṣan is only the inner guide and guardian of the animal world. Agni or Fire-God is more religious in character. The epithets that are hurled around this deity reveal the richness of imagination and of the aesthetic atmosphere. Apart from the poetic attitude and the religious approach, Agni has an important part to play. It is said that Agni has spies (IV.4.3). He comprehends the mental workings of all mankind (VIII.39.6). He has the power of discrimination (IV.2.11). He is the eye of R̥ta and the protector of R̥ta.

"Bhuvaś cakṣur maha ṛtasya gopā
Bhuvo varuṇo yadritāy aveṣi"

(X.8.5.)

Passages like these reveal that he is related to Varuṇa. Since Varuṇa is the invisible power, Agni is the visible embodiment of Varuṇa. In a similar way, Agni seems to be the visible incarnation of Bṛhaspati.

The third group of divinities are neither concrete human beings, nor idealized phenomena. Such are Rudra, Viṣṇu, Varuṇa, Bṛhaspati, and the like. Viṣṇu is always associated with the highest heaven where there is Madhn or spiritual wisdom. Rudra is likewise a philosophic deity who reveals the way of obtaining spiritual wisdom. It is said:— "Késī viṣasya patreṇa yadruḍreṇā pibat saha" (X.136). "The Kesins have drunk poison along with Rudra in their search for philosophic knowledge." The poison is nothing but a life of strenuous toil, a life of discipline, which alone is valuable in the advancement of true knowledge. Rudra is said to be an epithet of Agni in the other Samhitās.⁹ Judging from this identification it is better to postulate that Rudra is cosmic fire, whose symbol is Agni. The Maruts are the children of Rudra, and

⁹ See. A. V. 7.88.1; Taitt. Samh. 5. 4. 3. 1; Vāj. Samh. 39.8; Śatap. Brāh 1.7.3.8; 6.1.3.7.10.

they themselves are spoken of as the sparks of fire:

“Śuśukvāno agnayaḥ” (V.87.6)

Coming to the conception of Aditi we find ourselves in a land of speculative mysticism. Aditi signifies freedom from bondage or attachment. She is defined as “Anāgāḥ” in VII.51.1. The poets request her to make them free from sins and liberate them. She is invoked to give light (IV.25.3). She is all-pervasive and is not delivered by any finite quality (I.89.10). She too controls Ṛta. Consistent with such a description, she is also called ‘Uru Vyacā aditiḥ’ (V.46.6), ‘Uru vrajā’, and ‘Urūcī’ (VIII.56.12). Such a deity is not only the source of this creation, but also of the angelic heirarchy:

“Mātā Rudrāṇām duhitā vasūnām
Swasādityānām amritasya nābhiḥ”

(VIII.90.15).

Such an Aditi’s lustre (Jyoti) is said to be ‘Ritivridha’, and hence ‘Avadhya’ (VII.82.10), immortal.

Varuṇa is essentially the god of Ṛta, god conceived as Ethical. As the Iranians called their highest god Ahura Mazda, so did the Vedic Aryans address their Varuna as ‘Asuro mahān’, ‘Asurasya vedhasaḥ’, and so on. The occidental pundits have dubbed this deity as the god of sky, for they are too eager to find out only naturalistic phenomena in Ṛgveda. He is of a fixed resolve, ‘Dhṛtavrata’. As Macdonell observes, he is “the divine ruler in a monotheistic belief of an exalted type.”

EDUCATION WITH AN IDEAL BACKGROUND

BY SWAMI KIRTIDANANDA

It is being generally felt on all hands that the system of education as it obtains today in the country has outlived the purpose for which it was introduced here and requires a re-orientation. There appear to be no two opinions on the question of the need for its replacement by a better and improved system. But as to what that ‘better’ system is which could take its place and in what way the change could be effected, opinions may, and as a matter of fact do, differ. Such diversity of feeling and thought with regard to the problem arises mainly from two considerations. On the one hand it is being realized that the present system is not in conformity with the traditions and age-old aspirations of the country, that it is not very much conducive to the fruition of certain ideals which formed the basis of life and society in ancient days. Ancient India had developed a system of its own based on fundamental principles which were psychological in their origin. During the course of a

long period of trial and experimentation, the system had proved itself to be quite efficacious in developing the full personality of the child as it was conceived to be then. But times have changed and with them the conceptions of goals and ideals have changed. Is that pattern of any use to us now? Even if it is, is it practicable to adopt it in the present circumstances? The answer is quite obvious to anyone that it is not possible in the modern context to bring into being in its entirety the conditions and institutions prevailing then. On the other hand the present system stands outmoded in its methods and approach when viewed in the light of the recent researches made in the field in many of the advanced countries. The whole outlook on what the objects of education should be and how best they may be achieved has undergone a change there. But the traditional, social, financial, and other factors render the introduction of similar types of institutions, as they are, almost

impracticable, and in the final analysis, undesirable too here.

But this difficulty need not deter us from keeping the doors of our minds and hearts open for the experience of others to enter in and enrich us thereby. Questions like those of the 'ancient and the modern', 'east and the west', 'national and foreign' have no relevance here, and they should not arise and blind our vision. Nor should they stand in the way of our benefiting from the different experiments conducted and the advances made, here or elsewhere, now or in the past, in the methods and techniques of teaching and learning. So, when a change is found inevitable, it is necessary to be sure beforehand that it would not be for the worse. It should be the fairest flower springing out of the best experience of not one, but many a wise person, community, race, and country. For, as the scripture says, 'The knowledge that is got from only one source is neither well-established nor complete and full.¹ Just as honey gathered from different flowers is both sweet as well as rich in its content, so is the wisdom of that clever person who has acquired it from various sources, small and great.'² We may go a little further and derive another lesson from the same analogy. It is an interesting fact, worthy of note, that the final form of the honey invariably bears the impress of the particular kind of bee, though it has been collected from a variety of flowers. Even so, it has to be borne in mind, that the change that is thought of should retain its individual and unique character and should be reflective of the genius of the country. This is of the utmost importance, specially in view of the fact that there is a large body of students going abroad for higher training in different fields and there is also an equally good number coming to this country from far-off countries.

But this coming into intimate contact

¹Na hi ekasmāt guror-jñānam susthiram syāt supuṣkalam. *Bhāgavatam* XI. ix. 31.

²Aṇubhyaśca mahadbhyaśca śāstrebyaḥ kuśalō naraḥ, Sarvataḥ sāram-ādadyāt puṣpebhya iva ṣat-padaḥ. *Ibid* XI. viii. 10.

of students from different parts of the world would be of real benefit only if they represent in themselves the highest and noblest ideals that have stirred the depths of their people and nation all along the centuries into great and worthy acts. They must be imbued with the spirit that earned for them a distinguished place among the comity of nations. Then alone will there be a free flow of thought, the *sine qua non* for the growth of true knowledge and wisdom which could conduce to the betterment of all. Otherwise it would only result in one side being always the giver and the other always the receiver, irrespective of the nature of the thing received,—a result not very happy to be wished for. Any new scheme, if it is to be an improvement on the old, has to blend in itself the best elements in other countries and systems without being indifferent or negligent to what is best in one's own.

In ancient India, all knowledge to which a human being has access was considered to be of two grades,—the Higher (*Parā*) and the Lower (*Aparā*, literally 'not the Higher'). Under the latter group came those branches of knowledge which are found ordinarily useful and necessary to carry on the day-to-day affairs of the world,—those that are helpful, as it is often said, for a 'successful living' in this world. Thus the various physical and mental sciences, engineering, medicine, psychology, art, literature, music, political and economic sciences, and even the mere intellectual understanding and erudition in scriptures,—in short, all that could be acquired by the use of our physical, mental, and intellectual faculties was said to belong to this category. The other was something which transcended the restricted sphere of the mind and the intellect, yet by that very transcendence brought about the integration of the different and often conflicting aspects of the personality into a Balanced and Comprehensive Whole. On the surface, the distinctive definitions of these two types of knowledge present before us mutually contradictory and opposed pictures. There is, as it were, a wide gulf between them. And the foremost function

of education was conceived as the bridging of this gulf. One of the main objectives of education was the removal of those factors which make for the 'Lower Knowledge' to be looked upon as 'lower' and 'inferior'. The task of education ended not with the imparting of knowledge in the branches connoted by this term. It comprised also the duty of helping the students to see in them a wider range of usefulness than they are normally able to do. The emphasis was always on freeing the field of applicability of this 'Lower Knowledge' from its limitations and extending the bounds of its utility to vaster and vaster areas until at last it could be turned into a veritable means for the expansion into the 'Higher Knowledge'. The attention of the students was constantly drawn to this larger aspect of their education. And educational institutions were so constituted as to provide suitable opportunities as well as ways and means to achieve this objective.

A similar attempt at widening the scope of education in our own days would be worth one's examination. For the origin of many of the problems facing students nowadays may be traced to the scant attention paid to this all-important feature of education. Until and unless this fact is fully recognized and appropriate measures are taken to remedy it, the responses of the students to the environmental influences cannot be but what they are now. The cause of much of the unrest and unfavourable reactions in their conduct will be found in the lack of a proper and sufficiently high ideal which could act as a guiding force for their youthful energy. Political or economic ideals such as nationalism, patriotism or the vision of a glorious and prosperous motherland or race or community, are no doubt very powerful incentives for whipping up the enthusiasm and zeal of a people. But in the long run they promote narrow, parochial interests. As such they provide but poor channels for the smooth movement of the energies that are released. When stressed beyond a point, they lead to many untoward results difficult to check at a later

stage. So great care has to be taken to see that the ideal is the most satisfying before the passions of the young minds are aroused in the direction of its fulfilment. The ideal must be one which, either during the process of achieving it or when actually achieved, will not open up wrong tracks for the passions to take, thus frittering away the energies in useless and very often harmful pursuits. Purely objective ideals that do not aim at the inner transformation of the individual himself are all deficient in this respect. That ideal alone which is capable of uplifting and ennobling the inner nature of man can bring about universal good. Religion in its highest and purest forms offers us the required ideal.

Pointing out the ideal is not to overlook or deny the practical difficulties in the way of the students taking easily to it. They are many and real. Mention, for example, may be made of the question of unemployment. The completion of education at the universities and schools ushers the students into a world which, they find to their surprise, is not after all what their 'various informants' have led them to picture. A fortunate few, whom kind nature has placed in favoured circumstances or positions of influence, or who are endowed with special ability and intelligence, may find their course of life running smooth and easy. But for the rest of them it is merely a question of: What next? The immediate problem to be faced is that of finding a suitable job, and how best the education could be made to meet that end. In the vast majority of cases there is very little correspondence between the jobs that are entered into and the knowledge that one has struggled hard to acquire for many years. Practically the individual has to begin everything afresh. The disparity between the two renders his knowledge unfit even for that minimum of objects which the education is supposed to bring. Unless this is satisfied, it is futile to expect the boys to divert their energies for higher purposes. Therefore the training given to the students must be such as will make them fit and efficient to undertake services in as many fields as possible.

It speaks very badly of a system of education if it does not equip and help students to earn a decent means of livelihood. But it is a poor system if it does only that much and no further. The education that a student receives must also create in him a desire, willingness, and capacity for hard work. In the larger interests of the country also, it is not very desirable that the people should be unduly crazy after employments which would reward them with a life of ease and comfort. What is really required is the imparting of the right sort of training which would give the student the courage and strength to strive, even against heavy odds, for his own improvement as well as that of others. For a student just out of his educational career, the battle of life has yet to begin. The problems of life he has to meet and face are many and varied. The real test of a good system of education should be: How far does it enable him to face them with courage and determination, forethought and discrimination?

A satisfactory answer to this test involves the finding of ways for developing in the young students a spirit of independence, not in the sense of freedom to do whatever they like or behave as their whims and fancies bid them to do. Such unrestrained freedom is no freedom at all; its effects are definitely injurious. Independence can be defined as 'self-dependence'. The real spirit of independence is best attained when there is an awakening in the hearts of students, of a feeling of pride and dignity in being able to stand on their own feet, and a confidence in their own ability to do so. Of course, in a society there is nothing like complete independence. Social life always presupposes an amount of mutual help and dependence. So along with the rousing of 'self-confidence' they have to be made conscious of their obligations to others in society.

With this end in view the students in ancient India were prevailed upon to live, away from the parents, in the house of the teacher and beg their food from different houses. From the day the child was entrusted to the care of his teacher, the whole responsi-

bility of bringing him up was that of the teacher and the parents had, if at all, very little to do or say—either financially or otherwise—in the matter of the boy's growth and education. As the boy's education began when he was quite young, from that early stage onwards, he was free from the feeling of helpless dependence on the parents for the sake of his material needs. The duty of begging for his food prevented him from being a source of burden on the teacher either. On the other hand he was in fact helping in the maintenance of the institution itself, though perhaps indirectly. For, the gifts he got by begging were not personal ones made to the individual as such and he was not to consider them in that light. It was more in the nature of an arrangement by which he could prosecute his studies without any let or hindrance. It was the self-imposed duty of every member of the society to make his contribution to the general cause. And everyone did it, willingly and with much pleasure. The student had to look upon whatever he received as an offering to the teacher and the institution. He could take out of it for personal use only that which the teacher permitted him in his own interests. The rest was shared by the other members of the institution or used in any other fashion the teacher thought fit. So also the various other acts of service,—tending the cattle, taking care of the fields, supplying different articles like fuel etc. required for the religious and other needs of the household—all were enjoined on him with a similar intention. Though primarily meant for disciplining the inner and outer life of the student, they were also part of a device by which he was induced to participate directly in the running of the institution. They brought him closer to the institution and the system which educated him. Dropping off the aloofness that would have kept him apart as a separate entity, he became a part and parcel of the institution. The obligation to avoid collecting his alms from a single house took away the little chance there would have been for the expression of the natural human tendency to lean on any generous householder

for the sake of ease and comfort. Thus his relations with everybody were maintained on an impersonal level. With no personal attachments to anybody he could yet easily realize and feel his obligations ('debts' as the scriptures call them) to all those who had been responsible for his being what he was. He knew the share of each,—the parents, the teacher, and the society—in his upbringing. He felt automatically his duty towards them and set about discharging it of his own accord.

As a mark of respect for all that the teacher and the institution had done to him, it was usual for the student of those days to offer some honorarium to the teacher before his final departure after the completion of education. This honorarium was obtained by his own voluntary efforts. Here was an occasion for him to put to the test his own capacity for personal striving in future life, whether for meeting the ordinary demands of the body and the flesh or the higher pursuits of the mind and the spirit. This act of pure love and self-sacrifice, as earlier his going round the village or town for his begging, brought him into direct contact with the world that would be his in a few days and into which he would be entering as a full and active member. This contact gave him the practical, experiential knowledge of the nature and the ways of the people, the surroundings, and the society amidst which he would have to live. Thus he could feel the ground under his own feet before deciding where and how he could fit himself in smoothly for the benefit of himself as also others.

We may find in the modern practice of 'earning while learning' a parallel,—though a distant one—to this feature of the ancient system which laid emphasis on 'training in self-dependence'. Making use of the spare hours and vacation time to do odd jobs, so that they may pay their own way, in part at least, for their education is very popular amongst the student population in countries of the west. Even those coming from rich and well-to-do families are said to take delight in such an enterprise. It is a matter of pride and joy for them that they could manage without having to draw, in how-

soever small a measure, on the resources of others.

This is indeed very commendable inasmuch as it inculcates in them the value of self-effort, a passion for hard work, and the capacity for dependence on oneself. But the very expression 'earning while learning', not to speak of the indiscriminate adoption of it as a regular 'motto' or 'career' of their life, more often than not leads to their surrounding the 'act of earning' with a halo of glory quite uncalled for. This fondness for lucrative professions would naturally result in the neglect of all other values but the purely materialistic. There is also the possibility of their becoming over-conscious of their own personal endeavour. In that case they are not likely to understand or appreciate the nature and extent of the contribution of others in their growth and development.

These consequences could be obviated by the substitution of this practice by a planned programme of work, akin to it, but organized by the educational institutions themselves in accordance with the needs, capacities, and temperaments of the particular students and allied to the subjects of their study. Thus the disciplinary nature of the work 'entrusted' to their care could be brought home to them. A student of insufficient means but otherwise qualified would not have to forgo his education simply because he cannot afford it financially. He could work and prosecute his studies along with boys of better means on an equal footing without any feeling of inferiority. The scheme could be arranged so that it interferes the least with the main course of the studies. Rather it could be made as educative as any of the other extra-curricular activities.

Complete success in any undertaking is always commensurate with the 'joy and pleasure' accompanying it. They alone bring forth the maximum amount of energy to bear upon the task at hand. A recently sponsored proposal is to make the conferring of degrees or diplomas conditional to the offering of free services for a certain period after the completion of the course. Welcome though it may be in a way

yet it points to one of the shortcomings in the system that advocates it. The element of compulsion that is obviously involved in it takes away the real spirit that should be characteristic of such service. Thus it defeats the very purpose for which it is introduced. This is in striking contrast to the voluntary nature of the honorarium paid to the teacher by the students in ancient days, sometimes even against the wishes of the teacher. The feeling that one is being compelled to do something psychologically sets up an opposite reaction in the form of unwillingness to work and dampens the zest for it. An amount of compulsion may be unavoidable in the earlier stages if there should be proper growth. But as the students grow up the enforcement must come from within themselves. Creation of a 'lively interest' in whatever they are expected to do, removes the need for the use of any external force. The real teacher would not rest contented unless he has discharged this portion of his responsibility. Mere transference of knowledge from the teacher is not enough. It would not avail much if the receiving ground is not well-prepared. The student must have the thirst for it and must be ready to undergo the necessary trouble to acquire it. Otherwise examinations and employment, as the immediate and ultimate objectives, would be the only incentives for study and action. When success in the former is achieved the inclination and desire for the latter automatically wane if they do not altogether disappear. With such a limited aspiration in view the student ordinarily prefers the easy path of depending entirely on the teacher and the text-books for its fulfilment. Less troublesome though it may be, such an attitude stunts the growth of

the full personality. It dries up all springs of originality and independent thinking.

At the present moment the need for creative learning and originality of thought and action is felt at a very late stage in the life of the student, at the higher levels of education only. There too, it is confined to a very few research students who happen to be interested in their special subjects of study. But the rest of them who are in a majority just go through the course in a mechanical way. Herein lies the primary task of education. Our schools and colleges have to be saved from being mere factories for 'making man a machine'. We have to remind ourselves over and over again that 'It is more blessed even to go wrong impelled by one's free will and intelligence than to be good as an automaton.'³ From the early stage of their life, it has to be instilled into the hearts and minds of our boys and girls that education does not mean 'only passing some examinations'. Nor is that education 'worth its name' 'which does not help one to equip oneself for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion.'⁴ 'The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful'³ alone deserves to be called education in the fullest and truest sense of the term. And 'Religion is the innermost core' of all such training, 'religion that would enable one to develop along one's own line of least resistance, and not (just) anyone's opinion about it.'⁵

³ *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*
IV. 423.

⁴ *Ibid* VII. 146.

⁵ *Ibid* V. 161.

SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS OF ASTROLOGY

BY DR. SAMPURNANAND

I

While thanking you cordially for permitting me to speak this evening on a subject so dear to my heart, I also wish to take the rather unusual step of conveying to you my sincere congratulations. In arranging this lecture, you have given expression to that spirit of fairness and tolerance which should animate every seeker after truth and the scientist is, par excellence, a seeker after truth. You are not committing yourself to anything by hearing me. While it may be a sound dictum to begin by doubting everything, it follows as a corollary that you should hear everything. To condemn anything without listening to what its exponents have to say for it is to give evidence of a closed mind which is incapable of expansion and reception of the truth, and which functions within a prejudiced framework. Astrology has received recognition from some of the greatest intellects in the past and continues to enjoy that position even today. It would merely betray a littleness of mind to brush it aside as superstition.

It is amusing and, at the same time, pathetic to see those who are the loudest in their denunciation of astrology, asking how it can be scientifically true. They want to know how the stars can influence human destiny. They desire to understand the theoretical foundations of the science. The desire to reduce empirical material to a system of laws is natural and legitimate, but there are certain preceding conditions which must be recognized. If things like apples, stones and human bodies, not to speak of planets, suns and galaxies, did not possess the tendency to fall, to use a rather unscientific but certainly expressive term, there would be no point in discussing the law of gravitation. In fact, nobody would have thought

of such a law if such falls had not been noticed. If certain phenomena do not exist at all, why bother to discuss their rationale? The search for an explanation of astrological phenomena can come only after the existence of such phenomena has first been admitted; otherwise the labour spent on such a task would be more worthless than the labour lost in a wild hunt after the proverbial will-o'-the-wisp. Any number of hypothetical phenomena can be thought up but, I am sure, no serious scientist would devote his time and energy to trying to explain them. I must, therefore, to begin with, state categorically that those who do not accept the truth of what the astrologer designates as facts have no right to ask him to explain them in scientific terms. I shall proceed this evening on the assumption that those who are here have had some experiences which incline them to accept the factual claims of astrologers. They have probably come across confirmations of astrological predictions which cannot be explained away as mere coincidences. Calling every unusual or unpalatable event an accident or a coincidence is unworthy of a man of science; it is as unhelpful in a study of reality as that credulity which is prepared to accept everything as indubitable fact. If there is anyone here who has never had such an experience, I am afraid, my words will have no meaning for him. I would suggest to him to go to some astrologer, professional or amateur, get his predictions and see if they turn out to be true. As a man of science he will, I am sure, give enough trials before feeling himself on strong enough ground to denounce the whole thing.

Before I start let me make it clear that astrology is hardly a correct name. This

science has very little to do with the stars. Not that the latter can be ignored; what I am saying is that they do not come directly into the picture. The astrologer studies the movements of the planets. The Earth is a planet, of course, and its movements should be studied along with those of the other planets. But it is clear that the apparent movement of the Sun relative to the Earth will be an index to the real movement of the Earth relative to the Sun. Astrologers down the ages have found it convenient to study the movements of the Sun even while admitting the truth of the heliocentric theory of the solar system in the form in which it is accepted today. This form, as you know, is not that the Earth moves round the Sun but that the Earth and the Sun are like two balls moving round their common centre of gravity which, because of the greater mass of the Sun, lies within the body of the latter. It is for this reason that the Earth seems to move round the Sun. For this reason and for the sake of convenience the Sun is included among the planets, the *grahas*, as we call them in Hindu astrology. When the layman or even the professional astrologer speaks of the stars influencing human destiny, he is, in actual fact, referring to the planets. The stars find a place in this canvas in this way that the motion of a planet in its orbit round the Sun is always defined by its position at a particular moment against the background of the stars. When, for instance, we speak of the Sun being in *Simha Rāsi* (*Leo*) we mean that it is in that part of the sky which has, as its background, that group of stars which make up the constellation *Leo*.

The Moon, it may also be noted, is counted among the planets although it is, speaking astronomically, a satellite of the Earth, i. e., one of the two members of the Earth-Moon axis.

Besides the planets which are normally visible to the naked eye, there are Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. There may be one or more planets beyond Pluto just as some people think that there is a planet between the Sun and Mercury. It has even received a name,—

Vulcan. There is also the large asteroid belt between Jupiter and Saturn. These bodies, the asteroids cumulatively acting, more or less, like a single planet, are also bound to have the same relation, whatever it may be, to human affairs as the visible planets. Hindu astronomy, so far, takes no note of them, but astrologers in the West have begun to make a study of their behaviour. It is too early yet to be sure about the results of such a study. These planets take very long periods of time to complete a single revolution round the Sun. The asteroidal year is shorter than that of Saturn but they are such small bodies that it is difficult to study their effects and, in any case, if they have any effect at all, it must be comparatively negligible. It is necessary, however, in India also to prepare *Janmapatris*, nativities, including the position of the extra Saturnine planets and study the results.

Our *Janmapatris* also include *Rāhu* and *Ketu* among the planets. We should remember that these are not material bodies at all but *geometrical points*. They are the nodes or points of intersection of the planes of the Earth's orbit round the Sun and the Moon's orbit round the Earth. Because of well-known and simple astronomical facts these points change their position and seem to move among the zodiacal signs, the twelve *Rāsis*, there being always a difference of six *Rāsis* or 180° between them. They are indicative of the relative positions of the Sun, the Earth, and the Moon, and are useful in calculating eclipses. Without expressing any opinion about the truth or otherwise of the Paurānic story about the manner in which a single *Asura* got cut up into two parts, headless trunk and a trunkless head called *Ketu* and *Rāhu* respectively, it may be stated that *our astronomers* had never any doubt about the *actual cause of eclipses*. *Their theory was exactly the same as is held today*.

This, I believe, is a necessary preliminary to an examination of whatever scientific basis Astrology may have. The astrologer has before him the *Janmapatri* and proceeds to read the *Phaladeś*, the predictions, as one

may call them, as revealed by it. The *Janmapatri*, as we see, is merely a map of the solar system at the time of birth. By itself the map is rather incomplete. It gives, for instance, the information that at the time of birth a particular planet, say, Mars, was in *Kanyā Rāsi* (*Virgo*) but it does not tell at what exact point, how many degrees, minutes and seconds from the first point of *Virgo*, the planet actually was. This information is given by the other tables which accompany a really well prepared *Janmapatri*. If this information is not supplied, the exact time, date, and place must be indicated, so that the conscientious astrologer may work out all those details for himself. If this is not done, the *Phalades* will be very vague in nature, assuming that Astrology in itself is an accurate science.

Before coming to my subject proper, I might incidentally stress the great importance of a sturdy commonsense and an all-round wide-awakeness in the make-up of an astrologer. Many examples of this could be given. A dog and a human being could have happened to be born in exactly the same conditions and the cast of their nativity would presumably be the same. No adherence to a mere rule of thumb can possibly help the astrologer in such a case. I do not know if it is possible to tell a man's horoscope from that of an animal, but it is only commonsense that can help the astrologer in making sensible predictions. I do not know how many people here have read Louis de Wohl's interesting book *The Stars of War and Peace*. As you might be aware, Louis de Wohl was the unofficial Astrologer of the British Government during the Second World War. Astrology not being an *officially recognized department of the Government*, he was put in charge of what was called the 'Psychological Research Bureau' and was *attached to the War Office with the rank of Captain*. In the first place,

he was appointed merely to *inform the British Government of the predictions which Hitler's astrologers would probably be making, and thus to forestall Hitler's military movements*. In this work he was *eminently successful*. A large number of Hitler's movements were *anticipated and checkmated*.* As an example of the use of commonsense may be mentioned the following:

Shortly before the battle of El Alamein, De Wohl was given two birth data without the hour and the place and asked if he could tell which of the two men to whom they related would win. Obviously, it was not possible to prepare complete horoscopes from the insufficient data supplied, but certain rough and ready tables were prepared from which he came to the conclusion that the man born on the 17th of November would win. He also said that this man must be an Englishman. This latter deduction was made in this way. De Wohl knew that the horoscopes of the King of England and of Mr. Churchill all showed very good aspects in a short time; while the corresponding prospects were gloomy for Hitler. He, therefore, guessed that the winning man must be an Englishman. He was right. This man was General Montgomery. But there is one curious part of this story. While the data revealed that Montgomery would win, they also revealed that the other man, whoever he was, would not lose. This was surprising and no one could explain this remarkable prediction. The explanation came after the battle. This person, by the way, was the German General Rommel. Hitler's astrologers had also predicted that the British General would win. Therefore, to save Rommel from disgrace, Hitler recalled him to Germany two or three days before the actual battle. Thus, while Montgomery won, Rommel was not defeated.

(To be continued)

* Italics ours. Editor

PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION

BY MR. SHAMSUDDIN

Philosophy means love of knowledge or wisdom. A person who is always in quest of new knowledge and is never satisfied with what he has gained in learning is called a philosopher. Love of knowledge is nothing but the search for eternal truth, hence philosophy is also associated with the craving for truth. The scope of philosophy is very wide. Answers to the queries, 'What is life?', 'What is man?', 'What is the final goal of life?' etc. are all included in the wide range of different philosophies of life.

Philosophy or wisdom has its origin in different sources, and accordingly it assumes different names. For example, wisdom originated from human senses is named as natural philosophy, wisdom acquired from human rationality is called idealistic philosophy and so on. Philosophy not only satisfies human intellect by providing answers to its different queries, but also co-ordinates all knowledge formulating some fundamental principles of life. Those principles are applied and practised in human life. Thus philosophy also concerns the rules of human conduct, and suggests a particular way of life for human beings.

Education is nothing but influencing others with one's own views and principles of life. Every person has certain beliefs and when he wants that others should also act according to his beliefs, he imparts them education. Thus education is also a part of philosophy. It leads to the growth of human intellect by natural development. It takes its seeds from the past and sows them in the soil of the present to get the fruits in future. Thus the traditions of past culture in arts, sciences and literature are preserved and developed for future by means of education.

As education is related to life and life is a particular way or philosophy, both the terms, education and philosophy, are closely interre-

lated. There are ties of relationships of society, culture and religions between the two.

Education tends to improve the natural tendencies of human life. Now the question arises: In which direction and on what lines should this improvement be made? In other words, what should be the standard of education? Great educationists and philosophers of all ages have given answers to these questions. Aims of education are determined according to the ideals of life of the people of any time. Therefore as the ideals of life go on changing, the aims of education also change from time to time. Socrates believed that universal justice can be sought only by the pursuit of truth. Plato believed in preparing just citizens so as to create a just State. Aristotle believed in the attainment of virtues. With the start of the machine age, the aims of education and ideals of life became more and more materialistic. But even then persons like Mahatma Gandhi came forward and taught and preached the ideals of truth and non-violence, proving the supremacy of the spiritual force over the material. The tendency of the modern scientific age to ignore spiritualism and lay more emphasis on materialism would have resulted in the production of an impracticable, irrational and speculative kind of education. But in fact, "Education is a sustaining, progressive and purposive endeavour and these forces arise from moral values, which can be supplied by philosophy."

Our foremost endeavour should be to fathom the activities of man. Not only this, but to arrange them according to their importance in human life. These are the things which can be tackled by philosophy only. As Bode says, "Unless we have some guiding philosophy in the determination of objectives we get nowhere at all." The questions naturally

creep in: "What should be the place of imagination? What should be included in it?" and so on. All these questions can be solved by philosophy. When the curriculum is to be drawn out, it involves comprehensive philosophy in order to give full satisfaction to others and to implement it properly. Philosophy with a right ideology shows clearly that work can be harmonized and that man should get satisfaction in his labour. Thus it is obvious that the proper curricula and text books should be adopted to acquire the highest spiritual values. In the solution of all this, the question of philosophy comes in.

The methods of education too involve philosophy. Method forms the link between the pupil and the subject matter. Teachers avoiding philosophy fail to make their endeavours effective. The great educationists, Rousseau and Froebel, think that the child is good. Montessori pays more attention to environment. The modern educationists take pains to pre-

pare the atmosphere. But the basis of all these is philosophy.

As regards discipline, it too involves philosophy, which may be either of an individual or of a group. Naturalistic metaphysics creates discipline by natural consequences. Idealistic philosophy brought freedom in education. Harsh discipline was the result of political monarchies and today the Democratic ideal has created non-coercive and persuasive education.

From the above discussion it is evident that philosophy is the most essential factor for education. In other words education, life and philosophy are so closely linked that they cannot be separated. In this short span of life we find the problems of life too complicated. To be out of these, we must be guided by some sound principle, and that is created with the help of philosophy only. In brief, education and philosophy are "the two sides of a coin"; "philosophy is 'the contemplative side while education is the dynamic side.'"

THE BLESSED ONE

BY BRAHMACHARI MATRI CHAITANYA

Among the priceless treasures that have been discovered at Ajanta there is none more fascinating than that which adorns Cave Number One. To the left of the main shrine stands a young prince of gigantic proportions, wearing a tall crown, lotus in hand, his whole body and bearing bathed in an expression of great compassion, gazing at the world before him. On his left is his wife—young and beautiful—curving slightly the opposite way with an expression of tenderness and sympathy.

Buddha and Yashodharā. Evidently it is not the ascetic but the prince 'in that hour when the thought of the great abandonment first comes to him, Buddha on the threshold

of renunciation, suddenly realizing and pondering on the terrible futility of the life of man'. Yashodharā, the great wife of a great husband, seems to feel instinctively the deep stirrings of Siddhārtha's mind. The Yashodharā here is not only the wife who is loved and protected by Siddhārtha but also the goddess who inspires and protects him. She always had her place in the life of Buddha.

* * *

It is probably spring and there is great excitement in Kapilavastu, the capital; for the young prince is going to bestow costly and beautiful gifts to the noble ladies of the land: the King's plan to find out secretly some one

who might awaken the prince's love. Try as he might, the prediction of the royal astrologers that Siddhārtha would renounce the world always haunted the unhappy father. The procession of princesses borne on golden litters was long and cheerful. Gaily dressed, the citizens with their wives and children stood in streets and shouted and greeted as the litters passed by. And as the procession reached the gates of the palace, each princess, reclining softly in her glittering palanquin and weaving tender dreams, thought herself victor of the day; for though unannounced, everyone knew that this was King Shuddhodana's plot to make his son select a princess he liked.

With fluttering hearts the princesses came into Siddhārtha's presence; and after receiving the royal gifts they humbly bowed to the prince and hopefully returned to their appointed seats. When thus all the gifts had been bestowed, there came young Yashodharā, daughter of minister Mahānāma. She was exceedingly beautiful and it is said that the prince who sat all through the ceremony unmoved was thrilled at the sight of her. 'Is there no gift left for me?' she asked with a smile, looking straight into the eyes of the prince. Siddhārtha pinked slightly, smiled, removed his costly signet-ring (some say it was a necklace) and put it on her finger. Watchful eyes informed the King of the glances exchanged and he sent for the minister to ask his daughter's hand for the prince.

Mahānāma of course readily agreed to the proposal but it was the custom among the Shākyas that young nobles had to prove themselves worthy in martial exercises before they could court and marry the fairest princesses. These included riding, fencing, even wrestling and naturally the King had his misgivings as to the outcome of these contests; for the prince was young and delicate. However, Siddhārtha emerged victor in all these and won the hand of Yashodharā. They were married with great pomp and splendour and lived in a beautiful palace specially built for them, carefully guarded from the outside world of sorrow and suffering. Day and night Siddhārtha was sur-

rounded by the most beautiful damsels who exhausted all their arts in keeping him gay and happy.

For a time Siddhārtha was happy in the company of his young wife and forgot everything else. But a time comes in the life of everyone satiated with sensual pleasures when he will begin to tire of them. It seems probable that Siddhārtha would have reflected on the fleeting nature of all pleasures and of life itself even if he had never come across the tottering old man, the sick man, the corpse, and the serene monk. For Siddhārtha was unusually intelligent and the other side of the medal could not have escaped him for long. As things happened they only speeded up the growth of the seed of renunciation lying dormant, ever ready to sprout forth at the first approach of a tear.

Thus it came to pass that one day during the month of Chaitra, when the night was well advanced, prince Siddhārtha bid farewell to his sleeping wife and son Rāhula and passed the gates of his palace. It must have been a cool night filled with the intoxicating fragrance of flowers, with the moon and stars shedding secret light on his path, and the nightingales singing softly in the thicket, when Siddhārtha stepped into the wide world with a heart full of compassion for the miserable and the unhappy, — determined to discover the cause of suffering and unhappiness, disease and death, and if possible the remedy.

He rode on his horse Kantaka followed by his faithful charioteer Channa along long and tortuous paths till the palace was far behind. He then dismounted from Kantaka for the last time and requested Channa to take the horse back. Channa tried his best to dissuade his master; and when he could not, he humbly kissed the prince's feet and faithful Kantaka licked them with his tongue, and they departed.

Siddhārtha wandered from place to place, meeting learned Brahmins and questioning them. But finding the futility of all vain disputations to solve the seemingly eternal riddles of life, he left them and went to a village near Gaya to live the life of a terrible ascetic.

There are few incidents in the life of Buddha more tender than that of Sujātā who came through the trees like a goddess carrying in a golden bowl 'a dish of the greatest purity and delicacy' which she offered him in the hour of his greatest need. The devotion and gentleness of Sujātā the protectress is typical of all that is good and noble in Indian womanhood. Her simplicity and sweetness so touched the heart of Siddhārtha that he accepted her offering and blessed her. Is it possible, one wonders, that Buddha was persuaded to allow ladies into his monastic Order, unprecedented in the annals of India, because of Sujātā?

Nevertheless he soon found out that austerity and self-torture do not lead one to enlightenment. So abandoning these he adopted the golden mean, the Middle Path. In his first sermon at Sarnath near holy Banaras he declared to the company of Five Brethren:

'These two extremes, brethren, should not be followed by one who has gone forth as a wanderer:

Devotion to the pleasures of senses—a low and pagan practice, unworthy, unprofitable, the way of the world (on the one hand), and on the other hand devotion to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, unprofitable.

By avoiding these two extremes He who hath won the Truth (the Buddha) has gained knowledge of the *Middle Path* which giveth Vision, which giveth knowledge, which causeth Calm, Insight, Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.'

On the full-moon day in the month of Vaiśākh (By a strange coincidence he was born on this day about 623 B.C. and on the same day about 543 B.C. he passed away) he entered into a deep trance or Samādhi and remained immersed in it till dawn. When he came to he was no more Siddhārtha but the embodiment of absolute wisdom, the Buddha.

II

Before we venture to understand the main teachings of the Buddha we must have a hurried glance at the background against which he lived and preached. Buddha was born a Hindu, was brought up a Hindu, was steeped in Hindu lore, culture, and traditions, and

finally died a Hindu. Naturally most of the fundamental tenets of Hinduism he accepted apparently without questioning but it is likely that he must have found them very reasonable. He thus took for granted the theory of rebirth—the theory which propounds that every being in the universe passes through the wheel of countless births and deaths. He believed in the doctrine of Karma which is the law of cause and effect: virtue is rewarded and wickedness has its own retribution; good produces good, bad bad. He also believed that the world is full of pain and misery and that the truly intelligent and wise tried to cross it on the raft of renunciation. There is nothing in all this that is new or original. But what is truly novel about the Buddha is that after practising terrible austerities and self-mortification he came to know that the highest enlightenment would not result from them. He preached later that one who desires to tread the path to Nirvāna or the Highest has to steer clear of self-indulgence and self-torture. 'I call to mind,' said Buddha reminiscently, 'how when the Sakyan my father was ploughing I sat in the cool shade of the rose-apple tree, remote from sensual desires and ill conditions, and entered upon and abode in the First Musing, that is accompanied by thought directed and sustained, which is born of solitude, full of zestful ease.' And feeling instinctively that such must be the way to wisdom he abandoned all meaningless and absurd penances and began to take some substantial food. It is interesting to note that the five brethren attending him during this period got disgusted at his gluttony and parted company. They thought that Siddhārtha, unable to proceed further, had turned back to a comfortable existence. And it is to them that he preached his significant first sermon at Sarnath after his attainment of Nirvāna.

Buddha, like Socrates and Jesus after him, never wrote down anything. He was content to imprint his profound personality on the sensitive minds of his disciples and admirers. And it is from what they have handed down orally and in script that we get some

idea of his teachings. The oldest genuine documents are the *Pitakas* prepared for the Buddhist Council held in 241 B.C. Finally they were written down in Pali script by about 80 B.C. The *Sutta-Pitaka* consisting of the dialogues of Buddha has been ranked by Rhys Davids alongside of Plato's immortal *Dialogues*.

The essence of the teachings of the Buddha known as the Four Noble Truths or the Middle Path is startlingly simple. The Four Noble Truths are (i) the Truth about Suffering, (ii) the Truth about the Cause of Suffering, (iii) the Truth about the Cure of Suffering and (iv) the Truth about the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

What is the Truth about Suffering? Buddha preached that birth is suffering, decay is suffering, sickness, death is suffering, likewise sorrow, grief, lamentations—these are suffering. To be united with things we dislike and to be disjoined with those we like is also suffering. In short this Body without which these are impossible, and which is based on the principle of Grasping, is Suffering.

The Cause of Suffering is Tanha meaning Thirst or Craving or Greed. Craving for sensation, craving for lust, craving to be reborn or craving to do away with rebirth,—Craving is the Cause of Suffering.

The third Noble Truth is the truth about the Cure of Suffering. It lies in the complete cessation and release from this Craving or Tanha.

And the last Noble Truth is the Way leading one out of Suffering. This is the Middle Path which is also called the Eightfold Path because it consists of right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right contemplation. Practising this Middle Path with earnestness and sincerity leads the aspirant to the goal of man—Nirvāna or Enlightenment. Nirvāna is a state when we are absolutely free from any pain or misery, a state in the depths of which we are permeated and saturated with the peace that passeth all understanding.

Now what is right view? It is the knowledge about Ill, the arising of Ill, the ceasing of Ill, the way leading to the ceasing of Ill. Renunciation, non-resentment, harmlessness—these constitute right aim. And what is right speech? Abstinence from lying, backbiting, and abusive speech, and from idle babble. Similarly right action is non-killing, non-stealing, abstaining from wrong-doing in sexual passions. And right living? By giving up wrong living, getting his livelihood by right living is verily right living. Then we come to right effort. Herein

'a brother generates the will to inhibit the arising of evil immoral conditions that have not arisen; he makes an effort, he sets energy afoot, he applies his mind and struggles. Likewise to reject evil immoral conditions that have already arisen. Likewise to cause the arising of good conditions that have not yet arisen. Likewise he does the same to establish, to prevent the corruption, to cause the increase, the practice, the fulfilment of good conditions that have already arisen.'

And in right mindfulness one thinks of the body as a compounded thing, one dwells ardent, self-controlled, recollected, by controlling the greed and dejection that are visible in this world. So also with regard to Feelings, with regard to Perception, with regard to the Actions, with regard to Thought.

Lastly we come to right contemplation.

'Herein, brethren, a brother remote from sensual appetites, remote from evil conditions, enters upon and abides in the First Musing, which is accompanied by directed thought (on an object). It is born of solitude, full of zest and happiness.

'Then, by the sinking down of thought directed and sustained, he enters on and abides in the Second Musing, which is an inner calming, a raising up of the will. In it there is no directed thought, no sustained thought. It is born of contemplation, full of zest and happiness.

'Then again, brethren, by the fading away of the zest, he becomes balanced (indifferent) and remains mindful and self-possessed, and while still in the body he experiences the happiness of which the Ariyans aver, "the balanced thoughtful man dwells happily." Thus he enters on the Third Musing and abides therein.

'Then again, brethren, rejecting pleasure and pain, by the coming to an end of the joy and sorrow which he had before, he enters on and remains in the Fourth Musing, which is free from pain and

free from pleasure, but is a state of perfect purity of balance and equanimity. This is called right contemplation. This, brethren, is called the Ariyan truth of the Way leading to the Ceasing of Woe.' (*Digha Nikaya*, Woodward's translation).

Before concluding, it is worth while to see whether the teachings of the Buddha are a negative doctrine as supposed by some people or not. Nirvāṇa has been interpreted to mean nothingness, emptiness, void. The disciplines are more or less a pattern of prohibitions. Men are not to do this, not to do that. Though some of his teachings like non-killing, non-stealing, giving up of the world for the sake of Nirvāṇa etc. are no doubt to some extent negative, still it is clear that the Buddha could not have touched the heart of humanity down the centuries through a negativistic philosophy of life. Then again, Buddha did not talk about God or Soul. That, some say, was precisely because the Buddha did not believe in them. Nothing could be further from truth than these false allegations. He, we just said, could not have made the impress he did on his contemporaries and on succeeding generations with a negativistic doctrine. There must have been something shining, something pure, something positive about Buddha and his teachings. His love and sympathy, his compassion and sacrifice, his contagious calm and serenity, and the utter white purity of his character are all very positive and compelling. And he exhorted his disciples to cultivate all these qualities.

Nirvāṇa is not annihilation, emptiness, or nothingness. It is 'a state of Somethingness to the *n*th degree'. Outwardly one who attains it may be regardless of all sights and sounds but inwardly he is in a state of intensest activity. He is, says Sir Francis Younghusband,

'himself to the fullest stretch of his capacity—infinitely more himself, his real true deep-down self, than he is when moving about in the world, wide awake, with all his faculties about him. When a man is suddenly faced with a masterpiece, he hears nothing, he sees nothing but the one object. He is absorbed in contemplation of supreme beauty. Yet he is in no state of nothing-

ness, his soul is not empty. Inwardly he is full of activity. He has been stirred to be himself as never before. . . . To an even higher degree is it in regard to Nirvāṇa. He who has entered that state may be oblivious of all around him. All his faculties may for the time be suspended. Yet he may have become so profoundly himself that he may be in contact with the Self which is the ultimate source of all activity, and consequently in a state of such tremendous activity as to appear as motionless as a spinning top. This is what is meant by Nirvāṇa. And this is the goal of Buddhism. Not nothingness, but superlative activity.'

Buddha is most misinterpreted in his attitude to the idea of God. His golden silence on the topic is well known. But it is a sin to assume that since he was silent on the topic of God he must have been a disbeliever and atheist. If Buddha had the conviction that God and Soul were figments of human imagination, he would have been bold enough to proclaim it, for do we not see that the one quality which dominated his personality and infected his followers was his utter boldness? Therefore, his preference to observe silence with regard to the definition of God and His attributes must have had a deeper cause. To Buddha God must have been too great, too vast, too profound to be delimited by deft definitions. He must have felt like the Vedic sage who exclaimed: 'From where, failing to reach, speech turns back along with the mind.' The greatest definitions of God have been couched in terms of silence. Before the stunning reality of God who would speak, who would even think? Verily, 'Thy name is Silence'. We have almost an identical situation in one of the parables of Sri Ramakrishna:

A man had two sons. The father sent them to a preceptor to learn the knowledge of Brahman (God). After a few years they returned from their preceptor's house and bowed low before their father. Wanting to measure the depth of their knowledge of Brahman, he first questioned the older of the two boys. "My child," he said, "you have studied all the scriptures. Now, tell me, what is the nature of Brahman?" The boy began to explain Brahman by reciting various texts from the Vedas. The father did not say anything. Then he asked the younger son the same question. But the boy remained silent and stood with eyes cast down. No word escaped his lips. The father was pleased and

said to him: "My child, you have understood a little of Brahman. What It is cannot be expressed in words."

Hence to brand Buddha an atheist is to be bereft of any understanding of the profound personality that he was. Buddha's emphasis always lay on the ethical perfection of man, no doubt. And it is safe to assume that he knew that when a man has perfected himself ethically and morally he would arrive through right contemplation at Truth, that Truth would descend into the heart that was pure. After all, is not direct and immediate perception the best and most convincing of all proofs? Thus it would seem that all his efforts were guided to this single objective, viz., to cleanse the human heart which on the ordinary level is full of dirt and dross, to render it clear and shining and fit to reflect Truth in all its purity and radiance. No, Buddhism is not nihilism or atheism. It has its own God. And SILENCE is His name.

Buddha wanted men to be happy. He had begun the search for the cause of misery

with himself and discovered happiness within himself. His advice, born of his own experience, was very simple if extremely difficult to practise. Let men, he suggested, try to be good and charitable, loving and compassionate; let them separate themselves from greed and malice, selfishness and hatred and all evil thoughts and they would be as happy as he was. He taught men to live a good and true way of life. And Buddhism is intensely a Way of life than a system of philosophy or anything else. Though Buddha had a wonderful philosophy and psychology yet he would not teach them to the ordinary men and women who would either not understand it properly or would misunderstand it thoroughly. Still, on the point of his passing away, when he asked his weeping brethren whether they had any doubts to be resolved and they did not have any, he gave this as his last parting advice: 'Come now brethren, I do remind ye: "*Subject to decay are all compounded things*". Do ye abide in heedfulness.' It is his best advice and a whole world of philosophy lies hidden in these few words.

KURU WAR

COURSE AND TERMINATION

BY PROF. V. B. ATHAVALE

It is easy to show that it was not Sauti who shifted the position of the Gītā composition of Vyāsa. For, in the original 100 Parvas of Vyāsa Gītā-parva is 63rd and it precedes the death of Bhīṣma, which is 64th Parva. It is commonly believed that the Gītā dialogue actually took place on the battle-field just before the war started and the function of Vyāsa was merely to put it in the poetic form. But it is easy to show that Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were not together in the same chariot for more than five minutes before the war started on

the first day and hence there was no time for any lengthy discourse, which would require at least one hour at the normal speed of talk.

Bhīṣ. 43.11-93 tell that Yudhiṣṭhira got down from the chariot and started with folded hands towards the Kaurava army. Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva left their chariots and simply followed Yudhiṣṭhira because they could not understand anything of this strange behaviour. It was Kṛṣṇa who guessed correctly the intention of Yudhiṣṭhira and he told them that Yudhiṣṭhira was going

to secure the permission of the elders, prior to the beginning of the war. Verses 89-93 tell that Kṛṣṇa went alone in the chariot to meet Karṇa who was in the Kaurava camp and tried a second time to bring him to the Pāṇḍava side, but Karṇa refused in the same way as he had done at Hastinapur. When Kṛṣṇa returned, the Pāṇḍavas also returned after getting the blessings of Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Kṛpā and Śalya. Then Yudhiṣṭhira announced that if any persons from the Kaurava side were ready to come to him, he would be glad to accept them. Yuyutsu, a son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra from a Vaiśya wife, came to the Pāṇḍava side, and then the battle started on the first day.

We shall now try to ascertain the position of the moon on the first and the last day of the war and the major events during this period. We know definitely that Bhīṣma fell on Śaraśayyā on the 10th day. Ch. 43-119 are called 'Bhīṣmavadha'. The 64th Parva of Vyāsa is also 'Bhīṣma-vadha'. Here is a list of the major events on each of the 10 days. *1st day*: Ch. 43-49. Uttara and Śveta, the two sons of Virāṭa were killed. *2nd day*: Ch. 50-55. Bhīma killed Kalinga king and his sons. *3rd day*: Ch. 56-59. Kṛṣṇa went to kill Bhīṣma, but Arjuna stopped him. *4th day*: Ch. 60-64. Dhṛṣṭadyumna killed the son of Śala (brother of Bhūriśrava). Bhīma killed eight sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. *5th day*: Ch. 65-74. Bhūriśrava kills ten sons of Sātyaki. *6th day*: Ch. 75-79. Bhīma kills some sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. *7th day*: Ch. 80-86. Droṇa kills Śankha, a son of Virāṭa. Bhīma kills some sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. *8th day*: Eight sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were killed by Bhīma in the morning and some were killed later in the evening. Irāvata (son of Arjuna from Ulūpi) kills the brothers of Śakuni. Irāvata is killed by Ārṣaśṅga. At night, Karṇa asked Duryodhana to tell Bhīṣma to stop fighting and allow Karṇa to fight. *9th day*: Ch. 97-106. *10th day*: Ch. 107-119. Fall of Bhīṣma on Śaraśayyā in the afternoon.

11th day: Arjuna provides a pillow of arrows to the hanging head of Bhīṣma. Droṇa

is made the Senāpati. *12th day*: Bhagadatta of Prāgjyotiṣapur was killed by Arjuna. Aśvatthāmā killed Nīla. *13th day*: Laxmaṇa, a son of Duryodhana was killed by Abhimanyu. Jayadratha killed Abhimanyu. *14th day*: Arjuna killed Jayadratha. Droṇa killed Drupada and Virāṭa. Karṇa killed Ghatotkaca at night fighting. *15th day*: Droṇa was killed. In the 100 Parvas of Vyāsa, 65th is Droṇābhiṣeka, 66th is the death of the Samsaptakas, 67th is Abhimanyu-vadha, 68th is 'Pratijñā-parva', 69th is Jayadratha-vadha, 70th is Ghatotkaca-vadha, 71st is Droṇa-vadha, 72nd is 'Nārāyanāstra'.

16th day: Karṇa becomes the Senāpati. *17th day*: Death of Karṇa in the evening. The Kaurava army retired on the Aruṇa river in the evening. 73rd Parva of Vyāsa is 'Karṇa-parva'. *18th day*: Śalya became the Senāpati. But he was killed early in the forenoon. This 9th Parva of Sauti corresponds with 74th, 75th, 76th and 77th of Vyāsa's 'Śalya-vadha', 'Hrada-praveśa', 'Gadāyuddha', 'Sāraswata yātrā of Balarāma' respectively. It means that after the death of Śalya early in the forenoon, three incidents occurred till the evening of the 18th day. (1) Duryodhana fled to hide in the Dwaipāyana-hrada; (2) There was a mace fight between Duryodhana and Bhīma near the Hrada, after the king came out of his hiding place; (3) Balarāma arrived there just before the fight started and he was asked to be the umpire, because both of them were his disciples in the art of mace fight.

No one has so far tried to verify the correctness of these movements by identifying the places where they occurred. Many scholars like Dr. Balvalkar, Śrī J. S. Karandikar of Poona, have expressed the view that those incidents are the interpolations inserted by some later persons. The Hrada literally means a deep water pool. It is impossible for a man to dive in water and remain hiding there for hours. The arrival of Balarāma for the mace fight is also considered to be impossible because he had gone for a pilgrimage to avoid the battle. The Poona scholars have expressed

this view in Gītā-mañjari in connection with the observation of the Gītā-Jayanti day, i.e. the first day of the Kuru war. Mārgaśīrṣa Śukla 11th, with the moon in Bharani is assumed to be the day on which the Kuru war started.

If it is possible to prove that the arrival of Balarāma for the mace fight near the Hrada was a historical fact it is easy to show that Mārg. Śukla 11th can never be the date on which the war began and the moon cannot be near Bharani. For, Śalya. 34.6, 7 tell that the moon was in Śrāvana on the last day of the war when Balarāma arrived near the Hrada. As the moon travels one Nakṣatra per day, the moon must have been in the 18th Nakṣatra prior to Śrāvana, i.e. it must be in Mṛga and never in Bharani.

Śalya. 5.50-51 gives the exact location of the Kaurava army on the 17th evening after the death of Karṇa. The army retired eight miles back from the battle zone and rested on the Aruṇa river near Himavata-prastha. In my tour of the Kurukṣetra district I found out this Aruṇa river and traced the Himavata-prastha also. The Aruṇa river is three miles from the village Narayangad, 25 miles east of the town Ambala. The word Himavata-prastha means a road to the Himālaya. The Himālayan ranges lie behind the Siwalik hill range. One can go to the Himālaya portion only through some gaps in the Siwalik hills. At a place called Kala-amb, there is such a gap. The road to the Himālayas passes through this gap. Śalya. 6.1-3 also tell that on the 18th morning the Kaurava army gathered at Himavata-prastha after their retirement on the Aruṇa river on the previous night. Śalya. 26-28 tell that Bhīma killed eleven sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sahadeva killed Ulūka (son of Śakuni), Nakula killed Śakuni and Arjuna killed Suśarma of Trigarta, while Yudhiṣṭhira killed Śalya and his brother early in the forenoon. While tracing the movements of Sañjaya on the last day of the war, we have seen that Duryodhana met the wounded Sañjaya walking slowly towards the Śibira. He told Sañjaya that he was going to

Dwaipāyana-hrada for hiding to evade capture.

This incident makes it clear that Duryodhana had already thought about this place of hiding in case of emergency. It is easy to see that this Hrada locality must be within walking distance from the Himavata-prastha. For Duryodhana went on foot to that place alone. Udyog. 61.14 refers to this Hrada spot as a place of camouflage. Śalya. 30.57 gives the details of the camouflage. 75th Parva of Vyāsa calls it Hrada-praveśa. I have been able to identify this place as a deep winding valley only three miles from Kalamba (Himavata-prastha). At present this valley is called Satkumbha. The grass in this locality is very famous.

Śalya. 29 is also called 'Hrada-praveśah'. 76th Parva of Vyāsa is 'Gadāyuddha'. Ch. 30-33 are also called 'Gadā-parva.' When Yudhiṣṭhira heard that Duryodhana fled from the battle-field he sent persons to chase him and catch him. Bhīma announced by drum beating that if any one is able to trace the whereabouts of Duryodhana, he will get a good reward. Some hunters (lubdhakas) who were supplying meat and fodder to the Pāṇḍava army, had gone to the Hrada to drink water. They heard a talk between some soldiers there. They reported the matter to the Pāṇḍavas and thus the site to which Duryodhana fled became known and they went to the Hrada locality. We have already seen that Kṛpa, Kṛtavarmā and Aśvatthāmā went to meet Duryodhana when Sañjaya told them the place of his hiding. When they met Duryodhana, the king told them that he was tired on that day and they would resume fighting on the next day after taking rest. It was this talk which was heard by the hunters.

When the Pāṇḍavas arrived in the locality, Drauṇi, Kṛpa and Kṛtavarmā heard the sound of the horses; so they took leave of the king and went away. It was 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the Pāṇḍavas arrived there. But they could not find the place of his hiding. It was Kṛṣṇa who suggested that Yudhiṣṭhira should denounce Duryodhana as a coward. It

succeeded and the king came out of his hiding place. He argued that he did not hide as a coward. As he was alone, he thought he would be caught and put to death just in the same way as they had killed Abhimanyu, while he was alone. He was ready to fight a duel. It was ultimately settled that Bhīma and Duryodhana should fight the mace duel.

It was at this moment that Balarāma arrived there, quite unexpectedly. 77th Parva of Vyāsa is called 'Sāraswata pilgrimage of Balarāma.' Śalya. 34-54 tell how Balarāma reached Dwaipāyana-hrada. Ch. 34.2 tells that when Balarāma heard that his two pupils were to fight the mace duel near the Hrada, he arrived there.

We have already seen that Balarāma had gone to Upaplāvya on Puṣya Nakṣatra on Kārtik Vadya 5th just when the Pāṇḍava army had decided to go for fixing camps on Hiranvati river, and as Balarāma decided to remain neutral, he started for the Sāraswata pilgrimage on the same day. Ch. 35.42 tells that Prabhāsa was the 1st Tīrtha. Verse 85 tells that 2nd Tīrtha was Camasodbheda. Ch. 36.1 tells that the 3rd Tīrtha was Udapana (probably Māṛḡaya). Verse 54 tells that Saraswatī-vināśana was the 4th tirtha. Ch. 39.34 tells that Balarāma went to Prithūdaka from Saraswatī-vināśana. Ch. 50.69 tells that Balarāma went to Somatīrtha on Saraswatī. Ch. 54.1-11 tell that after visiting Kurukṣetra-tīrtha on Saraswatī river, Balarāma went to Plakṣa-prasravaṇa near the source of Saraswatī. Then he went to Karapavana-tīrtha on the Jamunā river. Śalya. 54.15-32 tell that some one (Nārada) told Balarāma in the forenoon that Duryodhana fled to the Dwaipāyana-hrada for hiding there and the Pāṇḍavas were trying to find him out. When Balarāma heard the news he cancelled his pilgrimage and went to Dwaipāyana-hrada, in about an hour and a half because it is only 20 miles from the tīrtha on Jamunā, which is the famous river gorge in the foot hills of the Himālayas.

We know that Duryodhana had gone to Dwārakā (Ānarta puri) to meet Balarāma but

Balarāma told him that he had decided to remain neutral. He advised the king to fight bravely and not to run away like a coward. When he heard that the king had fled, Balarāma felt worried and he decided to go there. It will be clear from the account that the sequence of events is historically correct and the places where these incidents occurred can be identified even now.

We can now follow the events after the arrival of Balarāma for the mace fight in the afternoon on the last day of the war when the Nakṣatra was Śrāvāṇa, and he was asked to be the umpire. Śalya. 55-65 tell that when Kṛṣṇa saw that Duryodhana was superior to Bhīma in skill and there was the chance of Bhīma being defeated, Kṛṣṇa suggested that Bhīma should strike below the waist even though it was against the rules. Bhīma thus struck on the thigh and the king reeled on the ground. Bhīma kicked the crown of the king by his feet and left the king in a dying condition. Balarāma got angry because Bhīma had got success by unfair method and he went away.

As Duryodhana was defeated, Yudhiṣṭhira had a right to capture his wealth in the Śibira. So the Pāṇḍavas went to the Śibira on the Dṛṣadvati river. Kṛpa, Kṛtavarmā and Aśvatthāmā got the news in the evening and they went to meet the king in a dying condition. The king asked Aśvatthāmā to take revenge. Thus they decided to enter the Śibira of Drupada at night and kill the sons of Draupadī etc. because Sātyaki, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas had gone to the Śibira of Duryodhana. Śalya. 61.42-45 tell that the Pāṇḍavas stayed on the Dṛṣadvati river near the Śibira of the king at night. The Pāṇḍavas asked Kṛṣṇa to go to Gāndhārī immediately and slowly break the news of Duryodhana.

78th Parva of Vyāsa is 'Sauptika'. In the scheme of Sauti, 10th Parva is 'Sauptika' but it includes the 'Aiṣika' also, which is 79th in the scheme of Vyāsa. Ch. 6-7 tell that Kṛpa, Drauṇi and Kṛtavarmā went to the Pāncāla Śibira at midnight and killed Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Śikhaṇḍi and the five sons of Draupadī. After

this revengeful slaughter, the trio went to the king to inform him about it, so that he should die in peace. They then decided to go to Hastinapur, for they thought that the Pāṇḍavas would chase them after they got the news of the slaughter.

One of the servants of Dhṛṣṭadyumna escaped from the night slaughter and he went to the Pāṇḍavas for giving the information, early in the morning. The Pāṇḍavas then decided to go to Hastinapur. Sahadeva was sent to Upaplāvya to bring the women to Hastinapur. It will be clear from this that Kṛṣṇa reached Hastinapur early in the morning, on the 19th day. Yuyutsu and Sañjaya had reached Hastinapur in the evening on the 18th day.

Strī. 10-14 tell that Vidura asked the blind king to go to the Gangā for the Udaka-kriya (offering of water etc. to the departed). Ch. 11.1-15 tell that just when the party had gone one 'krośa' from the town, in the morning of the 19th day, they met Kṛpa, Drauṇi and Kṛtavarmā. They told the blind king how they had killed the Pāncālas and the sons of Draupadī at night as a revenge for the unjust defeat of Duryodhana. They said that the Pāṇḍavas may come soon to catch them and hence they were in a hurry to go away. Kṛpa went to Hastinapur, Kṛtavarmā went to Dwāarakā and Aśvatthāmā went to the Āśrama of Vyāsa on the Gangā. Ch. 14.1-3 tell that Kṛṣṇa was in the Kaurava party. It corroborates the Śalya. 61.42-44 statement that Kṛṣṇa was asked to go to Hastinapur at night.

In the Aiśika parva (79th) we are told that when the Pāṇḍavas reached Hastinapur, they found that Aśvatthāmā had taken shelter in the Āśrama of Vyāsa. When Bhīma tried to capture him, he took a blade of grass (Iṣikā) and after uttering some mantra threw this Astra on Bhīma. This wrong use of Iṣikā brought a permanent discredit on Drauṇi. As Iṣikā was used, this Parva is called 'Aiśika'.

'Jalapradāna' and 'Strī-vilāpa,' are the 80th and 81st Parvas of Vyāsa. From Strī. 16.11 it is commonly believed that the women had gone to Kurukṣetra and the weeping took

place there. But the earlier verses say explicitly that 'Jalapradāna' took place on the Gangā and through the grace of Vyāsa, Gāndhārī saw the events that happened in Kurukṣetra though she was on the Gangā. Strī. 27.1, 11 tell that during Udaka-kriya, Kuntī disclosed that Karna was her son. It is also corroborated by Śānti. 1.22-42. Yudhiṣṭhira says that he was very much astonished to find a close similarity between the feet of Karna and Kuntī for a long time, till now.

12th Parva of Sauti is 'Śānti'. Ch. 1.1-3 tell that the Pāṇḍavas stayed on the Gangā for one month. 82nd Parva of Vyāsa is 'Śrāddha'. 83rd is Cārvāka-nigraha. 84th is 'Pāncājanya abhiṣeka of Yudhiṣṭhira'. 85th is 'Grha-pravibhāga'. 86th is 'Rājadharmā'. 87th is 'Āpaddharma'. 88th is 'Mokṣadharmā'. The Śānti-parva of Sauti is noted for its religious discourses, which took place between Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīṣma, who was on Śaraśayyā from the 10th day of the war. It is thus necessary to ascertain the historical reason for this event and the day on which it started as well as its duration.

Ch. 2-19 of Śānti is only the past history of Karna. It is a repetition of Vana. 300-310, which is 'Kuṇḍala-āharaṇa-parva'. 43rd Parva of Vyāsa has also the same name. Ch. 20-31 are discussions of Yudhiṣṭhira with different ṛṣis during this Āsauca of one month. Ch. 29 is a story of sixteen kings. Droṇa. 55-71 gives the same story. Ch. 1.15-16 tell that Kṛṣṇa had gone to Dwāarakā with Subhadṛā during this period of one month. Ch. 32-36 is a discussion of Prāyaścittas for the death of warriors in the war. It shows that Śrāddhas continued in this month.

Ch. 37-39 tell that Vyāsa and others asked Yudhiṣṭhira to go to the town and resume the duties of a king. Yudhiṣṭhira said that his mind was confounded about the duties of a king. He thought that religious behaviour and kingship are contradictory. Vyāsa said that Bhīṣma alone would be able to answer all his queries in the matter. Yudhiṣṭhira said that he felt shy to approach Bhīṣma, because

he had used Sikhaṇḍi to defeat Bhīṣma. Kṛṣṇa then intervened and said that grief also has its limits. He must go to the town first, and then go to Bhīṣma to get his doubts cleared. When the party went to the town, a Brāhmin called Cārvāka blamed Yudhiṣṭhira for killing his relatives and obtaining the kingdom. The man was then arrested. This is 83rd Parva of Vyāsa.

Ch. 40 tells that Kṛṣṇa performed the 'Pāncjanya abhiṣeka' of Yudhiṣṭhira by his famous conch. This is 84th Parva of Vyāsa. Ch. 41-44 are called 'Bhīmādi Karma niyoga'⁹ and 'Gṛhavibhāga'. 85th Parva of Vyāsa is also 'Gṛhavibhāga'. Ch. 45-47 tell that one day after Yudhiṣṭhira had assigned the duties to his brothers, he came to Kṛṣṇa, who was staying in the house of Arjuna, quite early in the morning. Kṛṣṇa was sitting in his bed in a state of deep meditation. Though Yudhiṣṭhira called out many times, Kṛṣṇa gave no reply. When Yudhiṣṭhira asked the reason for this silence, Kṛṣṇa said that his mind had gone to Bhīṣma because Bhīṣma was meditating on him. Then Kṛṣṇa insisted that they must go to Bhīṣma and get all doubts about religious behaviour cleared before he leaves his physical body on Uttarāyana day. *The 'Nīti Sāstra' of Uśanā and the 'Dharma Sāstra' of Brhaspati are all centred in him and unless it is obtained from him by questioning, it will be lost for ever with his death.*¹⁰

Ch. 48-51 tell how the blind king and the women arrived at the arrow-bed of Bhīṣma, which was on Dṛṣadvati river. Ch. 51.14-17 tell that Kṛṣṇa told Bhīṣma that they had come to him for Dharma discussion because he would be leaving the physical body on the Uttarāyana day, which would begin 56 days from that day.

⁹ Bhīmaṁ yauvarājye, Viduram mantre, Sañjayam āya-vyaye, Nakulam bale, Arjunam paracakre, Dhaumyam purodhasām śreṣṭham, Sahadevam śarīra-rakṣaka-pade.

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that Ādi. 100.36, 37 tell: Uśanā veda yat śāstram, ayam tat veda sarvaśaḥ/ taccaiva Āngirasaḥ putraḥ (Brhaspatiḥ) surāsura namaskṛtaḥ yat veda śāstram tat ca api kṛtsnam asmin pratiṣṭhitam/. It is corroborated by Śānti. 37.8,9.

86th Parva of Vyāsa is Rāja Dharma discourse. 87th is Āpat Dharma. 88th is Mokṣa Dharma discourse. This sequence of events proves that Dharma discourse was a historical fact. Ch. 56-130 is 'Rāja Dharma'. Ch. 131-173 is Āpat Dharma. Ch. 174-365 is Mokṣa Dharma. Ch. 150-152 tell the past history of Janamejaya Pāriksit and his Purohit Indrōta Śaunaka, who were the ancestors of the Pāṇḍavas. Śatapatha Br. 13.5.4.1 gives the same story. Many scholars think that this Pāriksit Janamejaya is the descendant of the Pāṇḍavas. It will be clear from the Mbh. reference that it is not correct. Similarly Ch. 311-319 refer to the Janaka Yājñavalkya talk in the past. Ś. Br. 11.6.2.1 also refers to this event. This proves that Yājñavalkya Vājasaneyā, the organizer of Śukla Yajurveda (Brh. Upa. 6.5.3) was earlier than the Pāṇḍavas. Some scholars think that this Yājñavalkya was a disciple of Vaiśampāyana, the Purohit of the grandson of Abhimanyu, but this cannot be true.

The 89th Parva of Vyāsa is 'Anuśāsana' and 90th is 'Swargārohana of Bhīṣma'. 13th Parva of Sauti is 'Anuśāsana'. Anuś. 166 tells that after some days of the discourse, Vyāsa told Bhīṣma that the mind of Yudhiṣṭhira was satisfied and he should be given permission to return to Hastinapur with a promise that he should come back on the Uttarāyana day. Ch. 167.5-7, 27-29 tell that Yudhiṣṭhira stayed in the town for fifty nights and then saw that the sun had turned north. He then remembered the promise of going to Bhīṣma. Then Vyāsa, Kṛṣṇa and others went to Bhīṣma. Bhīṣma said, 'The month is Māgha and the Pakṣa is Śukla. I am waiting on Śaraśayyā for 58 nights.' We know that Kṛṣṇa told Bhīṣma that there were still 56 days for the sun to turn north. We know also that the party remained at Hastinapur for fifty nights. It means that Dharma discourse continued for six days. Māgha Śukla 7th is known to be the day when Uttarāyana begins. Śānti. 47.1-2 (Bh. ed.) tells, 'śukla pakṣasya aṣṭamyām māgha māsasya pārthiva prajāpatye ca nakṣatre madhyam prāpte divākare

pravrttamātre tu ayane uttareṇa divākare samāveśayat ātmānam ātmanyeva samāhitah. This evidence proves conclusively that Bhīṣma passed away on Māgha Śukla 8th and not on Māgha Vadya 5th as assumed by Śrī Karaṇḍīkar and other Poona scholars.

91st Parva of Vyāsa is Anugītā and 92nd is Aśvamedha. The 14th Parva of Sauti includes these two Parvas of Vyāsa. Ch. 16-51 form Anugītā Parva. After the death of Bhīṣma, Kṛṣṇa wanted to return to Dwārakā. Both Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa went to Indraprastha (Delhi) to stay there for some time, prior to Kṛṣṇa's departure for Dwārakā. Arjuna told Kṛṣṇa that he had forgotten all the advice given to him on the first day of the war. He wanted to hear it again. Kṛṣṇa said that it was impossible to repeat it. Then Kṛṣṇa told Anugītā. Afterwards, Kṛṣṇa went to Dwārakā.

We have already seen that it was Vyāsa, who introduced the Gītā dialogue in Jaya history as 63rd Parva, in his 100 Parvas. 93rd Parva is Anugītā. This shows that Gītā and Anugītā are the compositions of Vyāsa. We have also seen that Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were not together in the chariot for more than five minutes before the war began. From the internal evidence of Gītā, it is easy to show that it was composed after the death of Bhīṣma. For, Gītā. 10-13 and 24 refer to Uttarāyaṇa and the way in which Bhīṣma left his physical body. Gītā. 18.70 calls the dialogue 'Dharmya samvāda.' It contains both 'Rāja Dharma' and 'Mokṣa Dharma.'

We have also seen that when Yudhiṣṭhira got confused over the issue of the duties of a king being contradictory to the religious behaviour for attaining Mokṣa, it was Vyāsa who suggested that Bhīṣma alone was competent to resolve his doubts. But Yudhiṣṭhira felt shy to approach Bhīṣma. Yudhiṣṭhira agreed to go when Kṛṣṇa compelled him.

Yudhiṣṭhira had even forgotten his promise but Kṛṣṇa ingeniously reminded him about it and again made it clear that this intricate knowledge about Dharma can be preserved only by discussing it with Bhīṣma, prior to his passing away on the Uttarāyaṇa day. Otherwise it will be lost for ever.

Maharṣi Kṛṣṇa Dwaipāyana composed the Gītā dialogue to commemorate the fact that this Dharma knowledge was preserved mainly through the efforts of Kṛṣṇa. Gītā is clearly a summary of Rāja Dharma and Mokṣa Dharma discussions of Bhīṣma through the able pen of Vyāsa. We know that the doubts raised by Arjuna in Gītā I, are exactly those raised by Yudhiṣṭhira at Upaplāvya before he asked Kṛṣṇa to go to Hastinapur for negotiations and Maharṣi Vyāsa was present on this occasion. The art of Vyāsa lies in transferring this dialogue to the battle-field on the first day of the war, just before the war started. Whether Arjuna got actually puzzled by looking at his relatives and whether Kṛṣṇa showed Arjuna the Cosmic Vision to resolve his doubts in a few minutes, are points too moot for a historical scrutiny.

* The apparent contradiction is that on the 10th day of the war, Bhīṣma fell on the arrow bed. This day must be Mārga Vadya 8th. Bhīṣma passed away on Māgha Śukla 8th. Thus there are only 45 days between the two. Pāṇḍavas went to Bhīṣma after 9 nights of war plus 30 nights of Aśauca plus x days spent in Gṛhavibhāga, Abhiśheka etc. and Kṛṣṇa says that Uttarāyaṇa will begin 56 days afterwards. If two lunar months equal to 59 days are added to 45, then only this equation is correct. We know from Virāta Parva that Bhīṣma told Duryodhana that 2 months must be added at the end of every 5 years to make up the lag of 12 days per year.

We are adding at present only one month after 2½ years. This method was adopted by Vedānga Jyotiṣa in 1400 B.C. In 3000 B.C. (Pāṇḍava period) 2 months were added at once at the end of the 5th year.

ŚRĪ-BHĀSYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

TOPIC 6

THE SELF TO BE SEEN THROUGH HEARING ETC. IS BRAHMAN

In the last topic the clause, 'Whose work this is', was interpreted to refer to the world and not to action. Thereby it was shown that the text does not refer to the individual soul but to Brahman, as the latter was the subject matter referred to at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the passage under discussion.

Now is taken up for discussion the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* passage where the individual soul is clearly referred to at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the passage. Therefore the opponent holds that the individual soul ought to be the subject matter of the passage according to the argument given in the previous topic. This topic is begun to show that it refers to Brahman and not to the individual soul.

वाक्यान्वयात् ॥१४१६

19. (The Self to be seen, to be heard, etc. is Brahman) on account of the connected meaning of the passages.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya, in reply to Maitreyī's question as to the way to immortality, says 'Verily the husband is dear not for the sake of the husband but for the sake of the Self a husband is dear' etc. (2.4.5) and then concludes by saying, 'The Self is to be seen—should be heard, reflected on, and meditated upon. By the realization of the Self alone, my dear, through hearing, reflection and meditation, all this is known.' The question is: Who is referred to by the word 'Self' in this passage—is it the Puruṣa of the

Sāṅkhyas or the supreme Brahman? The Sāṅkhyas hold that it is the Puruṣa. For it is the individual soul that is referred to at the beginning, in the middle and at the end. At the beginning the 'Self' is said to be attached to the husband, wife, son etc., which shows it is the individual soul. In the middle of the passage it is said that the 'Self' is connected with origination and destruction; Vide 2.4.12, and ends by saying, 'Through what, my dear, should one know the knower?' (2.4.14). Therefore the 'Self' is the individual soul, the Puruṣa of the Sāṅkhyas. The knowledge of this 'Self', as distinguished from Prakṛti, is what leads to immortality, according to the Sāṅkhyas. So the 'Self to be seen' is the individual soul as differentiated from Prakṛti. The knowledge of the 'Self' will result in the knowledge of all souls; for the souls, as distinguished from Prakṛti, are not differentiated as gods, men etc., but are alike.

This view is refuted by this Sūtra. Because from the connection of the various passages, it is clear that the supreme Brahman is taught and not the individual soul. The passage begins by saying that wealth does not conduce to immortality. In reply to this statement of Yājñavalkya, Maitreyī who was desirous of immortality says, 'What shall I do with that through which I cannot attain immortality? Tell me, venerable sir, of that alone which you know (to be the means to immortality)' (2.4.3). Therefore the 'Self' that is taught to be seen cannot be the individual soul but Brahman. For scriptures say that immortality is attained only through the knowledge of Brahman. 'Knowing Him only does one go beyond death', 'Knowing Him thus one becomes immortal here, there is no other means

to this' (*Svet.*3.8). So the supreme Brahman is taught in the text under discussion: 'The Self is to be seen' etc. Again, being the cause of the entire world, as mentioned in: 'From that great Being emanated the R̥g Veda etc.', can be true only of Brahman and not of the individual soul which, in the state of bondage is under the influence of Karma, and in the state of release, has nothing to do with the world. So also the enunciation that by the knowledge of the Self everything is known shows that it is the supreme Brahman which is the Self of all. The knowledge of the soul according to the Sāṅkhyas, as differentiated from Prakṛti, does not give a knowledge of the insentient world; and so the knowledge of the soul does not result in the knowledge of everything. 'This Brāhmaṇa, this Kṣatriya, these worlds, these gods, these beings, and all this are only the Self' (*Bṛh.* 3.2.63)—in this text the sentient and insentient world of perception is described as 'this' and identified with the Self and this is possible only if it is Brahman, and not the individual soul, whether in the state of bondage as identified with Prakṛti or in the state of release as differentiated from Prakṛti. Moreover the epithets used with reference to it in 'This great, endless, infinite Reality' etc. can be true only of the supreme Brahman.

In *Bṛh.* 2.4.12 and also in many other texts, the words denoting the individual self mean the Highest Self, and are used in grammatical equation with the word denoting Him. The Sūtrakāra supports this according to the views of other Ācāryas in the following Sūtras.

प्रतिज्ञासिद्धेर्लिङ्गमाश्रमर्थः ॥१४१२०॥

20. (The fact that the individual soul is taught as the object of realization is an) indicatory mark (which is) proof of the proposition, so Āśmarathya thinks.

The word denoting the individual soul is used to indicate the supreme Brahman, to show that the former is an effect of the latter

and therefore not different from It, thus establishing the promissory statement that by the knowledge of one thing the knowledge of everything is gained—so argues Āśmarathya. Vide *Mu.* 2.1.1 where it is said that the individual souls are brought forth from the Imperishable like sparks from a fire and return to It also. So they are one with Brahman in so far as they are Its effects. On this ground the word denoting the individual soul denotes the supreme Self also.

उत्क्रमिष्यत एवं भावादित्यौडुलोमिः ॥१४१२१॥

21. Because of this nature (viz. possessing the characteristics of Brahman) of the individual soul which rises from the body (at the time of release), thus (thinks) Auḍulomi.

'Now that serene and happy being, rising out of this body and reaching the highest light, appears in its own true form' (*Ch.* 8.3.4)—this text shows that the released soul possesses the characteristics of the supreme Brahman, therefore the word referring to the individual soul is used to denote the supreme Brahman—so thinks Audulomi.

अवस्थितेरिति काशकृत्स्नः ॥१४१२२॥

22. On account of Brahman abiding in the individual soul—so thinks Kāśakṛtsna.

'He who resides in the self' etc. (*Bṛh.* 3.7.22) shows that the supreme Brahman is the Inner Self of the individual soul which forms Its body. On this identity of the two selves related to each other as the soul and the body, the word denoting the individual soul is used to denote the supreme Brahman. This is the view of Kāśakṛtsna.

The three views expressed above are contradictory, and after the last one no other view is expressed by the Sūtrakāra nor is the last one refuted by him. So the last one viz. the view of Kāśakṛtsna seems to be the view of the Sūtrakāra also.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

We often forget that 'there is a gradation of thought from the man in the street to the speculative philosopher.' The latter's reasonings alone, Dr. P. S. Sastri reminds us, 'do not represent the conclusions and beliefs of the age.' 'Like the Upaniṣads Ṛgveda also offers us varied views,' and not 'a single conclusion on any ultimate problem'. In presenting us diverse facets of the Vedic mysticism, the learned Doctor brings to bear upon the subject his intimate knowledge of the Vedas. 'The religion of the Vedic times can be said to be, in the felicitous phrase of James, "Healthy-minded".' The second portion of the article contains in addition to various representative passages many valuable remarks, for example: 'Even in the ritual songs, we note . . . the richness which satisfies the imaginative and sensual visions as well . . . It is a garden of beauty and of rapture, informed by the poetic spirit. It is the worship of Beauty.' 'The whole atmosphere breathed an air of vitality, youthfulness and cheerfulness.' . . .

We have great pleasure in publishing in this issue the first part of a speech delivered by Dr. Sampurnanand, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, before a Society of Scientific Workers, Lucknow, on "Scientific Foundations of Astrology". The subject is important in a variety of ways. For one thing, it has become a fashion for people with a smattering of 'western' education (meaning a simple University Degree!) to laugh at everything related to 'old' India. According to them, it is that 'oldness' of India and her 'traditions' that brought down all calamities on her, including, of course, foreign conquest. It must be the duty, then, of all 'progressive', 'dynamic', and 'scientific-minded' Indians of the present day to root out all vestiges of 'traditional beliefs', of which 'Astrology' is supposed to be one of the most 'primitive'. The critics inter-

pret Astrology as a sort of 'star-gazing' which idlers resort to as a substitute for honest and productive labour in different fields. Those who wield political power have certain facilities for having their pronouncements put into print and circulated everywhere. In a context where certain men of status have indulged in reckless and positively injurious statements, it is quite heartening to see that Dr. Sampurnanand,—whose scholarship is well known and whose book on *Vrātya Kānda* we reviewed in our columns in October last has found the necessary time, and thought it desirable too, to deal with this very question of Astrology and compress his valuable knowledge of the subject within the compass of an hour's talk. He has put stress on the observation-verification method of science quite rightly, because his hearers are scientists, and the modern mind wants to know: 'Is Astrology scientific'? The discipline of the ancient sages did not dispense with repeated observation and coordination of facts. Their mental disciplines would surely have made them more quick and accurate in grasping subtle movements whether within human bodies, human minds or elsewhere. That is not, and cannot be denied. The clarity they got that way was not an enemy or substitute for observation and other processes of regular enquiry. The very books they have written on Astrology show the amount of calculation prescribed for each item. . . . Those who have been reading Astrological literature, eastern and western, would feel delighted at the way in which Dr. Sampurnanand has introduced the story of Montgomery and Rommel in this first part. Others too will feel delighted, and probably also surprised, to see that even in the thickest fights of 'modern War', Astrologers played 'scientifically' valuable, 'accurate' and 'helpful' parts, though often in an 'unofficial' capacity . . .

In our issue of December 1957, we published

the highly suggestive article on the 'Ancient Indian Universities' by Mr. Shamsuddin, B.A., B.T., M.Ed. This time he has discussed the most important question viz., 'What should be the standard of education?' 'Unless we have some guiding philosophy in the determination of objectives we get nowhere at all.' 'With the start of the machine age, the aims of education and ideals of life (have become) more and more materialistic.' But it is only philosophy that can 'fathom the activities of man' and 'arrange them according to their importance in human life', so that man will 'get satisfaction in his labour.' The author stresses the importance of adopting such 'curricula and text-books' as will be conducive to the acquirement of 'the highest spiritual values.' . . .

In this issue we are glad to publish two articles from Swami Kirtidananda and

Brahmachari Matri Chaitanya respectively. Both the writers are intimately associated with the editing and publication of *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . .

"Kuru War: Course and Termination" is the last part of a long article contributed by Prof. V. B. Athavale, M.Sc., F.R.G.S. Limitations of space made us split it into smaller bits, of which some appeared in the closing months of 1957. Owing to the need to incorporate articles on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda in the beginning of this year, we had to postpone publication of this final section. Repeated study, careful examination and coordination of details, and an irrepresible passion for Truth,—these are the accompaniments of genuine "scholarship"; and the Professor's articles reveal these in ample measure.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE PHILOSOPHIC HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION. BY JENNINGS C. WISE. *Published by Philosophical Library of New York. Pp. 404.*

This is a bold, brilliant and rare endeavour at reconciliation of the geo-physical, ethno-logical and anthropological findings in the story of the Earth's civilization, on the one hand, and ancient occult, esoteric, mythological, and religious literature on the other. The regrettable tendency of the modern scientific age to pooh-pooh the sacred scriptures by interpreting them in their literal sense, as store-houses of blind nonsensical superstition has been stoutly challenged. The author has drawn on his profound erudition of Indian, Egyptian, Jewish, Chaldean, Hebrew, Greek, Roman, Chinese, Japanese and other folklores and mythologies, and with a deep penetrating insight has endeavoured to unearth the dynamic working of creative genesis of mankind disguised in seemingly absurd myths and legends. The vast cycles of time embodied in the wisdom Philosophy, both Western and Eastern, inducing the Hindu Cycles of Yugas (432000 years) and Mahāyugas equivalent to ten Yugas have been re-interpreted in the light of modern scientific researches. The oldest philosophy known to man

has often, in the past, been ignored by the historian, and the author summons him to rationalize the apparently irrational elements in the story of civilization and to discover the spiritual factors that have operated along with material ones in the evolution of nations. The author has tried to show without any religious bias that the best that civilization has produced down the ages has been the product of faith in Divine wisdom and has thus attempted to rescue the spiritual man from being submerged by the economic man, who today controls education—rather mis-education—of the youth.

This spiritualization of History, the author hopes, may set in motion a new wave of interest among the thoughtful and contribute to the intellectual revaluation from which a new School of History may spring. The various panoramas of ancient cults and legends leading us through the various prehistoric ages afford us great fascination and instruction. The spiritual insights of the learned historian and scholar, Mr. Jennings C. Wise, are bound to be sources of inspiration to the future historian. This outcome of laborious study and research is undoubtedly a welcome addition to the studies of human civilization.

(PRINCIPAL) B. S. MATHUR

THIS WORLD OF OURS. BY ABRAM GLASER. *Philosophical Library, New York. Pp. xiii+492. Price \$ 5.00.*

More than twenty years ago H. G. Wells, the author's Preface tells us, wrote to him after reading a similar book of his: 'I think we want a great variety of such books telling the same story to different sorts of people. The important thing for the bible of the future is not that it should be one book but one story and one attitude.' In compliance with the great novelist's wish the author has produced this 'comprehensive book of essentials' for the 'salvaging of civilization'. It is in Mr. Glaser's own language 'a common book of history, science and wisdom which, like the Bible or the Hindu Purāṇas, would form the basis and framework of one's thoughts and imagination.' There is a noble purpose running all through, that of leading man to love God and be guided by His laws. Here are found the histories of the development of life and consciousness from the chemicals, of an organizing force which guides cells and cell-colonies, even when replaced in another part of the body of a creature, to grow in consonance with that part, and of the growth of thoughts, religions, politics, economics, and laws for the guidance and governance of individuals, society, and the state. One finds a noble attempt at understanding the other fellow's and the other nation's thought and feeling structures as expressed in his or its religion, society, and political and economic policies.

It has, however, to be admitted that the author has failed in this miserably, for he has gone out of his way picking holes, not only unnecessarily but quite *mischievously*, in describing some popular aspects of Hinduism (p. 333), in narrating difficulties encountered in endeavouring to help India 'improve its way of life' (p. 394-5), and even in praising non-Judaeo-Christian religions in such a subtle way as to show their inferiority to the Judaeo-Christian religions, as well as in minimizing the defects of the Western nations by palliations and omissions which are strewn over the chapters VIII, IX, X, XI. In fact, as the great savant Glasenopp has put it, 'Endeavours of this sort are tolerant in so far as they tolerate other views to which they ascribe a propaedeutic value, but they are not free from fanaticism, for their exponents stick to their own belief as being the best one, and assign to all other creeds a place much beneath their own.' Milton describes one of the fallen angels as one whose eyes were riveted upon the glittering golden throne of the Most High rather than upon Him. When one finds that the followers

of the blood-thirsty Goddess Kālī or Durgā are infinitely less blood-thirsty, and their hands, though stained with the blood of goats, are not stained with the blood of *human* brothers and sisters by *millions*, one stops to think if the analysis of the Western well-wishers is correct, for psychological laws are as inexorable as the natural laws. There is a god in Hindu pantheon, the Sahasra-chakṣus, every pore of whose body was converted by a curse into that organ of the half of the human race on which he was inordinately intent. Our Western critics might apply a microscope to see if every hair of their bodies has been converted into a *lingam* for they are more intent on that than the poor Indra with whom it was a temporary infatuation; for the Hindus who worship the *lingam* and some of whom carry the symbol with them look upon it as the holiest of the holy and regard their bodies and minds hallowed and purified by that. That's what we call a depraved mentality. Such writers ought to know that the world has long transcended that stage of bossing mentality and that they are but lone stragglers. There are some minor inaccuracies also in dealing with the Eastern movements. Despite all these, the book as a whole is a useful publication which should lead Eastern writers with their natural tolerant outlook to write similar books with better result.

B. P.

BENGALI

RAMAKRISHNA SANGHA. (ADARSA O ITIHAS)
—BY SWAMI TEJASANANDA. *Published by Swami Vimuktananda, Ramakrishna Mission Saradapith, P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah. Pages 47+iii. Price 75 naye Paise.*

Amidst the din and bustle of the present day world, the movement of a spiritual institution like the Ramakrishna Mission is almost a paradox. Its expression of the infinite spirit through a limited medium of work-form and aesthetic culture is not only alive today but at the same time putting a stop to the down-hill trend of many features of modern civilization. It is not easy for the general public to have sufficient opportunities to get a first-hand knowledge of the diverse activities of this institution as it stands today. In these circumstances the book under review will be found extremely handy and valuable. Within its short compass the learned author has compressed much useful information and opened up a perspective that grips the attention of the reader to the end.

S. M.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. MISSION VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY JAMSHEDPUR

Report for 1956

The activities of the Society fall under two main heads, Religious and Educational.

Religious : Daily Worship, Rāmnām Samkīrtan on Ekādaśī days, Observance of Śivarātri, Kṛṣṇa Jayanti, Christmas Eve, Durgā Pūjā etc., and the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda; also regular classes every evening in the Society premises and on Sunday evenings in the Tinplate area, and lectures by the Head of the Society in different places of the town.

Educational : (a) Twelve schools with a total strength of 2,662 boys and 1,977 girls. Attempts are made to inculcate in the boys moral values, a broad and catholic outlook, devotion to higher values of life, and foster in them the spirit of self-help, dignity of labour, and service to motherland.

(b) Two Students' Homes are run on the same lines. A healthy religious atmosphere is maintained. The routine of prayer, study, manual labour and voluntary service enables the students to build up a good character.

(c) A free reading room (with 10 Monthlies, 3 Dailies, and 3 Weeklies) and a Library (with 1,675 books in English, Hindi, Bengali and Gujarati). The schools have got separate libraries (with a total of 8,836 books).

R. K. MISSION ASHRAMA, SARISHA DIAMOND HARBOUR

Report for the years 1946-55

This Ashrama, started at the close of 1921, has been carrying on educational and humanitarian work among the villagers.

Educational : (1) *Siksha Mandir* and *Sarada Mandir* : The former is a High School for boys. It was started as a Lower Primary School in 1923. The latter was started in 1927 for girls. They were raised to the status of High School in 1948 and 1935 respectively. At present they command a strength of 277 boys, 154 girls, and a staff of 27 teachers. There are separate hostels and well-equipped libraries for the boys and girls. Provision has been made for training in physical education suited to the boys and girls separately. Socials, debates, handicrafts, excursions, dramatic performances, music, social service and N. C. C. are the extra-curricular activities of the students. Boys publish a nicely got up MS. quarterly as also an illustrated MS. wall magazine periodically. The girls publish another quarterly MS. magazine. The Boys' School has a small museum attached to it.

The Technical Section gives training in tailoring, weaving, and sock-making to the girls. Both the schools have been granted sanction for conversion into multi-purpose institutions,—technical and scientific studies for boys and Home Science and Fine Arts for girls being the elective subjects.

(2) *Sarada Mandir Basic Training College for Women* : This purely residential institution, started in 1950, trains teachers for imparting instruction in the Primary Basic Schools of the State. Spinning, Cane-work, & Agriculture are taught. Training is also imparted in creative art and music. There is provision for physical education.

(3) *Junior Basic School* : Started in 1949 it has now a total strength of 274 students and 9 teachers. Spinning and gardening, clay-modelling, paper cutting and painting, games, music, recitations, dramas, dancing, cleaning work in villages are some of the items taught. There is a separate library with juvenile literature.

Humanitarian : (1) *Social Education Centre* : Ashrama workers had been carrying on social welfare work among the Bagdi community in the neighbourhood since 1936. From 1939 this is being carried on in a more organized form with the help of the State Government. At present there are 9 such social education centres—5 for men and 4 for women adults. The strength of the schools is 132 men and 60 women. Efforts are being made to make the adults not only literate but also socially useful by giving them training in collective village work etc. Ideals of unity and national consciousness are inculcated by holding bhajans, jatra performances, Kathakatha etc.

(2) *Charitable Homœopathic Dispensary* : Daily average attendance—50.

(3) *Community Centre* : This social recreational centre for village women started in 1953 is furnished with modern aids such as gramophone, radio etc. A Community Literacy centre, particularly for adult Muslim women, functions under it.

(4) *Vivek-Bharati Patha-Bhaban* : This Area Library started under the First Five Year Plan in 1954 offers free library service to people in and around the locality. It has 7 feeder Libraries.

(5) *Audio-Visual Department* : Films of educational and social interest are being regularly shown in different villages.

The Management are deeply thankful to the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Education Department of West Bengal, Central Social Welfare Board, and all the well-wishers, donors and subscribers for their substantial help.