

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LXIII

JULY 1958

No. 7



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

## TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA\*

The gentle breeze of Divine Compassion rippled the Ocean of Formless Consciousness,  
And that birthless, deathless and undivided Absolute  
Took, by Māyā, a human form.

O God and man, Thy benign smile spreads its lustre  
Illumining even that region beyond the mind  
Where the sun and the moon dare not enter.

The exquisite charm of the God of Beauty  
Pales before Thy Divine form,  
And what sweet splendour Thine eyes shed!  
Whoever beholds them longs to dedicate his body, mind and soul to Thy holy feet.

How many ages have passed in eager expectation of Thee,  
O Messenger of Truth.  
Today all doubts have melted.

O Lord, I bring to Thy feet all that I have—  
I offer my life to Thy Service.

—Swami Premeshananda

\*Translated by Swami Shraddhananda from the original Bengali ('Arūpa-Sāgare līlā-laharī' etc.)

## THE GĪTĀ II\*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Gītā requires a little preliminary introduction. The scene is laid on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra. There were two branches of the same race fighting for the empire of India about five thousand years ago. The Pāṇḍavas had the right, but the Kauravas had the might. The Pāṇḍavas were five brothers, and they were living in a forest. Krishna was the friend of the Pāṇḍavas. The Kauravas would not grant them as much land as would cover the point of a needle.

The opening scene is the battlefield, and both sides see their relatives and friends—one brother on one side, and another on the other side; a grandfather on one side, a grandson on the other side; . . . When Arjuna sees his own friends and relatives on the other side and knows that he may have to kill them, his heart gives way and he says that he will not fight. Thus begins the Gītā.

For all of us in this world, life is a continuous fight. . . . Many a time comes when we want to interpret our weakness and cowardice as forgiveness and renunciation. There is no merit in the renunciation of a beggar. If a person who can [give a blow], forbears, there is merit in that. If a person who has, gives up, there is merit in that. We know how often in our lives through laziness and cowardice we give up the battle and try to hypnotize our minds into the belief that we are brave.

The Gītā opens with this very significant verse: "Arise, O prince! Give up this faint-heartedness, this weakness! Stand up and fight!" Then Arjuna, trying to argue the matter [with Krishna], brings higher moral ideas, how nonresistance is better than resistance, and so on. He is trying to justify himself, but he cannot fool Krishna. Krishna is the higher Self, or God. He sees through the argument at once. In this case [the

motive] is weakness. Arjuna sees his own relatives and he cannot strike them. . . .

There is a conflict in Arjuna's heart between his emotionalism and his duty. The nearer we are to [beasts and] birds, the more we are in the hells of emotion. We call it love. It is self-hypnotization. We are under the control of our [emotions] like animals. A cow can sacrifice its life for its young. Every animal can. What of that? It is not the blind, birdlike emotion that leads to perfection. . . . [To reach] the eternal consciousness, that is the goal of man! There emotion has no place, nor sentimentalism, nor anything that belongs to the senses—only the light of pure reason. [There] man stands as spirit.

Now, Arjuna is under the control of this emotionalism. He is not what he should be—a great self-controlled, enlightened sage working through the eternal light of reason. He has become like an animal, like a baby, just letting his heart carry away his brain, making a fool of himself and trying to cover his weakness with the flowery names of "love" and so on. Krishna sees through that. Arjuna talks like a man of a little learning and brings out many reasons, but at the same time he talks the language of a fool.

The sage is not sorry for those that are living nor for those that die. [Krishna says:] "You cannot die nor can I. There was never a time when we did not exist. There will never be a time when we shall not exist. As in this life a man begins with childhood, and [passes through youth and old age, so at death he merely passes into another kind of body]. Why should a wise man be sorry?" And where is the beginning of this emotiona-

\* Reprinted with the kind permission of the publishers of *Vedānta and the West*, Vedānta Place, Hollywood,



lism that has got hold of you? It is in the senses. "It is the touch of the senses that brings all this quality of existence: heat and cold, pleasure and pain. They come and go." Man is miserable this moment, happy the next. As such he cannot experience the nature of the soul. . . .

"Existence can never be non-existence, neither can non-existence ever become existence. . . . Know, therefore, that that which pervades all this universe is without beginning or end. It is unchangeable. There is nothing in the universe that can change [the Changeless]. Though this body has its beginning and end, the dweller in the body is infinite and without end."

Knowing this, stand up and fight! Not one step back, that is the idea. . . . Fight it out, whatever comes. Let the stars move from the spheres! Let the whole world stand against us! Death means only a change of garment. What of it? Thus fight! You gain nothing by becoming cowards. . . . Taking a step backward, you do not avoid any misfortune. You have cried to all the gods in the worlds. Has misery ceased? The masses in India cry to sixty million gods, and still die like dogs. Where are these gods? . . . The gods come to help you when you have succeeded. So what is the use? Die game. . . . This bending the knee to superstitions, this selling yourself to your own mind does not benefit you, my soul. You are infinite, deathless, birthless. Because you are infinite spirit, it does not benefit you to be a slave. . . . Arise! Awake! Stand up and fight! Die if you must. There is none to help you. You are all the world. Who can help you?

"Beings are unknown to our human senses before birth and after death. It is only in the interim that they are manifest. What is there to grieve about?

"Some look at It [the Self] with wonder. Some talk of It as wonderful. Others hear of It as wonderful. Others, hearing of It, do not understand.

"But if you say that killing all these people

is sinful, then consider this from the standpoint of your own caste-duty. . . . Making pleasure and misery the same, making success and defeat the same, do thou stand up and fight!"

This is the beginning of another peculiar doctrine of the Gītā—the doctrine of nonattachment. That is to say, we have to bear the result of our own actions because we attach ourselves to them. . . . Only what is done as duty for duty's sake . . . can scatter the bondage of karma. There is no danger that you can overdo it. . . . "If you do even a little of it [this yoga will save you from the terrible round of birth and death].

"Know, Arjuna, the mind that succeeds is the mind that is concentrated. The minds that are taken up with two thousand subjects [have] their energies dispersed. Some can talk flowery language and think there is nothing beyond the Vedas. They want to go to heaven. They want good things through the power of the Vedas, and so they make sacrifices." Such will never attain any success [in spiritual life] unless they give up all these materialistic ideas.

That is another great lesson. Spirituality can never be attained unless all material ideas are given up. . . . What is in the senses? The senses are all delusion. People wish to retain them [in heaven] even after they are dead—a pair of eyes, a nose. Some imagine they will have more organs than they have now. They want to see God sitting on a throne through all eternity—the material body of God. . . . Such men's desires are for the body, for food and drink and enjoyment. It is the materialistic life prolonged. Man cannot think of anything beyond this life. This life is all for the body. "Such a man never comes to that concentration which leads to freedom."

"The Vedas only teach things belonging to the three guṇas, to sattwa, rajas, and tamas." The Vedas only teach about things in nature. People cannot think of anything they do not see on earth. If they talk about heaven, they think of a king sitting on a throne, of people burning incense. It is all nature, nothing be-



yond nature. The Vedas, therefore, teach nothing but nature. Go beyond nature, beyond the dualities of existence, beyond your own consciousness, caring for nothing, neither for good nor for evil.

We have identified ourselves with our bodies. We are only body, or rather, possessed of a body. If I am pinched, I cry. All this is nonsense, since I am the soul. All this chain of misery, imagination, animals, gods and demons, everything, the whole world—all this comes from the identification of ourselves with the body. I am spirit. Why do I jump if you pinch me? . . . Look at the slavery of it. Are you not ashamed? We are religious! We are philosophers! We are sages! Lord bless us! What are we? Living hells, that is what we are. Lunatics, that is what we are!

We cannot give up the idea [of body]. We are earthbound. . . . Our ideas are burial grounds. When we leave the body we are bound by thousands of elements to those [ideas].

Who can work without any attachment? That is the real question. Such a man is the same whether his work succeeds or fails. His heart does not give one false beat even if his whole lifework is burnt to ashes in a moment. "This is the sage who always works for work's sake without caring for the results. Thus he goes beyond the pain of birth and death. Thus he becomes free." Then he sees that this attachment is all delusion. The Self can never be attached. . . . Then he goes beyond all the scriptures and philosophies. If the mind is deluded and pulled into a whirlpool by books and scriptures, what is the good of all these scriptures? One says this, another says that. What book shall you take? Stand alone! See the glory of your own soul, and see that you will have to work. Then you will become a man of firm will.

Arjuna asks: "Who is a person of established will?"

[Krishna answers:] "The man who has given up all desires, who desires nothing, not even his life, nor freedom, nor gods, nor work,

nor anything. When he has become perfectly satisfied, he has no more cravings. He has seen the glory of the Self and has found that the world, and the gods, and heaven are. . . within his own Self. Then the gods become no gods; death becomes no death; life becomes no life." Everything has changed. "A man is said to be [illumined] if his will has become firm, if his mind is not disturbed by misery, if he does not desire any happiness, if he is free of all [attachment], of all fear, of all anger. . . .

"As the tortoise can draw in his legs and if you strike him not one foot comes out, even so the sage can draw all his sense organs inside," and nothing can force them out. Nothing can shake him, no temptation or anything. Let the universe tumble about him, it does not make one single ripple in his mind.

Then comes a very important question. Sometimes people fast for days. . . . When the worst man has fasted for twenty days he becomes quite gentle. Fasting and torturing themselves have been practised by people all over the world. Krishna's idea is that this is all nonsense. He says that the senses will for the moment recede from the man who tortures himself, but will emerge again with twenty times more [power]. . . . What should you do? The idea is to be natural—no asceticism. Go on, work, only mind that you are not attached. The will can never be fixed strongly in the man who has not learnt and practised the secret of nonattachment.

I go out and open my eyes. If something is there, I must see it. I cannot help it. The mind runs after the senses. Now the senses must give up any reaction to nature.

"Where it is dark night for the [sense-bound] world, the self-controlled [man] is awake. It is daylight for him. . . . And where the world is awake, the sage sleeps." Where is the world awake? In the senses. People want to eat and drink and have children, and then they die a dog's death. . . . They are always awake for the senses. Even their religion is

just for that. They invent a God to help them, to give them more women, more money, more children—never a God to help them become more godlike! Where the whole world is awake, the sage sleeps. But where the ignorant are asleep, there the sage keeps awake—in the world of light where man looks upon himself not as a bird, not as an animal, not as a body, but as infinite spirit, deathless, immortal. There, where the ignorant are asleep, and do not have time, nor intellect, nor power

to understand, there the sage is awake. That is daylight for him.

“As all the rivers of the world constantly pour their waters into the ocean, but the ocean’s grand, majestic nature remains undisturbed and unchanged, so even though all the senses bring in sensations from nature, the oceanlike heart of the sage knows no disturbance, knows no fear.” Let miseries come in millions of rivers and happiness in hundreds! I am no slave to misery! I am no slave to happiness!

---

## UNIFIED OUTLOOK THROUGH PROPER DISCIPLINE

BY THE EDITOR

### I

‘Mind’, as we ordinarily know it, moves ‘matter’. The simplest proof is that we can make our physical body obey us. When we resolve aright, our heavy frame clambers up a mountain side or faces destruction in the field of battle. It is not necessary that the initial suggestion should originate in our ‘own’ mind. It can emanate from anyone with whom we are in contact. It is thus that professors convey knowledge to students, salesmen persuade intending purchasers, or politicians gain votes. When conditions are adjusted properly, views put forth by others become accepted as our own. The result is precisely what it would have been if they had sprung up independently within ourselves. The body proceeds to express them through relevant activities.

Looked at from this angle, physical movements fall into a wider perspective in which the decisive role is played by thoughts. The world, to this extent, is not so much material, but mental. If we systematically alter the pattern of thoughts, the consequences must, in due course, penetrate into appropriate mate-

rial levels. If those patterns are such as rouse unhealthy passions, like hatred or greed, the outcome at the tangible end must turn out to be disastrous. We shall find ourselves dragged into war, small or big, as history has amply shown. If and when it comes, the cultural achievements of a few decades or centuries prior to us would be wiped out within a short time. The serious question, therefore, is not whether we should accept ‘matter’ as the basic reality, but whether we are, in our ignorance, indulging in thoughts which must condense inevitably into painful material combinations. Do we not remember what Shakespeare put into the mouth of the Prince when he addressed sorrowing Capulet and Montague? Said the Prince:

‘See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love;  
And I, for winking at your discords too,  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen:—all are punished.’

When tragedy has taken its toll, it is poor compensation to say:



‘... I will raise her statue in pure gold;  
That while Verona by that name is  
known,

There shall no figure at such rate be set  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.’

The Prince’s pathetic rebuke can be lifted from its limited setting of tragic family feuds and applied to all important contexts of the modern world. If thoughts that carry disruption in seed form are left to themselves, they are bound at their own speeds to sprout, grow up, and bear fruits to poison the very atmosphere people breathe. What is worse, these fruits will in their turn, scatter fresh batches of seeds, thereby extending the evil to vaster areas and generations yet to come.

Every religion has some texts that enumerate injurious thoughts. Often they are spoken of as marks of a ‘demoniac nature’. Through attractive stories they are presented as ‘attributes of living men’ who act under their influence and bring about calamities. This is a useful device. ‘For it is only when we can recognize evil in visible shapes that we can take steps to avoid it.’<sup>1</sup> If we prepare a list of the main undesirable characteristics, it can serve as a standard of reference to check our own mental movements. That will benefit us directly, and the rest of the world indirectly in the course of our dealings with it. We may start with the general statement that people of the demoniac type ‘do not know what acts they should undertake to achieve human welfare’—technically called ‘aims of man’, individual and collective. Naturally ‘they also fail to see from what acts they should abstain in order to avert evil.’ There is a kind of ignorance which is due to want of opportunities for study. That too leads to pain. That ignorance, however, is pardonable.

<sup>1</sup> Ā-adhyāya-parisamāpteḥ āsurī sampat prāṇi-  
viśeṣaṇatvena pradarsyate, pratyakṣikaraṇena ca  
śakyate asyāḥ parivarjanam kartum iti. Śaṅkara  
Bhāṣya *Gītā*, xvi. 6. Pravṛttim ca, pravartanam,  
yasmin puruṣārtha-sādhane kartavye... tām,  
tad-viparītām, yasmād anarthahetoḥ nivartitavyam  
sā nivṛttih, tām ca janā āsurā... na jānanti...  
āsaucā anācārā māyāvināḥ anṛta-vādinō hi  
āsurāḥ. *ibid*, 7.

But demoniac people stand in a different category. They are not innocent. They are clever and have used their intellectual faculties for evolving a formula of ‘Power and Pleasure’.<sup>2</sup> According to them, virtue and vice do not act as invisible causes to produce joys and sorrows, or success and failure, as religious people believe. The universe, they argue, is only the resultant of ‘blind forces’. Why should not man confidently ‘manipulate them as dictated by his ego and permitted by the range of his abilities? There is no motive power behind the universe except desire. In its most sensuous form it produces physical bodies, while in its subtle form as aggressive and ruthless ambition it leads to ‘success’. Knowledge occupies an important place, since without it one may not understand how to secure pleasures. There is no need for God in this scheme; and beyond the limit called ‘death’, there is nothing enjoyable for which one should practise self-control now.

Regular introspection alone can show how often we are releasing into the total world of mind the destructive forces of the ‘Power and Pleasure’ formula. Scriptures condemn the narrow and perverse reasoning behind it. They point out that it can create only endless plots and frustrations in its follower’s mind, and irreparable losses and sufferings in the lives of his victims, individually or collectively. Those who adopt it violate the Divinity present in themselves and in the rest.

## II

We are, however, so constituted that we can, if we so desire, deal with inner forces more efficiently than with external ones. To the extent we step up and co-ordinate internal values, our thoughts can also acquire a rare

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the drift of ‘Bhogaiśvarya-gatiḥ’ and ‘Bhogaiśvarya-prasaktāḥ’ in *Gītā*, ii. 43 and 44; also of ‘cintām-aparimeyām’ ‘Kāma-bhogārtham anyāyenārtha-sañcayān (ihante: na dharmārtham),’ ‘Mām, ātma-para-deheṣu pradviṣantaḥ’ in *Ibid*, xvi. 11-18; and ‘Karṣayantaḥ śarīrastham... karaṇa-samudāyam, Mām ca tat-karma-buddhi-sākṣi-bhūtam; Mad-anuśāsana-akaraṇam eva Mat-karṣanam in *Ibid*, xvii. 6.



penetrative power to tap the sources of all round development in the field of our daily work. That is what scriptures teach. It is immaterial, for the sake of analysis, whether we say that God regulates this acceleration as a mark of His grace, or that Nature herself does it through some of her higher laws, set in motion automatically by our sustained aspiration. Of all the people in the world,—physical culturists, artists, wealth-producers, moral instructors, scientists, and politicians, to mention only a few—there is none who stresses the value of aspiration more than the religious person does.

It may be that the aspiration advances along a conventionally accepted devotional path alone. In other words, the meditator may be engaged only in directing his love to the Supreme Being, thought of as endowed with a Form and a set of Qualities appealing to him most. He may, for example, visualize himself as seated in the very presence of his Chosen Ideal. By creative suggestions from within, he may next train his mental eye to gaze on the beauty of the Lord's limbs, mentioning them by name one after another. Likewise, the mental ear may listen to assuring words uttered by Him, and mental service may be offered either at an altar or in the persons of His numerous creatures. In such exercises it is advantageous to control physical movements which divert attention from the main purpose. But mental movements of the right sort are welcomed and systematically intensified. The one vital difference is that they are focussed on the Lord as the Indweller of all. Later, even when the physical body deals promptly with its legitimate objects, the loving remembrance of the Ideal, as fully immanent in the total environment, is diligently kept up with special effort. The cumulative result of repeated endeavours in this line must be to give the seeker an unwavering conviction that he is in the protecting arms of the Divine,—guided by Him to play noble, though sometimes painful, parts in the situations created by His inscrutable power. Prayer and work then blend harmoniously. While we

may see him serving society, he himself views his action only as worship,—as religious ritual of a different variety. He may not claim any result for himself out of it. But results are bound to follow, and in all probability in a far greater measure than expected.<sup>3</sup> If by watering the root of a tree, its trunk and branches are able to get the necessary nourishment without water being poured directly on them, is it not reasonable to find the welfare of everyone, including oneself, brought about by the worship of the One Being who creates, sustains, and protects all?<sup>4</sup>

That is how the devotee may proceed and interpret his experiences. To get a fuller view, we may turn to the sacred texts which show that certain developments, not consciously aimed at, do normally take place in the personality of the sincere aspirant. Has not the Lord been residing in his heart all the while? It was indeed under His benign look and silent prompting that the meditator could succeed in emptying his mind of attachments for petty sense objects. What is, then, more fitting than that the Lord Himself should deign, at the proper time, to light the lamp of Wisdom and place it, unasked, in the chamber of His devotee's heart where stormy passions rage no more? That would be a happy consummation of his labours and self-surrender. As one commentator says, it will be the lamp fed by the oil of pure devotion, and fanned by the gentle breeze of earnest meditation. Right intuition will act as its wick, and it will remain purified by the cultivation of piety and other well known virtues.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Ísvare sannyāsasya adhikātara-phala-hetutva-upapattē. Ibid, vi. introduction.*

<sup>4</sup> *Yathā hi skandha-śākhānām  
Taror-mūlāvasecanam,  
Evam ārādhnam Viṣṇoḥ  
Sarveṣāṃ ātmanas-ca hi. Bhāgavatam, viii.  
v. 49.*

<sup>5</sup> *Teṣāṃ . . . nivṛtta-sarva-bāhyaiṣaṇānām . . .  
prītiḥ, snehaḥ, tat-pūrvakam Mām bhajatām . . .  
prayacchāmi buddhiḥ, samyagdarśanam . . . yena . . .  
Mām Parameśvaram ātmabhūtam ātmatvena prati-  
padyante . . . antaḥ-karaṇāśayaḥ, tasmin eva sthi-  
taḥ san, jñānadīpena, viveka-pratyaya-rūpeṇa (mi-  
thyā-pratyaya-lakṣaṇam mohāndhakāram nāśayāmi)*



We may account for the inflow of discrimination thus: Consciousness or the 'current of thought', as we know it, contains within it all the elements required to make us attain perfection. We experience delays because many of our desires and purposes point to a contrary direction. Intentions and attitudes act like adapters, whether we know it or not. They select particular aspects from the general current, and in due course help to manifest them in tangible forms, i.e. in the world of the senses, including our physical body. Obstacles and pains confront us because wrong adapters have been inserted. Except sheer 'ignorance', there was no 'reason', especially of a 'compelling' nature, for our having 'introduced' them earlier. But since they have taught us what pains to expect from them, let us hasten to put in new adapters capable of picking up the elements that can bring about the good of all. In other words, let us make universal good the one aim of all future efforts.

Some may find universal good to be too vague a concept. We can, if we like, use other terms like love, service, truthfulness and so on instead. But even these terms have an apparent mutual exclusiveness. The resulting intellectual pictures may probably make us think that supplementary exercises would have to be undertaken later for achieving all round perfection. There is, however, no reason for anxiety on that score. For, irrespective of conceptual limitations, occasioned by words,—even the best chosen ones—the general aspiration itself will, as it gathers momentum, blossom forth in all desirable directions. It will supply, from 'outside' as it were, whatever additional qualities are required. Thus, what is deemed pure devotion at the commencement ultimately gets widened and harmonized with discrimination as well as

practical efficiency in daily life.<sup>6</sup> This Wisdom that is gained can never be divorced from Love or Service, as commonly feared by beginners, or by critics who 'make no beginning' at all. On the other hand, it will come as the much needed corrective to the vicious formula of 'Power and Pleasure'. Henceforth it will be the province of Wisdom to decide *how* power should be secured, *what type* of pleasure gained, and *for whom*.

### III

To be convinced about the merits of a unified outlook is one thing; but the actual improvisation of disciplines to achieve it is a totally different thing. And yet, without such improvisation, theories can have no practical value.

Among the aspirants who intend seriously to make experiments, there may be some who are temperamentally inclined to put all 'controllable' changes into one big category called Nature. There may be others who are prepared to accept, in addition, categories like individual souls, infinite in number, and a Supreme Being, with different meanings attached to each term. Disputations among these groups may not carry any of them very far. It is much more profitable to see that all systems,—whatever be the number and implications of their categories—agree on one vital principle, viz. that all *humanly controllable mental impurities* must be eliminated. Until that is done there is no hope of attaining perfection which, according to one group, is inherent in Nature's subtlest realms and, according to the rest, is either the 'essential' form of individual souls, or realizable as a 'gift' from the Almighty. It is certainly reasonable to hold that when every 'controllable' change is effected, Perfection which must be, by its very nature, beyond changes in the sense of increase, decrease, or grudging, is sure to register itself on well prepared and

<sup>6</sup> Cf. dakṣaḥ, pratyutpanneṣu kāryeṣu sadyo yathāvat pratipattum samarthaḥ. He is able to decide rightly on the spot in matters demanding prompt attention. *Ibid*, xii, 16.

. . . Bhakti-prasāda-snehābhiṣikṭena, Mad-bhāva-abhiniveśa-vāteritena, brahmacarya-ādi-sādhana-saṁskāravat-prajñāvartinā, virakta-antaḥkaraṇa-ādhāreṇa - viśaya-vyāvṛtta-citta-rāga-dveṣākaluṣitanivātāpavāraka-sṭhena, nitya-pravṛttaikāgrya-dhyā-najanita - samyag-darśana-bhāsvatā jñāna-dīpena. *Gītā*, Śaṅkara Bhāṣya, x, 10-11.



sensitive grounds. And all religions agree that what we call 'thought' can be made sensitive to that point.

There is, thus, no harm if thought is treated as a product of Nature's evolution, and the ultimate, unified, all-loving outlook itself as a much finer and later product. Nor is there any harm if mind also is declared to be matter of a very subtle kind. What is essential is the recognition that the means adopted *now*, or at *any* stage, must hold in seed form the properties expected to appear in developed forms at *subsequent* stages. If brotherhood and compassion are to be realized in ourselves and in others whom we contact, at least two main conditions should be fulfilled. To use negative terms, we have systematically to detect and root out exclusiveness and hatred from the one area ever at our disposal, viz. our 'own' current thinking, willing, and feeling. Is there anything more likely to yield to control than these? Matter, energy, and mind are all there in a 'portable' state. They follow us as an ever-open laboratory for verifying the validity of the truths we proclaim for the improvement of others. Next, to use positive terms, we have to examine thoughts till we can sense, pick up, and strengthen the virtues typical of the integrated vision that confers benefits on all alike. When once we learn to handle major inner forces, we shall also acquire the art of maintaining a single, even, and expectant pressure of aspiration, whatever may be the character of the subsidiary disciplines carried on from time to time,—whether they come under the literal meanings of the negative or positive terms we use.

One point to be remembered about these disciplines is that the gains that might accrue from them will be predominantly qualitative in character and verifiable within the personality of the aspirant. They are not directly intended to produce that kind of quantitative improvement in all sectors of public life which constitute the pronounced objectives of agricultural, economic, political, or military departments of a modern State. What mental disciplines can offer is the prospect of achieving inner stabi-

lity and discrimination that nothing can shake. There can be harmonization of rare alertness, absolute fearlessness, habitual trust in the goodness of man and Nature, and quiet capacity to add to the totality of benevolent influences operating in any context. Is it a small matter to fashion, out of a well-meaning but hesitant seeker, a personality that can swing into position in its entirety at a moment's notice,—one that can exert an unflinching, though often imperceptible, pull on its environment,—through words and deeds at opportune moments, and through a creative invocation of highest values at all times?

#### IV

Among the disciplines indicated by sacred books, one of the most comprehensive is based on the study of the personality itself. We find it poetically described in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. The approach there is fivefold. It is meant primarily for persons conversant with scriptural texts and yearning to widen their already acquired knowledge into a unified outlook. Even those who regard the habit of questioning as the special mark of modernity can profitably take up this study. They can find therein enough scope to exercise their powers of reasoning: first, to see where the original passages lead; and secondly, to overcome the inner resistances to their getting out of accustomed, narrow, mental grooves. The commentator sets the ball rolling by asking why man, and not external Nature as such, is taken as the starting point. We are free to assign reasons satisfying to us. He simply leads the way by giving the traditional reply. All creatures, he reminds us, are born out of food, i.e. matter. In other words, matter itself is so arranged as to function as a body capable of unfolding higher values. All that is in the external world is therefore 'potential' in the embodied man. Man is pre-eminent among creatures, as all can see. 'He alone is competent to perform actions (to manifest all latent powers) and to acquire Wisdom.' 'The Self is expressed in its full glory only in man. He is endowed with intelligence. He speaks



what is known; he sees what is known. He knows what is to come. He understands the visible and invisible worlds. He desires to realize immortality by appropriate means. Thus endowed is man.'<sup>7</sup> All men have not evolved sufficiently to exemplify everything that is mentioned here; but the diligent and painstaking ones can evolve. That is why scripture has taken the trouble to make so many statements.

But why should we proceed *slowly*, climbing up five steps, as it were, instead of making a *through* flight to the highest level? 'Man's intelligence is at present tied up with the habit of looking upon particular external forms as the Self,—which they are not. It cannot be enabled at once to turn upon the innermost or subtlest Principle, the Self, and rest upon the Unconditioned without taking the aid of familiar conditions. Hence the fiction of a visible body is assumed for the purpose of leading the aspirant by degrees to the real knowledge of the Self,—as in the case of some one who is to be shown the (crescent) moon hidden behind the branches of a tree.'<sup>8</sup>

Thus, in the first approach, we are asked to start with the most patent 'personal' possession, the physical body. It has its well known head, arms, trunk and the like with which we are naturally identified from our birth. From there we are to move on to grasp the significance of the entire field of Matter which may be called an unrecognized Cosmic

body. The little body is the name given to a temporary configuration of the matter of the bigger one, moving in and out. The comparison of the lower limbs of the human frame to 'the tail' is a poetic figure,<sup>9</sup> deliberately used. It shows that we must adopt the poet's eyes to catch, and take full advantage of, inward visibility. Intellectual concepts of debating philosophers will only hide the light. If this exercise is rightly carried out, the defects of inordinately clinging to the perishable body will disappear by themselves. In their place will come a constant awareness of the total fund of Matter,—the basis for the birth, development, and final withdrawal of all beings in the universe.

In the second stage, the same process is repeated, starting from the limited vital energy functioning as the individual life, and gradually integrating its value with Cosmic Energy. This has to be done in such a way that the earlier outlook gained by examining Matter is not lost, but enriched and widened. It is Energy itself that is viewed as Matter, individual or Cosmic.

The third stage starts from the individual mind and envisages the Cosmic. The study will give due consideration to what is conscious to the individual and what falls outside it. This is the plane which, when properly handled, helps latent values like truth and good will to be made 'habitual'. And the disciplines involve the careful co-ordination of what is accepted from scriptures and the living teacher with one's own practices and direct perception.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Nābher-adhastād-yad-aṅgam tat puccham pra-tiṣṭhā . . . Etat-prakṛtyā uttaraśam prāṇamayādī-nām rūpakatva-siddhiḥ, mūṣā-niṣikta-druta-tāmrā-pratimāvat. *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Jñānam śāstroka-padārthānām pariñānam, vijñānam tu śāstrato jñātānām tathā eva svānubhava-karaṇam; tābhyām jñāna-vijñānābhyām tṛptaḥ sañjāta-alam-pratyaya ātmā antaḥkaraṇam yasya saḥ . . . aprakampyo bhavati. Śaṅkara Bhāṣya, *Gītā*, vi. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Sarveṣām api anna-rasa-vikāratve Brahmavam-śatve ca aviśiṣṭe, kasmāt puruṣa eva gṛhyate? Prādhānyāt. Kim punaḥ prādhānyam? Karma-jñāna-adhikāraḥ . . . 'Puruṣe tvevāvistarām-ātmā; sa hi prajñānena sampannatamo, vijñātam vadati, vijñātam paśyati, veda śvastanam, veda lokālokau, martyenāmṛtam ikṣati ityevam sampannaḥ.' *Tait.* ii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Tasya ca bāhyākāra-viśeṣeṣu anātmasu ātma-bhāvitā buddhiḥ, anālambya viśeṣam kamcit, sahasā antaratama-pratyagātma-viśayā nirālambanā ca kartum aśakyā iti drṣṭa-śarīra-ātma-sāmānya-kalpanayā, śākhā-candra-nidarśanavat, antaḥ praveśayan-āha-tasya idam eva śiraḥ. *Ibid.*



# THE CONCEPT OF TRANSCENDENTAL REALITY

AS EVOLVED BY MAṄḌANA MIŚRA

BY DR. S. S. HASURKAR

The doctrine of the Ultimate Reality, as discussed and developed by Śrī Maṅḍana Miśra, in his famous *Brahma-Siddhi*,<sup>1</sup> is unique, not so much because it displays any entirely novel aspect, but because it reveals a clarity of conception, a logical force of the arguments in support and a convincing strength of the examples, drawn from the level of the conditional reality,—which are at once remarkable.

The unassailable,—and at the same time almost unchangeable,—pedestal, on which the fundamental aspects of the doctrine of the Ultimate Reality had been placed by the greatest Advaitin of all times, viz. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, and the series of the clashes with other systems of philosophy, gaining more prominence than ever before—both these factors encouraged the trend of the evolution of the Advaitic thought of post-Śaṅkara times to treat the doctrine of the Ultimate Reality as quite firmly established in the fundamentals, to supplement it in a way of clarification, to defend it fiercely against the onslaughts of the rival schools, and to devote more of attention to the elaboration of lower facets of the metaphysical set-up of being in accordance with Advaitism. All the works of major Advaitic writers of post-Śaṅkara age display this tendency with varying degrees of emphasis. And the *Brahma-Siddhi* of Maṅḍana Miśra presents no exception to this general remark.

Thus, at the very beginning of the first chapter of his work, the philosopher enumerates, in a concise verse-form,<sup>2</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Published in the Madras Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Series, Madras.

<sup>2</sup> Anandam ekam amṛtaṁ ajaṁ vijñānam  
akṣaraṁ  
Asarvaṁ sarvaṁ abhayaṁ namasyāmaḥ  
prajāpatiṁ

fundamental aspects of the doctrine of Ultimate Reality, and then systematically proceeds to take up those facets one by one and elaborate them in his own characteristic fashion.

First of all, he picks up the problem of the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality, and declares in ringing tones that It is of the nature of Bliss. There are some philosophers, he says,<sup>3</sup> who interpret the unimpeachable texts, stating this fact, in a manner totally different and logically untenable. These thinkers argue that had the Ultimate Reality been of the nature of Bliss, the toils of the seekers after It would never have become capable of vanquishing the chains of Bondage; on the other hand, they would have strengthened them. Because, in that case the *sādhana* would have been of the character of having been tempted by the desire (*rāga*) on the part of the *sādhakas* to attain that Bliss. Therefore, the Ultimate Reality can be conceived of only as being beyond the Shadow of Sorrow, and not as of the nature of Bliss too. The sacred texts, such as 'ānandaṁ Brahma' which characterize the Ultimate Reality as Bliss, should be interpreted a bit differently. The term 'ānanda' there should be taken as implying a complete absence of sorrow as such. It is futile to argue that if mere absence of sorrow is denoted by the term 'joy', an expression such as 'That stone is full of joy' will have to be accepted as correct. Because, there is no consciousness as such associated with the absence of sorrow in the stone, they conclude.

But, this argument of the profound thinkers, says the author,<sup>4</sup> is totally divorced from reality. Because, in its support, not a single instance can be quoted on the empirical

<sup>3</sup> Vide *Brahma-Siddhi*, Page 1, line 12 to Page 1, line 19.

<sup>4</sup> Vide B.S. 1/19 to 2/7.



plane of being, where mere absence of sorrow is denoted by the term 'joy'. On the other hand, joy is actually experienced even when sorrow of some sort or the other is being experienced, as for example by a person, who, in the scorching heat of the mid-summer sun, is standing in the waist-deep water of the tank. That joy is something positive by nature, and is different from mere absence of sorrow can be proved in yet another way. A person, who is without any sort of sorrow,—if he is given, say, a rose, he experiences a totally new sensation. Had the joy been nothing more than mere absence of sorrow, that person being already full of joy, that gift of rose would never have become capable of producing any new sensation in him. Moreover, no difference of degrees being possible in absence, had joy been identical with absence of sorrow, it would not have been subject to the difference of degrees, and no one would have striven to amass more and more worldly things to catch hold of more and more joy.

Some people argue<sup>5</sup> that it is 'desire', *kāma*, which is identical with sorrow, and because there happens to be a total annihilation of desire on the attainment of Brahma-hood, the latter is characterized as of the nature of joy. But, these thinkers also are obviously on the wrong track, says Maṇḍana Miśra.<sup>6</sup> Had they been right, they would not have been contradicted by a common state of affairs, where a man, who is already without any sort of desire, experiences a totally different sensation, on being provided with an enjoyable object. It may be argued here: Since it has been invariably seen that only those objects are capable of giving joy for which there is the corresponding desire in the person concerned, it is in the fitness of the things to assume that such a man necessarily had got the desire, though in a latent form, in him. The said enjoyable object at first roused that latent desire in that man and then vanquished it. And it was that vanquishment of the

desire, which was misunderstood by the Advaitin to be a positive entity, worth characterizing as joy. But exponents of such a view conveniently forget that the enjoyment of a thing of pleasure does not vanquish the desire. On the other hand, it actually feeds it. Moreover, had the vanquishment of desire through the acquisition of the desired object been the real nature of joy, there would have been no difference of degrees in the joy, experienced by two persons on being given two similar objects of desire. Surely, there cannot be any difference of degrees 'in the vanquishment of desire' on two personal planes! The realization of the transient nature of objects of desire,—well, it also vanquishes the desire. But, surely, no one experiences that sort of sensation when the desire is vanquished through such a 'doṣa-darśan' (understanding of 'defects'), which one does, when the desire is vanquished (or to put it in a more logical way—temporarily satisfied) through the enjoyment of that object. Moreover, had the joy been nothing more than absence of desire, in the life of a man who is given and who has enjoyed an object of pleasure, without his having desired for it first,—then, the state of actual enjoyment of that object would not have been drastically different from the states immediately preceding and succeeding it, simply because absence of desire as such is common to all these three states! It is not possible to argue here that the state of enjoyment cannot help being different from other states, because it has the desire present in it in an aroused and unvanquished form, while in the other two states, it is unaroused and vanquished respectively. Because, in that case, a curious state of affairs will have to be accepted as its logical sequence. The man in question will have to be characterized as happy before and after the enjoyment of the object of pleasure, and as unhappy during the enjoyment itself. To that extent even the learned philosophers, with whom the problem of essential nature of joy is being discussed here,—implies the author,—will not belie the

<sup>5</sup> B.S. 2/8-9.

<sup>6</sup> B.S. 2/9 to 3/12.



truth. Moreover, it is a matter of common experience that the object of pleasure, un-obtained as yet but presenting itself in the form of sweet remembrance, has got the capacity to arouse desire. The same, when taken hold of and experienced, has got the capacity to calm it (though of course temporarily). Now, the stand, just criticized, assumes that the object of pleasure, when taken hold of, arouses the desire. Such an assumption is totally contradicted by the experience, recorded above. Moreover, had the object of pleasure, when actually being experienced, been endowed with the capacity to arouse the desire, it would not have possessed the capacity to vanquish it. Surely, one and the same thing cannot be both arouser and vanquisher of another thing! In the same way, had the joy been identical with absence of desire, people who through an affliction of some sort or another have lost the desire for a particular set or sort of objects of pleasure, would not have lamented their lot and tried to improve the matter through medical treatment. Therefore, thus concludes the author,<sup>7</sup> it is highly improper to deny the essentially positive character of joy and to characterize it as mere absence of sorrow. And, just as on the empirical plane of being, so on the transcendental one too, it is this positive joy, which is denoted by the terms like 'Ānandaṁ'.

In spite of this, he however hastens to add,<sup>8</sup> the *sādhana* of the earnest one does never strengthen the chains of bondage, because that *sādhana* does not fall in the category of the activity springing out of *rāga*. And, only the activity of that sort has got that baneful influence. *Rāga* is not identical with mere wish. But, it is so with the wish which has assumed a form of passion; which has a thing, not really existent, for its object; and which thus owes its own existence to the (conjuring) influence of *Avidyā*. The pure wish to realize the Ultimate Reality eternally identical with the seeker's essential Self,—the wish which arises in the tranquil mind of the seekers as

<sup>7</sup> B.S. 3/13 to 3/16.

<sup>8</sup> B.S. 3/17 to 3/25.

the effect of correct mediate realization of the truth of being,—surely that type of wish cannot be branded as *rāga*. In the same manner, the disgust which is experienced by the seeker, as a result of objective analysis of the empirical world, cannot be characterized as *dveṣa*. Otherwise, even after the acceptance of the stand that the Ultimate Reality is of the character of absence of sorrow, and nothing more, possibility would be still there of the chains of bondage being strengthened by the pious *sādhana*, motivated as it is by the *dveṣa* (i.e. hatred) in the form of disgust with the empirical world.

Having discussed on these lines, the positive character of 'joy', which is unimpeachably preached to be identical with Ultimate Reality, Maṇḍana Miśra turns his guns on other critics, and states<sup>9</sup> that these philosophers find fault with the Advaitic stand, described above, from a yet different angle of approach. They ask: the joy, which is said to be the nature of the Ultimate Reality,—is it cognizable or uncognizable? If it is cognizable, the entire superstructure of Advaitism tumbles down. The fact of these being in the Transcendental Realm of being itself, joy which is cognizable logically indicates the existence of other members of the circle, viz. the cognizer, the act of cognition and the means of cognition in that state. It thus goes against the sacred texts, such as 'Ānandaṁ Brahma', which unequivocally enunciate the identity between Ānandaṁ and Brahma. Nor is it possible to maintain that there is no equal identity as such between Ānanda and Brahma; it is the latter, which is endowed with the former. Because, in that case, the texts, such as 'ekamevādvītiyaṁ Brahma', become inexplicable. Now, if that joy is held as being ever beyond cognition, it is as good as non-existent and therefore hardly worth mentioning. Had the joy-that-is-Brahman been cognizable, it would have been befitting on the part of the sacred texts to enunciate it. Because in that case, it would have constituted the 'parama-puruṣārtha'. But the uncognizability of it robs it of this

<sup>9</sup> B.S. 3/26 to 4/3.



opportunity, and renders it unworthy of mention.

But, this objection of the hostile critics of Advaitism is hardly reasonable, points out the author of *Brahma-Siddhi*.<sup>10</sup> Because, according to the Advaitins, the Bliss, which is the very nature of the self-luminous Transcendental Reality, is neither cognizable (because it cannot be an object of cognition), nor uncognizable (because it is self-manifest). Such a statement may seem to be irrational on the surface of it. But it has got many a similar example even on the level of empirical being. Take for example 'the experience' (i.e. *anubhavaḥ*), which is the fruit (i.e. *phalaṁ*) of means of cognition. This 'experience', whether held as identical with the means of cognition or different therefrom, cannot be viewed as uncognizable. Because, with the cognizability of all objects of knowledge depending upon the cognizability thereof, its otherwise character would ultimately result in the uncognizability of all things! Nor can it be held as exactly cognizable, because, in that case, it will have to be accepted as object of cognition, which however one cannot do. Because, undeniable absence of another experience of the present experience (*saṁvidantarānupalabdhiḥ*) clearly shows that the present experience is never an object of cognition as such. Hence, it has to be accepted as cognizable in the sense of its being self-manifest, and also as uncognizable in the sense of its never being an object of cognition. Another example can be quoted here as having equally irresistible similarity. The individual self of a person, thus, cannot be summarily characterized as uncognizable by nature. Had it been uncognizable, cognition itself would have become impossible. Nor would it have been ever possible for a person, named as A, to connect his cognizable self with a particular object of cognition, and thus to differentiate the object that he has perceived from the object which another person, named as B, might have perceived. On the other hand, this individual self cannot be char-

acterized as cognizable. Because, in that case, it would turn out to be yet another object, to be different from subject, and thus to be non-self itself! Hence, it has to be accepted as neither cognizable nor uncognizable in the common sense of the terms. But as cognizable in an extraordinary sense of 'self-manifest', it should be taken.

There is another school of critics, who try to sabotage the Advaitic conception of the Ultimate Reality as identical with Transcendental Bliss, from yet another point of view. The advocates of this school argue:<sup>11</sup> The descriptive epithets, which try to describe the Ultimate Reality in a negative manner, do not run against the fundamental stand of monism. For example, take the epithets, such as—Secondless, Deathless, Birthless. This 'being less' is not a positive something that can run counter to the basic conception of Advaitism. Caution must be taken, however, when the sacred words, seemingly conveying affirmative descriptions of the Reality, are to be interpreted. For example: Take the line from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*—'Vijñāna-mānandaṁ Brahma'. Here, Vijñāna and Ānanda are obviously different from each other. Had they been identical with each other, the text would not have employed two different words to denote one and the same thing. Now, if the joy, denoted by the term Ānanda, is something positive, something more than mere absence of sorrow, it would be either 'dharma' or 'dharmi',—in which cases, knowledge, denoted by the term 'Vijñāna', would be either 'dharmi' or 'dharma' respectively. Whatever alternative is chosen, the outcome will be the same,—contradiction of the basic stand of monism at the hands of duality. It cannot be argued here that even the acceptance of either of the two, mentioned above, as dharma, and of the other as dharmi, does not lead one to the acceptance of duality, because there exists no drastic mutual distinction (*ātyantika bheda*) between the 'dharma' and the 'dharmi'; otherwise, no relation, such as existing between them two,

<sup>10</sup> B.S. 4/3 to 4/15.

<sup>11</sup> B.S. 4/16 to 5/4.



would have been possible. Because, as there does not exist a drastic mutual distinction between the 'dharma' and the 'dharmi', there also does not exist a complete mutual identity (*ātyantika abheda*) between the two. Therefore, on accepting that out of *Ānanda* and *Vijñāna*, one is 'dharma' and the other 'dharmi', and they are interrelated by a particular relation, one has perforce to accept that even in the Transcendental state of being, there does exist some sort of duality, and that the texts, such as '*Ekamevādvitīyam*', are untrue. Out of this difficult situation, which no Advaitin would ever like to be in, there is only one way to escape,—point out these critics. And it is to interpret the term '*Ānanda*', not as denoting joy, positive by nature, but simply indicating complete absence of sorrow. In other words, according to these philosophers, the term '*Ānanda*', like the terms '*Asthūlaṁ Anaṇu Ahrasvaṁ*', is a negative epithet of the Transcendental Brahma, which is of the nature of *Vijñāna*.

But this criticism is hardly based on the correct understanding of the text '*Vijñāna-mānandaṁ Brahma*', says Maṇḍana Miśra.<sup>12</sup> The key-words in this sentence, viz. *Vijñānaṁ* and *Ānandaṁ*, are not synonymous and are at the same time denoting one and the same thing, i.e. Brahma. This will become clearer by an example. Take a sentence,—What an excellent, dazzling Sun! Now, here two words are employed, namely, excellent and dazzling. These two words are not exactly synonymous. Because, in that case, even one would have become sufficient. Nor do they denote two different entities. For, there is no excellence possible in the Sun apart from splendour; and the splendour is the Sun is inseparable from excellence. Both these terms therefore denote a particular splendour identical with the Sun in their own ways.

<sup>12</sup> B.S. 5/5 to 5/11.

Exactly in the same manner, the terms '*Vijñānaṁ*' and '*Ānandaṁ*' in their own ways denote a particular Bliss or a particular knowledge, eternally identical with Ultimate Reality.

The transcendental character of the Bliss, which is thus undoubtedly of a positive nature, is not due to its either being ever-free from dependence on the external factors, or being above decadence and destruction, but is so by very nature,—says the author of *Brahma-Siddhi*.<sup>13</sup>

Again, reverting to the problem of the exact implication of the term '*Ānandaṁ*', characterizing Brahma, he pleads:<sup>14</sup> Had it meant only complete absence or final destruction of sorrow, the texts proclaiming that the earthly joy, experienced now and then, is but an imperfect and fleeting reflection of the Transcendental Bliss, eternally identical with the *Ātman*,—such texts would turn out to be inexplicable. That there is nothing dearer than the *Ātman* also points out that It is of the character of Bliss.

Some people try to establish this Advaitic tenet on the strength of the remembrance (*parāmarśa*), which occurs to the man who has just enjoyed a deep sleep, in the form: '*Sukhaṁ ahaṁ asvāpsam*'. Because, in the opinion of these Advaitins, such a remembrance would not have become possible, had the self of the sleeper, during the state of deep sleep, not got submerged into the Transcendental Self, which is eternally of the nature of Bliss. But, this attempt of these Advaitins is bound to end in an endless controversy, implies our philosopher, inasmuch as such an experience can be explained with equal feasibility by their opponents as reflecting a complete absence of sorrow, and nothing more, during the past state of deep sleep.

(To be continued)

<sup>13</sup> B.S. 5/11 to 5/15.

<sup>14</sup> B.S. 5/15 to 6/6.



# DIVE DEEP

SAID ŚRĪ RĀMAKRISHNA

By SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

Progress in the spiritual life depends to a considerable extent on one's earnest personal endeavour. When the *Kātha Upaniṣad* says, "Arise, awake, approach the great and learn," it evidently points to the immense necessity of indomitable courage and enthusiasm on the part of a seeker of truth. All through the *Gītā* we find Śrī Kṛṣṇa exhorting his disciple Arjuna in a similar strain. We may remember, for instance, the last line of the last verse of the fourth chapter. It reads: "Oh mighty descendant of Bharata, get up; shake off all doubt and sluggishness and hold fast to the practice of yoga." What again could be the meaning of those words of Christ, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you"? Undoubtedly, the great Teacher is unambiguous here as to the primary requirements of a spiritual aspirant, namely, keen desire and ardent striving for the Ideal. The same voice has been heard once again in our own day in this simple utterance of Śrī Rāmakrishna: *Dive Deep*.

Śrī Rāmakrishna coined this expression from two popular Bengali religious songs wherein man's spiritual quest has been compared to the search for precious gems on the bottom of the sea. One of the songs begins thus:

"Dive deep, oh my mind, dive deep in  
the ocean of God's beauty;  
Descend into the uttermost depths and  
find therein the precious gem of  
Divine love."<sup>1</sup>

The second song opens in this manner:

<sup>1</sup> डूब् डूब् डूब् रूपसागरे आमार मन  
तलातल पाताल खुंजले पाबि रेप्रेम रत्न धन ।

"With the name of the Divine Mother on  
your lips  
Dive deep, oh my mind, into the ocean  
of your heart.  
The ocean can never be without gems.  
So, if by diving twice or four times you  
fail to secure them  
Strike with the power of self-control  
And reach the very bottom of this ocean  
Where the Divine Mother is lying as  
Kuṇḍalinī."<sup>2</sup>

These two simple words "Dive Deep" are, then, an incentive to spiritual struggle and Śrī Rāmakrishna very aptly used them as a stimulus for devotees to take up religious practice in right earnest. Those blessed persons who have realized truth do not speak in the sophisticated jargon of the scholastic. Their language is straight and penetrating. Its appeal is not to idle imagination but to prompt and effective action. "Dive Deep" is an excellent specimen in point. It is interesting to note that Śrī Rāmakrishna employed this same simple maxim as a powerful corrective to three principal religious aberrations which he noticed in his time. We shall deal with them one by one.

The first of these can be termed as superficial fidelity to religion. Vast is the difference between a make-believe formality in the name of religion and a genuine spiritual hankering. When we do not care to know the true mean-

<sup>2</sup> डूब् दे रे मन काली बले  
हृदि-रत्नाकरे अगाध जले ।

रत्नाकर नय शून्य कखन दुचार डूबे धन ना पेले  
(तुमि) दमसामर्थ्ये एक डूबे याओ कुलकुण्डलिनीर

कुले ।



ing and goal of religion and consider it as merely one of the customary fashions of our life, then religion loses its ennobling power and potency whether for the individual or for society. It becomes just a series of mechanical activities in a temple or a church, a bundle of idle speculations on the life beyond or some unquestioning ritualistic performance out of an element of vague otherworldly fear.

A true spiritual hankering is surely something very different from this manner of confused thinking and behaviour. It is well known that whenever a great religious teacher has appeared his first duty has been to point out to people the difference between lifeless customs and a living fervour for the divine life. This initiative was noticed in Buddha when he denounced the traditional followers of the then religious patterns. The evidence of the *Gītā* shows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, too, had to clearly draw the distinction between a formal religion based on ritualistic sacrifices and a genuine spiritual seeking. In the case of Jesus, we know that before He chose His disciples and began to preach His message in right earnest, He had first to prepare the ground by rebuking the Sadducees and the Pharisees. In his spiritual ministration, Śrī Rāmakrishna also had to face this same problem—the superficial allegiance which is man's number one perversity in the field of religion. "Dive Deep" was his solution. In the *Gospel of Śrī Rāmakrishna* we find numerous instances in which the Saint in an eloquent mood draws the distinction between formal piety and honest religious quest. In order that religion does not remain a futile conjecture but becomes a mighty fact of life, its votaries must "Dive Deep."

Not that Śrī Rāmakrishna did not recognize the value of rituals and customary religious observances under a certain context but, compared to the ultimate purpose of a man's life, namely, the realization of God, this formal religion was, according to him, of little worth. "God can be seen," said he, "He can be touched. We can even talk with

God." God is not indeed a superfluity in the scheme of human life. He is the most essential power in our life, the most important element in our thoughts, aspirations, and actions. We may cite one simple illustration which Śrī Rāmakrishna used to give. When you add ciphers successively to the digit one, you get figures whose value increases proportionately, for example, a hundred, a thousand, etc., while any number of ciphers without this digit one before them are of no value. Similarly, God is the numeral one, so to say, in all the values of our life. If you leave Him out of the picture in life's pursuits, those pursuits become a mere string of worthless zeros.

We may here recall a portion of that interesting conversation between Śrī Rāmakrishna and Pundit Īśwar Chandra Vidyāsāgar, the great scholar, philanthropist, and pioneer of education in Bengal. Śrī Rāmakrishna one day went to visit the pundit, and as was his custom he soon gave the conversation a spiritual turn. In a mood of eloquent inspiration the Master made much of the difference between philanthropy, a moral or even a virtuous life on the one hand and a genuine hankering for God-realization on the other. He said to Vidyāsāgar:

"The activities that you are engaged in are good if you can perform them in a selfless spirit, renouncing egotism, giving up the idea that you are the doer. . . . But the more you come to love God, the less you will be inclined to perform action. When the daughter-in-law is with child her mother-in-law gives her less work to do. . . . There is gold buried in your heart but you are not aware of it. It is covered with a thin layer of clay. Once you are aware of it, all these activities of yours will lessen." (*The Gospel of Śrī Rāmakrishna*, Chap. 3).

Did not Swāmi Vivekānanda too reiterate that sentiment of his Master when he said that religion should not be looked upon as a Japanese vase in our drawing room? Such a vase is only one of the many decorations one



has in his house in order to pass oneself off as a gentleman. Similarly, religion may be just one of the variegated interests we have in our life so that we can pose as "decent" men. With such a spirit do we not make of religion a kind of mockery? All of those criticisms we read or hear levelled against religion spring from the fact that the majority of people who pass as "religious" do not, in effect, show any higher behaviour than a lifeless, superficial allegiance to the faith they profess. If a case for religion is to be built up in the modern sceptical age it can only be done by the practical example of a great number of sincere people who are ready to "Dive Deep."

When Śrī Rāmakrishna said "Dive Deep" he was careful to describe the full implications of this phrase. "God is the ocean of immortality. A man sinking in it does not die, he becomes immortal," assured he. So we have nothing to fear from the spiritual struggle. It will not land us into darkness and uncertainty. The sacrifices we make at the beginning of and during our *sādhana* will be more than compensated when spiritual vision dawns on us.

The second of the unsound religious attitudes Śrī Rāmakrishna noticed is the confusion of spiritual wisdom with intellectual sophistry. For many persons religion is equated with a sort of intellectual understanding of the scriptures or of some systems of discursive philosophy. The emphasis is on argumentation rather than on actual practice, on the reading of books rather than on contemplation. Now an intellectual grasp of religious problems is, of course, good but here too great caution is necessary. Śrī Rāmakrishna's favourite way to illustrate the folly of mere religious intellectualism was to liken it to the counting of leaves, trees and branches in a mango orchard. Such idle counting is foolishness. It is wiser to take to the eating of mangoes. Similarly, since the aim of human birth is to love God, one should seek to realize that love and be at peace. "What need is there of your knowing the infinite qualities of God? You may dis-

criminate for millions of years about God's attributes, and still you will not know them."

If by blessed fortune one happens to take an interest in religion, that interest should not be frittered away in mere theoretical estimations. "Dive Deep" would be the unequivocal pronouncement of Śrī Rāmakrishna to the speculators. For, religion is not in books but in the concrete transformation of the words of books into indubitable truths in life.

To recall another simple illustration which the Saint used to give. Suppose you have to purchase certain things from the market. While at home, you prepare a list of the articles you want. After you have made the purchases, the list ceases to be of value; you may as well discard it. In a way, the scriptures are like such a list. Their purpose is to indicate the means to the realization of truth. Once you are on the track, however, it becomes a waste of time to cling to them too much. More important now is to plunge into spiritual practice.

Śrī Rāmakrishna's conversation with one of the celebrities of his time, Pundit Shashadhar Tarkachūdāmaṇi, is illuminating in this connection (*The Gospel of Śrī Rāmakrishna*, Chap. 25). To quote a few lines which the author "M" records the Master as having spoken to the pundit: "There are many scriptures like the Vedas. But one cannot realize God without austerity and spiritual discipline. . . . Better than reading is hearing but seeing is far better than hearing. Then all doubts disappear. It is true that many things are recorded in the scriptures but all these are useless without the direct realization of God, without devotion to His lotus feet." The pundit had taken upon himself the task of preaching the cardinal principles of Hinduism to various social gatherings. His talks which were fascinating, used to draw crowds—a circumstance of which the Master was aware. He now asked the pundit if he had received a commission from the Lord to preach. When the pundit replied in the negative, Śrī Rāmakrishna told him that unless



he had realized the truth and had actually received the Lord's commission, his preaching would be a waste of breath. In conclusion, the Master repeated his formula, "Dive Deep."

"My child, add a little more to your strength. Practice spiritual discipline a few days more. You have hardly set your foot on the tree, yet you expect to lay hold of a big cluster of fruit."

The third religious aberration Śrī Rāmakrishna was at pains to correct is a lukewarm attitude in regard to spiritual practice. Some people have the clue to a genuine spiritual life; they have realized the importance of *sādhana* and have also understood the difference between mere intellectual interest in religion and a real longing to realize God. Yet for some reason or other they have not been able to exert themselves as much as they should. As Śrī Rāmakrishna would put it, they are "lukewarm." This lukewarmness in spiritual practice is a great danger. And here, too, Śrī Rāmakrishna would employ his pithy, imperative sentence "Dive Deep." Once a Brahmin devotee named Ishan Chandra Mukherjee came to visit the Master at Dakshineswar, as was his wont. Śrī Rāmakrishna, who was fond of him, sometimes gave him instructions. On this occasion, after a little conversation with the Master, Ishan took his leave so as to perform the ritual of the Sandhyā Vandanam in front of the Kālī temple. Later in the evening Śrī Rāmakrishna came upon him engaged in this act of devotion. In a rapturous mood he remarked: "What? Are you still performing the Sandhyā? . . . How long must a man continue the Sandhyā? As long as he has not developed love for the lotus feet of God."

Then the Master sang two devotional songs in praise of Kālī, wherein emphasis is given to the cultivation of genuine love for the Mother, rather than to the routine virtuous acts, such as the counting of beads, charity, vows, pilgrimages, etc. Addressing Ishan again, the Master resumed in words which

were stronger still and sounded like a mild reproach:

"You cannot achieve anything by moving at such a slow pace. You need stern renunciation. Can you achieve anything by counting fifteen months as a year? You seem to have no strength, no grit. You are as mushy as flattened rice soaked in milk. Be up and doing! Gird your loins!"

Ishan was a man of affluent circumstances. Not much entangled in the affairs of his family, he would often engage himself in a lot of self-chosen public activities. Śrī Rāmakrishna knew this and today wouldn't leave him on that score too. In the same mood of chastisement he continued:

"What are these things you busy yourself with—this arbitration and leadership? You have been doing this kind of work for a long time. Let those who care for such things do them. . . . You have had enough of these. Now the time is ripe for you to devote your mind to the lotus feet of God. If you realize God you will get everything else."

And the pitch of the counsel reached its climax when Śrī Rāmakrishna asked Ishan to become mad with love of God.

"Let people know that Ishan has gone mad and cannot perform worldly duties any more! Then, people will no longer come to you for leadership and arbitration."

The truth of the Spirit, though closest to man, may yet remain farthest from him if man, out of his perversity, does not care to see it. Great teachers like Śrī Rāmakrishna feel it their duty to cure man of this obduracy. Truly has Śrī Kṛṣṇa said in the *Gītā*: "What is night to ordinary men is day to the sage and what is day to the former is night to the latter" (II, 69). Spiritual values are as clear as daylight to the seer of truth. It is beyond his grasp how man, a child of immortal bliss, can remain satisfied with a world-bound existence forgetting his spiritual nature. Hence out of compassion these messengers of God move among men and inspire them to realize



the supreme goal of life. They do not talk much but they talk clearly and powerfully. They do not promise much but they vouchsafe for something which is of eternal value. They do not always appear pleasant but they

appear to have reached Truth beyond any possibility of doubt.

And all these characteristics become transparently evident when we hear Śrī Rāma-krishna say: "Dive Deep."

## FROM THE EARTHLY MAN TO THE COSMIC MAN

BY DR. S. K. MAITRA

It is not man's destiny to remain for ever confined to this Earth. Not that his work on earth is finished. But for the successful carrying out of his work on earth and also for fulfilling his destiny as man, it is necessary that he should rise from the earthly to the cosmic status. He has a rôle, and a very important rôle, to play as a citizen of the universe and not merely of this earth. It is his destiny to do so. He cannot fulfil himself unless he does so.

It is a good thing that man has begun to realize this. His attempt recently to go beyond the limits of this earth proves this. It is one of the signs that the time has now come for him to rise from his present level to a higher one. So long as man is merely at the earthly level, he won't be able to see things in their totality. Discords and disharmonies he will see everywhere, for these are the results of a partial vision. So long as he is a mere dweller on earth, man will not be able to see things in their true perspective, just as when a man is in a valley, the elevations and depressions of the valley prevent his getting a total view of the scenery that is spread before him. It is only when he ascends to the peak that he gets a full view. So is it exactly with the earthly man. So long as he confines himself to this earth, its problems present themselves to him as a series of conflicts which he is not in a position to resolve, for he cannot get a total view in which

alone the conflicts are removed. But if he rises to the cosmic level, he has no difficulty in reconciling conflicts which from his lower angle of vision appeared absolutely irreconcilable.

Our ancient sages always urged us to take a cosmic view of things. The *Gītā* asks us to perform actions which have a cosmic sanction. The conception of Yoga which it puts before us and in the light of which it enjoins upon us to do all our actions, is borrowed from the conception of Cosmic Yoga. The karma of human beings must partake of the nature of the first karma or yajña performed by God, which ushered in this universe, as described in the Puruṣa Sūkta of the R̥gveda. The *Gītā* therefore speaks of karma as *bhūtabhāvodbhavakaro visargaḥ*<sup>1</sup> that is, sacrifice which is cause of the creation of the world. Lord Kṛṣṇa also quotes his own example as a model for all human beings to follow as the principle of their action. This principle is stated in *Gītā* iii. 22 as follows: "O Pārtha, there is nothing in the three worlds for me to do, nor is there anything worth attaining which is not attained by me; yet I continue to work." Although there is nothing for Lord Kṛṣṇa to attain or nothing that remains to be done, yet he continues in action. Arjuna, therefore, should also act without reference to the fruits of action. This is the sanction behind the principle of *anāsakti-yoga* which is expounded in

(1) *Gītā*, viii. 3.



the *Gītā*. The cosmic teaching of Arjuna continues in the other chapters of the *Gītā*, until it reaches its climax in the eleventh chapter, where the Lord shows His Viśvarūpa or His Cosmic Form. This frightens Arjuna, because he is accustomed to live in his insularity, which is another name for egoism. The cure for the self-sufficiency or egoism of Arjuna lies in his realizing his cosmic background. It is not for him to detach himself from the vast cosmic order of which he forms a part. It is only by realizing his oneness with the cosmic order that he can fulfil himself. No rule of morality, therefore, is a merely *human* rule, no principle of human action merely a *human* principle. But they all have their cosmic reference, and it is only so far as they meet their cosmic requirements, that they are fit to be accepted as rules for human conduct. The *Gītā*, however, stresses the necessity of applying the Cosmic Revelation to the problems that concern us in our daily lives. In fact, it is the establishment of the connection between the Cosmic Revelation and the affairs of our mundane existence that is emphasized in the *Gītā*. Sri Aurobindo in his *Essays on the Gītā* has drawn our attention to this. Thus, he says,<sup>2</sup> "A reconciling greater knowledge, a diviner consciousness, a high impersonal motive, a spiritual standard of oneness with the will of the Divine acting on the world from the fountain light and with the motive power of the spiritual nature—this is the new inner principle of works which is to transform the old ignorant action. A knowledge which embraces oneness with the Divine and arrives through the Divine at conscious oneness with all things and beings, a will emptied of egoism and acting only by the command and as an instrumentation of the secret of Master of Works, a Divine love whose one aspiration is towards a close intimacy with the Supreme Soul of all existence, . . . are the foundation offered for his activities to the liberated man."

It will be clear therefore that the essence

of the teaching of the *Gītā* is that man should realize his cosmic status, and in the light of this realization, he must shape and mould his conduct in this earthly life. In fact, the last six chapters of the *Gītā*, as I have shown in my book *The Spirit of Indian Philosophy*, depict the descent of the Soul after its Cosmic Realization to the world in which human beings live and move.

I have already mentioned that the idea of the sacrifice of the Puruṣa, as we have it in the Puruṣa Sūkta of the *Ṛgveda*, is the source of our ethical teaching, which is expressed tersely in the *Īsopaniṣad* in the words "tena tyaktena bhunjīthāḥ" ("Therefore, enjoy through sacrifice"). The *Ṛgveda* also in the celebrated Gāyatrī mantra, as Rabindranath has pointed out in his famous interpretation of this mantra, in the essay "The Simple Ideal of Dharma" in his book *Dharma*, has directly asked us to realize our oneness with the entire universe. To quote the words of the poet, "In this way the true Arya is asked at least once a day to place himself in the midst of the sun, the moon and the stars, and realize his essential unity with the whole universe. And in doing so, he is asked to utter the words, "tat savitur vareṇyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi" ("We contemplate the glorious light of the god Savitā"). But on what principle are we to contemplate this glorious light? What is the thread by which we are connected with the Lord of the Universe? The answer is given in the concluding portion of the verse: "dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt" ("May He direct our intellect!"). It is through our intellect that we are to contemplate Him". We must not, however, interpret the word 'intellect' narrowly. It is not logical reason but the higher powers of cognition by which alone we can get access to the ultimate mysteries of the universe. The poet continues: "Outside, the universe, and inside, my intellect—these two are manifestations of the same power. Knowing this, and realizing in this way the intimate relationship of the universe with my mind, and my mind with Saccidānanda, I

(2) See *Essays on the Gītā*, 2nd Series, pp. 178-79, 2nd edn.



obtain emancipation from all narrowness, selfishness, fear and grief."

From the point of view of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, the ascent from the earthly to the cosmic plane is one of the necessary changes brought about by the descent of the Supermind. It creates a fundamental and radical change in human consciousness which is the first step towards the divinization of that consciousness. It is not a slow growth from international consciousness, but it is a jump from it—an emergence which can in no way be regarded as a continuity of it. Bergson in his *Two Sources of Morality and Religion* has shown that internationalism cannot be looked upon as a result of a continuous growth from nationalism, but is a radically different type of consciousness. What Bergson has said about internationalism applies with greater force to Cosmic Consciousness. Its difference from international consciousness is a fundamental one.

Another thing deserves to be mentioned here. Just as with the growth of internationalism, there is improvement in national consciousness also, so the emergence of cosmic consciousness will react favourably upon international consciousness. In the larger background of the cosmic sphere, international problems will be viewed in their proper perspective. We realize this very clearly at every moment these days. We have attained a certain degree of international consciousness no doubt, but it is not sufficient to solve the problems with which we are faced today. The sort of co-operation between the different nations of the world which is indispensable for the solution of our present troubles is wanting now, and unless it is improved, and improved very considerably, our intellectual problems will remain practically where they are at the present moment. But when the higher consciousness, and in this case, the cosmic consciousness, will emerge, it will have its effect upon international consciousness also. In the vaster background of the cosmic problems, the international problems which trouble us very much will lose their present acuteness.

This is one of the illustrations of the principle of transformation upon which so much stress is laid in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

Our international problems have reached a stage when the emergence of cosmic consciousness has become an absolute necessity. It is childish to think that our international problems will be solved automatically. If that were so, some indication of that would have been perceptible even now. But they have remained in that acute form for a considerable number of years without anything happening which may lead us to hope that they will be solved quickly. It is clear that unless a higher consciousness emerges, there is no chance of our attaining that degree of internationalism which will make for permanent peace. It is only when we realize that our interests on this earth are not the only things that matter, but that we have other and higher interests in the universe which will suffer if we attach too much value to our earthly interests, that the foundations will be laid for a permanent peace on our earth.

I therefore welcome very much the new consciousness that has arisen recently in the form of a desire to conquer space for the purpose of having contact with the interplanetary and interstellar world, and of which the two Russian artificial moons are a symbol. There can be no doubt that if we can expand cosmically by having contact with our sister planets, and then with the still vaster stellar regions, and get rid of our present insularity, our difficulties which seem to be insuperable at the present moment, will vanish as dewdrops do in the glare of the morning sun. Insularity is the cause of all egoism, which, again, is the cause of all ignorance, error and evil.

One great sign of our insularity is the view still widely prevalent, that our earth is the only world which contains intelligent beings, or that we are God's most favoured creatures. The first thing we must do before we can hope to rise to the cosmic stage is to give up once for all this egoism. It is not so much in conquering space as in coming in contact with



other minds, other types of consciousness, that the value of cosmic expansion mainly lies. This is a thing which it is very necessary to emphasize at present, for in the recent attempts that have been made to penetrate into outer space, there is too much evident the idea of conquering other worlds and establishing earthly colonies in them and too little that of establishing contact with beings similar to, if not higher than ourselves. Not only so, but the very idea of other worlds being inhabited by intelligent beings is being ridiculed. This is highly regrettable, and serves only to perpetuate our egoism.

If the cosmic age is to be established, it is very necessary that we should give up this attitude of ours and openly recognize the existence of intelligent beings on other planets and also in the stellar world and try our best to establish contact with them. It really seems very strange that there should be so much hesitation to acknowledge a thing which but for our blindness and our perverted mentality we should have acknowledged long

ago. The revelations contained in Major Donald E. Keyhoe's most challenging new book,<sup>3</sup> which is a most authoritative one, as it quotes chapter and verse for every statement which it makes, about the deliberate and systematic manner in which one of the most advanced countries on our planet is suppressing all news about the strange spacecraft that have been seen by thousands of people and in so many different countries, make one feel very sad. Why should there be so much reluctance to admit that there may be beings higher than ourselves who may have discovered the secret of space travel which we have yet to discover? Rather than suppress all news about them, we should broadcast it as far as possible, for we have nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by continuing in our present insularity.

(3) *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy*. By Major Donald E. Keyhoe. Published both in America and England. American Publishers: Henry Holt & Co., New York. English Publishers: Hutchinson & Co., London.

## ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

### A BRIEF STUDY

BY SRI SUBHASH CHANDRA

(Continued from previous issue)

#### V

From the seemingly dead and dormant matter to the creative efforts of a genius is a long way, which the Will traverses in an ascending series of the grades of its objectification or manifestation. These grades are, according to Schopenhauer, coincident with the Ideas of Plato. We shall see later what the Ideas stand for. The Will is the Alpha and Omega of life. Schopenhauer sees the

Will as the kernel of the laws of nature. To Schopenhauer, "every universal, original force of nature is nothing but a low grade of the objectification of Will."<sup>28</sup> In thunder and lightning, in the fury of the flood, in the scourge of the storm, in the relentless rush of the ocean upon the coastal rocks, in the violence of the cyclone, in the rage of the typhoon, in the eruption of the volcano, in

<sup>28</sup> *The World As Will And Idea*, vol. I, p. 174.



the convulsions of the earth, and in the climatic upheavals Schopenhauer witnesses the objectification of the Will, though in a nascent form. The Will is visible in the attraction which impels a piece of iron to cling to the magnet, and in the force of gravitation which draws the falling stone back to the earth. So far we see the objectified Will as merely a blind and restless striving. Matter itself, to Schopenhauer, is the visibility, the concretisation of the Will. Matter is the nexus between the world as Will and the world as Idea. In the forming of the crystal we see the mark, a rudimentary and ephemeral mark, of life.<sup>29</sup> The plant-life marks a further grade in the objectification of the Will. The Will is the force which impregnates and vegetates in the plants. It is the Will which incarnates itself in the countless forms of plants, vegetables, fruits, flowers, etc. In a sense, one may claim that Schopenhauer anticipated the outcome of the researches in plant-life carried on by J. C. Bose. In the animals the marvellous development of the instincts (in other words, of innate, involuntary, and unlearned activities) speaks volumes for the operation of the Will. "The bird of a year old has no idea of the eggs for which it builds a nest; the young spider has no idea of the prey for which it spins a web; nor has the ant-lion any idea of the ants for which he digs a trench for the first time. The larva of the stag-beetle makes the hole in the wood, in which it is to await its metamorphosis, twice as big if it is going to be a male beetle as if it is going to be a female, so that if it is a male there may be room for the horns, of which, however, it has no idea. In such actions of these creatures the Will is clearly operative as in their other actions."<sup>30</sup> In the animals the Will is still a blind activity; it is accompanied by a rudimentary consciousness, but not guided by it.

Finally, we come to the man, who is the apex of the objectification of the Will. Here

it is important to point out that though man, as Idea, represents the clearest and fullest objectification of the Will, yet he alone could not express the Will. "In order to manifest the full significance of the Will, the Idea of man would need to appear, not alone and sundered from everything else, but accompanied by the whole series of grades, down through all the forms of animals, through the vegetable kingdom to unorganized nature."<sup>31</sup> Every movement of my body is nothing but the act of the Will objectified. Conversely, every action upon my body is an action upon *my will*. Anything which goes counter to *my will* pains me, and anything which gratifies it gives pleasure to me. And, what, indeed, characterizes the personality of the man? What exactly is in the man which survives the march of time, surmounts the effects of diseases, remains unshattered even after damage to the brain, and remains unaltered even after the individual becomes insane? It is the identical *will* and character of the individual, answers Schopenhauer.<sup>32</sup>

Now, what distinguishes the man from animals? The presence of the *intellect* in man gives him his place of honour in the world. The gift of reason enables the man to call himself the *rational* animal. According to Schopenhauer, the brute only *wills*; the man not only *wills*, but also *thinks* and *knows*.<sup>33</sup> We have already seen that Schopenhauer's philosophy is one long counterblast to rationalism. We have also seen that the Will of Schopenhauer is blind and unconscious. No wonder, then, that Schopenhauer considers the intellect to be a mere tool of the Will. Originally, the intellect, like any other part of body, was intended to serve the activity of the Will in the individual. And in the majority of men, the intellect is still the obsequious servant of the Will. Only in a genius the intellect overwhelms the Will, and becomes the master. Apart from this exception, the Will reigns and the intel-

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 37-47; vol. I, p. 153.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 148.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 200.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 459-461.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 47.



lect hastens to obey. "The Will is the substance of man, the intellect the accident; the will is the matter, the intellect is the form; the will is warmth, the intellect is light."<sup>34</sup> The Will is primary, but the intellect is secondary. The intellect may deteriorate and weaken, but the Will never suffers any loss of vehemence. The Will has no degrees; only its *excitement* has degrees. On the other hand numerous, indeed, are the degrees of the intellect. The intellect, after a sustained mental exertion, becomes fatigued, but the Will is always fresh. All intellectual activity necessitates effort; willing, on the contrary, is itself effort. The preponderance of the Will over the intellect is palpable in the case of 'infants who scarcely show the first weak trace of intelligence,' but "are already full of self-will: through unlimited, aimless roaring and shrieking they show the pressure of Will with which they swell, while their willing has yet no object, i.e. they will without knowing what they will."<sup>35</sup> The supremacy of the Will is also borne out by the fact that the intellect can only function when the Will is silent. Fear, anger, joy, zeal, intense desire and other manifestations of the Will petrify our intellect, and it, for the time being, sinks in abeyance. The intellect, then, is subordinate to the Will. It is the servant of the Will, but its service,—and this is an important point—is one of *guiding* the Will. "What bridle and bit are to an unmanageable horse the intellect is for the Will in man."<sup>36</sup> Schopenhauer rightly describes the relation between the Will and intellect as that of the strong blind man who carries the lame man who can see on his shoulders.<sup>37</sup> In the light of this elucidation of the relation between the Will and the intellect, we fail to see any ground for the charge of Prof. Wallace that: "What is Will, and what is intellect, he

(Schopenhauer) nowhere adequately explains; he simply repeats, as a thing self-evident, the contrast of terms."<sup>38</sup>

## VI

Now, we come to that part of Schopenhauer's philosophy, which, more than any other doctrine of his, is popularly associated with his name. Schopenhauer and pessimism are usually considered as the two sides of the same coin, and *The World As Will And Idea* has been described as "the great anthology of woe". We shall strive to render a balanced account of Schopenhauer's pessimism, for as Josiah Royce remarks justly: "I find indeed that his (Schopenhauer's) pessimism is usually wholly misunderstood and unappreciated, as well by those who pretend to accept as well by those who condemn it."<sup>39</sup>

Schopenhauer's pessimism is not an isolated point of view, but forms an integral part of his philosophy. While it has its roots in Schopenhauer's doctrine of the blind Will, it, on its part, strengthens Schopenhauer's *Grundanschauung*. Rightly has Prof. Volkelt observed: "All that Schopenhauer, over the reign of stupidity, of evil, of chance, over the absence of the progress of human history, over the negative existence of pleasure, over the preponderance of pain and of ennui, over the illusory mockery of the sexual love says, serves retrospectively to strengthen the main doctrine of the blind World-will."<sup>40</sup>

Schopenhauer's pessimism was not a later development of his thought, or a mere consequence of the doctrine of the blind Will. Traces of pessimism can be delineated back even to the childhood and youth of the philosopher. As early as 1806, Schopenhauer's mother wrote to him: "I could tell you things that would make your hair stand on end, but I refrain, for I know how you love to brood over human misery in any case."<sup>41</sup> In a

<sup>38</sup> *Schopenhauer*, by W. Wallace (London, 1890), p. 82.

<sup>39</sup> *The Spirit Of Modern Philosophy*, by J. Royce (New York, 1892), p. 262.

<sup>40</sup> *Arthur Schopenhauer*, by J. Volkelt, p. 165.

<sup>41</sup> *Schopenhauer*, by Helen Zimmern, p. 28.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 412.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 424.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 426.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 421.



revealing passage, we find Schopenhauer writing: "In my seventeenth year, without any but the most elementary school education, I was as possessed by the sorrow of the world as was Buddha in his youth at the sight of illness, old age, pain, and death."<sup>42</sup>

The metaphysical foundation of Schopenhauer's pessimism is the concept of the Will as something blind and unconscious. The Will has no aim, and therefore life is purposeless. Nature, as we have seen, is only interested in the maintenance of the species, and is callously indifferent with regard to the individuals. Life perpetuates itself through sexual coitus which, considered objectively, engenders disgust and loathing. No wonder, then, that the devils and witches in Goethe's *Faust* wallow in the mire of lewdness and obscenity.

All our life we are craving for something or the other, and craving connotes deficiency and suffering. Life is short and ephemeral, but our wants are endless. Every satisfied desire generates a further chain of desires, and we find ourselves vainly hoping for tranquillity and contentment. "The subject of willing is thus constantly stretched on the revolving wheel of Ixion, pours water into the sieve of the Danaids, is the ever-longing Tantalus."<sup>43</sup> The evolution of the world is the result of a fierce and ferocious struggle for existence, in which only the fittest survived. "No victory without conflict"<sup>44</sup> is the motto inscribed upon the banner of nature. "How man deals with man is shown, for example, by negro slavery, the final end of which is sugar and coffee."<sup>45</sup> The pages of history narrate one sorry tale of ever-recurrent wars, which decimate the youth of the world, impoverish the land, uproot industry, drain the resources of countries, just to satisfy the avarice of a monarch or the ambitions of a politician. Life is full of hazards, known and unknown. It is constantly besieged by foes

like floods and famines, earthquakes and epidemics. Even if we overcome these dangers, we are not an inch nearer to genuine tranquillity and contentment. For, if we are not engaged in obtaining a fleeting and evanescent satisfaction of our endless desires, and have surmounted the dangers, clear or clandestine, imperilling our lives, then we find ourselves oppressed by boredom and unbearable ennui. In order to even feign to be happy, we must, like the characters of Voltaire's *Candide*, perpetually occupy ourselves with some work or other. "All men who are secure from want and care, now that at last they have thrown off all other burdens, become a burden to themselves. . . . As want is the scourge of the people, so ennui is that of the fashionable world. In middle-class life ennui is represented by the Sunday, and want by the six week-days."<sup>46</sup> It was Schopenhauer's conviction that our world is the worst of all possible worlds. Happiness or pleasure is only negative and never positive. It signifies merely the absence of sorrow or pain. The sublime Misanthrope of Frankfurt maintains: "We feel pain, but not painlessness; we feel care, but not the absence of care; fear, but not security."<sup>47</sup> When any one is afflicted with a great sorrow, we seek to console him by reminding him that there are others more *unhappy* than himself in the world! Life is a Vanity Fair. It is the scene of sorrow and suffering. "If life were in itself a blessing, and decidedly to be preferred to non-existence, the exit from it would not need to be guarded by such fearful sentinels as death and its terrors. But who would continue in life as it is if death were less terrible?"<sup>48</sup> asks Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer is convinced that if the dead were aroused from their graves, and asked whether they would like to live again, they would emphatically say, no. Dante obtained material for his hell from this so-called best of all possible worlds of Leibniz, and Schopenhauer assures us that Dante's

<sup>42</sup> Adduced by Hoffding in his *History Of Modern Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 216.

<sup>43</sup> *The World As Will And Idea*, vol. I, p. 254.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 190.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, III, p. 388.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 404.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, III, pp. 384-385.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, III, p. 389.



portrayal of the hell is quite a successful one.

## VII

So, then, life is an unhappy tale, and a sordid affair. Schopenhauer was an avowed pessimist. He regarded optimism as naive, self-deluding, and even cruel. But Schopenhauer, though a pessimist, was not a fatalist. For him, evil, though undeniable, is not inescapable. It is wrong to say, as some Indian scholars do, that Schopenhauer regarded evil as inescapable.<sup>49</sup> After reading the second and the fourth book of the first volume of *The World As Will And Idea* no one can reproach Schopenhauer on the ground that he makes no room for deliverance from pain and misery, disease and death. Under the erroneous impression that Schopenhauer's pessimism amounts to fatalism, the Western scholars are precipitously holding the effect of the Upaniṣads upon Schopenhauer as responsible for it, and the Indian scholars are impatient to refute such allegations. The truth is that, though their metaphysical backgrounds are at variance, Indian thought, both Hindu and Buddhist (one may add Christian thought as well), is in consonance with Schopenhauer that life is full of sorrow and suffering, and that bliss can only be obtained by transcending this world. Hinduism and Buddhism hold that real bliss is possible only after the attainment of mokṣa or nirvāṇa, and Schopenhauer holds that only after the denial of the Will is bliss possible. We are happy to strengthen our point by citing Paul Deussen (who, more than any one else, is competent to decide this point, since he, as we know, has translated the Upaniṣads into German and written erudite books on the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta, and also edited the *Sämtliche Werke* of Schopenhauer in 16 volumes): "The system of Schopenhauer is no more and no less pessimistic, than the three world-religions . . . Brāhmanism, Buddhism, and Christianity, which all three unanimously regard as the

highest end the deliverance from this existence."<sup>50</sup>

Schopenhauer does not end his enquiries with a note of hopelessness and despair. He was not just a metaphysician content to know that the world is a vale of tears, but was also alive to the pressing need for deliverance from sorrow and suffering. Rightly has Prof. Volkelt observed: "Schopenhauer's philosophy is both: it is the thirst for experience, nature, and life, and at the same time the yearning after deliverance from life and the world."<sup>51</sup> If so, then, by what way can we tear asunder the shackles of the Will to live? Is suicide the way out of the misery of existence? No, says Schopenhauer. For, the man who commits suicide has not overcome the Will to live, but abhors only a particular *form* of life, which renders his existence unbearable. "A man has no deliverance to hope for from death, and cannot right himself by suicide. The cool shades of Orcus allure him only with the false appearance of a haven of rest. . . . Suicide appears to us as a vain and therefore a foolish action."<sup>52</sup> If suicide is foolish, then, what other ways are open to man to redeem himself from this world of suffering?

The world, as we have seen, is the objectification of the Will. We have also referred to the fact that the Will ascends from the apparently dead matter to man through grades of objectification, which are nothing but what Plato called the Ideas. It is not possible here to discuss Plato's theory of Ideas. We need only to point out here that Schopenhauer's concept of the Ideas differs from that of Plato on two points. Firstly, Schopenhauer, in contradistinction to Plato, holds that the manufactured articles like chairs or tables do not express the Idea of a chair or a table, but that they objectify the Idea expressed in their material. Secondly, Schopenhauer crosses swords with Plato on the point that the object of art is not the particular thing, as Plato

<sup>50</sup> *Allgemeine Geschichte Der Philosophie*, by Deussen, vol. VI, p. 563.

<sup>51</sup> *Arthur Schopenhauer*, by J. Volkelt, p. 343.

<sup>52</sup> *The World As Will And Idea*, I, p. 362.

<sup>49</sup> *History Of Philosophy: Eastern and Western*, edited by Radhakrishnan and others, vol. II, p. 290.



holds, but the Idea.<sup>53</sup> The things of the world are not the immediate objectifications of the Will, but are the expressions of the Ideas. The Ideas are the direct and most adequate *objectivity*, as against later *objectifications*, of the Will. In the Ideas (Ideen) the Will is not yet objectified, not yet become idea (Vorstellung). Ideas are still the thing-in-itself, and are beyond the world of appearance. They are eternal, for they lie outside time. They are independent of the principle of sufficient reason.

We have already seen that the intellect is but the servant of the Will. Now, so long as the intellect remains in its servile position, we are chained to the world and doomed to affirm the Will to live. But the moment the intellect revolts against the hegemony of the Will, we are free from the gnawing tyranny of an unhappy existence. For the revolt against the Will constitutes a denial of the Will to live. The mutinous intellect now is absorbed in contemplating the thing itself, and not just its relations. The revolt of the intellect is sudden and spontaneous and effortless. The intellect is now occupied with the contemplation of the objects of art, because the end of all art is the knowledge of the eternal Ideas. The insurrection of the intellect is only possible through a serene contemplation of the works of art. The state of the intellect at the time at which it throws off the bonds imposed by the Will is very much akin to a mystical experience. In this spontaneous release of the intellect, the individual "lets his whole consciousness be filled with the quiet contemplation of the natural object, whether a landscape, a tree, a mountain, a building, or whatever it may be; inasmuch as he *loses* himself in this object, i.e., forgets even his individuality, his will, and continues to exist as the pure subject. . . . and he can no longer separate the perceiver from the perception, but both have become one."<sup>54</sup> But this relief from the sorrow and suffering of the world is a momentary one. We cannot for long remain contemplating the eternal Ideas. We are constrained by the

physical and biological needs to forgo the meditation, and the intellect once more is reduced to its secondary position. Before we proceed further, we would like just to mention that, to Schopenhauer's mind, genius is nothing but the intellect no longer at the beck and call of the Will.

### VIII

Life is nothing but the Will to live. We cling to our lives, however miserable and wretched they may be, with undiminished ardour, and we are always craving for a longer, and presumably, a happier life. But the clinging only fetters us, and the craving multiplies our afflictions. Apart from the aesthetic contemplation, there are two other roads open to the man to transcend the misery of life, viz. the moral way, and the way of the ascetic. Both the paths are, of course, closely related to each other. Life is the assertion of the Will to live. It is, however, the assertion not merely of this or that individual, but of all the individuals, nay of everything, sentient or insentient, in the world. And according to Schopenhauer, I commit a *wrong* when I, in the course of asserting my will, prevent or thwart others from asserting their wills. The extent to which I inhibit their assertion of their wills measures the extent of my wrong. Conversely, with the realization that the same Will is running through me and through the world, if I refrain from hindering others in the assertion of their wills, even if that entails a certain amount of the denial of my will, I am doing something *good*. Now this doing good, i.e., refraining from impeding the assertion of the Will by others, may go to such an extent that it comes to involve a complete denial of the Will to live. In asceticism, not only is the Will to live denied lest it should interfere with the assertion of will by others, but also denied for its own sake. Asceticism usually involves the torturing of the body, and to Schopenhauer this torture represents the direct denial of the Will, since our body is "the paraphrase of the Will to live." Sexual continence is the most important code of asceticism, because the sexual impulse, as we have seen, constitutes

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 273-274.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 231.



the very kernel of the Will to live, and in Schopenhauer's view, *voluntary* renunciation of the satisfaction of the sexual impulse, without any *motive*, itself denotes a denial of the Will to live. Schopenhauer also refers to still another way of overcoming the Will to live, viz., by suicide through *starvation*. This may seem at variance with Schopenhauer's aforementioned view that suicide is no panacea for the sorrows of life. But actually there is no inconsistency, because while all other forms of suicide may mean nothing more than abhorrence of a particular *form* of life, the suicide through starvation by its very lingering character, which precludes precipitancy, can mean nothing but aversion for *life itself*, and not just a form of it.

The man, therefore, obtains deliverance through the contemplation of beauty, through moral self-abnegation, through the total renunciation of the ascetic, and through voluntary self-starvation. The veil is rent, and the Will to live is denied and abrogated. The man is free. But, free where? What is the nature of this freedom? What happens after redemption? Schopenhauer says that there can be no answer to these questions. With the abolition of the Will, *Nothing* remains. But *Nothing* is a relative term, and for want of a better term it is used. We are now in the realm transcendental, where *neti, neti* is the only way of describing things. But as Jonas Cohn has succinctly put it: "The state of bliss can only be negatively described, in the language of understanding it is *Nothing*, but conversely for the redeemed are all riches and struggles for power, all pleasure and all sorrow, sun, moon, and stars—*Nothing*."<sup>55</sup>

Before we conclude our study of Schopenhauer, I would like to add a few words as to what Schopenhauer meant when he described the Will as thing-in-itself. It is, indeed, at the first sight, baffling to be told that the reality is unconscious and blind, and that

<sup>55</sup> *Der Deutsche Idealismus*, by J. Cohn (Leipzig, 1925), p. 123.

deliverance means the denial of the reality underlying appearance. The conundrum will continue to flabbergast us so long as we do not realize that the Will is the thing-in-itself in a special and relative sense. Schopenhauer, we must remember, was a philosopher and not a mystic. Schopenhauer was quite aware of the fact that Will cannot be said to be the thing-in-itself in the *ultimate* sense. In a highly significant passage, which unfortunately has been mostly overlooked, Schopenhauer writes: "If, however, it should be absolutely insisted upon that in some way or other a positive knowledge of that which philosophy can only describe negatively as the denial of the Will, . . . there would be nothing for it but to refer to that state . . . which has been variously denoted by the names ecstasy, rapture, illumination, *union with God*, and so forth."<sup>56</sup> So we find that the denial of the Will leads to *union with God*. Surely, if the Will had been the thing-in-itself in the ultimate sense, its denial would have spelt total annihilation and complete void and not *union with God*.

Schopenhauer's philosophy represents a turning point in Western thought. His thought has "an architectonic connection or coherence", which Schopenhauer held that a system of thought ought to have. Schopenhauer was a great thinker, but he was not, therefore, omniscient. He himself, belying all accusations of excessive vanity and self-conceit, writes: "I have never professed to propound a philosophy which leaves no questions unanswered."<sup>57</sup> His philosophy is not completely bereft of inconsistencies, and he had his own frailties. But there can be no doubt about the fact that the guiding principle of his life was: "Life is short, and truth works far and lives long: let us speak the truth."<sup>58</sup>

(Concluded)

<sup>56</sup> *The World As Will And Idea*, I, p. 530.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, III, p. 405.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. XV.

The English translations of the passages from the German works cited in this article are my own. I am grateful to Dr. S. Vahiduddin of Osmania University for his advice in translating these passages.



# SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS OF ASTROLOGY

BY DR. SAMPURNANAND

(Continued from the previous issue)

## III

I have drawn my examples from events affecting the lives of a nation because it is easier to check the accuracy or otherwise of predictions made in this field. But, very often, the individual is more interested in his own life and in the lives of those near and dear to him than in world events. Obviously, the method of observation would be the same in both cases. But an immensely larger number of individual lives would have to be studied. Equally immense would be the number of permutations and combinations of the positions occupied by the various planets.

I have no doubt that fundamentally this method of observation could have been the only basis on which the edifice of Astrology has been built up. Presumably, led by curiosity, whetted at times by interesting confirmations, observers in different countries carried on their researches over long periods of time. The results were noted down and compared. Gradually a system must have evolved out of the chaotic mass of observed data, much of which must have had to be rejected. Quite obviously, the procedure outlined above will be a long one but it would be idle to expect short-cuts to reliable formulae in branches of knowledge like Astrology where results have to be deduced on the basis of information subject to statistical analysis. Still it is possible to expedite matters to some extent and, I am sure, this method must have been used extensively in the past. It is calculated to yield very satisfactory results. I refer to the comparative method of study. A number of nativities belonging to persons in the same or allied walks of life can be compared with

a view to finding out their common elements, if any. If after weeding out all accidentals it is found that certain planets occupy identical houses in these horoscopes there would be a very strong ground for presuming interrelation between these planetary positions and the native's career. One would be justified in assuming that a child with a similar horoscope would have a career more or less of the same kind.

Careful study and further research would show that things are not so simple as this. All possible influences will have to be studied. It may be that there is something in the horoscope that has a tendency to neutralize the effect of the elements on which one has been counting for one's predictions. Astrology is a growing science and he would be a rash man who would venture to say that we have all the material necessary to make correct predictions. Some factor which one has failed to notice or to give sufficient importance may completely upset all one's calculations. I shall give one very interesting example. We all remember the earthquake that shook Bihar on January 15, 1934, and the great havoc caused by it. This earthquake was predicted in very clear terms in most *Panchāngas* for the year. On that date the planets Mars, Mercury, Venus, Saturn, and the Sun were in *Makara* (*Capricorn*). The Moon was to enter that house about 2.45 in the afternoon. It was predicted that some great catastrophe would happen at that time. As you know, the earthquake actually started at this very time. As the *Viśwa panchānga* published from the Hindu University said, there was



probability of some Provinces suffering from an earthquake. It was only necessary to combine the two statements. It will require a good deal of courage, shall I say, to call this a pure coincidence but it is a fact that the equally severe earthquake which shook Baluchistan a few years later was not anticipated. Quite obviously, some important factor had not been noticed or given the importance it deserved.

A question of great importance is sometimes asked in connection with astrological predictions. How far is it possible to be exact in respect of time? Bad astrologers try to cover their inefficiency by indulging in vague generalizations or making predictions which cover very large periods of time. As Charles Carter says in *Symbolic Directions in Modern Astrology*, 'it has always seemed to be of great importance that astrologers should be able to predict as exactly to time as possible when directions—and especially when dangerous directions—are likely to operate.' There is a reason why the words 'as exactly to time as possible' have been used. In the first place, it is not always possible for everyone to have at his command a delicate chronometer accurately timed to standard astrological clock. Even small differences will affect the results of mathematical calculations and vitiate results. In the second place, as Carter himself observes, 'one cannot possibly watch against perils that may occur at any period during a year or more, or even during a month, unless, indeed, one has nothing more pressing to do in life than to stand as it were on guard. Even then the strain of doing so would, in many cases, be much more hurtful than the actual direction.' Life would become a perpetual hunt for foretelling and predictions if one tried to go into such details or sought to regulate the normal routine of life under the guidance of the astrologer. This would be one of the surest methods of proving that Astrology is a false guide in the affairs of men. I have purposely refrained from discussing the laws which astrologers have pro-

fessed to have discovered. They are complicated. It is very difficult to interpret them. It is easy to prepare a horoscope. It is difficult to interpret it. The position of one planet in any particular place may indicate one thing. The presence of another planet in the same house may indicate the exact opposite. The astrologer has to note down the indications given by these and other planets and then strike a mean. There are formulae which help him to do so to some extent, but he must, to a large extent, depend upon his own experience and commonsense.

There are several branches of Astrology. There is, for instance, the astrology of disease and psychological astrology. There is an important branch of this subject dealing with meteorological phenomena of which the monsoon is the most important factor, so far as India is concerned, and there is a new and growing body of astrological knowledge having a bearing upon economic crises. It was formerly comparatively easy for the astrologer to make a prediction about any country by studying the horoscopes of the royal family, particularly that of the ruler. Now this is no longer possible because even in countries where the monarchical form of government is still continuing, the king is little more than a titular sovereign. Astrology in relation to national life is, therefore, another branch of the subject which is gradually taking shape.

As I have stated a little earlier, it is not my intention to discuss the laws and rules claimed to have been discovered by astrologers, in the first place, because what I know about Astrology amounts to less than nothing, and in the second, the deduction of tangible results from these rules is such a difficult process that an amateurish approach to the subject may well serve to discredit the science. Still, books by well-known astrologers sometimes contain simple directions which may well be pursued with interest even by the amateur. The results achieved will show that the labour spent on the work has not been lost. One such book which I can recommend



is *Symbolic Directions in Modern Astrology* by C. V. O. Carter. It gives interesting instructions about the reading of horoscopes and making calculations about things like longevity and even death. There are references to the horoscopes of well-known men. Quite obviously, this book makes use of the technique employed by western astrologers. *Studies in Jaimini Astrology* by B. V. Raman gives equally interesting instructions according to the methods of Hindu Astrology.

I should like to conclude by dealing briefly with what I consider to be the philosophical explanation for the facts of Astrology, although this is, perhaps, not strictly germane to the subject I am discussing this evening. Assuming that Astrology is a science capable of objective verification, would not its truth imply man's absolute subordination to something that is predestined? That 'something' may be good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, but there can be no tampering with it. Hindu Astrology does not accept this position. In the first place, it says that what is preordained is not fate or *kismet* in the sense of the fiat of an absolute God who is *kartum*, *akartum*, *anyathā kartum samarthah* i.e., who has the power to do things, not to do things, to undo things, in other words, to act in any way He chooses. Indian philosophy knows no such God. A man's destiny is forged by his *karma*, the effect of his actions in the past. It is universally admitted that the bodily and mental make-up of an individual is influenced by his environment, subjective and objective, pre-natal and post-natal, but Indian philosophy goes a step further and says that it is a man's *karma* which determines which particular set of influences, what particular environment, he shall be subjected to. But whether it is God's will or his own *karma*, the individual would be entirely a creature bound hand and foot. This is only half the story. The nature of the spirit is essentially the same as the nature of God—*Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*. True, this spirit is enmeshed in *avidyā*, nescience, but it does not reconcile itself to this condition. At every

moment there is the sub-conscious, and, at the higher levels of intellectual and spiritual development, the conscious, effort at self-realization, the effort to break the bonds. This effort is what western philosophy calls free will. There is thus a perpetual tug-of-war between free will and destiny and our actions at any moment are a resultant of these two forces. In the ordinary man, free will is not very strong. His actions in life will, therefore, correspond, to a very large extent, to the forecast given by his horoscope. But, in the case of persons of greater intellectual and spiritual development, there will be greater variation, even though the general pattern will remain the same as indicated by the horoscope.

There is another and, perhaps, a no less important question to which an answer may well be sought. Using the word 'influence' in as wide a sense as we choose, how is it that the planets influence human action? I can only explain this phenomenon in this way. Using Vedic terms, the whole universe is governed by *Rta* and *Satya* which are really two aspects of one Reality. These two words may roughly be translated as the law of nature and the law of morality, respectively. As an essential consequence of this, there is an ever-present parallelism between natural phenomena and those phenomena which constitute the sum-total of the experience of sentient beings. A change in one is accompanied by a change in the other. We find it easy to study external phenomena; and causation appears as a simpler hypothesis than simultaneity. Hence, the external phenomenon is described as the cause of the experiential one. This is purely a procedure based on convenience. Actually all that we are entitled to say is that the presence of a particular phenomenon in one series is a strong indicative of the existence of a corresponding phenomenon in the other series. This is the only explanation which I can give.

Whether, as a matter of fact, such parallelism exists or not is a subject for continuous



research and study. Astrology, even if it is a science, cannot claim to be perfect. It may be that evolution is the result of the clash of mutually exclusive and independent forces, and is proceeding at random along a tortuous path leading nowhere in particular. It may, on the other hand, be that the Universe is the result of the unfoldment of one principle, transcending and, at the same time, permeating everything, manifesting itself in a hundred forms and proceeding in an ordered line of march towards a goal which is the fruition and fulfilment of its Nature. Perhaps the cosmos is a chance product of what is essentially chaos, or there is

One God who ever lives and loves,  
One God, one hand, one element  
And one far off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves.

The solution to this mystery lies in the territory where Science meets philosophy. It is needless to say that Astrology can have no meaning in a universe governed by Chance.

I have not made any attempt to convince you of the truth of Astrology. My endeavour has only been to show that it is a subject *as worthy of study and investigation as any*

*other.* We can, if we choose, laugh it away but thereby we shall only be denying ourselves the use of what might turn out to be a *very efficient instrument* for human well-being. Let me give an example. We are spending huge sums of money on meteorological experiments. The money is being well spent, but why not see if the methods given for weather forecasts in books on Astrology also give the right results? They may be entirely wrong. On the other hand, it is just possible that they are also based on observations carried out, perhaps, for thousands of years. It would, therefore, be childish to refuse to give them a trial. Astrology, like Medicine, is a body of knowledge which deals with *verifiable phenomena.* It is, therefore, the easiest thing in the world to test its truth. Nothing could be more *unscientific* than to *discard* it *merely* on the basis of some kind of *a priori* reasoning. Even if astrologers failed completely to give a satisfactory explanation of the laws of Astrology, it cannot be treated as a pseudo-science so long as its predictions correspond with our actual experience. *After all, we have accepted the law of gravitation without being able to explain the fact of gravitation.\**

\* Italics ours, Editor.

(Concluded)

## ŚRĪ-BHĀŚYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

### CHAPTER II

#### SECTION I

In the last chapter it was shown that the Vedānta texts teach only Brahman which is different from the insentient world of matter experienced by direct perception, as also from the sentient world of intelligent souls, whether in the state of bondage connected with matter or in the state of freedom dissociated from

matter,—Brahman which is the repository of infinite good qualities, free from all imperfections, the one cause of this sentient and insentient world, and the inner Self of everything. The second chapter is begun to strengthen this view by refuting all possible arguments that may be brought against it. To start with, the author takes up the objection that this view would contradict the



Sāṅkhya Smṛti of sage Kapila who is recognized on all hands as a trustworthy authority on matters supra-sensuous.

### TOPIC I

## REFUTATION OF SMṚTIS THAT ARE NOT BASED ON THE ŚRUTIS

स्मृत्यनवकाशदोषप्रसङ्ग इति चेत्, न ; अन्यस्मृत्य-  
नवकाशदोषप्रसङ्गात् ॥२११॥

1. If it be said that (from the doctrine of Brahman being the cause of the world) there would result the defect of leaving no scope for certain Smṛtis (we say) no; (because by the rejection of that doctrine) there would result the defect of leaving no scope for some other Smṛtis.

The question is whether the view expressed in the last chapter, viz. that Brahman is the cause of the world, can be rejected as it contradicts the Kapila Smṛti, or not. The opponent holds that it should be set aside. Smṛtis only elucidate what is taught in the Śrutis, and one has to take their help to understand the true purport of Śruti texts. No doubt it is an accepted maxim that Smṛtis which contradict Śrutis are not to be accepted as authoritative. But this maxim applies only with respect to matters where the meaning of the Śruti texts is quite obvious and requires no reasoning to arrive at their meaning. But with respect to the ultimate truth, which is difficult for the dull-witted to grasp, the true purport of the texts has to be elucidated by Smṛtis written by great sages whose testimony is trustworthy. So one cannot set aside Smṛtis so very easily because they contradict a superficial view of the Vedānta texts. Sage Kapila, the promulgator of the Sāṅkhya Smṛti, is a seer of truth; and as his Smṛti deals only with the ultimate truth, one has to take its help for a true understanding of the Vedānta texts. Otherwise the Smṛti becomes absolutely meaningless. We have to conclude, therefore, that the doctrine taught by the Vedānta texts cannot be different from that taught by sage Kapila and that the Vedānta texts are to be

interpreted consistent with the Sāṅkhya Smṛti.

This view is refuted by the second half of the Sūtra. It says that if the doctrine of Brahman being the cause of the world be rejected to accommodate the Sāṅkhya Smṛti, then many other Smṛtis like that of Manu and others which uphold this doctrine and are based on Śrutis will have no scope. If help is to be taken to understand the Śruti texts, one should resort to Smṛtis which do not contradict the Śrutis.

It may, however, be said: Sāṅkhya Smṛti deals only with the ultimate truth, and so if, on this point, it be rejected it will mean its total rejection. But this is not the case with respect to Manu and other Smṛtis which also deal with ritualistic worship. So if they are rejected with respect to the ultimate truth, yet with respect to ritualistic worship, they will retain their authority. So it will not be their total rejection, as in the case of the Sāṅkhya Smṛti.

This view is not correct. For ritualistic worship is meant to propitiate Brahman, the ultimate truth. If there be indefiniteness with respect to this ultimate reality, ritualistic worship meant to propitiate it will be meaningless. So it is not correct to say that Manu and other Smṛtis will be at least partly authoritative if their view of the ultimate truth is rejected. Between the two, therefore, we have to accept those Smṛtis only which are based on the Śrutis and teach the doctrine of Brahman, an intelligent principle, being the cause of the world and reject Smṛtis like the Sāṅkhya Smṛti which go counter to the Śrutis.

इतरेषां च अनुपलब्धेः ॥२११॥

2. And on account of the non-perception (of the truth as taught by Kapila) by others.

An objection is raised that Kapila who had the power, through deep meditation, to realize the truth which is beyond sense-perception, did not experience that the Vedānta texts refer to Brahman, and so we have to accept that they refer to the Pradhāna as taught by



Kapila. This Sūtra refutes this argument as it equally applies the other way also. Manu and others who were foremost amongst the knowers of the Vedas and who also were able to realize the truth beyond the ken of the senses, did not perceive that the Vedānta texts referred to the Pradhāna but to Brahman. Therefore we have to accept their view and conclude that the realization of Kapila which goes counter to the teachings of the Vedas is based on error.

#### TOPIC 2

### REFUTATION OF THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY

एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः ॥२११३॥

3. By this the Yoga philosophy is (also) rejected.

A fresh objection is raised. Granting that the Sāṅkhya Smṛti is not authoritative, the Yoga Smṛti at least is so, for it recognizes an Īśvara who directs the Pradhāna and also because it is propounded by Brahmā or Hiraṇyagarbha who is the promulgator of the Vedas. There cannot be any sage superior or equal to him, whose Smṛti could be more authoritative as against the Yoga Smṛti. Therefore we have to interpret the Vedānta

texts according to this Smṛti and accept that Īśvara is the efficient cause and the Pradhāna the material cause of the world.

This view is refuted by this Sūtra. Even Hiraṇyagarbha is an embodied being and as such liable to error. This Smṛti also, like the Sāṅkhya Smṛti, is based on error. If Īśvara is merely the efficient cause, then by the knowledge of one everything will not be known. For the knowledge of the Pradhāna will not give us the knowledge of the sentient souls which are not its products. Nor can the knowledge of Īśvara result in the knowledge of the souls as they are not products of Īśvara who, according to the Yoga philosophy, is merely the efficient cause and not the material cause also. So we have to conclude that Brahman alone is both the efficient and material cause of the world and its knowledge will result in the knowledge of everything. Therefore, only those Smṛtis are authoritative which teach Brahman as the cause of the world. It may be said that the Yoga Smṛti teaches many things which are also taught by the Vedas. It is true, and to that extent only is it acceptable, and its other teachings have to be rejected.

(To be continued)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

Swami Vivekananda gave "The Gītā II" as the second of a three-lecture series in San Francisco in 1900. An old ticket shows that the lectures were delivered at 770 Oak Street on Saturday, May 26, Monday, May 28, and Tuesday, May 29. Admission was fifty cents for individual lectures, one dollar for the three. The lectures came to *Vedānta and the West* through the late Ida Ansell, who took them down in shorthand at the time of their delivery. . . .

Individuals and groups, in tune with Cosmic Creative Energy, attain excellence in some field or other. This, in its turn, leads to a distinct *Sādhanā*, and a philosophy that presents Reality in terms understandable by contemporaries. As time passes, other sections arise with their own *Sādhana*s and philosophies. Human nature being what it is, it is but natural that clashes should occur among them, each claiming superiority for itself and trying to show the inadequacies, or supposed fallacies, of the positions taken up by the rest.



Clashes mean splits in society, even among those interested in self-improvement. They have to be stopped through an approach that reconciles them all in the only way possible, viz. realization of the Unity behind all variations. It must also supply the platform from which the good found in each system can be retained and intensified, and the spirit of mutual antagonisms effectively eliminated. Advaita has supplied such a Unity. All religious disciplines, according to it, lead to citta-śuddhi, clarity of mind. When this reaches its zenith, Reality shines of Its own accord; Truth, unlimited by words, concepts, and physical activity, becomes revealed. Who does not remember Gauḍapāda's emphatic statement: 'Dualists cling obstinately to the conclusions arrived at by their own enquiries (as being the truth). So they contradict one another, whereas the Advaitin finds no conflict with them' (Māṇḍūkya Kārikā, III.17)? The trouble, however, is to interpret this 'non-contradictory' position when opponents put questions from widely differing standpoints, and there is the danger of the relative answer to one question being taken as a more pervading position than is actually intended in the context. Since Ultimate Reality is not a concept, no concept, however carefully formulated, can remain inviolable. The difficulty is greater as examples taken from daily life also have a likelihood of being elaborated to absurd lengths, leading not only to our missing the point at issue, but also to greater confusions than we had before! And yet, as often as problems arise, replies have to be found. Have there not been, and are there not even now, people who think that the philosophy of Brahman 'without name and form' can give us only bare 'stone', and not the 'living' 'bread' or 'waters' we badly require for world's betterment? The old form of this accusation of 'pure negativism' sometimes took the shape: 'The bliss of Brahman means only a complete absence of sorrow, or a state in which there is simply a total eradication of desire, the enemy of mankind.' Naturally discussions

revolved round the meaning of terms like 'Ānandam' repeated in scriptural texts. . . . Dr. Hasurkar, M.A., Ph.D., Sāhityācharya, Head of the Department of Languages and Research, Shahid Smarak, Jabalpur, has taken up this interesting topic for his article. He has written it in the very style of classic discussions. As a majority of readers may find it a little taxing, we have cut the article into smaller sections. The 'positive character of joy' is the first topic discussed. Next, Maṇḍana 'turns his guns'—as the writer puts it—'on other critics' who create a dilemma by asking whether the 'joy' is cognizable or uncognizable, affirmative answer to either of them being open to objections. . .

Swami Shraddhananda was the editor of 'Udbodhan', the Bengali monthly of the Order, before he went to San Francisco. At present he is the Assistant Minister at the Vedānta Society there. In his article he points out how even the most unsophisticated, ordinary words flowing 'out of compassion' from the lips of the great Teachers,—those 'messengers of God' who have 'reached Truth beyond all possibility of doubt'—carry behind them precious nuggets of wisdom and instruction to all mankind. As an illustration of this, he takes up one of Sri Ramakrishna's famous utterances, 'Dive Deep', and in his lucid, simple and charming style explains its inner significance 'as a powerful corrective to three religious aberrations': a 'superficial fidelity to religion', the 'confusion of spiritual wisdom with intellectual sophistry', and 'lukewarmness in spiritual practice'. All spiritual aspirants would derive great benefit from the Swami's words: 'The truth of the spirit, though closest to man, may yet remain farthest from him if man, out of his perversity, does not care to see it.' . . .

The Swami has also kindly translated for us the poem 'To Sri Ramakrishna' from the original Bengali by Swami Premeshanandaji of the Ramakrishna Order. This song was deeply appreciated by Revered Mahapurush Maharaj, the then President of the R. K. Math & Mission. The Swami writes: 'I once heard



Revered Mahapurush Maharaj say in an inspired mood to Swami Premeshanandaji as he had come one morning to bow down to him: "You have become immortal by this single song." In those days (1931-33) Rev. Mahapurush Maharaj would often ask Sankar Maharaj (Swami Apurvanda, at present Head of the Advaita Ashrama, Vārānasi) to sing this song in the shrine as also in his own room.' . . .

A man of Vision 'sees' the trend of world forces long before they assume proportions recognizable by persons of lesser sensitivity. He not only registers the better state towards which those forces move but also contributes his own share, often silently, to prepare the ground for its emergence. That share takes a twofold shape: first, a continuous and positive expectant pull through his whole personality; and secondly, efforts like persuasion, and organization of the energies, of others in accordance with his own inborn gifts. Thus, one may express his steady aspiration in speech if he is an orator, another in prose and poetry if he is a writer, in dissertations if he is a philosopher, in administration if he is a politician, and so on. There have also appeared individuals blest with a combination of some of these gifts . . . Those who have studied *Lectures from Colombo to Almora* will find that as early as 1897, Swami Vivekananda drew pointed attention (lecture on 'Vedānta and Indian Life', *Compl. Wks.* III. 241) to the phenomenon of 'solidarity coming in spite of itself'. 'The world,' he said 'is waiting to receive from our Upaniṣads' 'the solidarity of this universe.' He went on to remind us that 'Our Upaniṣads say that the cause of all misery is ignorance; and this is perfectly true when applied to every state of life, either social or spiritual. It is ignorance that makes us hate each other, it is through ignorance that we do not know, and do not

love each other. As soon as we come to know each other, love comes, must come; for are we not one?' Then he significantly added: 'Even in politics and sociology, problems that were only national twenty years ago can no more be solved on national grounds only. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can only be solved when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. International organizations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day. That shows the solidarity.' Then, in his characteristic way, the Swami spoke of science and religious realization,—ending with 'the One Unchangeable, Unbroken, Homogeneous Atman.' . . . Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D., of Vārānasi University, has approached the same subject of man's "Ascent" from "earthly" to "Cosmic" consciousness, starting from the 'international' plane, its present problems, and the pressing need to solve them through a widening of consciousness. Quoting from the writings of Poet Tagore and the Seer of Pondicherry, Dr. Maitra shows how modern men can get 'their proper perspectives' only if they realize their 'oneness with the entire universe', through right *Sādhana*. Take the *Gāyatrī*, or *Īśa Upaniṣad*, or the *Puruṣottama Yoga* of the *Gītā*,—wherever we turn with the eager longing to find the Truth, we come across the same unmistakable spiritual call: To acquire the 'knowledge which embraces oneness with the Divine and arrives through the Divine at conscious oneness with all things and beings,—a will emptied of egoism and acting only by the command and as an instrumentation of the secret of Master of works.' It is a Call which finds eloquent expression, for example, in the grand poetic description of the Immortal Indweller (*Antaryāmī Amṛtaḥ*) in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. . . We are thankful to the learned Doctor for giving us this article with its timely appeal to establish 'the connection between Cosmic Revelation and the affairs of our mundane existence'.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GOD AND COUNTRY. BY CHARLES SCHOENFELD. *Philosophical Library, New York.* \$ 3.00.

The author seeks to examine the human situation that man has developed marvellously in technology but has failed to be at peace with himself. He finds that the belief in God and the practice of religion have done more harm than good to man. He traces our religiosity to our inherent desire for security and our fear of losing this. He, in fact, gives a psycho-analysis of the religious phenomenon and speaks of our infantile fear of losing our mother, who symbolizes for us security and rest, as the basis of religion. He shows that the attributes of God are all false; they only reflect what we wish Him to be but in fact there is no God and His 'attributes'. The author then proceeds to show that some of our prevailing ideals of society and goals of life are also defective and have their origin in a sense of insecurity and fear. In discussing war he says that man returns to God in times of war and this must symbolically be interpreted as his return to mother. The author's own solution of our distressing malady is mere self-awareness which will cure our suppressed fear, so that knowledge and psychotherapy, more than religion, are needed for mankind today.

We cannot say how readers of different temperaments will receive this book. As for ourselves we believe the author, with all his sincerity of purpose and goodness, is seriously mistaken in his notion of religion. Any good religion is not a false refuge but a true one for man. It offers not stories of God and man's essential nature but *truths* which give him permanent peace. And religion is not merely a refuge, an escape, but it helps man to live a healthy life of *positive* values when he has cured himself of his malady of fear and distrust. Religion is a source of knowledge and happiness; the priest is no wizard but a wise man and God is no symbol but a *reality*.

DR. P. J. CHAUDHURY

REFLECTIONS OF A PHYSICIST. BY P. W. BRIDGMAN. *Philosophical Library, New York.* Price \$ 6.00.

This is a collection of non-technical essays of the author, written at various times over a period of about 15 years. Many of them have been published in academic journals. The topics too range over a considerable field. There are methodological problems and their applications to certain situations in modern physics such as Causality, Thermo-dyna-

mics and Time; there are social problems, mainly those related to the scientist as a citizen of the world having social responsibilities and freedom; and there are some very general questions discussed here, including some political ones. Naturally one does not get here a single thesis or an unified whole. However, the author is a well-known figure in philosophy of science, known for his operationalism, first elaborated in his book, *The Logic of Modern Physics*, in 1926. Of course that thesis, which defined a concept of a scientific entity or measure by the operations needed to verify or settle it, met much criticism and has been abandoned. The later formulation that the definition of a scientific concept should be specified in terms of checking operations was also found unhelpful and confusing. Certainly science in its explorations must be operational but in concept-formation it does not include the operations. The concept is defined in terms of structure and not operations though it is arrived at through the latter and is to be checked by them. The author in this book seems to be quite aware of this situation and so, though he has brought his operational analysis to bear upon the various subject-matters in science and sociology,—and this common methodological approach is the only unifying principle in the book—he has definitely no intention to set up any philosophical theory of meaning or scientific method. Here he is engaged in analysing certain concepts to bring out their real significance and in this analysis he has to refer to the actual operations, whether verbal or manual, that are involved in their making. Thus operational analysis, he says, is an art and a help to solution of many confusions.

It is highly profitable reading. The author writes with extreme clarity and conviction and the reader is led to see and appreciate many sides of a question he did not consider before. One learns many things, and above all, how to pursue a concept down to its experiential bases and thus to grasp its concrete meaning. The book is a valuable contribution to philosophy of science.

DR. P. J. CHAUDHURY.

THE GOSPEL OF SELFLESS ACTION OR THE GITA ACCORDING TO GANDHI. BY MAHADEV DESAI. *Published from Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pages 392. Price Rs. 4, Cheap Edition Rs. 3. (IV Impression).*

The present publication is an English translation of the Gujarati rendering of the Gita by Mahatma



Gandhi, the eloquent exponent of Karma Yoga (Selfless Action) and Ahimsā (Non-violence). The translator is well acquainted with the author and the accuracy of the translation is vouchsafed by Gandhiji. Sri Desai's elaborate and scholarly *Submission* is very instructive and shows his deep knowledge of things spiritual and philosophical. It helps the reader understand the message of the *Gītā* better. *Anāsaktiyoga* (The Gospel of Selfless Action), Gandhiji's Gujarati introduction to the *Gītā*, appears in this book in his own English version.

Gandhiji's work is an important landmark in the growing literature on the *Gītā* inasmuch as he had tried an unbroken forty years to enforce the meaning of the *Gītā* in his own life. Every word of his carries a persuasive conviction which will ultimately transform the reader into a sincere and devoted lover and follower of *Gītā*, the Mother. He says in the introduction (p. 132): "The common belief is that religion is always opposed to material good. 'One cannot act religiously in mercantile and such other matters. There is no place for religion in such pursuits; religion is only for attainment of salvation,' many worldly-wise people say. In my opinion the author of the *Gītā* has dispelled this delusion. He has drawn no line of demarcation between salvation and worldly pursuits. On the contrary he has shown that religion must rule even our worldly pursuits. I have felt that the *Gītā* teaches us that what cannot be followed out in day-to-day practice cannot be called religion."

The best Indian tradition has always upheld this lofty message. Says Sister Nivedita in her masterly introduction to *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (1907): If the many and the One be indeed the same Reality, then it is *not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realization. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life is itself religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid.*" (Italics ours).

This unique publication of Navajivan on the *Gītā* should be read by all who love India and her culture.

B. S. C.

MAHATMA GANDHI—THE LAST PHASE  
VOLUME II. BY FYARELAL. Published by Navajivan  
Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pp. xiii+887  
Price Rs. 20/-, sh. 30, \$ 5.

'I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old soul went through thinking of

it. *Let it not be said that Gandhi was party to India's vivisection.*' So was Mahatmaji heard musing in the early hours of a morning, 'weighed down with care' with the impending prospect of the partition of India. The earlier portion of this massive volume is a vindication of this statement of his. On another occasion he was heard to remark, 'I am surrounded by exaggeration and untruth . . . Sixty years of striving have at last enabled me to realize the ideal of truth and purity which I have set before myself,' and 'I fancy I know the art of living and dying non-violently. BUT I HAVE YET TO DEMONSTRATE IT BY ONE PERFECT ACT.' The rest of the book is the story of the realization of that 'perfect act' (by which he meant 'to hail death as a deliverer and friend' instead of dying of 'illness, groaning and moaning') and the course of events that led to it.

From the very beginning Gandhiji held the view that the 'Congress should in no circumstance be a party to partition. We should tell the British to quit unconditionally.' He would 'unhesitatingly choose chaos' and 'let the country be reduced to ashes' than accept 'partition at British hands as the price of peace.' 'Life with him was an unending duel, a ceaseless quest,' and he was not to be deterred from striving by 'failure'. For him there was only one 'adversity' and that was 'to forget God'. 'Struggle' for him was the 'means as well as the end', and not merely 'means to an end'. 'Even in the evening of his life he was capable of launching upon one more struggle' without feeling 'weary and footsore'. 'Independence was there right in front of them' and 'It was for them to take it' without helplessly depending on 'what the British Government might say or do.' But his 'Old Guard' in the Congress did not have that faith and strength, to begin the battle all over again. So, when, in spite of himself the inevitable happened, he as a 'dutiful' and 'loyal' servant of the nation accepted the proposal, though he did not like much of 'what was going on'. Then it dawned upon him that the country had been, all these days, following only the non-violence of the weak and that he had been 'wrong in placing civil disobedience before constructive work.' (A Golden Era will surely dawn if politicians everywhere begin to see this more and more.) The ghastly repercussions following partition, 'predicted' earlier by him, strengthened this realization of Gandhiji. He also saw the rot that had set in the Congress circles with the assumption of power by them and its 'slow death as a national organization.' From then onwards all his energies were directed towards the 'formulation of a new dynamo' that 'would fire the people with the enthusiasm for the non-violence of the brave' which alone, he was



convinced, would 'brace up and purify the political climate of the country.' How he set about this task till the end of his life in the midst of the raging communal conflagration and the 'welter of confusion' all around is retold by the author in a graphic manner. Two chapters are devoted to an elaborate exposition of the philosophy behind Mahatmaji's system of economy and planning, and the Epilogue is an estimation of the significance or validity of Gandhiji's message for the present-day world.

S. K.

## BENGALI

**SRI SRI MAYER PANCHALI.** BY SRI AKRUR CHANDRA DHAR. *Published by Sri Akshay Kumar Roy, Pirpur, Dacca.* (To be had of Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, and other centres of Ramakrishna Mission in East Pakistan.) *Pages 48. Price Annas Ten only.*

The booklet under review retells the life-story of the Holy Mother Sri Sri Sarada Devi in pleasant verses. Panchali is an unpretentious medium of folk devotion and through centuries it has been the evening prayer-book of devout village folk in Bengal. The Holy Mother's life is a poem of purity and the poet has done his devotional best to worship the Mother with the mellow cadence of his poetry. In a way the book is a triumph of condensation. We find in it the salient features of her life appropriately highlighted. It should also be added in commendation that the author has eminently succeeded in portraying the loving solicitude of the Mother for her countless children, near and distant, known and unknown.

The sale proceeds of the book go to Ramakrishna Math, Dacca.

PROF. J. C. DATTA

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS

(JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER, 1957)

(Swami Satprakashananda in Charge)

#### A. *Sunday Services*

The Swami gave public lectures on different religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel at 10:30 a.m. Groups of students from Washington University, Lindenwood College, United Hebrew Temple, and other educational centers and churches often attended the services. The total number of Sunday lectures was forty-six.

#### B. *Meditation and Discourses*

On Tuesday evenings the Swami conducted meditation and gave discourses on Nārada's Aphorisms on Divine Love and the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad successively. He also answered questions after the talk.

#### C. *Occasional Lectures and Discussions*

The Swami was invited to speak on Hindu religion and philosophy at the following places:

- (1) The Excelsior Club (women's literary association), East St. Louis, Ill.
- (2) Westminster Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Mo.
- (3) Concordia Seminary (theological college), St. Louis Mo.

He also talked to a group of young boys and girls of the Church of Christ, who came to him for some knowledge of Hinduism. There was a discussion at each meeting.

#### D. *Special Meeting*

On October 15 Professor Huston Smith of

Washington University gave an illustrated lecture in the Society's chapel on his recent trip to India.

#### E. *Anniversaries*

Important birthdays like those of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Christ, Śankarācārya, Śrī Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Brahmananda, were duly celebrated. Devotional services were conducted also on such festive occasions as the worship of the Divine Mother Durgā, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Good Friday.

#### F. *The Summer Recess*

In most of the Vedānta Centers of California visited by the Swami there were meetings of the devotees, at which he spoke and answered questions. On Sunday, August 11, he was the guest speaker at the Hollywood Vedānta temple. His subject was "Search for God."

During the Swami's absence the St. Louis devotees and friends met regularly every Sunday morning and Tuesday evening in the Society's chapel for prayer, meditation and reading.

#### G. *Guests and Visitors*

The Society had the privilege of receiving about twenty-five out-of-town guests and visitors, including Swami Pavitrananda of New York.

#### H. *Interviews*

A number of persons came to the Swami for spiritual guidance and instruction. Eighty-two interviews were given.

#### I. *Library*

The lending library of the Society was well utilized by its members and friends.