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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य ब्रह्मबोधत।

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



AT THE FEET OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY SWAMI ARUPANANDA

TRANSLATED BY SRIMATI LEELA MAZUMDAR

Vibhuti and I were at our evening meal. I said to him: 'It would be a good idea if we could get some good man to give an amulet for Radhu's hysteria. . . . Many people receive remedies in dreams for aches and pains, but she has no such good fortune.'

The Mother said: 'No, no one takes pity on her. I was once very ill, my whole body was swollen, and my nose and ears were running. My brother Umesh advised me to throw myself at the door of Simhavāhini's temple. He persuaded me and helped me to walk to the place. To me the full moon was like the new moon, I could see nothing; my eyes had been watering so that I had lost my sight. I went and flung myself before the temple of the goddess. To add to the rest, I had dysentery. . . . I lay there. A little later, a young girl of twelve or thirteen, who looked like an ironmonger's daughter, went to my mother and said, "Go,

go and bring her in. She is so ill, how can you leave her there? Bring her in at once. Take this medicine, it will make her well". She also said to me, "Rub some flowers of the gourd with salt and put a few drops in your eyes. You will get well". Then I took the remedy that my mother had received and put a few drops from the gourd flowers into my eyes. Immediately, my eyes cleared, and were cured in a day. The swelling died down, and I felt light. I was cured. To whoever asked me, I said, "Mother (Goddess) gave me a remedy". From that day, her glory spread. . . .

'My mother had a vision on another occasion. They were celebrating Kālī pūjā in our village, and Naba Mukherji did not collect our quota of rice, out of spite. My mother had husked it and set it ready. But he would not collect it from our house. My mother cried all night, "I made this rice for Kālī, and they would not

take it. Who will have it now? No one can eat of rice prepared for Kālī". At night, she saw Goddess Jagaddhātrī, red in colour, sitting by the doorway, her feet crossed. . . . She woke my mother by patting her body and said, "Why do you weep? I shall take Kālī's rice. What have you to fear?" My mother asked, "Who are you?" Jagaddhātrī answered, "I am the Mother of the world; I shall accept your *pūjā* in the form of Jagaddhātrī".

'Next day, my mother said to me, "Tell me, Sarada, which goddess is red in colour, and sits with her feet crossed? I shall worship Jagaddhātrī". It became a sort of craze with her. She must worship Jagaddhātrī. She sent for thirteen maunds (half a ton) of paddy. It rained all the time; there was not a single day's respite. My mother cried, "How can I worship you, Mother? I cannot even dry the paddy". In the end, Jagaddhātrī gave her sunshine. It rained everywhere, but where she spread out the paddy to dry, the sun shone. They burnt wood and dried the image before it and painted it. . . . So the *pūjā* was celebrated; the whole countryside was invited. The rice from that paddy paid for everything.

'When the time arrived for the immersion of the image, my mother whispered in the ear of the goddess. "Mother Jagāi, come again next year. All through the year, I shall make preparations for your coming".

'Next year, my mother said to me, "You must contribute something; we are going to celebrate Jagāi's *pūjā*". I said, "I do not want to be bothered. It was celebrated once; why go into all that trouble again? There is no need, I can't be bothered". That night, I dreamt that three personages had come to see me. I still tremble to remember it.'

I asked, 'Who were the three?'

The Mother replied: 'Jagaddhātrī and her companions, Jayā and Vijayā. She said, "Shall we go then?" I asked, "Who are you?" She replied, "I am Jagaddhātrī". I cried, "No, no, where are you going? Please stay. I never asked you to go".

'Since then, I always come here for Jagaddhātrī *pūjā*. The utensils have to be cleaned. And in those days, there were not many people (available for such service) in our house; so I would come to clean the utensils. Later on, Jogin (Yogananda) had utensils made of wood. He said, "Mother, you won't have to clean the utensils any more". He also donated some land. Ah, my mother was like Lakṣmī, the goddess of prosperity. All through the year, she would collect the things she would need.' . . .

I had a mild attack of dysentery. When the Mother heard of this, she said, 'He is inclined that way. He had dysentery even in Varanasi'.

I answered, '... It is a family weakness, Mother. My father and many others died of it'.

Vibhuti cried, 'What is that? What does it matter what one's father died of, sometime or other?'

The Mother said: 'Yes. . . . One should never make comparisons. . . . What does it matter how or when people die? Who is one's father or one's mother? God is all.'

14th July 1913, Jayrambati

Mukunda Saha and I were having our mid-day meal on the Mother's verandah. She was sitting in the eastern corner of her brother's verandah, when Nalini arrived in dripping clothes saying that she had to bathe again, because a crow had urinated on her.

The Mother remarked: 'I am getting old, but I have never heard of crows urinating! One must have committed many evil deeds to have such an impure mind! . . . It is a complex always to be suspecting impurities. And it grows on one.'

I said: 'I have seen Mahapurushji (Swami Shivananda) fondle dogs and then sit down for *pūjā*, after pouring a little water over his fingers, like washing his hands after a meal.'

The Mother said: 'Well, they are different. They have the purest minds, the minds of

saints. Those who live on the banks of the Gaṅgā are like gods; otherwise, they could never have lived there. If one bathes in the Gaṅgā, one washes away one's daily sins everyday.'

Nalini said: 'One day, at Udbodhan, Golapdidi cleaned the lavatories, then changed her clothes, and immediately sat down to peel fruit for the Master's offerings. I said, "What are you about, Golapdidi? Go and take a dip in the Gaṅgā". Golapdidi said, "Go yourself, if you want!"'

The Mother said: 'Golap's mind is pure and noble. That is why she does not bother about what is pure and what is not. This will be her last incarnation. You will have to be born again in a different body, before you have a mind like hers. ... This mind becomes pure after long practice. The pure mind can never be had without piety. What happens when one finds God? Does one grow two horns? No, indeed, but the mind becomes pure. And illumination dawns on a pure mind.'

I said, 'Those who calmly depend upon God and do nothing for themselves, how do they find God?'

The Mother said: 'As for those who depend upon God and have faith in Him, well, that is their piety.) Naren once said, "Why should we fear even if we are born a hundred thousand times?" He was quite right. Why should a man who has knowledge be afraid of being born? They may never sin. It is those who have no knowledge who should be afraid. They get entangled; they are engrossed in sin. They suffer for thousands of births, and in the end their sorrows make them seek God.' ...

18th September 1913, Jayrambati

The Mother had written to someone: 'There is no happiness while living in this body. The world is full of sorrow. Happiness is only a name. Only those who have received the mercy of the Master have been able to recognize him as God, and that is their only joy.'

A disciple, who had renounced the world, visited the Mother at Jayrambati, and then left for Rishikesh. Only a few days later, he wrote to the Mother, 'Mother, you told me that in time I would see the Master, but why have I not done so?' The Mother listened to the letter and said to me: 'Go, write to him that just because he has gone to Rishikesh, the Master will not be waiting for him there. He has become a monk; what should he do now but call upon God? He will appear when he wishes.'

A young man had come once or twice for the Mother's blessings. He was poor, and had much difficulty in coming. Unfortunately, he had not been able to receive her blessings, as she had been unwell. This time, he had appealed to us, 'Please do not close your doors to me. It is very difficult for me to go there. I would like to know if it will be possible to see her, should I go now', and so on. We read the letter to the Mother, and she said in reply: 'Anybody who comes to see me when I am ill has to go back. Even when I am well, I cannot invite anybody. People find opportunities according to their fate and *karma*. Some people come many times, but never see me; perhaps I am ill, or something else prevents them. It is their misfortune, what can I do? You may say that they have spent a great deal of money for the journey; everybody doesn't have money. No matter how often the *guru* sends him back. If a man really craves his blessings, he will come again, even if he has to beg for the money. The fact is, (if one's time to go beyond the world is ripe, one will break all bonds and come; nobody will be able to check him. Lack of money, awaiting a reply, fear of having to go back, these things are nothing.) She concluded by saying: 'I am feeling a little better nowadays; tell him he may come now.'

Udbodhan

A woman had written: 'Mother, I am young, and my husband's parents will not let

me go to you. How can I come against their wishes? I want your blessings.' The Mother asked us to write: 'My daughter, there is no need for you to come here. Call upon the Lord who pervades the universe. He will bless you.'

30th September 1918, Udbodhan, Prayer Room

In the morning, the Mother was peeling fruit for the *pūjā*; I was reading a letter from a disciple. The letter was full of pique against God. The Mother said in her reply: '... (If you do not call upon God—indeed many people never even remember Him—what does it matter to Him? It is your own misfortune. Such is the *Māyā* of God; He keeps them ignorant of Him saying, "They are happy enough, let them be so!"'

I said: 'Mother, it is not that these people do not want God. These problems would not have risen had they not done so. But it pains one's heart when He, whom we try to seek out as our own, evades us. Buddha, Caitanya Deva, Jesus Christ, they did so much for their disciples; they always thought of their good.'

The Mother said: 'So does the Master. Only I cannot always remember every disciple. I say to the Master, "O Master, care for all of them wherever they may be. I cannot remember everybody". And see here, my son, he does care, else all these people would never have come.'

I said: 'Yes, indeed. It is easy for men to believe in Kālī, Durgā, and the others as God, but it is difficult to accept a human being as God.' ...

The Mother said. 'That depends on His grace'.

Later, when the disciple arrived, I said to the Mother, 'Mother, this is the man who wrote that letter'. The Mother said, 'What? this one? Why, he is a good boy'. Then she said to him: 'Although it is the property of water always to flow downwards, yet the sun's

rays raise it up to the sky. So the mind naturally tends downwards—it suffers; but the mercy of God turns it upwards.'

It was about ten in the morning. A devotee came and after bowing to the Mother said, 'Mother, why do I not see the Master?' The Mother said: 'Keep on calling on Him. See how quite a number of *munis* and *ṛsis* could not find Him even after ages of searching, and do you want to have Him for the mere asking? If it does not happen in this birth, it will in the next; if not in the next, it will in the birth after that. Is the vision of God such an easy thing? But it is fortunate this time that the Master's path is easy.' ... After the devotee had gone, she continued the topic and said with some agitation: 'Why should not one have concentration and meditation if the mind is pure? Why should not one have the vision of God? When one sits down for *japa*, God's name will continue rising up from the mind naturally, and not with effort.'

'One must cast aside indolence and put one's mind to prayer and meditation at the proper time. At Dakshineswar, I felt unwell one day and rose a little later than usual. In those days, I used to get up at three in the morning. The next day, I rose later still. Gradually, I noticed that I no longer felt inclined to get up early. I said to myself, "Now, you are in the clutches of indolence". Then I made up my mind and began to rise early again, and everything was as before. A little determination is necessary to maintain these good habits.'

'Talk of prayer and meditation, or of pilgrimage, or of earning money, all these should be done during the earlier part of one's life. In those days, I visited the temples of Varanasi and Vrindaban on foot. Now I need a palanquin to go two yards, and have to be helped to it! (In old age, one's body is filled with phlegm; one's physical and mental strength is weakened.) Is that the time for any struggle? Look at our boys here now; they have turned their minds to God in their youth; this is right; this is the proper time. My son, your prayers

and meditations must be accomplished now, in your youth. Do you think you will be able to do anything later? Whatever you may do, this is the time for it.'

I said: 'Those who receive your blessings now are fortunate indeed. What will happen to those who will come later?'

She replied: 'What do you mean? Shall they not receive it? God is everywhere, all the time. There is the Master; by his mercy everything will be done. Is it not so in other countries?'

I said: 'One's mind is filled with yearning, only if one receives love. Do you really love us?'

She replied: 'Do I not love you? Who does the least service for me, I love him. And you have done so much. At home, whenever I lay my hands on anything, I remember you. Indeed, I love you very much. But I cannot always be with you on account of my health. Neither would it be right. I often think of the little band of you who are here. But as for those who are far away, I say to the Master on their behalf, "Master, take care of them; I cannot always remember them".'

Udbodhan, Prayer Room

The Mother was seated on her cot, and I was reading out her letters. Krishnalal Maharaj (Swami Dhirananda) was also present.

Someone had written, 'I cannot calm my mind and concentrate' and so on. The Mother became agitated at these words and said: ('It can be done if one repeats the name (*japa*) fifteen or twenty thousand times each day. I have seen it actually happen, Krishnalal. Let him do that first and talk afterwards if it fails. But one must put one's mind to it. But no, no one will do that. They will only say, "Why does nothing come of it?"')

A disciple had come in to bow to the Mother, and was questioning her about meditation and *japa*. The Mother replied: 'To repeat the name, count, keep count on one's hands, all this is only to bring concentration. The mind tends to wander, and may perhaps be bound by these things. When, after repeating the name, one sees God and is lost in meditation, there is no longer any need for *japa*. If one can meditate, that is everything.'

'The mind is restless; so in the beginning, one should hold one's breath for short periods and try to meditate. It helps to calm the mind. But one must not overdo this; it heats the head. Speak of finding God, or of meditation, the mind is everything. Concentrate, and everything will come to pass. Men are always forgetful of God. That is why whenever there is need for Him, God comes in human form and shows the way to piety. This time, he (the Master) has shown us the meaning of renunciation. He has said that he will remain with his children for a hundred years.'



Thy heart to Ramakrishna doth remain,
To hear His name is joy to Thee,
O Embodiment of His thought alone,
I salute Thee over, over again.

Noble Thou hast a character,
Pure is Thy life divine;
Ever we bow to Thee, O Mother,
Thou incarnate Purity fine!

—SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

THE SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT OF MAN

BY THE EDITOR

Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitaḥ—The Self, my dear, should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon.

—*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.4.5.

I

While concluding our last editorial, which was devoted to a consideration of the diverse aims of education prevalent today, we had said that a detailed treatment of the subject of 'education for the divinization of man' would be taken up on a suitable occasion. Our present theme is precisely this.

Indian thought at its highest holds the ideal of self-realization as the acme of human perfection. According to it, the *summum bonum* of life is to realize one's own inherent divine nature; and the imparting of spiritual knowledge, the knowledge that liberates, is regarded as the greatest gift that one can confer on another. The person who transmits such knowledge is looked upon as next to God, nay, as God Himself.

Man is a composite being. The merely physical man does not exhaust the whole of himself. He has a mental and an intellectual being in him; and deeper still, as the innermost core, is his spiritual being. For a healthy, all-round growth of man, attention should be paid to the development of each and every aspect of his being—the physical, the mental or the intellectual, and the spiritual. Only when adequate care is bestowed for the all-sided development of man, is he enabled to grow into a complete and total personality. It is such an all-sided personality that becomes fully integrated not only with his own being within, but also with the environment without. If, on the other hand, any one aspect of his being alone develops at the cost and to the exclusion of the others, such a person develops a lop-sided personality, resulting in an imbalance

in his own being as well as creating many complications for those among whom he lives.

Man needs to be trained at all levels of his being. For his physical growth, he pays all the attention that is needed. He takes particular care to see that nothing remains undone for his physical well-being. By way of food, shelter, and clothing as the primary necessities of life, by way of medical aid when he suffers from ailments, by way of sports, games, and physical exercise for his bodily growth and pleasure, he leaves no stone unturned to see that he is adequately provided with all of them. Man wants physical happiness first and foremost. No one can or will deny that. Most of what he does every day of his life is aimed at this end. That is his basic need. Commensurate with the will and effort that he puts forth in this direction, he reaps the fruits of his labour. That is how he fulfils the demands of his physical being.

Having met his physical needs, man should next direct his attention to such pursuits as will bring him mental happiness and intellectual satisfaction, those that enrich his knowledge and understanding and bring him more enlightenment about himself and the world around him. Developing his mind and intellect in tune with the accepted ethical and moral principles is the next step. Just as man's physical growth requires continuous exercise and culture, his mind, too, needs regular exercise and culture. With proper training, he grows mentally alert and intellectually sharp. He should also endeavour to develop a noble character based on morality and ethics. When all this is accomplished, he becomes better equipped to steer clear of much confusion and complexity

that life presents before him. That way points to a more happy and progressive life, no doubt. But it is still not the whole of life, nor a complete view of life, for an aspect of life that is most important, namely, the spiritual life of man, remains yet untouched.

II

The Vedic religion and philosophy, the source from which have flowed the different streams of later religions and philosophies of India, takes a complete view of man and his life, and sets before him two ideals, one complementary to the other. One of the ideals is concerned with the material aspect of his life; and the other, with his spiritual aspect. The one is called *abhyudaya*; the other, *niḥśreyasa*; and both combined provide for the physical as well as the spiritual needs of man. This twofold concept of the aim of human existence runs throughout the Vedic literature. The material comfort and happiness of man was always regarded as essential for a fruitful and healthy growth of his spiritual life. The material aspect of life was not to be neglected, and it was a basic and necessary preparation for his higher pursuits. The Upaniṣadic seer prays: 'May my body be fit. . . . Vouchsafe to me that Prosperity which brings, increases, and accomplishes quickly for me clothes, cattle, food, and drink for ever. . . . May I become famous among people. May I become praiseworthy among the wealthy' (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, I.4.2,3). We can come across hundreds of such passages all over the Vedic literature. While the dominant note of the Vedic religion and philosophy is concerned with the attainment of the highest good in the realm of the spirit, they cannot be dubbed as otherworldly and negligent towards man's life on earth.

A more precise and emphatic statement of this twofold Vedic ideal we get from Ācārya Śaṅkara in the introduction to his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. He says: 'It is the twofold Vedic religion of works and renunciation (*pravṛtti-dharma* and *nivṛtti-dharma*) that

maintains order in the universe. This religion, which directly leads to liberation and worldly prosperity, has long been practised by all castes and religious orders (*varṇa-āśrama*) who sought welfare.' It should, however, be pointed out clearly that, while the Vedic religion certainly sought to bring worldly goods and joy for man, it was never hedonistic either in form or in content. Its aim was always high—the spiritual perfection of man—but it built up that lofty edifice from the very foundations.

Worldly prosperity was never to be pursued recklessly, and all human activity was to be undertaken within the framework of *caturvarga* or the four values of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. The framers of this scheme of life had a profound insight into the workings of human nature, and provided for the satisfaction and sublimation of the deep urges that lurk in human beings. The economic value (*artha*) and the psycho-biological value (*kāma*) are to be pursued under restraint; and that pursuit is hedged between *dharma* on the one side and *mokṣa* on the other. *Artha* and *kāma* are to be gained on the basis of *dharma*, with an eye towards *mokṣa* as the highest goal to be achieved. The river of *artha* and *kāma* must flow between the banks of *dharma* and *mokṣa*, and it must never be allowed to overflow or cause any breach. The moral value (*dharma*) and the spiritual value (*mokṣa*) must always guard and guide the economic value (*artha*) and the psycho-biological value (*kāma*). That was why *dharma* was conceived as a dynamic moral force that upheld society together by prescribing duties and functions for one and all.

Artha and *kāma* are necessary for a happy life, but they must be acquired through *dharma*. The moral value is priced higher than the economic and the psycho-biological. The latter two must be subservient and never go counter to the former. A steadfast pursuit of *dharma*, it is firmly believed, not only leads to the good, but it does so invariably. But frail man has no patience to wait for the fruits of

dharma, which may accrue in some indefinite future. Hence he grows indifferent to it, despite his knowledge of its excellence. Typical of this state of mind and shortsightedness is the well-known statement of Duryodhana, who said: 'I know what is *dharma*, but I am not able to perform it; I know what is *adharma*, but I cannot desist from it' (*Pāṇḍava-Gītā*). It is of such human frailty and shortsightedness that the great Vyāsa speaks, when he says: 'Here I am, crying with uplifted arms that *dharma* brings with it both *artha* and *kāma*, but none listens to me' (*Mahābhārata*, XVIII.5.62).

III

Mokṣa or spiritual realization, which is the fourth *varga* or value, is the ultimate goal that is sought to be achieved by the other three values. Man should be free by acquiring knowledge about the truth of himself and the world. This is the goal of religion, of all spiritual practice; and all philosophy points to this goal as the highest to be achieved. The spiritual unfoldment of man is not an event that happens all of a sudden, or at a specified time and place. It is a progressive manifestation of divinity corresponding to the acquisition and perfection of its prerequisites. It is to be gradually realized at every stage; not that it would come after performing certain ritualistic duties or as the fruit of some religious observances. It is a conscious and continuous effort at pursuing a way of life, and steadily uncovering the layers that hide the divine essence of the soul of man—a gradual unfoldment of the purity, perfection, freedom, and consciousness of the eternal soul.

By realization, nothing new is added to the physical appearance of man. The realized soul becomes aware of his divine nature. Externally, there is no transformation noticeable in him. He remains human and functions like a normal human being, so far as his basic bodily needs are concerned. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it in his characteristic way, 'One does not grow

a pair of horns after realization'. What takes place in him is an inner transformation. His attitude towards the world changes; his emotions become chastened and refined; and his reactions and responses to outer situations and inner impulses become entirely different from those of an ordinary human being. He perceives the divine essence of all, and his self-knowledge makes him realize his own identity with all.

Such a man of realization is said to live, move, and have his being in God. He becomes the embodiment of all virtues, of all moral and ethical values, and lights the path of those that come to him seeking self-knowledge. In him the spirit that is the essence of everything in this universe unfolds itself fully and completely. Of him the *Bhagavad-Gītā* speaks: 'He whose self is harmonized by *yoga* sees the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; everywhere he sees the same' (VI.29). 'Even here (on earth) the relative existence is overcome by those whose mind is established in equality. God is flawless and the same in all. Therefore are these (persons) established in God' (V.19).

It is light alone that can kindle another light. It is so even in the realm of the spirit; it is the light and life of a realized soul that can kindle the light and life of an aspirant. Spiritual life cannot be developed by merely devouring the scriptures of the world, or by discussing religious topics. It can be learnt and practised under the care and guidance of only those souls who are, in the language of the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 'calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who, having themselves crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever' (37).

The knowledge that such teachers impart is called *parāvidyā*, higher knowledge, in the Upaniṣads—the knowledge that leads man to his spiritual realization by revealing to him the truth about his own self, which is pure, perfect, indestructible, absolute, and eternal. All

other knowledge is designated *aparāvidyā*, lower knowledge. Under this latter category comes all the extensive knowledge that man has achieved with great energy and endeavour. It includes all the sciences and arts and the hundred and one branches that are growing in the realm of modern knowledge. *Aparāvidyā* brings man the objective knowledge of things; it brings him health, wealth, and pleasure. But it does not confer on him the only thing that really matters in the final analysis, namely, the knowledge that saves or the peace that passes all understanding. That knowledge or that peace comes only as a result of the full efflorescence of the spirit in man.

Notwithstanding the phenomenal progress that modern knowledge has made in diverse directions, notwithstanding the great promises it still holds for us in the future, it can hardly be said to touch even the fringe of the inner man, the inner layers of his mental or intellectual being, let alone the innermost core of his being, the spirit in man. The discipline, the training, and the knowledge that are required for understanding the true nature of the self can be acquired by following the teachings of what is known in India as the *adhyātma-śāstra*—scriptures that dwell on the ultimate Reality of the universe. The Upaniṣads are held to be the *adhyātma-śāstra par excellence*.

IV

The chief purpose of the Upaniṣads is to rouse up the ever self-forgetful man from his slumber of ignorance and to exhort him to follow the way of the awakened ones, by prescribing various modes of spiritual *sādhana* and pointing out the goal to be achieved. These Śāstras are said to be deeply concerned with the spiritual unfoldment of man; and they are spoken of as dearer than human mothers. Human mothers look to the safety and protection of the physical life of their offspring. The Śruti, on the other hand, looks to the spiritual life of man and frees him for ever from the quagmire of worldly life.

The Upaniṣads exhort man to pierce through the veil of *māyā*, which conceals truth from his vision and projects a false appearance of this world of names and forms. They call upon him to know the truth of his being, and to grow into the awareness that he is eternally pure and perfect, always free and blissful, without beginning or end; that he is Truth itself; that he is Saccidānanda, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.

The Upaniṣads are never tired of repeating what man is in his essential nature, what he appears to have become, how he has strayed away from the path of truth, and how he can regain his own original, pristine state. The constant strain of the Upaniṣads is that the self of man (Ātman) is no other than, and identical with, the universal Self (Brahman). Only when this identification is fully realized, is man said to be released from the fetters of worldly existence. The self-same truth that is reflected and functions in individual consciousness is also the truth that underlies universal Consciousness. They are not two, but one and the same. The difference is only apparent, spatial and temporal, never absolute.

As long as the individual self is under the sway of *avidyā* (ignorance as to the nature of the self), the truth is hidden from him. Once the barrier is crossed, there is no longer the sense of two, the subject and the object. There is only the experience of the non-dual Self. Wherever his mind alights, he perceives only the Self, and no other. It is all one infinite ocean of Consciousness. The single drop of water, which had a separate existence with a particular name and form, has mingled with the ocean and become one with it. It has lost its limited individuality and gained the unlimited individuality of the ocean. No longer can the drop have a separate existence apart from the ocean, with which it has become completely merged. In the infinitude of the ocean, it attains its fullest stature; it has become the ocean. So does the individual self grow to its truest and fullest stature, when it becomes

merged with that Consciousness which is universal, absolute, and infinite.

From such a realization results supreme joy, peace, and blessedness. 'Happiness is only in the Infinite, not in the finite', declares the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VII.23.1). Finitude is a limitation, and limitation causes the sense of duality. Where there is duality, there is cause for love and hate, joy and sorrow, hope and fear, and all the dual throng. In the absence of all duality, when one has become the all, where is room for attachment or aversion; whom to love and whom to hate? 'He who sees all beings in the very Self, and the Self in all beings, feels no hatred by virtue of that realization. When to the man of realization all beings become the very Self, then what delusion and what sorrow can there be for that seer of oneness?' (*Īśā Upaniṣad*, 6, 7).

The Upaniṣads describe this glorious spiritual consummation in charming poetry and beautiful narratives. The spirit of the Upaniṣads shows an indomitable will for investigating truth, caring for no struggle or sacrifice, and yet with a faith that can be rarely found anywhere else. Unshakable faith, yearning devotion, and profound conviction, coupled with an uncommon strength of will to undertake most hazardous adventures in the realm of the spirit, are breathed out from every page of these sacred Upaniṣads. The one central idea throughout all these Upaniṣads is that of realization, of the spiritual unfoldment of man.

V

The supreme goal that is presented before man, according to Indian thought at its highest, is this state of self-realization, i.e. the full mani-

festation of the divine essence that is hidden in the heart of everyone. Since this spiritual unfoldment is a gradual and progressive attainment, the values that are implied by, and attributed to, Truth must be brought into being in the life, thought, and action of everyone that treads the spiritual path. The supreme Reality is described as the repository of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty; or rather, they are the very essence of Reality. This 'trinity of values', then, must be acquired and cherished by all who wish to live a purposeful life and work for attaining the high destiny that is promised for man.

The destiny that is promised for the man of self-knowledge is verily the highest. He climbs the very Mount Everest of the spiritual realm. He becomes the Spirit, one and identical with it. The Upaniṣads declare that the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III.2.9). To that supreme goal, man's life on earth must be constantly prepared and directed. For human birth is a rare opportunity that is given to the soul, and it is in the soul of man that such a spiritual unfoldment becomes full and complete. It is a pity, indeed, if man, after having got this rare privilege of human birth, does not strive after self-realization. Therefore it is that the *Kena Upaniṣad* counsels man to take to spiritual life, saying: 'If one has realized here (in this very life), then there is truth; if one has not realized here, then there is great destruction. The wise ones, having realized (Brahman) in all beings, and having turned away from the world, become immortal' (II.5). In this realization, human life finds its fulfilment. May we all strive to realize the Self in this very life.



DEVĪ WORSHIP IN SAUNDARYA-LAHARĪ

BY PROFESSOR M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

I

The greatness of *Saundarya-lahari* lies in its supreme poetry. Not only is the work rich in poetical concepts, but it also deals with the details of technical *yoga* in the manner of true poetry. The imagination of the poet rises to white heat and transmutes everything into a thing of beauty. *Saundarya-lahari* is a good illustration of the truth that there are no limits to the range of the poet's imagination, that every genuine experience is a fit theme for the poet, and that he can invest even the hard facts of science with a soft and mellow hue. Matthew Arnold has observed that religion is poetry suffused with emotion.

The first forty-one stanzas of *Saundarya-lahari* deal with the details of *kuṇḍalinī-yoga*. This is a vast and complicated subject. It is ridden with technical details. But even these hard facts are clothed in the forms of poetry. The poetic glow rises superior to the matter, and the net impression that we form is that we are reading excellent poetry and not the details of the technical *yoga*. The second part of the poem, from stanza 42 to the end, is a fine rhapsody. As the poet contemplates the Highest as Devī, naturally he observes the transcendent beauty of the former manifesting itself in every limb of the latter. The description of gods and goddesses from head to foot that we find in Hindu religious poetry is really intended to show that the supreme Being is also supremely beautiful, and when it gets embodied in human form for the benefit of dull-witted mortals, the beauty that is its essence naturally shines through every tissue and filament. There is nothing morbid or unhealthy about these descriptions. They are certainly not intended to suggest voluptuous pictures or pander to a low taste. Throughout the description in the second part of *Saundarya-lahari*, the poet is in a transport of joy, and he tries to communicate that ecstasy to the

readers also by the magic of his words and raise them to the same rapturous mood.

In this part of the poem, we come across refreshingly new and highly suggestive poetical ideas. The poet freely ranges over the whole field of nature, of animal, bird, and plant life, to illustrate the beauty of Devī's limbs. Incidentally, we learn that Śaṅkara was a profound naturalist, in addition to being a deep philosophical and religious thinker. He steers clear of the two extremes of high and tenuous idealism on the one hand, and rank realism on the other. His descriptions are a model of what religious poetry ought to be. The main purpose of religious poetry is to rouse our emotion of *bhakti* and strengthen it by furnishing suitable supports for meditation. The total impression that is left on the reader's mind is that Devī is near enough to us and yet far away, that she is in the world and also beyond it, and that she is both immanent and transcendent. We are struck with a sense of remoteness and nearness at the same time, of awe and terror on the one hand, and of benign love and compassion on the other.

II

The concept of the Highest as Devī is a unique feature of the Hindu religion. The Nirguṇa Brahman of the Upaniṣads comes down step by step and assumes not only the forms of gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, but also the form of a goddess who is known as Devī. The purpose of the descent is to make Himself acceptable to all tastes and temperaments and to gradually make them god-minded. It is a case of stooping to conquer

The picture of the Supreme as Devī has special attractions to commend it. The image of a female god gives much scope for the play of fancy and imagination; much colour and feeling, grace and beauty can be imported into

it. The resulting image will be that of a charming young lady who is fond of flowers and fruits, of dance and music, of poetry and song. She becomes ravishingly beautiful and spreads the glow of her lustre all around her. She is not a cold virgin, but a loving wife and the mother of children. She becomes the Universal Mother, solicitous of the welfare of the whole of mankind. Her compassion for weak mortals shines like the streak of lightning in the bosom of a massive dark cloud.

It is easy to judge and punish sinful mortals, but the more charitable attitude is to forgive and afford them a chance to reform their ways. This attitude of forgiveness and compassion has been the special prerogative of Devī, for love and pity come more naturally to women than to men. When Rāvaṇa was slain, Rāma sent word to Sītā through Hanuman. After conveying the glad tidings, Hanuman begged permission of Sītā to 'give it hot' to the *rākṣasīs* who had all the while tormented her. Sītā's answer is characteristic of her greatness: *Na kaścinnāparādhyati*. Being a high-minded lady, she pleaded for compassion towards those unfortunate creatures, who, after all, had no will of their own.

The great role assigned to Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu, is that of a compassionate mother, who puts in a kind word on behalf of her erring children. There must be the fear of punishment and, at the same time, the hope of being saved also. Śiva or Rudra is the god who judges and punishes, while Devī is the goddess who intercedes on behalf of frail mortals and brings them forgiveness and redemption.

III

The goddess who is selected for worship in this poem is Haimavatī, the daughter of Himavat and the consort of Śiva. She is known by various other names, such as Pārvatī, Kāmēśvarī, Kāmākṣī, Tripurasundarī, Śrī Lalitā, and so forth. She is conceived as the most High, higher than Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī, higher than

Stanzas 24 to 29 of the poem bear out this point.

It is the accepted convention in Hindu religion to exalt the god or goddess selected for worship to the topmost position. In fact, the *iṣṭa-devatā* then becomes the highest Brahman, and is worshipped as such. We invest the Highest, who is really nameless, and formless, with names and forms, and these differ according to our tastes and temperaments. Bosanquet has observed that if the Absolute falls into water it becomes fish. In the same manner, if it is conceived through our religious imagination, it becomes the god or goddess of our choice. All the paraphernalia of worship, such as a local habitation, a consort, attendants, conveyances, litany, and ritual, are then elaborated with much care. Beautiful temples are built; the god or goddess is installed with due ceremony; and daily worship is offered according to the Āgama Śāstra. On festive occasions such as *navarātri*, the *utsava vighraha*, duly bedecked and bejewelled, is taken out in procession through the principal streets of the town to the accompaniment of Vedic recitation, *Tevāram* singing, the music of the pipe (*nāgasvaram*), and fireworks. It will be a grand and impressive show calculated to touch the imagination of the people. Among the shrines dedicated to Devī, special mention may be made of those at Kalahasti, Jambukeswara, Tiruvannamalai, Chidambaram, Varanasi, and Madurai.

Though all this is allowed as a sort of concession to the popular mind, it is never forgotten that the deity, who is worshipped with so much ceremonial pomp, is only a support for meditation on the Highest who is strictly beyond thought and mind. The deity is really Brahman in 'empiric dress'.

IV

To the elect and the initiated, a higher form of worship consisting of inward prayer, deep meditation, and solemn contemplation is laid down. This is known as *samayācāra*, and is in

It was practised by great sages like Vasiṣṭha, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Śuka Brahmā, and by Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda himself. It has therefore become a hallowed practice and has come to be known as *śubhāgama-tantra-pañcaka*. The quintessence of the discipline is summed up in the *pañcadaśākṣarī mantra* consisting of fifteen germinal letters (*bijākṣaras*). It is a formula for deep meditation. There are similar formulae as aids for the worship of other gods, such as Śiva and Viṣṇu. As the essence, it is said to comprise all the fundamental truths of the universe.

Thus the *pañcadaśākṣarī mantra* is an epitome symbolizing the inward life of man, as well as the world of nature. The fifteen letters fall into three groups: *Vāgbhava-kūṭa* presided over by Agni; *Kāmarāja-kūṭa* presided over by Sūrya; and *Śakti-kūṭa* presided over by Candra. In these three *khaṇḍas* are comprehended the three states of waking, sleep, and dreamless sleep; *viśva*, *taijasa*, and *prājña*; *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*; Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva; and finally the mystic syllable *Om* consisting of three letters (*a*, *u*, and *m*). For the benefit of the very highly initiated, a sixteenth letter is added, and the formula then becomes *ṣoḍaśākṣarī mantra*. Just as the *tripād gāyatrī* is meant for ordinary people, and the *catuṣpād gāyatrī* for the advanced *sādhakas*, even so this *ṣoḍaśākṣarī mantra* is meant for those who have made great progress in prayer and inward meditation. This sixteenth letter is not openly stated. It is beyond thought and word, and corresponds to the *turiyāvastha* of man's spiritual experience. It is called *candrakalā-khaṇḍa*.

When the aspirant passes from one stage to another, he really overcomes one spiritual crisis after another. Each spiritual crisis is known as a *granthi*. Thus at the border between *agni-khaṇḍa* and *sūrya-khaṇḍa*, there is *Rudra-granthi*; at the border between *sūrya-khaṇḍa* and *candra-khaṇḍa*, there is *Viṣṇu-granthi*; at the border between *candra-khaṇḍa* and *candra-kalā-khaṇḍa*, there is *Brahma-granthi*. Pierc-

ing through these, the aspirant enters *sahasrāra-kamala*, where he attains oneness with Kāmeśvara and Kāmeśvarī.

V

It is necessary to set forth the nature of this discipline at some greater length. The first part of *Saundarya-laharī* (verses 1-41) is devoted to a full exposition of the details of the discipline known as *kuṇḍalinī*—or *ṣaṭ-cakra-yoga*. Sir John Woodroffe has explained this most technical discipline in easily intelligible language. The spiritual power in man lies dormant, and is likened to a serpent that has coiled up (*kuṇḍalinī*). This power has to be awakened and led up step by step, till it is disengaged from all that is adventitious to it, and emerges in its native splendour as pure Consciousness. It is hard to fix the levels of spiritual advancement in a clear-cut manner, but still certain well-marked stages can be laid down. These stages indicate the gradual dissociation of the spirit from the shackles of matter and also from the limitations that are imposed on it by its association with the mind and the *antaḥkaraṇa*.

Broadly speaking, consciousness has first to be freed from the thralldom of matter, and then it has to shed its finitude by breaking loose from its empirical apparatus. Consciousness has necessarily to manifest itself through the mind of man and his *antaḥkaraṇa*, and it has to stream out through the sense-organs and reach objects and illumine them before it can result in particular knowledge. This process hides its real nature. To restore it to its pristine nature which is pure, contentless consciousness, it has to be gradually separated from its association with matter in the first instance, and then from its association with the mind and the internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*).

Matter exists in the form of the five gross elements viz. earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These gross elements are formed out of the *tanmātras*, which are the finer essences. Each element has its own peculiar quality. Odour is the special quality of earth, taste of water,

colour of fire, touch of air, and sound of ether. We have developed special sense-organs—the nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, and the ears—to perceive these qualities. Objects of the world, possessing these qualities, work through the sense-organs and the mind and hold the spirit as if in bondage.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, III.2 speaks of the organs as *grahas* and of the objects as *atigrahas*. The aspirant has to rise above the sway of these *grahas* and *atigrahas* one by one, beginning with earth. After transcending the elements, he has to rise above the limitations set by his own mind and the internal organ. When consciousness is completely freed from all its adjuncts, it shines in its own native splendour. This is absolute or universal Consciousness—*akhaṇḍa caitanya*. This is the attainment of Brahmanhood or *mokṣa*.

VI

This Vedāntic truth is clothed in the language of the *yoga* technicalities. The *yoga* speaks of six *cakras* (plexuses) in the human body. At the lowest end of the spinal column, in the seat of the anus, there is the *mūlādhāra cakra*; it is like a four-petalled lotus and is of the essence of earth and *gandha-tanmātra*. Slightly higher up, in the region of the naval, there is the *maṇipūra cakra*; it is like a ten-petalled lotus and is of the essence of water and *rasa-tanmātra*. Midway between the anus and the naval, there is the *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra*; it is like a six-petalled lotus and is of the essence of fire and *rūpa-tanmātra*. In the region of the heart, there is the *anāhata cakra*; it is like a twelve-petalled lotus and is of the essence of air and *sparśa-tanmātra*. In the throat, there is the *viśuddha cakra*; it is like a sixteen-petalled lotus and is of the essence of ether and *śabda-tanmātra*. Lastly, between the eyebrows, there is the *ājñā cakra*; it is like a two-petalled lotus and is of the essence of mind. Then, high up in the cerebrum, there is the *Brahmarandhra*; it is like a thousand-petalled lotus and is therefore

known as *sahasrāra-kamala*. It is here that consciousness of the Absolute is transformed into absolute Consciousness. These *cakras* are not known to modern physiology or anatomy, and hence we must treat them as so many psychic levels of development.

Further details of the discipline are set forth in stanza 10. In a sequestered place, the aspirant must sit in the posture known as *padmāsana*. He must restrain the in-going and out-going breaths (*ucchvāsa* and *niḥsvāsa*) and practise *kumbhaka*. Air so restrained sets the *agni-tattva* in *svādhiṣṭhāna* aglow. The other *cakras* also get warmed up and begin to glow. Then the *sādhaka* pierces through *Rudra-granthi*, *Brahma-granthi*, and *Viṣṇu-granthi*, rises above the six *cakras*, and, passing beyond *agni-khaṇḍa*, *sūrya-khaṇḍa*, and *soma-khaṇḍa*, gets into the immediate presence of Devī, who is non-different from her Lord, Sadāśiva, and who is resting in her own place—*sahasrāra-kamala*.

We have said above that the *pañcadaśākṣarī mantra* is an aid to meditation. The well-known *Śrī-cakra* is a further powerful aid to deep meditation. It is, of course, contended that the *mantra* and the *cakra* are not mere aids to meditation, but embody the subtle essence of Devī herself. The *mantra* and the *cakra* must, no doubt, be meditated upon as Devī, even as Devī herself must be contemplated as Brahman. The essence of meditation has been stated by Śaṅkara as follows: 'It is the process of concentrating the mind on some resting place or support recognized by Śāstra, and generating a series of like thoughts without the interruption of anything contrary to the series.' The notion of the supreme Being must be superimposed on the object of worship. The *pañcadaśākṣarī mantra* as well as the *Śrī-cakra* must be worshipped as Devī, and Devī herself must be meditated upon as Brahman. On account of the *mantra* and the *cakra* being very efficacious, we often speak of them as Devī herself, much in the same way in which we identify the mystic syllable *Om* with Brahman itself. But it is only by a figure

of speech that we can do so. The identification only indicates our great faith in the symbol.

VII

We may now explain how the *Śrī-cakra* takes shape. It is set forth in stanza 11. The elements which sustain the human body are nine. *Tvac* (skin), *asṛj* (blood), *māmsa* (flesh), *medhas* (muscle), and *asthi* (bone)—these five are of the essence of energy (*Śaktisvarūpa*) and are known as *Śivayuvatīs*. They are diagrammatically represented as so many triangles with their apexes pointing downwards. And the remaining four elements which sustain the body are *majjan*, *śukla*, *prāṇa*, and *jīva*. They are *Śivasvarūpa* and are spoken of as *Śrikāntas*. They are symbolically represented as so many triangles with their apexes pointing upwards. The space between the two sets of triangles is the seat of Devī, and it is known *yonibindusthāna*. In addition to these nine substances which sustain the body, there are also forty-four elemental substances composing it, and these are arranged as so many triangles on the sides of the nine triangles. Round these forty-four triangles, there is first an eight-petalled lotus, and then a sixteen-petalled one. Then there is a belt made up of three lines known as *mekhalā*. Lastly, there is a quadrilateral made up of three straight lines with an opening at the centre of each side.

A close study will show that the *Śrī-cakra* is not a mere poetic fancy, but a more or less mathematical construction based on certain definite principles of the Tāntric philosophy. The *cakra* is a diagrammatic representation of the human body or the microcosm. It can also represent the macrocosm. The rudimentary principles of the cosmos are said to be embodied in the forty-four triangles. These principles are generally those admitted in the Sāṅkhya system. At the centre, there is Devī who is no other than Brahman, responsible for creating, sustaining, and destroying the world.

VIII

We now come to the description of the great qualities of Devī. Since she is the goddess chosen for worship, she is set forth as the supreme Deity. All other gods and goddesses are subordinate to her, and offer obeisance to her. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, and other gods, like Indra, worship her. Brahmā creates the world, Viṣṇu sustains it, and Rudra destroys it. But these three gods are subordinate to Īśvara who, in his turn, receives orders from Sadāśiva. Devī is superior even to Sadāśiva, to whom she gives instructions with just a movement of her eyebrows (24). The three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are ever bending their devoted heads at the feet of Devī, so that the flowers that we offer at the feet of Devī really fall on the heads of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. To worship Devī is to worship all the lesser gods (25).

In the abode of Devī, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Indra, and other gods are always offering worship at her feet. When her Lord enters the house, Devī has to steer clear of all these crowned heads to bid welcome to him (29). While other gods confer *abhaya* and *vara* with their hands, Devī's feet are quite competent to grant them (4). The Upaniṣads take Devī's feet on their heads. It means that their final import consists in getting to the feet of Devī (84).

The relation between Kāmeśvara and Kāmeśvarī is one of subordination and superordination, what is known as *śeṣaśeṣi-bhāva*. They are so much identified with each other that it does not at all matter who is spoken of as *śeṣa* and who as *śeṣin*. When one of them comes to the forefront, the other goes to the rear. Stanza 92 emphasizes the essential identity of Śiva and Śakti in *mahābindu*, which is in the centre of *sahasrāra*.

Devī's superiority to Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī requires special mention. Stanza 96 says that Sarasvatī becomes the spouse of any man who dabbles in letters; similarly Lakṣmī, of any man who acquires large properties. But Devī is the spouse of none but Śiva. Her loyalty to her

Lord is without a parallel. This stanza looks like a disparagement of Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī, but its real import is something different. The object of this high praise of Devī is not to run down Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī, but only to extol the goddess who is selected for worship. The real meaning of the *śloka* is that by worshipping Devī the devotee acquires learning and becomes prosperous also. In stanza 99, again, the poet emphasizes the same idea in a somewhat different way. He who worships Devī becomes the rival of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, as also of Manmatha. This stanza must not be interpreted literally. It is a poetic way of saying that the worshipper of Devī acquires great learning, becomes exceedingly prosperous, and develops a charming personality. That a man on whom the benign glance of Devī falls acquires bewitching personal charm is also stressed in stanza 13 in a rather forceful way: 'If Devī's *kaṭākṣa* falls on a man, however deformed and decrepit he may be, he immediately becomes so beautiful as to appear like a Manmatha in the eyes of ladies, who begin to run after him with their hair and dress in dishabille.' Manmatha, in spite of all his handicaps, has yet a powerful sway over the hearts of men by reason of the *kaṭākṣa* of Devī having descended on him (6).

Though Devī has manifested herself as Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, and Pārvatī, in her real nature she is beyond these goddesses and is transcendent. She is in the world and at the same time beyond it. She is both immanent and transcendent. 'You are indeed the *turiya*, beyond word and thought, inaccessible, and of unparalleled grandeur.' Brahmā is associated with *rajas*, Viṣṇu with *sattva*, and Śiva with *tamas*. *Māyā* is Īśvara's attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*); it is the adjunct (*upādhi*) of Śadāśiva. In Devī, there is no trace of *māyā* at all. She is Consciousness all compact—*sarvopādhi-vinirmukta-caitanya*.

IX

The next important fact about Devī is that she is the ultimate source of energy. Īśvara,

according to the Vedānta, is a complex of consciousness and energy. According to the Tāntric philosophy, which largely follows the lead of the Sāṅkhya, the energy is abstracted and embodied in Devī, and Īśvara becomes a mere passive spectator. Śiva is therefore unable to move except with the energy supplied by Devī (1). Collecting the dust from the feet of Devī, Brahmā acquires the power to create the world; Viṣṇu to protect it; and Rudra to destroy it (2). The dust of Devī's feet can remove the ignorance of people, give them the highest enlightenment, transport them beyond empirical life, and shower plenty on the poor and the needy (3). All the gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Yama, Kubera, and Indra, perish at the time of *mahāpralaya*, but Kāmeśvara remains untouched by this universal destruction, on account of his association with Devī (26). Indra and other gods, though they have partaken of the divine nectar, still perish at the time of *mahāpralaya*, but Kāmeśvara, though he had drunk the deadly *kālakūṭa* poison, escapes destruction, owing to the transcendent power of Devī's *tāṭaṅka* (28).

X

Devī's beauty is ineffable. She is the *ne plus ultra* of perfection in respect of physical charms. Her beauty is of such a superior character that there is nothing in this or in the other world that can at all be compared with it. Brahmā and other gods try in vain to describe Devī's beauty. Ūrvaśī, Rambhā, and other divine damsels wish to go near enough to Devī to form an idea of her beauty, but dare not do so. Through meditation and prayer, therefore, they seek *sāyujya* with Śiva, so that with him they can go near enough to Devī and contemplate her beauty (12). How the facial beauty of Devī is enhanced by the parting of her hair (*sīmanta*) is expressed in a superb poetical conceit in stanza 44. It is as if the beauty of Devī's face has overflowed the banks, and is in search of an outlet. The parting of the hair in the middle of the head is like a

canal for the excess waters to flow. Devī's tresses have a natural fragrance. They do not acquire their odour by association with flowers. Rather the flowers become fragrant by their association with Devī's hair. Devī's voice is naturally very sweet—so sweet that Sarasvatī's *viṇā* recital pales into insignificance before it. Stanzas 60 and 66 bring out this point.

In describing the beauty of Devī's eyes (49-57), the poet has made lavish use of his imagination. Some excellent poetical conceits are found in this description. Stanzas 50 and 56 deserve special mention. Both refer to the fact that Devī's eyes are long and reach up to the ear. The poet interprets this fact in a most fanciful way. In stanza 50, he says that when poets sing the praises of Devī, the ears are bent on hearing them, which are like honey. The two eyes which look like young bees also make a bid to drink the honey, and hence they go up to the ear. The poet places a different interpretation on the length of Devī's eyes in stanza 56. Devī's eyes never close; even so the eyes of the female fishes never close. Devī's eyes are unable to tolerate this insult. They seem to reach Devī's ears and complain to her secretly about the insolent behaviour of the female fishes. The fishes get scent of this and, becoming afraid, never make their appearance on the surface of water. In the second half of the stanza, a different explanation is suggested. There is the flower called *nīlotpala*. It blossoms only at night and remains closed during day-time. Devī's eyes are open during day, and the brightness (*lakṣmī*) which is present in Devī's eyes cannot also be present in the blue lotus. At night, Devī's eyes are closed in *yoganidrā*, and that is the time for the brightness (*lakṣmī*) to enter the lotus through the opening of the petals. The eyes seem to complain to the ears of Devī that *lakṣmī* leaves them stealthily at night and enters the lotus. The idea is that the eyes of the female fishes and the blue lotus are the only two things that can at all be cited as parallels to the beauty of Devī's eyes.

Stanzas 53, 54, and 55 refer to the three streaks, white, red, and black, in the eyes of Devī. This fact is interpreted in three different ways in the three stanzas. The red, white, and black spots found in Devī's eyes are said in stanza 53 to stand for *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, who are characterized by these qualities respectively, are called into being and set to work when Devī opens her eyes. This notion is based on the Vedāntic doctrine of *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi*. In stanza 54, the poet compares the three streaks to three rivers—*Śoṇabhadrā* running west and whose waters are somewhat reddish in colour; *Gaṅgā* running east and whose waters are white; and *Yamunā* running east and whose waters are black. At *Prayāga*, *Gaṅgā* and *Yamunā* converge. *Śoṇabhadrā* runs west and never mixes with the other two streams. The poet, however, suggests that all the three rivers meet in Devī's eyes. A dip at this confluence will purify a man of all his sins. The idea is that the gracious look of Devī will cleanse a man of all his sins.

In several *ślokas*, the poet refers to the high efficacy of Devī's *kaṭākṣa*. By worshipping her and obtaining her grace, Viṣṇu was able to assume the form of *Mohinī* and cause great perturbation in the mind of Śiva. *Manmatha* worshipped Devī and, by her grace, he acquired such an exceedingly beautiful form that he swayed the minds of even well-disciplined sages (5). The particular look of Devī which confers beauty on a man is called *ayodhyā* (49). In stanza 52, Devī's eyes are said to have destroyed the composure of Śiva's mind and filled it with passionate love.

Before we leave this topic, we may refer to the stately and majestic gait of Devī, to which the poet refers in stanza 91. It is usual for poets to compare the gait of ladies to that of the *haṁsa*, but here it is the reverse. The *haṁsa* learns the pace from Devī, who becomes its teacher in regard to this matter. Summing up the beauty of Devī, the poet refers to the net impression that is left on our minds in stanza 93. It looks as if the Lord's supreme

mercy has become embodied in the physical frame of Devī.

XI

Beauty is closely allied to art. It has been mentioned above that Devī is the repository of the highest beauty. From this, it follows that she is the matrix of all art. In *mūlādhāra cakra*, it is said that Kāmeśvarī and Kāmeśvara dance in order to create afresh the world reduced to ashes by Kālāgni Rudra. This dance exhibits the nine *rasas* (40). Describing the beauty of Devī's eyes in stanza 51, the poet says that they are speaking eyes fully expressive of the *rasas*. Devī herself is a poem, and she confers poetical gifts on those who worship her in the prescribed manner. In stanzas 15, 16, and 17, Śaṅkara says that poetry of the highest order comes effortlessly to the man who meditates on Devī in the proper manner. Even dumb-mutes are said to have burst out into poetry through the benign grace of Devī. 'The waters with which your feet are washed are capable of transforming even dumb-mutes into poets' (98). Tradition has it that a certain dumb-mute worshipped Devī in due form and, through her grace, composed five hundred stanzas in praise of Kāmākṣī. This work is known as *Mūkapañcaśatī*. Mūkakavi himself acknowledges this in his work.

In the last stanza of this century of verses, the poet says that it is a little odd that he should praise Devī with words borrowed from herself. Devī is the presiding deity of speech, especially of poetry. That one should make a gift of things borrowed from Devī to Devī herself is more than a trifle funny, but the poet excuses himself by citing other similar instances. When we burn camphor before the sun, the flame really belongs to the sun; when we make water-offerings (*arghya*) to *samudra-rāja*, we take out a handful of water from the sea itself.

XII

Devī confers the saving knowledge and the highest wisdom on the devout worshippers.

Her breast-milk is really nectar, and those who partake of it turn out to be savants and sages. In stanza 75, the poet refers to one '*draviḍa-śīsu*' who grew to be the foremost poet by drinking of the milk so graciously offered by Devī. Tradition identifies this '*draviḍa-śīsu*' with Jñānasambandar, one of the great Tamil Śaiva sages. Devī offers the nectar out of great compassion. It is said in stanza 47 that Devī's two eyebrows are bent a little downwards. This is an indication of Devī's great concern for the welfare of the world. In stanza 55, it is stated that Devī's eyes are always open. The poet interprets this as arising from a desire on the part of Devī to prevent the destruction of the world. In stanza 57, the poet implores: 'Cast your compassionate eyes on me. I stand at a distance, because I have no merit of my own.'

In exercising her compassion, Devī does not take into account the merits and demerits of people. The cool rays of the moon fall alike on forests and palaces. Does not Devī run towards the man who simply walks towards her? If he says Bhavānī as a term of address, Devī takes it to mean as an eager desire on the part of the man to become like unto herself (22). As a noun, the term refers to Devī; and as a verb, in the first person singular, it means 'I desire to become'. Such is the graciousness of Devī that she places this generous interpretation on the term and confers *mokṣa* on the devotee.

Such is the picture of Devī that Śaṅkara, the great mystic poet, has drawn for the benefit of devotees. It is to his eternal credit that he has caught and clearly delineated the vision of divine beauty which has floated before the mental horizon of poets. Śaṅkara, who is not only a poet, but a great *yogin* and mystic, brings before the readers a clear and concrete picture of divine beauty and presents the conception as a fit object of worship.

XIII

To the contemplation of such divine beauty, only those who are well-exercised in self-disci-

pline are eligible. In stanza 95, the poet says that the worship of Devī is impossible for those who have no control over their senses. In addition to great self-restraint, the devotee must be burning with the desire to have the beatific vision of Devī. He must have the longing to have *darśana* of Devī in the inmost depth of his heart, called *maṇipūraka*. He should like to see Devī with her golden bracelet, with bells jingling, with a slender waist, the upper part of her body slightly bent on account of the weight of her breasts, with her moon-like roundish face, with her four arms holding the bow, arrows, the noose, and the spear, as the spouse of Kāmeśvara, and in a form non-different from that of her Lord.

He should further desire to see her in the enjoyment of the highest bliss, lying on a cot whose four legs are Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, and Īśvara in her own house, built of *cintāmaṇi* stones, in an island called Maṇidvīpa, right in the centre of the ocean of nectar, the house being surrounded by a garden of *kadamba* trees (7, 8). To the devotee who intensely longs for such a vision, Devī will vouchsafe her benign presence. Such a man becomes a *jīvanmukta* here and now. He enjoys the bliss of the Infinite (99). Having caught the direct vision of Devī, he will ever be in the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman. Thereafter he may grow careless of the forms of worship, but every thought, word, and movement of his will be a spontaneous offering to Devī (27).

XIV

Śivānanda-laharī and *Saundarya-laharī* are companion pieces. They supplement each other, dealing as they do with Śiva and Śakti. The qualities that are wanting in the one are found in the other. The former breathes the emotion of *bhakti* in almost every stanza, whereas the latter lays down a very arduous discipline for the devotees. The former is therefore very popular and is meant for the generality of mankind, while the latter is meant for those who are adepts in yogic discipline. The popularity of *Śivānanda-laharī* is further enhanced by the interweaving of stories relating to the great achievements and exploits of Śiva, whereas *Saundarya-laharī* is deliberately silent about the battles which Devī fought to put down Caṇḍa, Muṇḍa, Mahiṣāsura, Bhaṇḍāsura, and so forth. The first part of the poem is necessarily meant for the initiated, and the second part for the highly self-restrained. The two poems are related as complementary pieces. Both are, of course, imbued with the spirit of the highest poetry. The great truths of religion are rendered in both poems in the manner of true poetry. If the imagination is of the required intensity, there is nothing that it cannot mould into its own likeness. This process will mean no violence to the matter that is dealt with. It will keep its distinctive features and yet will appear in a tender and mellow light. Only poets of the very highest order can give a truly poetic rendering of the hard truths of religion.

Manifestations of Her glory, show
In power of immeasurable might,
Throughout the universe; powers that swell
The sea of birth and death; forces, that change
And break up the Unchanged, and changed again.
Lo! where shall we seek refuge, save in Her?

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

KARMA-YOGA IN THE VĒDAS—1

BY DR. ABINASH CHANDRA BOSE

I

While the other *yogas* demand withdrawal from the world of affairs, *karma-yoga* comes into the closest grips with it, determined to bring it under the control of the spirit of man. *Karma-yoga*, as found in the Vedas, follows a twofold aim: to help man survive in the struggle for physical existence and, at the same time, to make his ideals dominate over his instincts. The Vedas recognize life-force as well as soul-force. They have not only spiritual aspirations, but also a keen zest for living. They wish to arouse the will to life and the will to victory in the battle of life. The Vedic sage knows the basic conditions of biological existence. He invokes the sun 'that shines crest by crest on all alike for well-being', and desires to see him rise for a hundred years (*Rg-Veda*, VII.66.26). He asks the enveloping air to 'blow its balm on all, bringing well-being and health and lengthening life' (*R.V.*, X.186.1).

The Vedic sage believes, rather paradoxically, that the mortal life on earth is part of divine immortality. Making of the air a symbol for the ultimate Being, the sage prays: Thou, Vāta, art our father, thou art our brother and friend, so make us long-lived. The treasure of thy immortality, O Vāta, that lies hidden in thy home, give of it to us, so that we may live (*R.V.*, X.186.2-3).

Human personality, the Vedas find, consists in both the mortal body and the immortal soul, and they seek health for both. The sage prays that his nostrils may have breath, his mouth speech, his eyes sight, his ears hearing; that his hair may not turn grey, his teeth may not fall into decay; and that his arms may be strong, his thighs powerful, his legs swift, and his feet steadfast. And the prayer closes thus: May all my members be unimpaired and my soul uninjured (*Atharva-Veda*, XIX. 60).

In later ages, people found evil in man's biological origin, but not so the Vedas. The sage says to the *devas*: 'We established with harmony our perpetual brotherhood, O bounteous Ones, in our mother's womb (*mātur garbhe*)' (*R. V.*, VIII. 83.8). To be born man, it is said, is to be born divine (*A. V.*, XI. 8.32).

Death that cast its dark shadow on the minds of poets, philosophers, and saints of after-ages is, according to the Vedas, only an end of the physical body; the immortal soul is left untouched by it, and follows its own career beyond this world. Rudra, the god of death, is invoked to 'pluck men from mortal life like the (ripe) cucumber from its stem'—from mortal life, and not from immortality (*amṛta*), (*R. V.*, VII. 59.12). The Vedas know that man has death for his companion (*R. V.*, VIII. 18.22), and want him to resist it till the ripe old age, and say that 'one should not be cut off from one's work before the season' (*R. V.*, II. 28.5); but when death comes, man should give a reverent welcome to it: *Namo' astu mṛtyave*' (*A. V.*, VI. 63.2). Even the mortal remains of man are tenderly consigned to Mother Earth: 'Cover him, O Earth, as a mother covers her son with her mantle' (*R. V.*, X. 18.11).

Rudra in the Vedas is not the god of death alone; he is the god of life, too. He brings fragrance to life, increases nourishment, and cures diseases. Maidens pray to him for husbands. Apart from the immortality of the soul, the Vedas find a physical immortality in the continuity of the race. So the precedence given in the funeral procession to the 'unweeping, healthy women with fine husbands, looking lovely in their jewels,' obviously indicates that the Vedic sage thinks of their prospective motherhood and finds in it a compensation for the death that has made a gap in society. And the reference to the healthy wife and her fine

husband also points to the Vedic sage's concept of eugenics that the new generation should represent what is best in the old.

The Vedas are optimistic. They want people who have come to pay their respects to the departed to go home with the knowledge of divine grace on them and to resume their 'dance and laughter' (*R. V.*, X.18).

The Vedas pray for long life, but not for a perpetual physical existence. They speak of the first man, the sage Yama, who 'chose death for the sake of men', and cast away his own dear body; and the others made a *yajña* (sacrifice) of it (*R. V.*, X. 13.4) in the manner in which the Puruṣa is said to have sacrificed His absoluteness in order to be revealed through creation. So the Vedas want man to live his mortal life like the immortal that he is.

The funeral hymn itself contains the exhortation: 'Accept life, welcome old age, and strive one after another' (the one behind taking up the place of the man in front, when the latter has dropped off). To be striving (*yatamāna*) in the struggle for existence is the keynote of *karma-yoga*. 'Gods befriend none but him who has toiled', says the *R̥g-Veda*, (IV. 33.11). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* says that God is active in a sleepless (*atandrita*) way to keep the universe in order (III.23). So do the Vedas speak of the protective powers of the Deity as 'sleepless, alert, swift, beneficent; kind, unwearied, and working in unison' (*R.V.*, IV. 4.12).

The Vedas pray for long life, strength of body, mind, and spirit, for goodness and prosperity: *āyuse, varcase, ojase, tejase, svastaye, subhūṭaye* (*A.V.*, XIX. 45). They pray for 'fine offspring, fine heroes, nourishing food' (*Yajur-Veda*, VIII. 53), and for vigour, valour, and virility. The Vedas find virility contributing to vigour and valour. 'Grant to the men the strength (*śavas*) of men, O Hero' (*R.V.*, X. 148.4); 'Give to our bodies manly strength (*nṛmṇa*) and all-conquering manliness (*pauriṣya*)' (*Sāma-Veda*, 231). The Vedas also seek concord between human valour and divine power. 'Be of one mind with them in whom

thou delightest' (*R.V.*, X. 148.4). They pray for divine help in support of what is most strenuous and valiant in man. 'May God give you protection; valiant be your arms' is the Vedic injunction to soldiers (*R.V.*, X. 103.13). It is through valour that man has to fight out the difficulties of life: 'The rocky stream flows on; move together, stand erect, and cross it, my friends' (*R.V.*, X. 53.8). For 'stand erect' the *Atharva-Veda* reads 'be heroic' (*vīrayadhvam*), and adds: 'Having crossed over all kinds of difficulties, may we, with all our heroes, enjoy a hundred years' (XII. 2.26). 'May we enjoy' is typical of the Vedic mood of cheerfulness, accompanying its heroic and active attitude towards life.

The Vedas speak of a heaven of 'eternal lustre' (*jyotirajasram*) (*R.V.*, IX. 113), in which the souls of the noblest people, including sages and heroes who laid down their lives in the battle, dwell (*R.V.*, X. 154).

The Vedas maintained their radiant attitude through a living faith in the innate heroism of man being capable of overcoming any difficulty that life might present, in divine grace that could make his strength invincible, and in the possibility of his growing God-like through the pursuit of spiritual values. It was a complete view of life, supported by a most energetic struggle for moral perfection and for intellectual and spiritual greatness. 'O Earth, my Mother,' prays the sage in the *Atharva-Veda*, 'establish me securely in full accord with heaven' (XII. 1.63).

II

The Vedas have clearly formulated their moral and spiritual values. The *R̥g-Veda* states them when it says that, in the beginning of creation, *ṛta* (eternal order) and *satya* (truth) were born of perfect *tapas* (spiritual fervour) (X. 90.1). *R̥ta* (or *dharma*, the term used in later times), *satya*, and *tapas*, these are the fundamental Vedic values. The sage in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, who in his final instruction to the pupil says, '*Satyam vada, dharmam*

cara'—speak the truth, follow *dharma*, was teaching the Vedic code of life. The *Atharva-Veda* adds two more values (by amplifying *ṛta* and *satya*) when, in the manner of the Ṛg-Vedic description of different social groups forming different parts of the body of Puruṣa, it asks, referring to Skambha (the ultimate Being): 'In which of His limbs does *tapas* lie, in which limb *ṛta*? Where does *vrata* (dedicated work) lie, and where *śraddhā* (faith)? And in what limb is *satya* securely established?' (X. 7.1).

Ṛta is the eternal order, eternal law, based on fundamental justice in the ethical sense of the term. (*Ṛta* has an aesthetic sense, too, as the order imposed by eternal law on Nature, making her beautiful.) It includes the ethical aspect of truth, the integrity and honesty in conduct, leading to the identification of *ṛta* and *satya*. But *satya* has another aspect: it is Sat, ultimate Reality, as distinguished from the relative reality of phenomena. *Tapas*, spoken of as the power working behind creation, has a positive and not a mere negative content in the Vedas. It is a creative spiritual effort, leading to noble achievement. *Vrata* is self-dedication to an ideal. *Śraddhā* in the Vedas does not imply blind faith; it is, as Śaṅkarācārya calls it, the 'acceptance by true judgement (*satya-buddhyā*) of the word of the scripture and the teacher' (*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 25).

In the great hymn to the earth (from which we have quoted above), the *Atharva-Veda* speaks of the earth, 'the mistress of the past and the future', being upheld by *dharman* (the older form of the word '*dharma*'); and the same hymn says that six principles uphold the earth, thus giving the contents of *dharma* or the moral and spiritual code of life. These six principles comprise the three Ṛg-Vedic ultimates—*satya*, *ṛta*, and *tapas*—and three others which relate to the religious life of man, viz. *dikṣā* (consecration), *brahman* (prayer), and *yajña* (sacrifice). While these three refer to the formal side of religion, indicating the ceremonial admission into spiritual life, the chanting of the Vedic *mantras*, and the offering of

oblation in the fire, they also carry an inner significance, namely, 'reaching truth beyond untruth', obtaining spiritual knowledge (*Brahmavid*, meaning the possessor of ultimate knowledge), and the spirit of sacrifice or renunciation.

In their own remarkable way, the Vedas equate the Deity with the values, speaking of Him as *satya* or *ṛta* (as for example, in *R.V.*, II. 7.8 and I. 1.5). The *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* echoes the *Ṛg-Veda* when it says: 'That they have called *ṛta*, and That *satya*, and That the eternal Brahman of the sages' (I.6).

The *Yajur-Veda* emphatically reiterates the Ṛg-Vedic values: *Ṛtam satyam ṛtam satyam* (XI. 47); and it says: 'Animate truth, animate *dharma*' (*satyam jīva, dharmam jīva*—XV. 16). It places the ideal on the social plane by the exhortation: 'Animate *brahman* (spiritual power), animate *kṣatra* (protective or political power)' (VI. 3).

The Vedas want the two powers to work in harmony: 'That world I would wish to know', says a Yajur-Vedic sage, 'where *brahman* (spiritual power) and *kṣatra* (political power) move in concord' (XX. 25). In terms of social life, the man who pursues spiritual power and *satya* (*Brāhmaṇa*) and the man who wields political power and follows *ṛta* (*Kṣatriya*) have to join hands to ensure both spiritual and material survival for human society. The union of *brahman* and *kṣatra* corresponds to the combination of wisdom and valour. The Vedas pray: 'Give to your worshippers... winning intelligence (*medhā*) and unimpaired and indomitable valour (*sahas*)' (*R.V.*, II. 34.7).

The Vedas wish to have a society with two dominant interests—spiritual and political—each to be furthered by people specially devoted to it, thus creating a sort of internal balance of power. The spiritual man (that is what the term '*Brāhmaṇa*' means in the Vedas) claims independence for himself of the political power: 'Ye people,' says the officiating *Brāhmaṇa* to the subjects of a king (at the end of his coronation), 'this is your king; God (Soma) is king over us, followers of spiritual

knowledge (Brāhmaṇa)' (Y.V., IX. 40). Yet the Brāhmaṇas are to be 'the watchdogs of the State'; 'May we, being stationed in the front, remain wakeful in the State' (*rāṣṭre jāgriyāma*) (Y.V., IX. 23). The Kṣatriya, the political man, is to be not a lord of the people, but a lord of *dharma*, moral law, imposing order on society, even as the *devas* impose order and beauty on Nature.

The *Ṛg-Veda*, working on the concept of the *brahma-kṣatra* leadership, takes a wider view of social life. It prays: 'Animate the spiritual power (*brahman*) and strengthen the intellect; animate the political power (*kṣatra*) and strengthen heroes; animate the milch cow and strengthen the masses of the people; slay the lawless enemy and drive away disease' (R.V., IX. 35.16-18). Here the Vedas state in a nutshell the whole problem of the collective survival of a society, making full provision for the spiritual and material needs of man. The famous *Puruṣa-sūkta* splits up the masses of people (*viś*) into two groups, the Vaiśya (producer and trader) and the Śūdra (labourer), and says that these, with the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya, formed different parts of the immolated body of the Puruṣa, while He renounced His absoluteness in order to be manifested through time and space. The *mantra* means that four fundamental types of work have to be done by society, and that all workers are equally divine. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* throws very interesting light on the subject. It says that there was at first only the Brāhmaṇa, but as he felt lonely and ineffectual, the Kṣatriya came into being; still the ineffectuality continued, and so one by one the Vaiśya and the Śūdra came into being. But even the four together found themselves ineffectual till *dharma*, the eternal moral law (*ṛta*), came into being. Therefore *dharma* was supreme (I. 4.11-14). The statement of the Upaniṣad means that none of the four fundamental types of work should be abandoned by society, if it wants to work effectually, and that true work is work done according to *dharma*. So we are led to the details of *karma-yoga*: we are told what

karma means and how the performance of *karma* becomes *karma-yoga*.

III

Thus a *karma-yogin* flourishes in the world by doing his work according to strict *dharma*. He is efficient (*dakṣa*) no less by his hold on *dharma* than by sheer dexterity (*svapas*). 'Let a man think of wealth', says the *Ṛg-Veda*, 'and strive to win it by the path of *ṛta* and by worship. And let him take counsel with his own inner wisdom (*kratu*), and grasp with spirit still greater ability (*dakṣa*)' (X. 31.2). This means that he has to guide himself by his own inner light, his *kratu* or *medhā* or *dhī*. Like the vista in the forest, like vigour in horses, like milk in cows, like the sun in the sky, God (Varuṇa) has placed *kratu* (intellectual power) within the spirit of man (R.V., V. 85.2). There is a prayer for the conquering power of the intellect (*jaitraṁ kratum*—R.V., X. 36.10). And the sages pray: 'Win for us intellectual power (*medhā*) and win the light' (R.V., IX. 9.9); 'arouse our intellectual power (*dhī*)' (R.V., III. 62.10); 'give us most brilliant ability (*dakṣa*)' (R.V., VI. 44.9).

It is in the light of his intellect that man has to find the social and spiritual values and discriminate between what is right and what is wrong. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* speaks of the man of the stable intellect (*sthitadhī*), who attains not only *dakṣatā* or efficiency, but also *prajñā* or spiritual realization, the latter leading him beyond the values, beyond the three attributes (*guṇas*). This is the spiritual height reached by the *jñāna-yogin* and the *rāja-yogin*. It is certainly a great thing when such men turn to be men of action. But they are rare. Equally rare is the man of pure *bhakti* who surrenders everything to God and works as His instrument. *Karma-yoga* of the Vedic type deals not with exceptional men, but with society as a whole, including the common man, trying to lift him to the state of *sattva*, the highest of the *guṇas* (qualities), 'which brings light and health', and 'produces attachment to happiness and knowl-

edge'. Guided by *dhī* (intellect), the Vedic *karma-yogin* constantly strives to find 'what is *ṛta* (right, truth) and what is *anṛta* (wrong, falsehood)' (*R.V.*, I. 105.5). The values and their opposites are generally signified in the Vedas by the use of the prefixes *su* (bene-) and *dus* (male-) respectively, as in the following:

Agni, lead us by the right path (*su-pathā*) to prosperity (*R.V.*, I. 89.1).

We will follow the path of righteousness (*svasti*, i.e. *su asti*) like the sun and the moon (*R.V.*, V. 51.15).

Leave here those who are evil minded (*durevā*), and cross over to powers that are good (*A.V.*, XII. 2.26).

Bar me, Agni, against evil conduct (*duścarita*), and make me a sharer in good conduct (*sucarita*).

I have risen with life, have risen with good life (*su-āyus*) (*Y.V.*, IV. 28).

For goodness, there are also common words like *bhadra*, *śiva*, *śam*, etc. Goodness (*śiva*) is not a mere matter of conduct; the Vedas trace it to the will in the inner spirit of man. There are prayers that one's mind may will what is good (*śivasankalpa*). The Vedas speak of love not only as an impulse of the heart which makes the *uśij* or *vena* (lover), but also as an intellectual attitude, the good-mindedness (*saumanas*), which is a steadier quality, e.g. 'May we have goodness of the mind (*sumanasah syāma*) all our days (*viśvadānīm*)' (*R. V.*, VI. 92.47). The Vedas desire mutual friendship between man and all creatures (*sarvāṇi bhūtāni*) through his inner strength (*Y.V.*, XXXVI. 18).

The Vedas, however, discover that with the best of will man may find himself challenged by forces of evil. In such a situation, it is not enough if his intellect (*medhā*) leads him to a cool and correct judgement; his valour (*sahas*) also should be roused to take up the challenge and battle against it with all his physical, mental, and spiritual energy (*vīrya*, *dakṣatā*, and *ojas*), with a will to victory. The Vedas speak of *manyu*, the militant resistance to evil and injustice. It may be noted that Vedic military

valour is roused against the challenger to security, the violator of human values, and the opponent of justice. The Vedic fighter has, as an oriental scholar calls it, 'the defence psychology'. The Vedas describe the ideal noblemen as people 'who conquered those that assailed them unprovoked'. The ideal Kṣatriya is found in Indra: One 'who bends not before the strong or the stiff, nor before the arrogant challenger (*śardhat*) instigated by the wicked foe (*dasyu*)' (*R. V.*, VI. 24.8). The Vedic insistence that war should be defensive and, even then, fought according to *dharma*, so that 'the *devas* may rejoice in the victory' (*R.V.*, VI.75.18), is very significant.

The description of the Vedic Aryans as swooping upon a well-ordered peaceful society had its origin, as Sri Aurobindo says, in the history of the barbarians of northern Europe descending on civilized Greece and Rome. It was presumed that something similar to events in Europe must have happened in India too. Or, it may as well be that the Western historians of ancient India were following the pattern of the conquest of aboriginal tribes by the Aryan races of Europe.

It should, however, be noted that the Vedas are very explicit with regard to the relation with the enemy: 'Whatever enemy wants to slay us, no matter whether he is our own kinsman or a stranger, may all gods discomfit him' (*R. V.*, VI. 75.19). 'Assail the challenging foes, whether they are strangers or kinsmen' (*R. V.*, X. 69.12). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* also takes a similar stand with regard to the kinsmen of Arjuna involved in the battle of Kurukṣetra. The Vedas are uncompromising in their resistance to aggressive forces of evil: 'Subduing the antagonists, subduing all malignities, withstand the man who menaces, withstand the man who teases us' (*R. V.*, X. 174.2).

Indra, standing for *ṛta*, and Vṛtra, who is opposed to it, represent the conflict on the cosmic plane between light and darkness, and between rain and drought; and on the moral plane, between good and evil. Indra's destruc-

tion of Vṛtra symbolizes the final victory of good over evil. This is the root of Vedic optimism. But it is not an optimism of the fatalistic type (like, for example, the belief of the modern man in human progress as an irresistible process). Vedic optimism implies that the heroism in man based on *dharma* is capable of subduing evil, but it must be put to action. So the following exhortation to Indra is also an exhortation to man:

'Go forward, be fearless and fight,
Thy thunderbolt cannot be subdued.
Indra, manliness is thy strength.
Strike the power of evil (Vṛtra), win the
waters,
After acclaiming thy own independent
sway (*svārājya*)' (R. V., 1.80.3).

In order to practise our *svadharma* (spiritual ideals of life), we must win *svārājya* (self-rule, free from the trespass of forces opposed to *dharma*). 'The earth elected for Indra and not Vṛtra' (A. V., XII. 1.37).

For man, the first question in a fight is whether it is against evil or not. According to the Vedas, there should be no aggression against innocent people. When, after coronation, the

king was ceremonially given a new bow, the priest spoke to the bow: 'Thou art Indra's Vṛtra-slaying weapon... With thee, may he (the king) kill Vṛtra' (Y. V., X. 8). The fighter must not have any evil in him. He is told: 'Fight, warrior, strong in truth (*satya-śuṣmā*)' (R. V., X. 112.10); and 'Make your mind pure (*bhadra*) in the fight with evil (Vṛtra)' (R. V., II. 26.2). At his consecration, the king is told: 'Thou art Mitra, thou Varuṇa' (Y. V., X. 16)—deities described as 'mighty *kṣatras* who are (manifestations of) the great *ṛta*' (*mahi kṣatrau ṛtam bṛhat*—R. V., V. 68.1).

The Vedic moral idealism about warfare must have been responsible for the absence among Indian Aryans of the practice of enslaving the fallen enemy, so much in evidence among their Western cousins, as well as of other kinds of slavery. It may also be noted that war for *dharma* or *ṛta* did not mean war on behalf of a religious creed or sect; it meant war in accordance with the principles of justice and goodness, which, as we find even in later ages, were followed by Indian warriors, sometimes at their own expense.

(To be continued)

INDIA, JAPAN, AND WORLD PEACE

BY SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

In his book *The Impact of Science on Society*, Bertrand Russell, the eminent British philosopher, refers to the tragedy of the contemporary world in these words: 'Broadly speaking, we are in the middle of a race between human skill as to means and human folly as to ends. Given sufficient folly as to ends, every increase in the skill required to achieve them is to the bad. The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence; but given knowledge and competence combined

with folly, there can be no certainty of survival. Knowledge is power, but it is power for evil just as much as for good. It follows that, unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow.'

The last three hundred years of human history has rushed human civilization through the epochs of steam and electricity to that of nuclear power. The human mind, disciplined in the methods of science, has gained increasing

knowledge of the mysteries of Nature and control over its powers. The extent and range of this new source of power is revealed by the famous Einsteinian formula for nuclear energy: $E=MC^2$, which means that the energy contained in a piece of matter is equal to its mass multiplied by the square of the speed of light. This enormous energy which Nature had hidden in the recesses of matter all these millions of years has now yielded its secrets to man.

But just when power has begun to come into his hands in abundance, man has begun to become uncertain about himself and his future. The scientists of the nineteenth century were moved by a passion for the alleviation of human misery and enhancement of human happiness and welfare through the advancement of science and technology. Undoubtedly, a part of the fruits of science is being invested in the enhancement of human life. But the rest of it is being invested, and invested with increasing earnestness of folly, in preparations for the destruction of human civilization itself. This is the tragedy of modern civilization, the combination of enormous power and stupendous folly as Bertrand Russell expresses it. There is evidence of a spirit of heartlessness, absence of compassion, or absence of, what Professor Sorokin, of Harvard University, calls, altruism in modern civilization, which has knowledge and power, but not wisdom. This wisdom is the product of knowledge and power chastened and purified by compassion and the sense of human responsibility.

If the voice of India speaks the language of peace and human fellowship today, it is because of that blending of compassion and human responsibility in her age-old culture and philosophy. It is accordingly not a voice of weakness, but of strength. In her 5,000 or more years of history, India has passed through every gamut of human experience, prosperity and adversity, victory and defeat, freedom and subjection, high-mindedness and small-mindedness. Her great thinkers had churned the butter of wisdom out of the milk of human experience

and imparted to its culture certain eternal values, the values of peace and gentleness, humanism and fellowship, tolerance and universality. Śrī Kṛṣṇa (about 1400 B.C.) taught the wonderful doctrine of fearless gentleness in the *Gītā*: 'He is my dear devotee who is fearless himself and also a source of fearlessness to the world at large.' This virtue of fearless gentleness found glorious expressions in later ages in a succession of teachers and exemplars from Buddha in the sixth century B.C. to Gandhi in the twentieth century A.D. It also found a unique expression in the political and State policy of Emperor Aśoka in the third century before Christ. This great emperor, after gaining a resounding victory in a war against one of the States of India, Kalinga, was moved by compassion when he learned of the enormous suffering inflicted by the war. He then and there renounced war as an instrument of State policy. Himself the ruler of a vast and powerful kingdom, he befriended his neighbouring States and peoples through an active foreign policy of peace and interchange of culture and thought, and inscribed the principles of this unique foreign policy on rocks and pillars in his vast dominions. The Indian mind got a rare education in peace and tolerance from this emperor, as it had earlier received it from the great spiritual leaders that had preceded him. The sum total of all this national education has been a complete absence of the aggressive spirit in India's long history. India has invaded no foreign country, never drenched her hand in foreign blood, nor enriched herself by exploiting other nations. Her international contacts have moved through the silent channels of culture and commerce, and never through the turbulent storms of violence and war. It is this heritage—ancient, dynamic, and pervasive—that gives authenticity to India's voice on behalf of peace and tolerance among nations today. As such, it is not a freakish product of the modern Indian mind.

India's philosophy has no fear of science or of advancing thought. It knows that the scien-

tific discipline can and should be applied not only to understand and control the processes and powers of the external physical nature, but also of the internal nature of man. The first is being wonderfully achieved by modern science and technology; but this achievement can never in itself confer happiness or a sense of fulfilment *directly* on men; it can at best create only *conditions* for his happiness. This happiness or fulfilment itself is the product of another discipline and technique which is religion, not as understood in its creedal or dogmatic aspects, but in its essential aspect of spiritual striving and realization. Western civilization has ignored the importance of this discipline, due largely to local historic circumstances. But according to Indian philosophy, both these disciplines of science and religion are complementary and not exclusive. The science of external nature cannot conflict with the science of internal nature, when both are identical disciplines, though with different subject-matters. Their aims also are identical—the enrichment of human life through increasing knowledge and control of nature and life. The modern world is groping towards this great consummation—the synthesis of the greatest values of the human heritage—science and religion, or the science of nature and the science of man. This is the only way by which man's increase of knowledge can be made to be matched by an increase in his wisdom, as demanded by Bertrand Russell, so that happiness shall be his lot and not sorrow.

A healthy manipulation of political policies of nations can help to avert an imminent war by postponing it; this itself is a great gain in the present-day world; and India's political policies have this short term aim before them. This short term objective has found eloquent expression in the principle of '*Pañcaśīla*' or '*Co-existence*'. But this can provide only a breathing time, which should be utilized to eradicate the schism in the soul of modern man through a synthesis of the total heritage of mankind. India hopes to contribute substantially to this consummation in her own silent way through

the new spiritual forces released in her being by Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) and Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902). Swami Vivekananda, who is acclaimed as one of the most important architects of modern India, expounded this Indian synthesis of all knowledge in a compressed statement of five propositions:

- '(1) Each soul is potentially divine.
- (2) The goal (of life) is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external (by science) and internal (by religion).
- (3) Do this either by (dedicated) work, or worship, or psychic (mental) control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these and be free.
- (4) This is the whole of religion.
- (5) Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.'

Touching on the possible contribution of the Indian spirit to human welfare, Will Durant, the American author, writes in the first volume of his five-volume series, *Story of Civilization*: 'It is true that even across the Himalayan barrier India has sent to us such questionable gifts as grammar and logic, philosophy and fables, hypnotism and chess, and above all our numerals and our decimal system. But these are not the essence of her spirit; they are trifles compared to what we may learn from her in the future. . . . Perhaps in return for conquest, arrogance, and spoliation, India will teach us the tolerance and gentleness of the mature mind, the calm of the understanding spirit, and a unifying, pacifying love for all living things' (1935 edition, p. 633).

Post-war Japan is confronted with the problem of reassessing her position in the world community and her contribution to the world at large. One of the most difficult choices for emerging nations, as for individuals, is how to invest their surplus psychic energies. From the fifteenth century onwards, Europe started investing her surplus energies in collisions with weaker nations, which took the forms of im-

perialism, colonialism, and war. It brought sufferings to its victims; but it recoiled on the European nations themselves eventually. The two world wars have acted as boomerangs of such a policy. Europe has recognized the folly of such a policy and has retraced her steps to a great extent, partly no doubt under the pressure of the rising tide of freedom movements in the subject countries. She has also joined the commendable international movements of industrial and economic assistance to backward countries. This policy of help and co-operation among nations in the economic fields holds great promise for the world's future; this is being reinforced by the activities of the UNESCO in the educational and cultural fields. The United Nations itself, in spite of occasional vacillations and fumbings, is contributing to the preservation of world peace by checking aggressive nations, as was demonstrated during the Suez crisis.

There is thus a vast creative field in the international political, economic, educational, and cultural spheres in which a dynamic nation can invest its surplus energies for the good of mankind as a whole.

Japan's sudden emergence as a modern nation at the end of the last century was a source of great inspiration to modern India. But India as a whole watched with dismay and sorrow Japan's following in the footsteps of the imperialist and colonialist nations of the West. This was a tragedy of the first magnitude. India long ago recognized an inherent beauty and goodness in the soul of the Japanese people, matched by the beauty and charm of their country and its landscape. Japan's imperialist

policies and wars had marred this inherent beauty of its soul. In this beautiful country inhabited by an intelligent and gifted people, who love beauty, order, courtesy, and good manners, the mood of chauvinistic pride, violence, and war was an utterly unnatural intruder. During its brief intrusion into the national mind, it brought havoc on its neighbours and finally on Japan itself. This small interlude of toying with man's uglier tendencies and its aftermath can be looked upon as a brief worth-while experience, if there emerges out of it a positive national force for peace and co-operation in the world. Let Hiroshima be the symbol of this national resolve; let the deeply touching inscription on its Peace Memorial Grave, 'Rest here in peace: for never again will we repeat the mistake', be inscribed in the hearts of our children of every generation, dedicating them to peace, tolerance, and co-operation. This is the path of glory for Japan today; and it is an undying glory unlike the glory of violence and war. India chose the path of this glory long, long ago, and has dedicated herself to it with a fresh determination on her emergence from political subjection. The glories and victories of peace are greater and purer than those of war. There is enough suffering in the world as it is; why should a nation through its policies and actions add to it? Today, the greatness of a people or a nation will be measured by the contribution it makes to reduce sufferings and tensions and enhance happiness and peace among mankind. This is a road on which India and Japan, both youthful and dynamic, can march together along with other nations similarly resolved, creating a mighty bulwark of peace and fellowship in the modern world.



She (Asia) is working for us. We are working for her. Europe and Asia are the two halves of the Soul. *Man is not yet. He will be.* God is resting and has left to us His most beautiful creation—that of the Seventh Day: to free the sleeping forces of the enslaved Spirit; to reawaken God in man; to re-create the Being itself.

—ROMAIN ROLLAND

PRAJÑĀ

BY DR. K. C. VARADACHARI

Indian thought has its deep foundations in psychological truths. The very concept of *jñā* or knowing is very ancient. Along with its complementary though not synonymous concept of *cit*, it represents the starting-point of knowing and knowledge. A theory of knowledge stems out of a theory of knowing. Later thought has undoubtedly mixed up these two, and indeed so inextricably that it is well-nigh impossible to disentangle the mesh.

The highest Reality has been designated as Sat-Cit-Ānanda. It has also been designated as Jñāna. The method of knowing being *jñā*, it follows that the ultimate Being is an object of knowledge (*jñāna*). However, since all is a continuing activity, it follows that the knowing process and knowledge are coexistent.

The ultimate Being or Reality, however, can never be grasped by means of the mind, or senses, as the Upaniṣads say. They may grant knowledge that is but a tithe of the whole, and that too cannot be verbalized or put into words of communication. In other words, it is beyond all knowledge in a sense. The ultimate Being is said to be that in which thought expires, and the knowing agent also. What is that condition? It is the transcendent state of Reality. Thus it is the source of all being (*satya*), of all *caitanya* (*citta*), and of all *ānanda*. It cannot be said to be the potential condition of all actuality, but beyond even the potential condition, what might causally be considered to be the antecedent of the consequents, such as knowledge and knowing.

Thus the ancient psychologists knew of the depths of being correlated with knowing and also as transcending knowing. That the two poises of knowing and known of that which is ultimate to them are derived from that ultimate Being is the truth that they have laboured to communicate to the seeker after the ultimate Being or God or the Absolute. The

triadic synthesis results from the Whole or the One within which they are held in unique transcendence.

The *jñā* concept leads to derivatives such as *prajñā*, *ajñā*, *vijñā*, *sañjñā*, and so on. Each one of these knowings represents a kind of knowing different from the rest. That they may represent several limbs of one integral knowing has not to be ruled out. It is not certainly a fanciful undertaking to seek to know what each one of these represents. A clear study of these several derivative terms or concepts may help to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of the ancient psychology.

Prājñā, in a common, non-technical sense, means one who is intelligent or knowing. *Prajñāvādāṁśca bhāṣase*: thou speakest as if thou art wise, or as those who hold to the doctrine of *prajñā*. The second meaning refers to the technical sense of *prajñā*, as that which is a high spiritual attainment. Indeed, in Buddhist thought, we come across *prajñā* as a high state (*prajñāpāramita*). In Upaniṣadic thought, we come across this word significantly in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. *Prājñā* refers to the nature of the third state represented by *makāra* (of the Praṇava). It is the state when the mind and the senses, both motor and sensory, are withdrawn from all activity. It is a state of perfect non-objectivity; and obviously, it is the state of self-wraptness. It is not a state of non-being, but of pure being. It is of *suṣupti*. Knowledge or *jñā* here seems to have become *pratyak* (self-directed), not *parāñcikhāni* (moving outward to objects of senses). The *pra* of *pratyak* is tagged on to *jñā*, and thus it becomes *prajñā* by assimilation. It is said to be the state of *tam* or thatness, though, later on, writers have almost equated it with *layāvasthā* or *tamas*, beyond which there is the fourth or *turiya*.

In the *Yoga-Sūtra*, we have significantly the

states of *samādhi* being described as *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta*. The word 'prajñā' occurring here also seems to refer to the third stage of being without any interference of the *citta-vṛtti*, which operates through the mind and the senses. The *nirodha* of the *citta* (otherwise identified with the operations of the *manas*) is achieved in the *samprajñāta-samādhi*, thanks to the attainment of the inward poise of the *prajñā*—somewhat identical with the *suṣupti* (deep sleep). It is the deep sleep of the senses and not of the Self (Ātman). Whereas in the one who has attained *samādhi* of the *prajñā* state the *citta-vṛtti* does not begin to operate when one comes out of it, for the ordinary man who certainly enjoys this repose in his sleep everyday this *citta-vṛtti* begins to return no sooner than he awakes. The *asamprajñāta-samādhi* is the state of transcendence equivalent to the *turiya* or the fourth. The description of these as having an object and as having no object misses this point of *prajñā*, which is of the quality of absorption of all in the one inward condition of Self.

The concept of *sthitaprajñā*, in the second *adhyāya* of the *Gītā*, can throw some significant light on this point. The description of the *sthitaprajñā*, one established in *prajñā*, gives the idea that such a person is beyond the sensory dualities of heat and cold, beyond that duality that arises out of gain or loss, honour or shame, victory or defeat. These are all referable to the mind, which is said to be the organ of pleasure and pain or *cetanatā* in respect of objects that are brought to knowledge by it. The transcendence of *manas*, which is verily described as the cause of bondage, is achieved when one enters into the *prajñā* (self-state). This state of *prajñā* looks as if it is night to the others, even as the waking and dream states look as night to one who has entered the *prajñā* or got established there. It is the state that refutes the *ajñā* (non-knowing or activity state). It is beyond the threefold knowledge that accrues to one who pursues the *trivarga* (*dharma-artha-kāma*), which seems

to be confined to the two states of *viśva* and *taijasa* or *jāgrat* and *svapna*, and which is extolled in the *karmakāṇḍa* of the Vedas.

Thus the *sthitaprajñā* is verily one who has achieved the state of *prajñāta-samādhi* of *rāja-yoga*, who has reached the state of transcendence over the waking and dream-constructive consciousness. It is a self-aware consciousness beyond the object-activity consciousness. It is so very different from the other two that it is qualitatively different from their consciousness. Obviously, the state of the self or *jīva* in its disjunction from *manas* and the organs of sense and activity is thus arrived at in this state. That this state should look as *śūnya* or nothingness or night or *pāśāṇa-tulya* is what had led to many theories about it (*prajñā-vāda*).

The Upaniṣadic seer went beyond this *prajñā* state and announced that that is the real Self or the universal Self or Brahman. It, however, could be arrived at only through the *prajñā* state. The clear and decisive abandonment of the knowing through the senses and through mind is counselled. The inward knowledge is not a communicable knowledge, but it is experienced, and informs all activities even of the senses and the mind. Though, at first, the two kinds of existence are apparently so contrasting that one might well appear as the delusive or shady counter-aspect of the other, it becomes clear that both of them derive their very existence from a third higher state. This higher state, however, cannot be arrived at by any logical synthesis of the lower dualities. That is the reason why it is expressed as the source or cause in a sense that would make clear the fact that all arises from it, though not contained in it in the same manner in which they appear to us. Thus the concept of *vivarta* arises. A reversal of the whole manner of existence and a reversal of the whole method of knowing are necessary. Knowledge by itself cannot do it constituted as it is; its logic is of the finite and of the activity of thought that is projecting outward away from the self. Thus

the reversal of knowledge is not had through activity, but by inward concentration or devotion to the inmost being beyond knowledge and word (beautifully represented by the words 'manas' and 'vāc').

Prajñā, as used in the *Gītā*, thus fully corresponds to the Upaniṣadic concept of *prajñā*. The interpretation of the *sthitaprajñā* as one who is almost a *jīvanmukta*, or one who has achieved liberation from *saṁsāric* cycles, i.e. has terminated his future births, and as one who is only awaiting to be released from the *karma* that gets the perishable body going, will also fall in line with the view taken. It is, however, clear that this condition of *sthitaprajñā* is almost the very first that has to be

attained on the path of divine life, for in putting up this ideal for man—even the ordinary man of duty and knowledge—at the first opportunity, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has shown that it is the peace or *śānti* that this gives that becomes the abode of higher evolution or attainment of the *Brahmanirvāṇa*.

Individual realization precedes God-realization for some; for some others, God-realization includes individual realization. The God-peace or *ānanda* is a matter for grace; individual peace or *śānti* is a matter for individual effort. But one who establishes himself in God even at the cost of abandoning all claims to his own consciousness arrives at that awareness that is doubly sanctified by God-united-soulness.

THE INDIAN IDEALS OF RELIGION AND MORALITY

BY DR. M. HAFIZ SYED

The word 'religion', which is in use in the Christian world, is derived from Latin words 're' and 'ligare', which mean to bind back. Therefore it means that which binds human beings to each other in the bonds of love and sympathy, mutual rights and duties. It binds them all also to God; it endeavours to take them back to that world-soul from whom their lower nature makes them stray away in following the objects of the senses. It binds them to, and keeps their minds fixed on, that supreme principle of Unity, in the midst of their daily work, in order to enable them to do that work with proper balance and righteously. The power which binds together the hearts of men to one another by the common bond of God, the all-pervading Self, is the power that gives birth to, nourishes, and maintains a high civilization.

The corresponding Vedic word is 'dharma', from *dhṛ*, to hold and bind together, which

has exactly the same significance. The unity of the universal Self is the ultimate *dharma*, which is the cause and source of all the various aspects and meanings of *dharma*.

In order to understand the relation of morality to religion, it is necessary, according to the Indian ideal, for a man to understand his relation with the source of his being. Before having a clear idea of the source of one's being, one has to find out one's own inherent constitution. According to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, man is not a mere body, the end of which is death, but is more than his perishable vesture. He says: 'It is said that the senses are great; greater than the senses is the mind; greater than the mind is reason (*buddhi*); but what is greater than reason is the Self.' Thus we see that the real nature of man is divine; he is part and parcel of the universal Self. What does religion do for us? In the first place, it gives us some idea of the supreme Reality, whose manifestations

we are. It reminds us of our close affinity, nay, identity with the universal Being called by various names—Jehovah, God, Īśvara, or Allah.

From our point of view, every religion speaks but one letter of the word of God. Various teachers of humanity, who have come on this earth from time to time, have invariably reminded us of our divine heritage; and they have laid down a code of morality and conduct, based upon their own experiences, for the benefit of mankind. Before accepting the binding force of the moral laws as the expression of divine will, we have to clearly understand that these laws become binding upon us by virtue of our own inner divine life, which is inherently imperishable and which has all the divine qualities latent in it. What is called the science of morality or moral conduct is the expression or reflection of our own inner self, which is Sat-cit-ānanda. We do the right, we sympathize, we serve and love our fellow-beings, not with a view to get any reward or recognition or a place in paradise, but because we are a part of the whole. To hurt a brother man is to hurt our own selves.

The object of morality is to bring about happiness by establishing harmonious relations between all the *jīvas* that belong to any special-area; harmonious relations between the members of a family; harmonious relations between the families that make up a community; harmonious relations between the communities that make up a nation; harmonious relations between the nations that make up humanity; and, finally, harmonious relations between human beings and the other inhabitants of the earth. The great circle goes on spreading outward indefinitely and including larger and larger areas within its circumference. But still, whether the area be large or small, morality aims at the principle of harmonious relations. Thus we have family morality, social morality, national morality, international morality, and human morality. We are always suffering from want of harmony, from jarring wishes, from

friction between ourselves and others; from the lack of mutual support, mutual assistance, and mutual sympathy. Where there is harmony, there is happiness; where there is disharmony, there is unhappiness. If we are to go to the root of things, we cannot but seek the help of religion.

There are three principal ways in which mankind has tried to discover what is right and what is wrong. The first is the way of religion. Great sages, the founders and teachers of religions, have laid down certain laws which were seen in their spiritual vision to exist in the nature of things; and these they have declared authoritatively. These, like other laws in nature, can be verified again and again by the use of reason which is purified and free from selfishness and desire. The second way is that of intuition expressing itself as conscience. The third way is that of utilitarianism, which works for the greatest good of the greatest number; but, let us add, the minority is also a part of the whole; and its interests must be guarded, for the majority and the minority form parts of one humanity. The union of the three ways is to be found in the recognition of the basic truth, the Unity of Life. This gives to the religious way its true foundation and the purified reason. It gives to the intuitional way the explanations of the variations of conscience according to the stage of manifestation reached by the One Life in each. It widens the utilitarian way by showing that the ultimate good of each is identical with the ultimate good of all, and that morality must aim at nothing less than that ultimate universal good.

It is religion which gives us the proper basis upon which ethical science may be built. Morality has only this basis on which it is built up, as a house is built on its foundation. Just as a house will become deformed and fall, if it be built on a shaky foundation, so will morality fall if it is not built on a sound basis.

According to Indian thought, ethical science

is a relative one; it is relative to the man himself and to his surroundings. We have also to ascertain what is good for ourselves and in relation to ourselves and others. What is good for one man may not be good for another man. What is good at one time and at one place may not be good at another time and at another place. Thus we see that the whole fabric of moral life is comparatively relative. It is acknowledged by the great sages of India,

more especially by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that everyone has to follow his own path of development according to his own scale of evolution at which he may have arrived. Relativity of Hindu *dharma* is based on *svadharma*. In the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa: 'Better is one's own duty, though destitute of merit, than the duty of another, well discharged. Better is death in the discharge of one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger.'

ŚRĪ-BHĀŚYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

अविरोधश्चन्दनवत् ॥२।३।२४॥

24. There is no contradiction, like sandal-paste.

Just as sandal-paste applied to any particular part of the body gives a pleasant sensation all over the body, the soul, though of atomic size and therefore occupying only one part of the body, may yet experience sensations extending over the entire body.

अवस्थितिवैशेष्यादिति चेत्,

न, अभ्युपगमात् हृदि हि ॥२।३।२५॥

25. If it be said that on account of the particular position (of the sandal-paste in the body the analogy is not correct), (we say) not so, on account of the acceptance (by the scriptures of a special seat for the soul, viz.) in the heart alone.

An objection is raised against the view expressed in the previous *sūtra*. The sandal-paste produces the sensation, as it is in contact with a definite part of the body. But in the case of the soul, we do not know that it occupies a particular part of the body. This view the *sūtra* refutes and says that the scriptures do

declare that the soul has a particular abode in the body, viz. the heart. 'The self-effulgent one in the heart' (*Br. U.*, IV. 3.7).

गुणाद्वाऽऽलोकवत् ॥२।३।२६॥

26. Or owing to its quality (viz. intelligence) as light.

In this *sūtra*, the Sūtrakāra gives his view as to how the atomic soul experiences sensations throughout the body. As a light placed in one corner of the room lights the whole room, so the consciousness of the soul, though atomic and seated in the heart, yet pervades the whole body and thus experiences pleasure and pain throughout the body.

व्यतिरेको गन्धवत्तथा च दर्शयति ॥२।३।२७॥

27. There is distinction as in the case of smell; scriptures too declare so.

An objection is raised that, as the soul is mere intelligence, how can intelligence be said to be a quality of the soul with which it can pervade the entire body. This view is refuted. Just as smell experienced as a quality of the earth is distinct from it, so also the knowledge of which we are conscious in statements like 'I know' is different from the knowing subject,

the 'I'. Scriptures also declare it so. 'This person knows'.

पृथगुपदेशात् ॥२१३१८॥

28. On account of the separate teaching (by the Śruti texts).

Knowledge is not only perceived as separate from the soul in experiences like 'I know', but it is also declared by the scriptures as separate from the soul. 'For there is no absence of knowing on the part of the knower' (*Br.U.*, IV. 3.30).

How then is the soul said to be mere knowledge in texts like 'Knowledge performs sacrifice' (*Tai.U.*, II. 5)? This is explained in the next *sūtra*.

तद्गुणसारत्वात् तद्व्यपदेशः प्राज्ञवत् ॥२१३१९॥

29. But that declaration (as to the soul's being mere knowledge) is on account of its having that (viz. knowledge) as its essential quality, even as the intelligent Lord (Brahman who, though omniscient, is said to be mere knowledge).

The word 'but' refutes the objection. The self is said to be mere knowledge, because it has knowledge for its essential quality. Similarly, the intelligent Brahman, described by texts as 'By the intelligent supreme Self' (*Br.U.*, IV. 3.21); 'He who is omniscient, all-knowing, etc.' (*Mu.U.*, I. 1.9), is described by Śruti texts as 'truth, knowledge, infinite is Brahman' (*Tai.U.*, II. 1.1), because of Its essential quality of omniscience.

यावदात्मभावित्वाच्च न दोषस्तद्दर्शनात् ॥२१३२०॥

30. And there is no defect (in what has been said in the previous *sūtra*), (as the quality of knowledge exists in the soul) so long as the soul exists; because it is so seen (in the scriptures).

As knowledge exists throughout as its essential quality, there is no harm in designating it as knowledge. It is seen that a cow with broken horns is still called a cow, because the generic character is still found in it as its essential nature. Moreover, like knowledge, the self also

is self-manifested; and for that reason also, it is well designated as knowledge.

An objection is raised that knowledge is not an invariable quality of the self, for it is not found in deep sleep. The next *sūtra* answers this objection.

पुंस्त्वादिवत्त्वस्य सतोऽभिव्यक्तियोगात् ॥२१३२१॥

31. On account of the manifestation (of knowledge in the waking state) being possible only on its existing (potentially in deep-sleep state), like virility etc.

Knowledge exists even in deep-sleep state, though it is not manifest, and it manifests itself in the waking state etc. It is like virility which exists potentially in a child, but manifests only when the child attains youth. Unless it exists potentially in childhood, it cannot manifest itself in youth. Similarly, unless knowledge exists in deep sleep, it cannot manifest itself on awakening. Therefore the soul is a knower and atomic in size. *Br.U.*, II. 4.12 does not declare that the released soul has no knowledge or consciousness whatsoever, but that it has no knowledge of birth, death, pain, etc. experienced in the state of bondage. This is explicitly stated by other texts which describe the state of the released soul. 'The seeing one does not see death nor illness nor pain, (*Chā.U.*, VII. 26.2); 'Not remembering that body in which he was born—seeing these pleasures with the mind, he rejoices' (*Chā.U.*, VIII. 12.3,5).

नित्योपलब्ध्यनुपलब्धिप्रसङ्गोऽन्यतरनियमो

वाऽन्यथा ॥२१३२२॥

32. Otherwise, there would result either perpetual perception and non-perception, or else the limitation of either of the two.

This *sūtra* refutes the view of the Sāṅkhyas who hold that the self is mere knowledge and omnipresent, and also of the Vaiśeṣikas who say that the self is omnipresent and that knowledge is its adventitious quality. If the self is mere knowledge and at the same time omnipresent, then it would result in perpetual simultaneous perception and non-perception or per-

petual experience of either of the two only to the exclusion of the other. But our experience is otherwise, for we sometimes perceive objects and sometimes do not. To explain, if the soul is the cause of perception and non-perception, then it is either the cause of both, in which case there will be perception and non-perception of an object simultaneously, which is contrary to experience; or else, if it is the cause of one of the two only, then in that case we will be having only perpetual perception or perpetual non-perception to the exclusion of the other, which is also against our common experience. Moreover, if the soul were omnipresent, then there would have been ego-consciousness everywhere

and not be confined to the body only. If for any reason the ego-consciousness elsewhere were restricted, then for the very same reason, there would be no ego-consciousness in the body also. All these difficulties are averted if the self is atomic, and has knowledge for its quality. The view of the Vaiśeṣikas also is defective for these very reasons. According to them, knowledge results as a quality in the inert soul when it is connected with the organs. If, as they say, the souls were omnipresent, they would be always connected with all organs, and there would be perpetual knowledge, but this is not so experienced in life.

(To be continued)



NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The contemplation of Divine Mother as the embodiment of beauty and charm *par excellence* is the chief object of *Saundarya-lahari*. In his devout study on 'Devī Worship in *Saundarya-lahari*,' Professor M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., describes how the great Śaṅkarācārya portrays the transcendent beauty of the Divine Mother in supreme poetry and offers that divine form as the fit object of worship. . . .

The Vedas are the source and repository of all the philosophical and religious ideas professed by the Hindus, though some of these are to be found there only in their rudimentary form. Traces of the ideal of *karma-yoga*, so fully developed later in the *Gītā*, may also be found in the Vedas. *Karma*, according to the Vedas, has a twofold aim: to help man survive in the struggle for physical existence and to prepare him for the pursuit of higher spiritual ideals. The genesis of *karma-yoga*, as we understand it today, is sought to be traced to this source by Dr. Abinash Chandra Bose, of Delhi, in his well-documented article 'Karma-

yoga in the Vedas', the first part of which is given in this issue. The second and concluding part is proposed to be included in the next issue. . . .

'India, Japan, and World Peace' By Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the New Delhi centre of the Ramakrishna Mission, was originally contributed to *Yomiuri Shimbun*, a Japanese daily of Tokyo, during his lecture tour of Japan in September-October 1958. The full text of the article in English is given to our readers for the first time. *Yomiuri Shimbun* published only an abridged version of it in the Japanese language. . . .

The profound psychological analysis of self-consciousness implicit in the Upaniṣadic literature forms the subject of the short article on 'Prajñā' by Dr. K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D., Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. . . .

According to Indian thought, religion provides the foundation for a moral life, and morality cannot be divorced from religion. Dr. M.

Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., the well-known scholar and writer of Allahabad, discusses in his brief article 'The Indian Ideals of Religion and Morality'.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

Two of our editorials were devoted to the subject of education, in its secular as well as spiritual aspect. While on this subject, we think it useful to present to our readers what an eminent educationist writes about the philosophy of education in India. In a very thoughtful article entitled 'Continuity of Tradition in Indian Educational Thought', published in *The Indo-Asian Culture* for January 1959 (Vol. VII. No. 3), Professor Humayun Kabir, Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India, makes a detailed survey of the educational values that have kept alive our national tradition, as well as of the educational ideas of some of the leaders of contemporary India. The article referred to is based on a lecture Professor Kabir delivered at the Oxford University, and reprinted from *Philosophy East and West* (April 1956), Vol. VI. No. 1. Of the educational values recognized and emphasized in ancient India, Professor Kabir says:

'The philosophy of education in ancient India recognized and stressed three main values. Of these, the first and foremost was the quest for the liberation of the individual from the bondage of evil. Evil is a denial of the good, and arises out of ignorance. Ignorance is a limitation of the ego. In fact, all wants arise out of the sense of limitation. Education was the means to attain freedom from ignorance and, therefore, from limitations. The attainment of knowledge thus released one from the bondage of want and fear. The seers of ancient India were not afraid of living dangerously in thought and action. Their example, even more than their precept, inspired their pupils; and again and again we encounter cases where the students ask the most searching and devastating questions of their teachers. It was not only a national, but also a human loss when this adventurous spirit of Indian education gave place to instruction where learning by rote and submission to authority became its dominant temper.

'The second value which was emphasized was one of tolerance and forbearance. It arose not only out of respect for life as such, but even more out of the recognition that ultimately all individuals are manifestations or moments of the Brahman. Since the Brahman alone is real, and whatever in any sense is is a manifestation of the Brahman, everything is worthy of respect and regard. This had no doubt its obverse in the uncritical regard for even the trivial and the preservation of many elements which were better discarded. On the positive side, however, it did make for a large-hearted acceptance of differences, which is the essence of democracy.

'The third, and in one sense the most characteristic, value of the Indian philosophy of education was the principle of disinterested devotion (*niṣkāma-bhakti*). It arose directly from the striving for freedom from limitations and the regard for individuality. Once the limitations of the self were overcome, the ego became identified in one sense or another with the Absolute. As such, it had no longer either the need or the inclination to think in terms of self-interest. Since this was true of all selves, it was possible to view all action as part of the cosmic process. Each individual is responsible for his actions. Each is master of his destiny. Since he is at the same time also a manifestation of the Brahman, his individual liberty must be reconciled with his function in the totality of the Absolute. This reconciliation is effected through the concept of disinterested devotion and action. This is akin to the Islamic conception of surrender to the will of God. Such surrender does not mean a negation of personality or acquiescence with fatalism, but a deep sense of identification with the will of the Absolute. They alone shall have eternal life who give up the claim for limited personal lives. In the words of the Indian sage, "*Ātma-vaṭ sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*"—He alone sees who sees all beings as himself (*Vṛddha Cāṇakya*, II. 16).'

Then the learned professor turns his attention to a survey of 'the salient features of the educational philosophies of Tagore, Gandhi, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, and Iqbal'. Coming to Vivekananda, he writes:

'Vivekananda's (1863-1902) main contribution to educational thought lay in his emphasis that education is realization of the perfection already in man. He was strongly of the view that no knowledge comes from outside. Instead of saying that a man learns, we should, according to him, say that he discovers or unveils. In Vivekananda's words, "What a man learns is really what he discovers, by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowl-

edge". According to Vivekananda, all outward experiences only offer the occasion for the development of knowledge which is inherent. The affinity with Plato is perhaps not accidental.

'Vivekananda has thus placed the greatest stress on education as the gradual unfoldment of the intrinsic quality of the individual. He holds that even a child educates itself, and the teacher actually does more harm than good when he thinks that he is teaching the child anything. Vivekananda held that in true education all that we have to do is to ensure that children may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, and eyes.

'It is not surprising that, with this emphasis on calling out the innate qualities of the individual, Vivekananda should lay the greatest stress on the development of character and spirituality. He held that building up a strong body is the first condition for training a strong mind. Physical weakness is, according to him, one of the major causes of human misery. In his picturesque phrase, "One will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of *Gītā*". In fact, he was a great votary of power and strength, and held that the evocation of mental, intellectual, and spiritual strength is one of the main purposes of education. Nor did he neglect the claims of science. He held that the West has mastered nature through the pursuit of scientific

knowledge, and India must not only take full advantage of what the West has achieved, but make scientific contributions of her own.

'Along with this cultivation of the strength of the body and the mind, Vivekananda was a great believer in the education of the heart. According to him, one of the major weaknesses of Western civilization is that it has encouraged intellectual education without taking adequate care of the heart. Vivekananda held that the heart can raise man to planes beyond the reach of intellect. In fact, inspiration is, according to Vivekananda, essentially a function of the heart.'

The rest of the article, from which the above extracts have been quoted, deals with certain problems that education faces in modern India as a result of her contact with the West and the growing integration of the country, as well as the challenge offered by rapid industrialization and urbanization. Concluding his masterly survey, Professor Kabir expresses the hope that 'there is little doubt, however, that the basic values which the Indian philosophy of education shares with the other great educational philosophies of the world will survive and, in fact, be enriched'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

LIFE OF ŚRĪ RĀMĀNUJA. BY SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-4. 1959. Pages 273. Price Board Rs. 4; Cloth Rs. 5.*

The publication of the English translation of this moving work on Śrī Rāmānuja is truly a significant event. Śrī Rāmānuja is one of the leading figures in the history of Indian philosophy and religion. Swami Ramakrishnananda was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna—a disciple who lived up to the fascination of the Master, and who was deeply revered by all who knew him for his singular piety, unique *guru-bhakti*, and spirit of complete dedication. The work bears the catholicity and spiritual fervour characteristic of the neo-Vedānta shaped by the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and his illustrious disciples. It embodies its elevating theme in fitting words.

The book, originally written in Bengali, was designed for the pious readers of Bengal. The author collected materials from several literary sources, both in Tamil and Sanskrit, and built up his narrative keeping faithful to the broad outlines of the traditional biographies. It is right that he keeps clear of historical and sectarian controversies. He surveys Śrīvaiṣṇavism from the earliest Āḷvārs and brings the account up to the great disciples of Śrī Rāmānuja. Each important figure receives worthy presentation in a brief compass. The personality of Śrī Rāmānuja unfolds itself in all its magnificence, and the saintly biographer communicates to us his ardour of devotion.

The place of Śrī Rāmānuja in the evolution of Indian philosophy, and culture must be visualized correctly, and the historical perspective would enable us to appreciate Swami Ramakrishnananda's choice of

the subject. In the post-Upaniṣadic period of Indian thought, during which the great systems, both *nāstika* and *āstika*, emerged, the principle of *bhakti*, the approach to Reality by way of mystic adoration, received very little recognition. Even the ultra-orthodox schools like the Mīmāṃsaka and Advaita emphasized *karma* or *jñāna*, and the way of *bhakti* present in the earlier literature, Vedic and Upaniṣadic, went inadequately stressed. Naturally, the religion of love left the highway of philosophy, its sobriety and rational purpose, and found vent in Purāṇas, Āgamas, and popular religion. Consequently, the pure *bhakti* often degenerated into cults—sectarian, ritualistic, and sometimes morbidly emotional. Thus the two extremes of godless metaphysics and irrational devotionism held sway in the field of spiritual culture, impoverishing simultaneously both philosophy and religion. It was in this historical context of double deficiency that Śrī Rāmānuja appeared and boldly introduced the factor of *bhakti* into philosophy. There was, in consequence, a concurrent uplift of philosophy and religion. In this twofold process of elevation, current philosophies were shown to be inadequate on philosophical grounds, and current religious practices were shown to fall short of religious consciousness. All the polemics of Śrī Rāmānuja proceed from the criterion of spiritual truth furnished to him by the synthesis of *Brahmavāda* and *bhakti*, a synthesis the secure establishment of which should be considered the highest triumph of his genius. Philosophy, for him, is a poor thing, if it does not kindle and augment the love of God; and mysticism has no worth, if it is not the culmination of philosophical wisdom.

The translation is readable, and has achieved a high measure of success. The book is enriched by very valuable appendices supplied by Swami Paramatmananda and Swami Adidevananda. They supply supplementary material on both the historical and philosophical aspects. The get-up of the book is fine, and its price is reasonable. The picture of the Ācārya in the book, a photograph of the image at Sriperumbudur considered authentic by tradition, does enhance its beauty. The publication is an altogether welcome addition to the literature on the subject.

PROF. S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

SCIENCE AND THE LOVE OF GOD. BY FRANK J. PIRONE. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th Street, New York-16* Pages 233. Price \$4.25.

The author, who is a doctor and a psychiatrist, here presents his conviction that the Christian dogma can explain the facts about our body and mind better than modern scientific theories of evolution and psy-

cho-analysis. The arguments offered by the learned doctor cannot convince any scientific man, but they may please the Roman Catholic Church. The book is dedicated to the Popes of the twentieth century. As such, the book will have an appeal to a very limited circle of readers, though many other persons may find the book very original and challenging. There is, however, no doubt that the modern scientific theories about man cannot explain many facts of our life and that some of our old religious notions may after all be not without some meaning and fruitfulness. But the author does not make this general plea for religion; he is very specific and firm in his belief that the Roman Catholic Church, rather than modern science, can provide us the truth about ourselves.

DR. P. J. CHAUDHURY

SCIENCE VERSUS PHILOSOPHY. BY F. G. CONNOLLY. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 90. Price \$3.75.*

This book has an appeal to the scholastic philosophers who may be bothered by the question whether science is philosophy or not, and in what precise manner it is related to theology as known to Christian thinking. The author has approached the question with extreme care and scholarship, but his conclusions can have very little value to a modern scientist or philosopher, who will find most of the discussion in the book arid and unprofitable, because the notions of science and philosophy that the author has in his mind are medieval. The modern problem of science *versus* philosophy, which is very exciting and which is discussed in academic circles in various forms, is not at all touched by the author.

DR. P. J. CHAUDHURY

TRUTH AND MEANING. BY DAVID GREENWOOD. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 114. Price \$3.75.*

This is a very expert work in modern analytical philosophy, and the author has addressed to specialists who, I am sure, will be impressed by his acute thinking. To the ordinary students of philosophy, the last essay of this book will have some appeal. This deals with the pragmatic theory of truth, and the author has very carefully distinguished the different views of the pragmatists. Other essays of the book are on metalanguage, semantics, and sentential calculus, which are extremely thoughtful.

The author's views are independent, and the reviewer personally favours them, though he fears that most modern analysts would disagree with him.

DR. P. J. CHAUDHURY

LIFE'S HIGHEST BLESSINGS. A TRANSLATION OF THE MAHAMANGALA-SUTTA BY DR. R. L. SONI. FOREWORD BY SIR U. THWIN. *Published by the World Institute of Buddhist Culture, Mandalay, Burma. 1956. Pages 146 and a supplement of 16 pages. Price Rs. 10.*

The work under review gives the transliterated Pali text of the *Mahāmaṅgala-Sutta*, in twelve stanzas, word by word translation, a running translation in English verse, along with notes and comments upon the more important Pali words that occur in the *suttas*. In the following chapters, the author gives a synthetic view of the thirty-eight blessings which are enumerated in the *suttas*, and he points out how the message of the Buddha is of special value in the context of the world problems of today. In his foreword, Sir U. Thwin points out that the *suttas* remind him of the Preamble of the Constitution of the UNESCO. Speaking of peace based on the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind, the author has brought to his work enthusiasm and earnest study, and he has tried to look at the subject from every point of view.

While one may welcome the idea of ethical idealism as the solvent of life's ills, in so far as it forms the essence of the social function of religion, one does not know to what extent one would be justified in discountenancing the idea of God and grace, inasmuch as it forms a part of both Hindu and Christian thought for centuries. In his interpretation of *brahmacarya*, the author equates it with celibacy, and has nothing to say on its primary significance as the path to Brahman. It is doubtful whether the age-old controversy on Ātman should have found a place in an interpretation of a purely ethical text. meant to guide the common reader.

Inasmuch as the empirical ego is the source of all sorrow and suffering—and upon that all are agreed—whatever leads one along the path of perfection must necessarily lead to individual and social harmony. It is a useful guide to both the introvert and the extrovert. The book contains an index.

PROF. V. A. THIAGARAJAN

WHICH WAY LIES HOPE? BY RICHARD B. GREGG. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pages 219. Price Rs. 2.*

Modern science and technology 'wrapped up in industrialism and large scale commerce' are rapidly making their way in Asia and Africa. Asians and Africans are in consequence faced with confusions and conflicts in all walks of life. Vital changes are rapid-

ly transforming them and their parts of the world. The old order is changing everywhere yielding place to the new. A new order is emerging, and it has been attended by the inevitable birth-pang

We, in India, are 'in the midst of this kaleidoscopic world'. How and on what lines are we to build the India of tomorrow? The author prescribes Gandhiji's programme of decentralized democratic village economy based on agriculture. Big industry and heavy technology are not, however, tabooed. But they must be reduced to the minimum and controlled for the benefit of all. Government must be based on the consent of the governed, and their refusal of consent is to be made effective in the last resort by mass *satyāgraha*.

Many will not agree with the author. He, however, argues his case with ability and sincerity. We are not in a position to say whether Gandhiji's programme will deliver the goods or not. Its potentialities are, however, indisputable. For while '69 years were required for the ideas of Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto (1848) to flower in the seizure of power by the Russian Bolsheviks in 1917', to oust 'British power from India by Gandhiji's programme required only 28 years' '*The spirit has power. Along this way lies hope*' (italics added) (p.206).

PROF. S. B. MOOKHERJI

LANGUAGE STUDY IN INDIAN EDUCATION. BY M. P. DESAI. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pages 54. Price 50 nP.*

The language problem in India is one that calls for an immediate solution. But the failure of the government to give a bold and rational lead in the matter, the unreasonableness of the Hindi purists, the impatience of the protagonists of Hindi, the fear and suspicion of the non-Hindi speaking groups, and, last but not the least, the existence of bi-lingual and multi-lingual states, such as Bombay, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Kashmir, among others, stand in the way.

The author, Sri M. P. Desai, suggests that English should be immediately replaced by regional languages as the media of instruction in our universities. Some universities have already done this, and others are contemplating to follow suit. Results achieved so far, however, have not been encouraging. The author's suggestions that Hindi should be compulsorily taught up to the first degree (B.A., B.Sc., etc.) course and that all regional languages should be made the media of Public Service Examinations deserve serious consideration. The latter, needless to say, is

the only way to safeguard the interests of non-Hindi speaking groups. The former suggestion, if acted upon, will facilitate the peaceful acceptance of Hindi as our official national language.

Sri Desai writes with balance and honesty on a rather ticklish problem, and we are thankful to him for his constructive suggestions.

Prof. S. B. MOOKHERJI

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION MATRI-BHAVAN, CALCUTTA

REPORT FOR 1957-58

The activities of this institution, which is devoted to the service of expectant mothers, may be classified as follows:

(a) *Ante-natal care*: There is an outdoor clinic where proper advice and suitable treatment in complicated cases are given to expectant mothers free of charge. Total number of cases who received the doctor's instructions: 1957: new cases: 2,389; old cases: 3,076; 1958: new cases: 2,248; old cases: 3,617. Total number of complicated cases treated: 1957: 870; 1958: 1,051. Total number of ante-natal cases treated in the indoor: 1957: 157; 1958: 221.

(b) *Post-natal care*: Every child born under the care of the institution is looked after daily for the first week, then once a fortnight when it is brought to the outdoor clinic. At the clinic, the children are weighed, measured, and thoroughly examined, and the mothers are instructed about proper feeding, habit training, etc. Statistical report of post-natal cases: 1957: Mothers: 1,346; Babies: 3,100; 1958: Mothers: 1,857; Babies: 3,410.

(c) *Hospital Confinement*: Statistical report of hospital confinement:

	1957	1958
Primiparae ..	270	338
Multiparae ..	913	1,139
Number of deliveries ..	1,183	1,477

The most important event of the year is the completion of the two-storied building to house the hospital. The cost of the construction came to Rs. 1,83,000. There are 36 beds, half of which are free and kept reserved for poor and deserving patients.

Immediate Needs of the Hospital:

1. Endowment of free beds .. Rs. 6,000 per bed

2. For clearing the debt incurred for the construction of the new building Rs. 70,000

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1958

The Dispensary treated 1,42,586 cases in its allopathic and homoeopathic departments. Allopathic: old cases: 84,152; new cases: 37,912; total: 1,22,064. Homoeopathic: old cases: 13,526; new cases: 6,996; total: 20,522.

Eye Department: Number of patients treated: new: 13,515; old: 3,524; total: 17,039. Number of operations done: 71. Number of refractions done: 93.

E. N. T. Department: Number of patients treated: old: 8,279; new: 3,491; total: 11,770.

X-Ray Department: About 30% of the cases are X-rayed and screened free of all charges. The rest of the cases are charged Rs. 8|- each for X-raying and Rs. 2|- for screening. In all, 303 patients were X-rayed and 83 patients were screened in 1958.

Children's Special Treatment: Medicated milk was distributed to about 9,000 sickly children belonging to the different parts of the city.

Milk Distribution: Milk was also distributed regularly throughout the year to 85,839 under-nourished women and children.

Dental Section: This is a fully equipped department. Details of treatment: Extractions: 2,689; Caries: 1,951; Pyorrhoea: 1,026; total: 5,666.

Laboratory: 629 different kinds of specimens were examined during the year.

Present Need: A permanent endowment fund procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 1,000 for the maintenance of the dispensary. (*This amount is required for the purchase of medicines, bandage materials, etc.*)