PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LXIV MARCH 1959 No 3

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

The day before I was initiated I went to the Mother and said, 'Mother, I would like to receive my initiation'.

She asked, 'Have you not been initiated as yet?'

When I replied in the negative, she continued, 'I thought you had!'

After my initiation she said, 'May the Lord's name and prayers make you pure in mind and body'....

I asked, 'Is it necessay to keep count on the fingers when making *japa*? May I not do it in the mind alone?

She answered, 'The Lord has given the fingers, make the best use of them by counting His *mantra*'.

25th September 1910. Udbodhan, Prayer Room

In the morning, the Mother and I were talking. I said: 'If there is a God, why is there so much misery in this world? Does He not see? Or has He not the power to remove these evils?'

The Mother said: 'Creation itself is full of griefs. How can one understand joy, if there be no sorrow? And how can it be possible for everyone to be happy at the same time? There is a story that once Sītā said to Rāma, "Why do you not remove everyday's miseries? Make everyone in your kingdom—all your subjects—happy. You can do it if you like". Rāma answered, "Can everyone be happy at the same time?" "Well, they can, if you so desire. Why not satisfy all their needs from the royal treasury?" "Just as you wish."

'Then Rāma called Lakṣmaṇa and said, "Go and tell everyone in my kingdom that all their needs will be supplied from my treasury",

When the people heard this, they came and explained their needs. The treasury was laid open. Everyone lived in happiness. But such was the dispensation of Rāma that soon the roof of the royal palace showed cracks and water seeped through. Masons were sent for to repair the crack. But there were none to be found. Where was any labourer to be found? The subjects also came and complained that, because there were no masons or workmen, their houses and buildings were falling to pieces. Then, seeing no other way, Sītā said to Rāma, "We cannot suffer in the wet like this! Let everything be as it was. Then we can get workmen again. Everybody cannot be happy at the same time". Rāma answered, "So be it". In the twinkling of an eye, everything was as it used to be. One could get workmen again. Sītā said, "Lord, it is true that this life is only a game of yours!"

'No one is miserable for ever, no one in all the incarnations. One reaps as one sows, it is all linked in cause and effect.'

I asked the Mother, 'Is everything then the fruit of *karma*?'

The Mother replied, 'What else, if not *karma*?'...

I asked, 'Where does this initiative for good and evil originate? You may say from your previous life, but where is the source of it all?'

The Mother replied: 'Even a blade of grass cannot stir without the will of God, my son. When a creature falls on good times, his thoughts turn to prayer ; when he falls on bad times, all is evil It is all according to His will, He acts through His objects. What powers did Naren have by himself? It was because God acted through him that he achieved what he did. The Lord knows what he is about to perform. But should a man yield himself unto Him, He will do everything for him. One must bear with everything, because it is all due to cause and effect, according to one's *karma*. And *karma* counteracts the effects of one's previous *karma*.'

I asked, 'Can *karma* counteract the effects of *karma*?'

She said, 'Why not? If you do a good act, it cancels the effects of your evil deeds. If one prays, takes the name of God, and thinks of Him, the effects of evil are cancelled'.

Udbodhan, Prayer Room, 1910

It was morning and we were talking.

The Mother said : 'After the Master left me, I was living at Kamarpukur, and would sit alone and wonder what was the use of it all ; I had no son or anyone. The Master appeared to me one day and said, "Why do you worry? You want one son, I have given you so many jewels of sons, such as these! A time will come when many people will call you mother".

'On my way to Vrindaban, I saw the Master at the window of my compartment, and he said to me, "About that amulet you have with you, see that you do not lose it".

'I had his own amulet on my arm. I used to worship it. Later, I gave it to Belur Math. They worship it there now.'

I said: 'It got lost during the Master's birthday celebrations this year. They had thrown it into the river along with the flowers and *bel* leaves. Ram Babu's son Rishi discovered it while playing there during ebb tide, and he picked it up and brought it in.'

The Mother remarked, 'It is his own amulet. They should take great care of it'.

We began to talk about Belur Math. The Mother said: 'I always seemed to see the Master in that place across the river, where the Math and banana plantation now stand, as though there was a house there and he was living in it. The Math had not been established as yet. When the land was first purchased, Naren took me over one day and showed me round the grounds saying, "Mother, now you can walk about to your heart's content in your own place".

'When I saw the Math at Bodh Gaya and how well provided and wealthy they were, I

wept and said, "Master, my boys have nowhere to sleep and no food ; they wander from door to door. If they could only have a place like that!" At last, by the Master's will the Math was built.

'Naren came to me one day and said, "Mother, I have dedicated 108 *bel* leaves to the Master with the prayer that the Math might secure some land. You know that no *karma* is without its effect. You will see we shall have the land one day".'

When I went upstairs for some betel leaves after dinner, I heard the Mother say: 'Naren once said, "Mother, everything is taking flight nowadays. I see everything fly away". I said —here the Mother laughed—"Well, see that you don't put me to flight as well". And Naren said, "But Mother, if I put you to flight, where shall I stand? Knowledge which sets at naught the lotus feet of the *guru* is as ignorance. Where can knowledge stand, if it denies the sacred feet of the *guru*?"'

But after saying this Mother added: 'When one attains true knowledge, God Himself does not exist. One calls upon the eternal Mother, and in the end finds Her in all creation. Everything then becoines One. That is all.'

Udbodhan, Prayer Room, 1910

The Mother was sorting flowers and *bel* leaves for the *pūjā*. I was showing her a new print of her photograph. I asked, 'Is it a good likeness?'

She answered: 'Yes it is. But formerly I was a little plumper. Jogin (Swami Yogananda) was lying very ill when this photo was taken. I had grown thin with anxiety. I was very unhappy. When Jogin iinproved, I felt better, and when he grew worse I shed tears. The European lady Sara Bull took this picture. I was unwilling, but she kept pressing me, "Mother, I want to take it to America and worship it". In the end, she took this photograph'.

I said, 'This picture of the Master that you have here is a good one. One can see what he was like. Is it a good likeness?'

The Mother said: 'A very good one. It belonged to a Brahmin. They made a few copies, and this Brahmin had one. It used to be very dark, dark as the Goddess Kali, so they gave it to the Brahmin. When he went away from Dakshineswar, he left it with me. I placed it among the pictures of the other gods and used to worship it. I was then living below the music tower. The Master came there one day and, seeing the picture, said, "Now, what is all this?" We were cooking in the space underneath the staircase, on the other side. Later, I saw hiin pick up soine *bel* leaves and other things that were lying there, and place them before the picture, worshipping it. This is the same picture. That Brahmin never came back, so I still have it.'

I asked, 'Mother, when the Master was in a trance, did his face ever look sad?'

Mother: 'No, I never saw it sad. He always smiled when in a trance.'

I said, 'The face might be smiling when he was in *bhāva-samādhi*,[1] but the Master himself said of the picture, taken when sitting, that it was one showing a very elevated state. Did he smile even then?'

The Mother answered, 'I always saw him sinile, whenever he was in a trance'.

I asked, 'What was his complexion like?'

The Mother said: 'Like the yellow orpiinent *haritāl*. His complexion seemed to be one with the gold amulet he wore. When I rubbed oil on hiin, a kind of radiance seemed to come out of him. Once, a very fair man came to the temple premises, and the Master said to me, "Watch us as we walk about in the Panchavati and see who is the fairer". So I watched them as they walked. The other man seemed a little fairer than the Master ; there was just a shade's difference.

[1] God absorption on a relatively lower plane, where duality still persists and the aspirant thinks of a personal God.

'Whenever he went out in the temple premises, people would stand by, watching him, saying, "There he is!" He was rather plump. Mathur Babu gave him quite a large, flat, and low wooden stool. When he sat on it for his meals, it did not seem big enough for him. When he put on his little oily *dhoti* and went to the river for his bath, people would gaze at him in wonder....

'I never saw him sad. He took the greatest pleasure in the company of young and old. I never saw him sad. Ah! At Kamarpukur, he used to get up in the morning and say, "I would like to have such and such vegetables, do prepare them today", and we (myself and Lakshmi's mother) would cook them for him. A few days later, he said, "Ah! What has come over me! I think of food the minute I get up in the morning! Shame on me!" Then he called me and said, "I no longer fancy any particular dish. I shall have whatever you cook, whatever you give me". He used to go home for his health. He constantly suffered from dysentery at Dakshineswar. ... Later on, all this made him despise his own body, and he no longer took any care of it. ...

'You see so many disciples nowadays, the place is full of them. But when he was so ill, one man ran away, because he was expected to contribute twenty rupees. It is not very difficult to look after the Master now. They offer him food, but eat it themselves. If they give him a seat, he remains sitting. If they put him to bed, he stays there. He is only a picture.

'The Master first saw Balaram Babu beside the image of Mother Kālī, his hands folded, a turban on his head. He was always like that, hands folded. He never touched the Master's feet. The Master understood this and would say, "O Balaram, there is an irritation in my foot, do rub it!" Balaram would at once get hold of Naren or Rakhal or whoever was around and say, "Here, do rub the Master's foot, there is an irritation!"'

I said to the Mother, 'I asked Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) about the Master's complexion, and he said, "He was like us".'

The Mother said, 'Maybe, when they saw him. He had neither his old health nor his complexion then. ... When I was at Dakshineswar, I never went out of doors. The steward used to say, "I have heard that she is here, but I have never seen her!"

'Sometimes I did not see the Master for two whole months. I would comfort my own mind saying, "What have you ever done to deserve the sight of him every day?" I would stand for hours and, through the cracks in the matting (screen round the room), listen to the refrains of the *kirtanas*. That was how I got my rheumatism! He used to say, "If the bird from the forest is shut up in a cage day and night, it gets rheumatism. Go out and visit the neighbours sometimes". I would take my bath at four in the morning. A little sunlight would reach the staircase in the afternoon, and I would dry my hair there. I used to have a load of hair in those days. My room was very small and filled with all sorts of things. There were hooks hanging down from the ceiling. ... But I never felt any difficulty, except about the sanitary arrangements....

'Such singing and such trances there used to be! Gourdasi here, she fell into deep trances too!' ...

It was now time for the evening prayers, and the Mother would conduct them. I went downstairs Later, I came up again to receive *prasāda*. The Mother sat with her feet pointing southwards, serving out portions of the *prasāda* on *sāl* leaves. I sat on the verandah asking for this and that. I wanted something that was not within her reach. I reached out for it myself, to spare her the trouble, and my elbow touched her foot. She immediately said 'Aha!' and folded her hands in apology. I said, 'Why Mother! It is nothing!' But she was not satisfied, and said, 'Come nearer, my son, let me kiss you'. In the end I put up my face ; she touched my chin and kissed her hand, and only then was her mind at rest.

In this way, she venerated her disciples as gods, and loved them as her own children.

29th October 1910. Udbodhan, Prayer Room

We were seated south of Mother's cot while talking. ... I asked, 'Is the Master present in the picture?'

Mother replied, 'Why should he not be? A thing and its reflection are the same. A picture is but a reflection of him'.

'Is he present in all the pictures?'

'Yes, his presence can be felt after repeated prayer. The place becomes holy.'...

'Well, those places seem to be holy because of sacred association.'

'Not quite so. He has his benediction on them.'

I then asked, 'Does the Master accept the things you offer to him?'

Mother said, 'Yes, he does'.

'But how so, why do we not notice any sign?'

'A beam of light issues out of his eyes and tastes everything. But his ambrosial touch fills them up again, so there is no decrease. The Lord comes down, from His place in heaven, where the devotees call Him. ... My mother-in-law saw Lakṣmī (Goddess of Wealth) coming from where the Lahas' home stands.... What need has he to eat? He comes for the satisfaction of his devotee, and eats. By eating *prasāda* one's mind becomes purified; but ordinary food makes it impure.'

I asked, 'Does the Master really eat?'

She answered, 'Do you think I do not notice whether the Master eats or not? He sits for his food, he eats'.

'You really see?'

'Yes, he eats some, but he simply looks at some. As a matter of fact, do you even relish all things at all times, or everybody's food? It's just like that. It depends on one's intensity of feeling and devotion. Devotion is the main thing.'

'How will devotion come? A child does not even know its own mother if it is brought up by someone else.'

'Yes, truly so. His grace is necessary. One must deserve his grace.'

I protested, 'How can there be any fitness for grace? Grace is unquestioning for all'.

The Mother explained, 'One has to sit by the riverside and call on him. He will ferry across at the proper time'.

'Everything occurs at the proper time; where is the place for his grace then?'

'Even so, has not one to throw one's line and wait for the fish when one goes out angling?'

'If he is our own, why should we have to wait?'

'That's true enough. It happens even before its time. People grow mangoes and jackfruits even out of season nowadays. Quite a lot of mangoes grow even in September.'

'Is our highest expectation limited to this much only that he dismisses us by giving to each one what he wants? Or can we get him as our own, over and above this? Is he my own?'

The Mother replied, 'Yes, he is one's own, ever related to one. He is everybody's own—each getting him according to his imagination',

'But imagination is like a dream, like dreaming what one thinks of.'

'Well, you may take it that way. The whole world is a dream. This waking state is also a dream.'

'No, it is not a dream; if it were, it would vanish in a moment.'...

'Even so, it is nothing but a dream. What you dreamt last night no longer exists. A peasant dreamt that he had become a king and a father of eight sons. When the dream vanished, and he found that one of his real sons had died, he cried, "Should I weep for those eight sons or this one?"'

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

16th May 1896
63 St. George's Road
London—S.W.

DEAR ADHYAPAKJI,

Last mail brought the very very sad news of the blow that has fallen on you.

This is the world my brother—this illusion of Maya—that Lord alone is true. The forms are evanescent, but the spirit being in the Lord and of the Lord is immortal and omnipresent. All that we ever had are round us this minute, for the spirit can neither come nor go, it only changes its plane of manifestation.

You are strong and pure and so is Mrs. Wright, and I am sure that the Divine in you has arisen and thrown away the lie and delusion that there can be death for anyone.

'He who sees in this world of manifoldness that one support of everything, in the midst of a world of unconsciousness that one eternal consciousness, in this evanescent world that one eternal and unchangeable, unto him belongs eternal peace.'

May the peace of the Lord descend upon you and yours in abundance is the prayer

of your loving friend,
VIVEKANANDA

* Letter from Swami Vivekananda to Professor John Henry Wright, written on hearing of the death of his daughter, age 16.

THE SPIRIT OF OUR TIMES

By the Editor

I

It is a melodrama that we are witnessing all around in the world today. At first sight, we behold a scene unfolding itself with all horrors and violent emotions. Fear, suspicion, and hatred rule the minds of the so-called leaders of nations. Diplomacy, deceit, and diabolical stratagems seem to be the order of the day. Cold war is indulged in gleefully and with no respite. Nations are armed cap-a-pie and kept at the 'brink of war'. There is everything in the atmosphere to create a war psychosis in the minds of men. New weapons of mass destruction are produced and perfected day after day —nuclear weapons, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and what not—the very mention of whose names sends a cold current in the hearts of men. It appears that the heart of man, from which is supposed to flow the milk of compassion, is smitten with bitterness and animosity. The spirit of love, selfless service, and self-sacrifice seem to be searing, giving place to enmity, selfishness, and self-aggrandizement. My country first and last and everything it stands for, and everyone else must submit before it —that seems to be the guiding principle in the affairs of nations, dividing mankind into separate segments surrounded by high walls of suspicion and fear.

'Love thy neighbour' was the dictum, but man appears to be out to annihilate the neighbour. 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more', this was the grand message given by the prophets of old. Are their descendants heeding the warning? It was said, 'I call heaven and earth witness. This day I have placed before you life and death. Choose life that thou and thy seed may live', but what is man up to? Is he not playing with death? That is the choice confronting mankind today. Which way to go, immortal life or imminent death? Total destruction of humanity with all its proud achievements and its beautiful civilization seems to be staring man in the face. The sword of Democles seems to be hanging precariously over the head of mankind.

As one ponders over all these, one is left dazed and dismayed. One's faith begins to quail, self-confidence totters, the future appears to be dark, and life loses all its meaning and charm. One shudders to think of the impending catastrophe that is round the corner, which, when it comes, will not even give one time to know that the end has come.

True, the scene, at first sight, appears to be dreadful, dark, and dreary. That is what catches the eye on the surface. But deep down lurks the real humanity, the enduring world with all its lofty ideals, surviving all vicissitudes of history, and destined to survive even the present cataclysmal situation. It is that world which we search for—the world that has lived on trust, goodness, love, and hope and upheld the deeper values of man and his spirit, the world which promises a brighter and a better future for humanity. Fortunately, there are in this world more individuals—many times more than the opposite sort—and more nations who are deeply interested in world peace and world brotherhood. They are earnestly trying to bring together different sections of humanity and to develop among them mutual respect, amity, and understanding, recognizing the great truth of the statement, 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?' They are convinced that either they live by these ideals or they perish, but perish they will not.

Thus it is that in the midst of the loud proclamation of world destruction, there is also a faint talk of world renaissance. And though we are walking, as it were, along the narrow razor-

edge between chaos and a new era of God-discovery, we somehow feel it within our power to lead ourselves from darkness to light, from hatred to understanding, and from fear to fellowship. Moved by this ennobling ideal, a number of humble individuals, private organizations, national institutions, and great international bodies are ardently engaged in fostering among groups of men this sense of the oneness of humanity, and developing in them a regard and an appreciation for other religions and cultures, races and languages, customs and manners, and other social, economic, and political ideas and ideals. In this particular field, the achievements of the UNESCO and other specialized agencies of the United Nations have been phenomenal. These bodies have broken all the barriers of race and nationality, religion and culture in bringing succour to the undeveloped and under-developed countries of the world in the spheres of education, health, social welfare for women and children, youth camp movement, labour welfare, refugee rehabilitation, relief work, economic aid, scientific and technological advancement, etc. The amount of work these agencies have already done and are doing on an international scale is magnificent.

Amidst diverse activities that UNESCO has initiated in this direction, one very significant move is in the cultural sphere. Explaining the spirit that animates UNESCO's major project for the mutual appreciation of eastern and western cultural values, *Orient-Occident* (the mouthpiece of UNESCO on this project) says: 'Every culture is endowed with a universal dimension, not only because it can be understood and respected by all peoples, but because it gives particular expression to the highest qualities of mankind, and because its values contain a wealth of teaching and inspiration. In this perspective, all cultures have classical values. Eastern cultures, and those of the Occident, must be appreciated not as peculiar curiosities, but as expressions of human genius..... The development of mutual appreciation of cultural values calls for the fashioning of a renewed and broader humanism, within which cultures endowed with their own unshakable individuality, but capable of drawing from each other inspiration and enrichment will coexist and collaborate. This cultural pluralism, tempered by the necessity for understanding and appreciation of each culture by the other, and inspired by the idea of the universal solidarity of mankind, characterizes the point of view of the present age on the problem of the unity of civilization.'

This is the point of view that is becoming more and more evident in the international sphere—the idea of the universal solidarity of mankind, despite differences and diversities in race or religion, culture or language. It is heartening to find leaders representing various faiths coming and telling cosmopolitan groups: 'Expect and respect differences'; 'Religions are not contradictory, but supplementary'; 'Let us mingle with people of other faiths and exchange our spiritual discoveries as never before'; 'From a study of comparative religion, we learn to read the sacred books of other people, and there we discover common ideals inspiring the whole human race. God withheld his prophets from no peoples'—utterances which could be hardly expected from orthodox sections a few decades ago.

In the same spirit, calling for the co-operation of all religions in achieving spiritual brotherhood, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, in his book *East and West: The End of Their Separation*, affirms: 'The history of the new world, the one world, has begun.... We are living at the dawn of a new era of universal humanity.... Whether we like it or not, we live in one world and require to be educated to a common conception of human purpose and destiny.' Pointing out that the future cannot be built merely on the material plane, he further asserts: 'We cannot base the new civilization on science and technology alone. They do not furnish a reliable basis, if we wish to avoid the catastrophe that threatens us. We must discover the reserves of spirituality, respect for human personality, the sense of the sacred found in all religious traditions and use them to fashion

a new type of man who uses the instruments he has invented with a renewed awareness that he is capable of greater things than mastery of nature.' The way to the discovery of those reserves, he tells us, is the recognition of the transcendental unity underlying the empirical diversity of religions.

II

The recognition of 'the transcendental unity underlying the empirical diversity of religions', in other words, the spirit of religious harmony, is an ideal that is understood and immediately subscribed to by the Indian mind. The Indian has an instinctive reverence for all faiths and all sages and prophets; and this attitude is very old, as old as the Vedas themselves. And from those dim ages of antiquity, it has continuously flowed, sometimes in a trickling stream and sometimes in a forceful current, through the long stretched valley of these scores of centuries. Our vast literature of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the epics, the Purāṇas, and the literature of the medieval mystics, all breathe the same spirit, so much so the very air of India is charged with such sentiments as: 'That which exists is One, but the sages call It by various names'; 'Just as water falling from the sky goes to the sea, so the salutations offered to the various gods reach God alone'; 'All men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me'; 'There are as many ways as there are points of view'. Time and again, sages and seers, mystics and saints have appeared on the Indian soil, breathing the same sentiment and demonstrating its spirit in their individual lives.

To the Indian mind, Truth presents itself in diverse ways, the validity of each of which is always accepted and respected. Diversity of sects and cults is necessary to suit diverse temperaments and personal predilections. An oft-quoted Sanskrit verse recognizes these individual differences in mental attitude and inner spiritual development: 'Owing to their diversity in taste, people prefer different ways, straight or curved; but Thou art the only goal for man, just as the sea is the goal of waters.' This is the basic religious tendency and tradition of India, and she has always welcomed true spiritual striving whatever person or whatever quarter it may come from, provided this spirit of understanding and accommodation is there in it.

It is in this tradition that a mighty spiritual force appeared in recent past in the personality of Sri Ramakrishna, who, it has been aptly said, 'was the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people'. His life was a living commentary on the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, and he himself a living harmony of religions. His whole life was an uninterrupted experiment with this spirit, and he vividly demonstrated the truth of it by his own realizations. And this constitutes the essential part of his message to compose a distracted world that is torn to pieces by religious rivalry, sectarian exclusiveness, bigotry, and fanaticism.

Sri Ramakrishna was a meeting ground for all apparent contradictions, where paradoxes blended and distinctions disappeared. He discovered the thread of harmony running through all incompatibles, and, in one life, he lived and practised all modes of *sādhanās* that he came across. At the end of each and everyone of them, he discovered the same truth. Though born and brought up in orthodox Hindu tradition, when once he touched the bottom of unity of all apparent diversities, when once he realized that Religion is one and religiosities are many, that Truth is one but hath a thousand names, he threw overboard all the stifling restrictions imposed by his birth and tradition and took to the 'other' ways of knowing the same Truth. An intense desire came upon him to follow the Christian and the Mohammedan ways of religious life. Soon after, he set himself free from all old habits of thought and was completely absorbed in his new belief. The perfect *sādhaka* that he was, the results were quick and sure. He discovered that the self-same Godhead is

attainable at the end of each journey, and that all religions are fundamentally one.

Even in the matter of the different approaches to God according to Hinduism itself, his life was a remarkable reconciliation. He was a *bhakta,* a *jñānin,* a *karmin,* and a *yogin* all in one. He commenced his spiritual life as a *bhakta* of the Divine Mother and completed it in pure *jñāna* by contemplating on the impersonal absolute Brahman. The range was vast, and in between he practised the different *mārgas* and *bhāvas*—the courses and attitudes —according to the various cults and sects prevalent in India—the Tantra, the Śākta, the Śaiva, the Vaiṣṇava, etc. Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Advaita mingled in him together to form a beautiful symphony in the music of his life. He enjoyed the bliss of divine companionship in every form of human relationship—*vātsalya, madhura, sakhya,* and *dāsya*—that of parents, of lovers, of friends, and of master and his servant, one after another in quick succession.

Thus Sri Ramakrishna represents a harmony of all religions and all modes of approach to Truth, a harmony in one person among all the great teachers of the world. His life and realizations have been so unique that he stands before the world as the embodiment of India's national genius and the fulfilment of her age-old aspirations. 'As many faiths, so many paths'—that is the grand message of Sri Ramakrishna which is spreading slowly but surely in this wide world of ours, the message of *'sarva-dharma-samanvaya'*, in which all religious conflicts are resolved, burying, once for all, all bigotry and fanaticism, where man and man can meet in this human family as the children of one God, where doctrines and dogmas do not matter, where sects, temples, and churches count for little, and above all, where religion does not mean mere meaningless words, but true spiritual realization. To proclaim this underlying fundamental unity of all religions was the mission of Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna in his own inimitable way illustrated the truth of the variety of expressions of the one eternal Truth in homely parables: A chameleon lived on a tree. One person came and saw it was green ; a second person saw it red ; a third one, yellow. In this manner, a number of persons saw it as of different hues. Each of them was disputing the other and saying that the animal was green, red, yellow, and so on. At last, they went to the man who had been sitting under the tree. He said, 'I live under the tree night and day. I know it is a chameleon ; it changes colour every moment. And sometimes it has no colour at all'.

Yet another is the parable of the 'Fish': As the same fish is dressed into soup, curry, or cutlet, and each has his own choice dish of it, so the Lord of the universe, though one, manifests Himself differently according to the different likings of His worshippers, and each one of these has his own view of God which he values most.

He said: 'God is one. He differs only in names and forms. He reveals Himself unto a devotee in whatever form he wishes to see Him.' 'Various are the paths that lead to the ocean of Immortality. Life is blessed no matter by whatever means you get into it.' 'Different creeds are but different paths to reach the one God.'

It is to carry this immortal message of India, as exemplified and demonstrated in the life of his master, that Swami Vivekananda travelled to the countries of the West, and there he preached it freely and forcefully wherever he went. First we see him at the historic Parliament of Religions, in Chicago, where he speaks not of this faith or that, not of the many sects and sectarian beliefs, but of the Religion which is universal in character and application—the Eternal Religion. He spoke of the Religion which taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. He deprecated 'sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism', which had filled the earth with violence and drenched it with human blood. He hoped that the Parliament would inaugurate a new era of free association among the nations of the world, so that each nation could make some distinctive contribution to the general progress of man and his civilization.

Throughout the several addresses the Swami delivered at the Parliament, not a word of denunciation of any faith ever rose from his lips. His words always breathed a remarkable spirit of universalism. Describing this in a touching manner, Romain Rolland writes: 'Each time he repeated with new arguments, but with the same force of conviction his thesis of a universal religion without limit of time or space, uniting the whole *Credo* of the human spirit, from the enslaved fetishism of the savage to the most liberal creative affirmations of modern science. He harmonized them into a magnificent synthesis, which, far from extinguishing the hope of a single one, helped all hopes to grow and flourish according to their own proper nature. There was to be no dogma but the divinity inherent in man and his capacity for indefinite evolution.'

'Religion', Swami Vivekananda said during the course of an interview in Detroit, 'is the acceptance of all existing creeds, seeing in them the same striving towards the same destination. Creed is something antagonistic and combative. There are different creeds, because there are different people. ... Religion recognizes and is glad of the existence of all these forms, because of the beautiful underlying principle. ... All the creeds which are accepted by all people are but the endeavours of humanity to realize that infinity of Self.'

Elsewhere, with the same width of vision and depth of understanding, the Swami declares: 'I accept all religions that were in the past and worship with them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship. ... I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future. ... The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, and all other sacred books are but so many pages, and an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded. ... We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present, and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future.'

This all-comprehensive, universal vision is gaining in power and widening its influence. This is the spirit of our times, and with the passage of time, greater expressions of it on much wider scale are sure to manifest themselves, yielding better benefits to man and making his life on earth happy and worthwhile. The future of humanity lies in preserving, practising, and propagating this spirit of inter-religious harmony and understanding; there is no other way.

SISTER NIVEDITA AND ACHARYA JAGADISH CHANDRA BOSE

By Brahmacharini Kalpalata

I

On November 30, 1917, Dr. J. C. Bose dedicated the Bose Institute with the words:

'I dedicate today this Institute—not merely a laboratory, but a temple.'

As one enters this 'temple', one sees at the entrance a fountain, 'the memorial fountain with its bas-relief of woman carrying light to the temple'. Underneath it reposes, as we have heard, a portion of the mortal remains of Sister Nivedita. Towering above all is the *vajra*—the symbol of thunderbolt that Sister Nivedita adopted. These in silent eloquence speak more of the relation of Sister

Nivedita and Jagadish Chandra Bose than words can convey.

A score and four years of intense struggle came to an end at the realization of this cherished dream of Jagadish Chandra, and it was natural that on such an occasion, when his glory had reached the pinnacles, he remembered his comrades. In a reminiscent mood he said, 'In all my struggling efforts, I have not been altogether solitary ; while the world doubted, there had been a few, now in the City of Silence, who never wavered in their trust'. Among these was Sister Nivedita.

His biographer writes: 'Her fervid faith in the long-dreamed of Research Institute, its possibilities for science and its promise for India, was no small impulse and encouragement towards its realization.' Professor Patrick Geddes wrote the biography in 1919, entitling it as *The Life and Work of Sir Jagadis C. Bose*.

Long before that, Sister Nivedita had planned to write his life. In a letter of 1901, she refers to a character sketch of Bose written by her. In a letter dated 16th July 1906, while writing to Mrs. Bull about her literary work, she expresses her desire to leave papers ready for Bose's life. In 1910, when strain of work had told upon her health, and she had a premonition that she would not live long, we find her writing to her friend Mrs. Bull in a mood of despondency: 'My wonderful 12 years is drawing to a close, and I feel that in November when the Mintos go, I shall enter on a very dark period, which I dread more for his sake than for anything else. I have still 2 years left and no more..... I am so afraid that I shall not be there to write his life. But I know you will leave a special legacy of £100 to SK., R., or to N. for this purpose, not to pay expenses, but to pay for time. The life can easily be published in India and at Indian cost. And my papers will be at their disposal. Of course, no one will ever see him as I have done, but perhaps N. would do best the grim hour to hour struggle with villians that he had had and the gallantry with which his ship has breasted every wave.' Sister Nivedita did not live to write about his struggles in life, for she died in 1911, but perhaps she left her papers behind to help another to write about them.

When a battle is won, we applaud the victory and glory in it and forget the struggle. If only we would remember the struggle, we would be wiser. For the struggles of great and noble lives are the lamps to guide our footsteps. Successes and failures follow in natural sequence, and therefore are looked upon as one ; much value is never attached to them. The combat itself is greater.

Jagadish Chandra once said that his life had ever been one of combat, and would be so to the last. The invincible courage and strength that was his in all his struggles was derived from the lesson he had learnt from his father's life. Speaking about him once at his home town Faridpore, he said, 'And if some of the audience thought that the speaker has been blessed with life that has been unusually fruitful, they will soon realize that the power and strength that nerved me to meet the shocks of life were in reality derived at this very place, where I witnessed the struggle which overpowered a far greater life'.

So, if the Indians today feel proud in the achievements of this scientist, they must also remember his sufferings. As a pioneer in this field among the Indians, he had to bear the brunt of it. His honest efforts were thwarted, because he was an Indian ; because he belonged to a race of dreamers who had dwelt in metaphysical speculations only, and had never dared to tread the sacred grounds of exact sciences. True to his leadership, he did not leave the battle-field till the end. His aim was to open the way for other Indians to follow. 'My own experience told me how heavy, sometimes even crushing, are the difficulties which confront an inquirer here in India; yet it made me stronger in my determination that I should make the path of those who would follow me less arduous, and that India should

never relinquish what has been won for her after years of struggle.'

Sister Nivedita was not an Indian by birth, but having identified herself in love and devotion with everything Indian, she suffered with Indians in their humiliations and gloried in their successes. In supporting and helping Jagadish Chandra Bose, she felt she was discharging her duties towards the land she loved. That explains their true and sincere comradeship.

II

When Jagadish Chandra was a student of St. Xavier's College, his natural aptitude for science developed under the influence of Father Lafant, Professor of Physics, whose teaching and experiments made the subject very interesting.

When his career was still undecided, Jagadish Chandra asked permission of his father to go in for Indian Civil Service, the most promising career, to relieve his father of financial burden. But the patriotic sentiments of his father prevented him, and though it was inexpedient for Jagadish Chandra to undertake expensive education in England, both father and son decided upon his going to England for some further training in science. He first chose medicine, but gave it up, and later went in for all sciences—biology, physics, chemistry, and physiology. His hard work and thoroughness of method brought him credit. When he desired to return to India, he secured a letter of recommendation to Lord Rippon, then Governor-General, to nominate him for the Educational Service.

From this time onwards started a hard struggle: a fresh young Indian trying in his natural rights for scope of work in the field of science against an array of British administrators determined not to help him.

Even after the Governor-General's recommendations, the D.P.I. refused to give him a permanent appointment in the Imperial Educational Service. When forced from above, he was irritated, and gave Jagadish Chandra an officiating appointment. Even after appointment, the Principal of the Presidency College protested on the grounds that an Indian was not fit to teach exact sciences. But Jagadish Chandra stayed on. He did his work earnestly, and always stood for the honour of Indian professors. As is reported, an Indian professor's income, even in the Imperial Service, was two-thirds of an European's in those days, and because Jagadish Chandra was an officiating professor, his pay was further reduced by one half. As a silent protest, he refused to accept the pay, even at the cost of great hardships and privations.

However, after three years of professorial work, his services were appreciated, and full pay of last three years was given to him. That was the end of the first phase of his struggle.

Since 1894, he had devoted himself more to research work. He went on his first scientific deputation to the West in 1897. His researches on electrical waves won him recognition among the physicists. The Royal Society in London published his researches, and a grant was given to him for further research. He thought that now the closed gates were opened, and his progress would henceforth be unhampered. But his faith and hope again came to test after five years.

The second phase of the struggle really began when, as he himself says, 'In pursuit of my investigations, I was unconsciously led into the border region of physics and physiology and was amazed to find boundary lines vanishing and points of contact emerge between the realms of the living and non-living'.

Even his exact scientific analytical methods and dexterity in experiments did not convince a section of the Western scientists, the physiologists, that there is a point where the final distinction between the living and the non-living disappears. They even advised him to confine himself to physical investigations and leave their field of work. But he was not the person to give up his search for truth, nor was

he afraid to prove to the world what he had found to be right. For what he was saying was truth which was revealed to his ancestors thousands of years go. Without reserve, he proclaimed to the world from the platform of the Royal Society on May 10, 1901: 'It was when I came upon the mute witness of these self-made records, and perceived in them one phase of a pervading unity that bears within it all things—the mote that quivers in ripples of light, the teeming life upon our earth, and the radiant suns that shine above us—it was then that I understood for the first time a little of that message proclaimed by my ancestors on the banks of the Ganges thirty centuries ago: "They who see but one, in all the changing manifoldness of this universe, unto them belongs Eternal Truth—unto none else, unto none else!" '

This naturally perplexed the Western scientists, who always tried to demonstrate the manifoldness of the universe in their search for truth. Their prejudices against the Indian scientist led them to criticize him in strong terms. His papers were not published, but were 'shelved'. His researches were stolen. It was a regular battle, the 'Bose War' as Sister Nivedita often called it. It left him tired and depressed. His health broke down. He often complained to friends to seek relief. It was at this trying period of his life that the trust, help, sympathy, and encouragement of friends like Sister Nivedita and Rabindranath Tagore sustained him.

In a letter to Rabindranath written in March 1902, he says: 'I did not frankly write to you all the facts, because you all would be anxious. You have heard about the leading physiologist of Europe, Burden Sanderson. When I spoke at the Royal Society,... Burden Sanderson got up and said: "I have made plant research all my life. Only Mimosa responds, but that ordinary plants should give electric response is simply impossible. It cannot be!" He further said: "Prof. Bose has applied physiological terms in describing his physical effects on metals. Though his paper is printed, yet we hope he will revise it and use physical terms, and not use our physiological expression in describing phenomena of dead matter." I said in reply that scientific terms are no one's monopoly. And this phenomena is "One", therefore I am against preaching manifoldness.

'The result of it all was that the publication of my paper was stopped, . . . because if my theory is accepted, the established theory of scientists would be proved wrong. They thought that, as my time for returning home was near, they would be out of danger once I cross the sea.'

In another letter written to Rabindranath about two months later, he wrote more dejectedly: 'You will not know what difficulties I have to face. You cannot imagine. The publication of my article on 'Plant Response', which I wrote in last May in the Royal Society, was stopped by the conspiracy of Waller and Sanderson. But my discoveries have been published by Waller in his own name in a journal last November. All these days I did not know about it. When the Council thought of publishing my paper read at the Linnean Society, Waller's friends tried to stop it, saying that Waller had already published it in last November. The Proceedings of the Council were confidential, therefore I did not know about this conspiracy. And as my paper read at the Royal Society did not get publicity, there was no proof. Fortunately, the matter was referred to in my lecture at the Royal Society ; and luckily, my paper was with the Secretary of the Linnean Society. I hear that after much controversy it has been decided to publish my paper. ... President wrote to me: "... there are many queer things you have yet to learn. But I am glad that you now have had fair play." I heard many things from him. What is the use of speaking about those things now? ... What is the good in losing faith in the Science Society of this country? ... But I am depressed. I wish to return now and regain the spirit of life by touching the dust of Bhārata.'

The other person whose friendship helped Jagadish Chandra Bose during this trying period of his life was Sister Nivedita. After her death, Mrs. Bose wrote of her: 'It was not till a much later date, when I had been blessed with her friendship, that I came to know the strength that lay behind the life of Margaret E. Noble. How manifold were the blessings she conferred on all who came in contact with her, and in how many directions she had effectively served our Motherland, it is too early yet to speak.'

Those who do not know about Sister Nivedita's impassioned love for India and her complete self-effacement in her services cannot understand the spirit behind the life-long sincere friendship of Sister Nivedita with the Boses.

III

Sister Nivedita came to India in 1898 in response to a call from Swami Vivekananda to serve the cause of education of Indian women. The first lesson that she took from her *guru* was that she had to forget her own past and work for India in the Indian way. Her interests in life were manifold, and being gifted with a penetrating intelligence, it did not take her long to enter the Indian way of life, completely forgetting her old self. To quote Mrs. Bose again: 'She had so completely identified herself with us that I never heard her use phrases like "Indian need" or "Indian women". It was always "our need", "our women". She was never as an outsider who came to help, but one of us who was striving and groping about to find the way of salvation.' When the revival of India became her sole passion in life, she emphatically said that India's hope for salvation lay in revitalizing its own forces ; in reliving its own ideals. She incessantly spoke and wrote about them. She saw how indifferent the foreign government was to the sufferings of the Indians and how its political interests led to the exploitation of the country. With the freedom-loving Irish blood in her veins, she was vexed with any hindrance put in the way of the Indians. In utter disgust, she wrote to Miss Macleod in 1901:

'India was absorbed in study ; a gang of robbers came upon her and destroyed her land. The mood is broken. Can the robbers teach her anything? No, she has to turn them out, and go back to where she was before. Something like that, I fancy, is the true programme for India. And so I have nothing to do with Christians or government agencies as long as the government is foreign. That which is Indian for India, I touch the feet of, however stupid and futile. Anything else will do a little good and much harm, and I have nothing to do with it. Yes, my way will do some harm, too, but it will be *vital* to thé people themselves. Good and evil of their own, not any other, and for such harm I care nothing. They need it.'

It is not surprising then that, when Sister Nivedita came to know about Dr. Bose, his discoveries, and his single-handed fight on the world-stage for having his theories recognized on the one hand, and for establishing the importance of India's contribution in the field of science on the other hand, she became interested in him and his work. In 1898, with Mrs. Bull, she had gone to meet Dr. Bose. He was at that time engaged in his new investigations on 'Response of the Living and non-Living'. He was invited in August 1900 to the International Congress of Physics arranged at the Paris Exhibition. The Government of India had deputed him to go ; and there amidst a world gathering, Dr. Bose read his paper on 'Response of Inorganic and Living Matter'.

Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita were in Paris at that time. Both felt proud that an Indian was invited to speak of his discoveries in such an international gathering. Swami Vivekananda later wrote in a letter how impressed he was by Bose's exposition of his new researches: 'Here in Paris have assembled the great of every land, each to proclaim the glory of his country. ... Among these peer-

less men gathered from all parts of the world, where is thy representative, O thou the country of my birth? Out of this vast assembly, a young man stood for thee, one of thy heroic sons, whose words have electrified the audience, and will thrill all his countrymen. Blessed be this heroic son and blessed be his devoted and peerless helpmate who stands by him always.'

After his return to England from Paris, Dr. Bose had a physical breakdown. He was operated upon in December. After that, he was invited to stay at Sister Nivedita's mother's house in Wimbledon. In a latter of 4th January 1901, she wrote to Miss Macleod: 'Dr. B. is practically well, and Mother has left her little house to them and us, and gone away, so we are now staying in Wimbledon.' Later, when Mrs. Bose was ill, she was also restored to health at Wimbledon.

The 'Bose War' actually started after his Paris paper. His scientific papers were not allowed to be published, or were deliberately misrepresented, as we have known from the letters quoted above. Dr. Bose was tired, and did not want to continue writing papers for scientific societies. He desired to write books, but felt no urge to do so. He wrote to his friend Rabindranath: 'My own work is in a way stopped, because I have written 11 papers and not one has been published. I do not understand what has happened. I think of writing books, but do not feel like looking at those writings again.'

It was in this work that Sister Nivedita was a great help to him. From her personal notes, we come to know that from 1904 onwards she had been constantly engaged in revising and editing his papers. In 1905, she informed Miss Macleod: 'I hope we shall have a book on botany out in the autumn, that ought to be very astonishing in the scientific world.'

Referring to the book, she writes, in 1906, to Mrs. Bull: 'Vines has written a long letter setting out the hard criticism which the book will have to meet. Poor. B., it has alternately depressed and angered him, but this morning we shall have to answer it, and then I hope it will cease to rankle.

'There will certainly be an outcry, because he has quoted others so little, but you know we decided on that deliberately, because it seemed better not to quote names. Whom to quote would simply be to pillory for foolishness and error. It simply means, as I said to B., that he was to turn his face away from the past and look to the future. The old, whom he superseded, will hate him, but the young will hear his voice and follow him. Leaders and prophets must needs be solitary, so he hopes you will not be bitterly disappointed, because there will be no chorus of welcome and applause.'

That Sister Nivedita was always occupied in helping Dr. Bose is also recorded by Sister Devamata in her book, *Days in an Indian Monastery*. In 1909, she stayed at Sister Nivedita's school as a guest, and referring to those days she wrote: 'Literary work absorbed Sister Nivedita too profoundly to enable her to take part to any extent in teaching. She was occupied also in assisting the famous botanist, Dr. J. C. Bose, in preparing a new book on plant life. He spent several hours every day at the school and sometimes lunched there, so I had a delightful opportunity to know him.'

Besides helping Dr. Bose with writing, she also sought financial help for the publication of his books from her friends like Mrs. Bull. Praising Mrs. Bull for spending her money usefully, she wrote to her in 1910: 'You know this school is really yours, and my writings are really yours, and the science books are yours, the laboratory will be yours. ... Don't you feel that it is a goodly array of things that you have made possible by your support? ... No, I must say that used as you have used it, money seems to me a great and good thing.'

But the greatest gift of Sister Nivedita to Jagadish Chandra was perfect comradeship. She was a seeker of truth, therefore knew no

fear. She keenly felt the wrong done by the Western scientists to him and considered it shameful. In no uncertain terms she condemned it. 'As for England', she wrote to her friend, Miss Macleod, 'this Bose War seems to spell individual and general degradation. I am sure if he were in England he would do much—he could not help doing much—but as far as she herself is concerned, England, or all that was noble in her, at least seems dead.' ... And in an emotional outburst she adds: 'Oh India, India! Who shall undo this awful doing of my nation to you? Who shall atone for one of the million bitter insults showered daily on the bravest and keenest nerved and best of all your sons?'

In India, she became a bearer of his message that Indians should no longer look to the West and accept what it offers, but must enter the arena of modern thought and knowledge as masters and vindicate their intellectual superiority. She prayed for this 'Man of Science', and exhorted the people to remember him at their prayers daily. In her last birthday greetings to him, sent from Geneva in 1910, she hailed him as an adventurer and leader of the people: 'When you receive this, it will be our beloved 30th, the birthday of birthdays.

'May it be infinitely blessed—and may it be followed by many of ever increasing sweetness and blessedness! Outside there is the great statue of Christopher Columbus and under his name only the words, "La Patrie", and I thought of the day to come when *such words* will be the speaking silence under *your* name —how spiritually you are already reckoned with him and all those other great adventurers who have sailed trackless seas to bring their people good.

'Be ever victorious! Be a light unto the people and a lamp unto their feet! and be *filled* with peace!

'You the great spiritual mariner who have found new worlds!'

Since 1900, when Sister Nivedita became a friend of the Boses, she spent every holiday with them in India or abroad ; on pilgrimages or on hill stations. To restore her ill health, she went in the Pūjā vacation of 1911 to Darjeeling with them, and there on the 13th October breathed her last.

What a loss it was to Jagadish Chandra, only their intimate friends knew. Sister Christine wrote in a letter to Miss Macleod in 1913: 'Dr. Bose is much better physically and mentally, and one no longer has the fear that he may not be with us long. But life is so dull for him now. He constantly says: "I do not know how to pass my days." Margot (Sister Nivedita) gave him sympathy, understanding, enthusiasm, inspiration, and help in his work. You can imagine what a void she left.'

After Dr. Bose's fourth deputation to the West in 1914, all his struggles came to an end. His discoveries were universally accepted, and his instruments made famous. In 1916, he again went to the West. In 1917, his dream of a Research Institute was fulfilled. He lived on till 1937, a great and successful man, quite a long passage of time for people to forget about his friends of old. But all did not forget. On receiving the news of his death, his dear old friend Rabindranath Tagore spoke about him to his students in Santiniketan, ending thus: 'In the days of his struggles, Jagadish gained an invaluable energizer and helper in Sister Nivedita, and in any record of his life's work, her name must be given a place of honour. Thenceforward, his renown spread all over the world, overcoming every obstacle.'

THE GREATNESS OF OUR EPICS

By Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

It may be useful to start by pointing out the place of the epics in our sacred literature, which comprises the four Vedas, the six Vedāṅgas, the Śāstras, the Itihāsas, and the Purāṇas. The Vedas are *Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda Sāma-Veda,* and *Atharva-Veda.* Each Veda is made up of a collection of *mantras* called Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, and Upaniṣad. The first three groups relate to what is called the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Veda, while the last constitutes the *jñāna-kāṇḍa.* The Upaniṣads convey the ultimate import of the Vedas; hence they are also known as the Vedānta, the term meaning what comes at the end of the Veda and also what brings out the final meaning of the Veda. The Sanskrit word *'anta'*, like the cognate English word 'end', conveys this double significance. The Vedāṅgas are Śikṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chandas, and Jyotiṣa. The Śāstras are the six systems of philosophy, namely, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika Mīmāṁsā, and Vedānta. The two Itihāsas are the *Mahābhārata,* which is an epic of growth, and the *Rāmāyaṇa,* which is an epic of art. The Purāṇas are eighteen. The *Bhāgavata,* though classed as a Purāṇa, really enjoys the status of an Itihāsa.

The term *'itihāsa'* is derived from *'iti+ha +āsa'*, which means 'so indeed it was'. The Itihāsas have therefore a nucleus of historical truth. Round an historical personality, the imagination of a poet has woven a great epic, whose ultimate purpose is to elucidate the great teachings of the Vedas through the medium of an interesting story. The Itihāsas are therefore didactic only in an indirect way. The story is the most important thing. Śrī Rāma's exploits when he was yet a boy in his teens, his marriage with Sītā, the great renunciation that he made to save the reputation of his father, his life in the forest, his encounter with Khara, Dūṣaṇa, and other *rākṣasas* (demons), the abduction of Sītā, his friendship with Sugrīva, Hanumān bringing word about Sītā from across the seas, Rāma and the *vānara* (monkey) hosts crossing the sea, the killing of Rāvana, Rāma's victorious return to Ayodhyā, and his getting crowned as king after giving proof of his heroic qualities—the narration of these incidents is bound to be interesting even in the hands of an ordinary poet. But in the hands of a skilled artist like Vālmīki, who knows how to bring out the best from every situation, how to sound every situation to its innermost depths, the narration becomes most fascinating.

Generations of Indians have read and reread Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* primarily for the story and its poetry. But they have imbibed all the time the great truths of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads that it embodies almost unknown to themselves. The three strands—the story, the poetry, and the philosophy—are so skillfully interwoven that they present many facets and the reader comes upon something new to appreciate everytime he reads the epic. In fact, he never feels that he has done with the poem and that there is nothing more to understand or appreciate. It is said of Śrī Rāma that he was *'sadaiva priyadarśanaḥ'*—that he possessed such a charming personality—that it was always pleasing to observe him. Explaining the nature of Rāma's charming personality, Govindarāja, the famous commentator, observes, *'tadeva rūpaṁ ramaṇīyatāyāḥ kṣaṇe kṣaṇe yannavatām upaiti'* (a charming personality is one which presents fresh and novel aspects everytime you see it). The same can be said of Vālmīki's great epic. The more one dives into it, the richer are the treasures that one brings up. There is so much to appreciate in it that one never feels like laying down the book.

The *Mahābhārata* also deals with a very interesting story—the rivalry between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, the strategems practised by the former, the untold sufferings of the latter, their unswerving faith in God, and the great part played by Śrī Kṛṣṇa as 'friend, philosopher, and guide to the Pāṇḍavas. The narration of these incidents, interspersed as it is by moral and philosophical disquisitions in many places, is absorbingly interesting. But the didactic element is silently making itself felt all the time on the reader's imagination. Perhaps the *Mahābhārata* is a little more direct in preaching lessons than the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It is because these two epics have so wonderfully succeeded in bringing the great truths of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads down to the level of the ordinary understanding that they have come to be regarded as the *fifth* Veda. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* speaks of *'itihāsa purāṇam pañcamam'*. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it is said that, when God came down to earth as the son of Daśaratha, the Vedas came down, too, and became the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

The main teaching of the Upaniṣads is the truth—emphasized in the *Gītā*—that there is God in the heart of every man. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says that the *jīva* is no other than God. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* shows how Naciketas, following the instruction of Yama, realized the godhood in himself. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* shows it in a different way. By stripping oneself bare of all adventitious wrappages, one realizes one's nature to be *ānanda*. In his discourses to King Janaka, Yājñavalkya shows that the *jīva* can be made to shed its finitude and emerge as Brahman, which it really is. The main theme of the Upaniṣads may be described as the *ascent* of man to godhood.

The converse process of the *descent* of God to the world of human beings is set forth in the epics. We have all heard of the ten *avatāras* of Viṣṇu. Those of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are very popular as fit for worship and meditation. The purpose of the *avatāra* is stated in the *Gītā*. It is to protect the righteous, to punish the wicked, and to restore the eternal *dharma* to its pristine place of eminence. There are many passages in the *Rāmāyaṇa* which support the conception of Śrī Rāma as an *avatāra*—the gods approaching Brahmā, his sending them to Viṣṇu, and his agreeing to be born in the world as the son of Daśaratha for killing Rāvaṇa, Viśvāmitra's statement that he knew the real nature of Rāma, and so on. Among the queens, Sumitrā knew it. Her advice to Lakṣmaṇa when he is about to set out to the forest along with Rāma, her immense satisfaction when she learns later that in the forest her son had been doing odds and ends in serving his brother, and the wise words that she utters by way of consoling Kausalyā who is overburdened by grief—all these bear out the view that Sumitrā had an insight into the real nature of Śrī Rāma. Rāvaṇa realized the truth about Śrī Rāma at the end. The assembled gods revealed his true nature to Śrī Rāma who, however, looked upon himself as a mere man. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa was aware of his divinity all the time. It is therefore said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was a *pūrṇāvatāra*, while Śrī Rāma was only an *aṁśāvatāra*.

There are also several passages in the *Rāmāyaṇa* which speak of Rāma as a mere man. Vālmīki's question and Nārada's answer relate to a man. Among other proofs, we may mention Rāma's giving free and unrestrained vent to his sorrows in *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* (chapter 53), his intense grief at the loss of Sītā, his nearly going mad on that account, his suspicion about Sītā's chastity, and his explicit statement that he regarded himself as a mere human being (*ātmānaṁ mānuṣaṁ manye*).

It may look as if there is a conflict between the two sets of passages, but the conflict is more apparent than real. It depends upon how we look at the matter. If we want to emphasize man's effort and the great things that he can achieve, we speak of Rāma as a man who, by dint of practice and discipline, rose to godhood. If we, on the other hand, wish to bring to the fore God's concern for

erring mankind and His interest in the maintenance of *dharma,* we speak of God descending to the world. It is a question of standpoint. In the Introduction to the edition of the *Rāmāyaṇa* brought out by the Madras Law Journal Press, the late Professor S. Kuppuswami Sastri observes: 'The author of the *Rāmāyaṇa* blends in a happy way two ideas, that God fulfils Himself in the best man, Śrī Rāmabhadra, and that man, as Daśaratha's son, rises to his full stature by pulling up his manhood to the level of Brahmahood.'

But Vālmīki's true aim is to show how Śrī Rāma was an ideal man, an ideal son, an ideal brother, an ideal husband, an ideal friend, and, last but not least, an ideal foe. He is the great exemplar of correct conduct. He is the incarnation of *dharma* in flesh and blood (*Rāmo vigrahavān dharmaḥ*). This tribute was paid to Rāma not by one of his friends, but by Mārīca who was at one time his enemy and who later developed fear and admiration towards him. Manu observes that *dharma* will protect the man who meticulously walks in its footsteps (*dharmo rakṣati rakṣitaḥ*). As if to remind Rāma of this assurance, his mother says, when he is about to leave for the forest, that the *dharma* which he observed with steadiness and determination will surely protect him.

Śrī Rāma not only discourses on the nature of *dharma,* but also acts up to it. He brings out, in fact, the nature of *dharma* more by his own example than by precepts. The plighted word is sacred, and to uphold it no sacrifice is too high. He would never go back upon his promises: *'Rāmo dvir nābhibhāṣate'*. To let down one's father is to let down the reputation of the family. Daśaratha had given the word to Kaikeyī, and she had every right to insist on having the pound of flesh. Others fall foul of her, but Rāma never thinks hard of her. In fact, he chastises people who speak ill of her. She was well within her rights, and there was no reason to think unkindly of her. Daśaratha was sentimental, but Rāma clearly realized that he had to rise superior to sentiment in order to safeguard the reputation of the family, and also to set a good example to the people at large. Any lapse in high places would lead to disastrous consequences. It is to prevent loose talk and consequent deterioration in public morals that he sent Sītā to the forest when she was a pregnant lady. People might think that he was cruel and subjected Sītā to undue suffering out of a foolish regard for public opinion, but there is another way of looking at the question. He would not hesitate to set aside public opinion and act according to his own best judgement where it was a question of *dharma,* but never to serve his own purposes or for his own comfort. When two courses of action were open to him, he invariably chose the harder way, because he never wanted to be tender to himself. He would undergo any amount of suffering, make any sacrifice in the interests of public welfare. The king was to be the ideal of right conduct.

Many people swear by *dharma,* but not all of them act up to it. They may order their conduct in obedience to *dharma* when no great sacrifice is called for, but they will not hesitate to throw it to the high winds when adherence to it will bring in its train discomfort to oneself, financial loss, the giving up of power and position, or sacrificing the interests of those who are near and dear to them. There is not much virtue in paying this kind of homage to *dharma.* It amounts to saying, 'I will go with *dharma* when it suits my convenience, but not when it proves inconvenient to me'. No greater insult can be thought of. We cannot play with *dharma* as we please. *Dharma* is a jealous mistress who does not brook a rival. Either you go all the way with *dharma,* or you have nothing to do with it. Śrī Rāma was a whole-hogger in this respect. He understood, as few others did, all the implications of *dharma,* all its severe demands, and obeyed them most cheerfully. Every fibre of his being was tuned to the demands of *dharma,* and in every situation his behaviour was automatically correct. He struck the right note whenever any complicated question involving conflict of duties arose.

Such spontaneously right conduct came as the result of systematic training and hard discipline. Vālmīki has not told us much about Rāma's preparation for life, but there are various hints scattered here and there which throw valuable light on how he ordered his life. In many places, the poet uses the epithet '*atmavān*' with regard to Rāma, which means that he was a man of great self-restraint. His training under the inspiring guidance of Viśvāmitra no doubt stood him in very good stead. On the eve of the *yuvarāja paṭṭābhiṣeka,* Daśaratha advises his son to be self-controlled and utterly humble. He who would rule a kingdom must first learn to rule himself. Such severe self-discipline gave him an insight into the nature of right conduct. His behaviour was born of an enlightenment and not merely in blind conformity to a mechanical code. The right kind of reaction to any situation came to him in an effortless manner. He does not appear to experience any 'civil war' in his mind. Nor does he keep constantly reminding himself of the highest code of conduct. It has become part and parcel of himself, having entered into his very bones. He could therefore be gentle without being weak, kind and considerate without sacrificing his principles, strong without being rude, and generous without being considered ostentatious. He could speak the unpleasant truth without giving unnecessary offence. He knew that virtue was the mean between two extremes. Right conduct at such a level becomes a fine art. In the last analysis, it is the expression of the Spirit in man. He was able to hold contradictory qualities in harmony, because he had synthesized them at the higher level of Spirit. He was essentially a *viditātman,* one who had awakened to the Spirit in him.

Herein lies the great importance of our epics, and especially of the *Rāmāyaṇa.* They show how it is possible for man to rise to godhood. What is possible for one man is possible for another. Great heroes are made out of ordinary clay. Rāma is an eternal reminder to us that we can shake off our congenital weaknesses by hard discipline and shine in our true nature as essentially spiritual beings.

We may add that Vyāsa and Vālmīki are great nation builders. The exposition of their poems to the masses of the people has leavened their character for the better. Indians are essentially *sāttvic* and law-abiding. In spite of their terrible poverty, it has never occurred to them to break out in revolution, to take the law into their own hands, and to chop off the crowned heads. If anything goes wrong, the average Indian only thanks himself for it and rarely lays the blame at others' doors. For hundreds of years, the two epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata,* as well as the *Bhāgavata* have been expounded to the masses of the Indian people to very good purpose. Such expositions have not only moulded the character of the nation and given it its characteristic genius, but have also underlined the unity of the country. It is on the basis of the cultural unity that was developed through the ages by poets and savants that the present political unity has been achieved as the crown and consummation.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE*

By Swami Ranganathananda

I have been asked to speak on 'The Spiritual Life of the Indian People'. That you have chosen this subject is indicative of your keen desire to have a closer insight into the life and thought of the people of a country from which you of Japan have derived a large part of your own spiritual life. And no better subject could have been chosen for this purpose, for religion has formed and still forms the keynote of the music of Indian national life, and no understanding of India will be adequate or proper which does not impart an insight into the spiritual life of her people. I shall endeavour to give here a picture of the spiritual aspirations and activities of the people of my country.

Two things I would request you to constantly bear in mind: one, the vastness of India in size and population; two, its long history running into over five thousand years. These two facts have imparted an amazing diversity to Indian culture and life. From the snowy peaks of the Himalayas in the north to the land's end, the Cape Comorin, or Kanyakumari, on the Indian Ocean in the far south, a length of about 2,000 miles; from the jungles of Assam on the border of Burma in the east to the deserts of Rajasthan and the beautiful valley of Kashmir on the border of Pakistan in the west, a distance of over 1,800 miles, India contains a wide variety of climate, flora, and fauna, of culture, language, and human types. This vast land and its people have the pressure or the stimulus of over five thousand years of history and tradition behind them, a long history during which the national mind has had the opportunity to experience life from various angles and various levels—prosperity and adversity, victory and defeat, freedom and subjection, knowledge and ignorance, illumination and darkness. The people had been taught one great lesson by their earliest leaders and thinkers, viz. that the object of life is not pleasure or pain, but knowledge through a dispassionate study of both. The people of India have more or less accepted this outlook on life, the thinking people more and the ordinary people less, for which the land became known abroad as a land of philosophers; for that attitude is the characteristic of a scientific and philosophic mind. Equipped with such a mind and temper, an individual achieves a greater and deeper measure of maturity of knowledge and outlook, the longer his life, and the more varied his experience. Without this temper of reflection, long life means only long existence, nothing more; it just means a repetition of the first round of experience, not capable of producing maturity of outlook and chastening of mind and heart.

Wordsworth referred to this chastening process when he sang:

> For I have learnt to look on Nature,
> Not as in the hour of thoughtless youth,
> But hearing often times the still sad music
> of humanity,
> Nor harsh, nor grating,
> But of ample power to chasten and to
> subdue.

This is true not only of individuals, but also of nations and cultures. Cultures with violence imbedded in their hearts represent the failure to capture this maturity of philosophic temper. Fortunately for India, her teachers and leaders from the great sages of the Upaniṣads, and Rāma and Kṛṣṇa of the prehistoric past, through Buddha and Śaṅkara of the historic period, to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda of our own times have helped her people to capture this mood and temper, which ac-

* Adapted from lectures delivered at the universities of Okayama, Toyo, and Tokyo in Japan.

counts for the compassion and humanism in her culture and her spirit of tolerance and peace.

It was the great sages of the Upaniṣads who first expounded the science and philosophy of man's spiritual life ; this was about 500 to 1,000 years before Buddha. Religious acts of worship and ritual, and religious beliefs of myth and legend obtained even before the Upaniṣads, in the early Vedic and the pre-Vedic or Mohenjo-daro periods. In fact, such expressions of religion are coextensive with human existence itself ; they characterize the life of all men from the primitive to the advanced. But questioning these religious acts and beliefs, bringing a meaning out of them through comparison and contrast, and grading them into stages according to their spiritual content—in short, the development of a full psychology and philosophy of religion—these were achieved first in the Upaniṣads or Vedānta, and later in various other limited formulations.

The practice of meditation, sitting with eyes closed and mind indrawn, was prevalent in India five thousand years ago during the Mohenjo-daro period, which has yielded through excavations the statue of a god sitting in *yoga* pose with eyes closed and mind indrawn and surrounded by tame and wild animals, much like the image of Śiva of the later ages. The *Ṛg-Veda* largely depicts a religion of worship and prayer and praise of the various gods of its pantheon in the context of a close kinship of nature, gods, and man. It is a religion of this-worldliness aiming at health, wealth, and welfare of man in society. The worshipper keeps his eyes open and directs them to the gods of wind, rain, and sunshine in the sky. It was marked by simplicity and spontaneity. These two forms of religion became accepted by the Vedānta as two valid expressions of the religious impulse. All the higher religions of the world contain these two phases, often living apart and unreconciled, with the claims of this world standing in sharp contrast with those of the world beyond. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Hinduism have these two elements in them, the social and the trans-social or mystical, in varying proportions, with a rule-of-thumb method of adjustment between these two elements in them. According to the preponderance of these two elements, the world religions can be classified as mystical or non-mystical. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity belong to the mystical type, while Judaism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism belong to the non-mystical. In the same country, there may be both types of religions present like Shintoism and Buddhism in Japan, and Confucianism and Taoism in China, with mutual adjustment based on social expediency rather than of philosophic necessity.

The Upaniṣads carried the development of the mystical religion to its highest point, when they discovered the real Self in man behind his apparent self, the former immortal, ever pure, and ever free, while the latter finite, mortal, and bound. And they declared the great truth that MAN IS DIVINE, which was echoed centuries later in the declaration of Buddha that *nirvāṇa* is the birthright of every being, and still later in that of the New Testament: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you'. If Divinity is the inmost core of man, the path to it lies through the withdrawal of the senses and the mind from the world of sensate experience and turning their energies inward in a supreme effort of concentration. By such inward penetration, man achieves realization of his true nature, the non-dual, immortal, changeless, and pure Ātman behind his apparent self of changeful individuality. This is the well-known *yoga* technique and achievement as expounded in the Vedānta, of which one of the most glorious examples was Buddha.

But the Upaniṣads did not stop there ; they asked the important question as to the true nature of the world outside as well. Their knowledge of the Divine within helped them to penetrate into the nature of the world outside, for, as Eddington tells us, at the farthest limits of our knowledge of the external world,

we realize that 'consciousness is the first and most direct thing in experience; all else is remote inference'; or, as Jeans tells us, 'in the last resort, those waves which we describe as light-waves, and those other waves which we interpret as the waves of an electron and proton, also consist of knowledge, knowledge about photons, electrons, and protons respectively'. The answer the Upaniṣads received to that question raised the thought of the Vedānta to supreme philosophic heights. They discovered Divinity at the core of the world as well, as they had earlier discovered it at the core of the human soul. The universe to their purified vision revealed itself as spiritual through and through. Nature is Divine and man is Divine. Thus God becomes the unity of man and nature; their duality was relegated to partial, limited knowledge, revealed through the prism of the senses and the sense-bound mind. When viewed without these human limitations, the world is Divine. This conclusion the Upaniṣads couched in some of the most pithy and majestic utterances: *'Sarvaṁ-khalu-idaṁ Brahma* (All this is verily Brahman —the spiritual Absolute); *'Ekam evādvitīyam'* (One only, without a second); *'Neha nānāsti kiñcana'* (There is not the least duality here); *'Ayam atmā Brahma'* (This Self is Brahman); *'Satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ Brahma'* (Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, and Infinity); and *'Brahmaivedam amṛtam'* (All this universe is Brahman, the Immortal).

Thus the Upaniṣads bridged the gulf between man and nature by proclaiming the solidarity and oneness of all existence. This one great idea precluded the maintenance of the whole host of those sharp distinctions between this world and the next, the non-mystical and the mystical, reason and faith, life and religion, as also between religion and religion and faith and faith. It was left to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a few centuries later, to gather up these apparently diverse spiritual elements in a sweeping synthesis of comprehensive spirituality in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The *Gītā* achieves the synthesis of the mystical and non-mystical religious elements, of the Shintoistic and Buddhistic elements of all religions, in a comprehensive spirituality based on the metaphysics of the Upaniṣads. This is the *yoga* of the *Gītā* as different from the Pātañjala and other *yogas*. *Yoga* in the *Gītā* is the science and art of the spiritual life. In the light of this total vision, the *Gītā* discovers two different manifestations of the spiritual life; one, in the form of social ethics; the other, in the form of trans-social spiritual striving. In the first, man learns to chasten his emotions and thoughts through the discharging of his family and social responsibilities, and experiences the delights thereof. This spiritual education gives him an experience of self-transcendence, within the context of his social life itself, a rising from the limited, truncated ego to the largeness and fullness of a social personality. The only austerity he is called upon to undertake at this state is the austerity of expansion of his interests and affections; it is the austerity involved in love and service; and it is always sought in the context of delight and joy. He is required to cultivate active virtues, for manliness is the end sought to be achieved in this sphere.

When his social personality has become fully developed, when he has achieved manliness, he is called upon to enter the next state of spiritual education through a direct confrontation of the divinity within. This harder path becomes easy to tread after the achievement of manliness in the earlier stage. There is a change in forms and technique here consequent on the change in the field of action. Calm endurance of external circumstances with a view to fit the mind to penetrate to the internal core of his being becomes the virtue to be developed. The emphasis shifts from active to passive virtues, from action to contemplation, from love of society to love of solitude without, however, involving any hatred of society as such. This training imparts a depth to the human personality, a stability and a strength to man's character, and a tranquillity and poise to his bearing; for he is reaching out to the centre of all power and energy within him, his

true Self. Every step gained in this direction makes him more peaceful, more joyful, more compassionate, and more efficient. When at last he gains the vision of the Self, he becomes illumined, with all bondages of the heart destroyed and all finiteness transcended. He realizes an infinite individuality, the culmination of the process which had started with his social education. Herein is the achievement of the full meaning of the Delphic exhortation: 'Man, know thyself.' 'The man of spiritual vision perceives equality everywhere, realizing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self', says the *Gītā*. 'One who perceives all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings will not, in virtue of that realization, hate any one or practise dissimulation. When, to that knowing sage who has realized supreme unity, all beings have become the Self, what delusion, what grief can afflict him?', says the *Īśā Upaniṣad*.

Thus has the *Gītā* gathered up the twofold Vedic *dharma*, which is representative of the twofold forms of all religions, the social and the mystical, in a comprehensive statement of human spiritual life. The Vedānta very aptly designates these two forms of all world religions as *pravṛtti dharma* and *nivṛtti dharma*—religion of social action and religion of inward contemplation. The Vedānta holds that every man and woman has to pass through the discipline of these two *dharmas* in order to achieve spiritual fulfilment. Both social ethics and mystical spirituality become the earlier and later phases of one continuous spiritual education of the human soul ; there is not and never can be, in the view of the Vedānta, any conflict between them. Conflict arises only when one takes a limited view of the scope of human life, or when one refuses to move to higher levels of life expression ; in short, conflict arises from stagnation at any particular level.

The Upaniṣads described life as a dynamic movement and used the symbol of the chariot with its horses and driver to illustrate its dynamic nature. They discovered a goal to all this movement, physical, social, and spiritual, and called that goal the achievement of freedom and fullness, Self-realization, or God-realization.

Ācārya Śaṅkara (A.D. 788-820), the greatest philosopher of India, refers to this twofold form of religion in his introductory commentary to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*: 'The Vedic *dharma* is verily twofold, characterized by *pravṛtti* (social action) and *nivṛtti* (inward contemplation), designed to promote order in the world ; this twofold *dharma* has in view the true social welfare and spiritual emancipation of all beings.'

The classification of religion into *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* was based on the felt interests and longings in the heart of man. The Vedānta also makes another classification of religion based on temperament and inclination. This is the well-known classification into the four *yogas* of *jñāna* (philosophy), *bhakti* (devotion), *rāja* (concentration and psychic control), and *karma* (dedicated action). Buddhism in its original form and certain aspects of Vedānta belong to the *jñāna* type ; Christianity, popular Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism belong to the *bhakti* type ; *rāja-yoga* and *karma-yoga* enter into the other two expressions, though they are not absent in their specific forms among a certain type of seekers both in ancient and in modern times. The active type of men and women of an extra-religious or extra-philosophical temperament have always resorted to the pure form of *karma-yoga*; similarly, the contemplative type of men and women who are extra-religious and philosophical have always been drawn to the *rāja-yoga* for its experimental attractions.

The Vedānta holds that this classification is not exclusive, but it rests on the predominance of a particular temperament and inclination. In a further reduction, the Vedānta and the *Gītā* speak only of two *yogas*: the *yoga* of knowledge and the *yoga* of *bhakti*, to the latter of which is joined *karma-* and *rāja-yogas*.

The *Gītā* expounds the latter of the two as the royal spiritual path for the majority of men

and women, giving them a scheme of practical spirituality leading to breadth of outlook, strength of character, and efficiency of action.

The guidance of *jñāna* or philosophy is always to be there as its background. The devotee here is moved by love of God, God who dwells as the inner Spirit of all beings and in all nature; to that God of love, he dedicates his life and actions, with whom he seeks to commune in prayer, song, and meditation, and whom he seeks to serve in all His creatures.

This is the characteristic religious attitude and temper of the majority of the people of India, as it is also the characteristic attitude and temper of the majority of the religious people of the world.

It is against this ideological background that we have to view the spiritual life of the Indian people. The first thing that strikes us is the vast diversity of its expression. India did not believe in uniformity of type either in religion or in culture. It believed in a variety of expressions held together by a central thread of unity.

This idea derives from its philosophy, which holds that Unity in variety is the plan of the universe and not a dull, dead uniformity. India speaks of the search for God as the search for the One in the many, the One that gives meaning and significance to the many, like the figure one behind a zero or zeros. And so, in religion, it consistently upheld the idea that the goal is one, but the paths are many.

To the people of India, therefore, toleration of different forms of faith and culture, of belief and practice, becomes a natural corollary of their thought and philosophy. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's proclamation in the *Gītā*, 'Through whatever paths men approach Me, I receive them through those very paths; all paths, O Arjuna, ultimately lead unto Me only', has gone into the bone and marrow of the Indian people, and made the spirit of positive toleration or universal acceptance pervasive of the entire range of its long history.

India defines religion as realization (*anubhava*, in Sanskrit), and not as a matter of forms, ceremonies, and dogmas. The latter are valid as means, but not as ends. Secondly, India does not equate religious scholarship with spirituality. Knowledge of religious tenets is not the same as religion. Such knowledge is also valuable, but only as means and not as end; it must reach out to experience. As *The Imitation of Christ* expresses it: 'I would rather feel compunction than know the definition thereof.' Thirdly, atheism is not such a bugbear to India as to Semitic religions; for these are merely academic affirmations and negations; in the absence of an earnest endeavour to realize God, India does not find much difference between the affirmation of the theist and the negation of the atheist.

Moreover, India holds that consistent atheism is an impossibility, because the God it preaches is not an extra-cosmic God, but Divinity in the heart of all—in the theist and the atheist, in the wise and the ignorant. No one can deny such a God without first denying oneself; no one, on the other hand, can affirm such a God without first affirming oneself.

As a fruit of this view, there has been very little heresy hunting in Indian history; India's toleration extended not only to different groups of the faithful, but also to the different groups of the faithless who could not arrive at any faith in God.

The majority of the people of India belong to one or other of the various branches of the ancient religion of the country, the Vedānta. It has another significant name—the Sanātana Dharma or Eternal Religion. This was the name that the people of India gave to their religion. It is based on the eternal impersonal principles discovered by different sages at different times and collected together in the Upaniṣads. As such, the Sanātana Dharma is not derived from the authority of any single personal founder.

The sages of the Upaniṣads discovered the truths of religion, and they (these sages) are honoured as such ; but the truths themselves are eternal, and can be discovered by any person in any age. In fact, the Sanātana Dharma holds that it is precisely this effort to discover the truth by oneself and its final realization that constitute religion, and not the effort to believe in a creed or dogma about God or soul.

This impersonal foundation of the Indian religion stands in sharp contrast to the personal authority of a founder of all the other world religions. Early Buddhism was an impersonal religion ; Buddha discovered the truth and showed the way to truth to others. He described himself as the Tathāgata, the pathfinder, and declared that Buddhahood was a state, not a person, and that it was attainable by all.

In this, he was a teacher of the Sanātana Dharma, and his teaching was close to the spirit of the Upaniṣads. Later, when he was transformed into a personal founder of a particular religion, a spirit of exclusiveness developed ; and from being, like the Vedānta, an Eternal Religion, the Sanātana Dharma, it was changed into a religion with history, so much so that, without the authority of the personal founder, the religion cannot stand.

This limitation of its scope was one of the important reasons for its later disappearance, in name and form, though certainly not in substance, from India, a phenomenon in Indian history not confined to this one instance only.

The Vedānta or Sanātana Dharma is not the same thing as Hinduism. The words 'Hindu' and 'Hinduism' were not coined by the people of India to refer to themselves or to their religion. As it was said earlier, they themselves designated their religion as Sanātana Dharma, Eternal Religion. 'Hindu' was a term coined by foreigners, especially the ancient Persians, to designate the people of India in a territorial sense ; it only meant the people living on the east of the River Sindhu (modern Indus), and they pronounced 'S' as 'H'. Thus the 'Sindhu' of Sanskrit became 'Hindu', and their land, Hindusthan. The Greeks avoided both 'H' and 'S' and pronounced it 'Indos', from which was derived 'India'. Thus the word 'Hinduism' originally meant the religion of the people of Hindusthan. In actual fact, however, it is not one religion that exists in India, but many religions. Apart from the religions that came to India from outside in the course of her long history, namely, Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Islam, all of which are based on a personal founder or founders, there are several indigenous religions, each complete in itself, and all loosely called by the single name of Hinduism.

Among these, three religions are particularly important, both as to philosophy, tenets, and long history and as to the number of the adherents involved. These are Vaiṣṇavism, adoring Viṣṇu or his incarnations, Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, as the Deity; Saivism, adoring Siva as the Deity; and Sāktism, adoring Sakti, the Divine Mother as the primal divine Energy, as the Deity.

Among these, Śaivism and Śāktism are practically one, as both the deities are objects of worship in each of them. These deities and incarnations have been the objects of worship for millions and millions of the people of India during these two to five thousand years. These religions have not remained the same during all these millennia of history. They have undergone changes—even profound changes—in their every aspect, in theological structure as much as in their mythology and ritual.

Their contact with the rational philosophy of the Upaniṣads gave rise to the changes in their theology, while this orientation, in turn, produced relevant changes in their mythology and ritual. This story of the peaceful evolution of the Indian religions under the stimulus of a lofty philosophic thought, and in response to changing cultural situations, is one of the most impressive chapters in the history of religion. Through this process, primitive forms of reli-

gion were allowed to grow and develop into highly spiritual religions without getting smothered by more advanced ones.

The history of the Śākta religion is significant in this connection. Originating as the worship of the Mother-Goddess patronized by the primitive groups in all parts of India, in the hills and in the plains, this religion slowly evolved under the stimulus of the Vedānta and became centuries ago a complete religion of deep philosophy, profound mysticism, and appealing ritual.

Some of the greatest personalities of Indian history, including the great philosopher Śaṅkara, were followers of this religion. Conceived as the Divine Mother of the universe and called by different names, such as Devī, Durgā, Bhagavatī, Kālī, Bhavānī, Annapurṇā, or Mīnākṣī, this Deity centralized within herself the entire range of the Mother-Goddess cults of the vast continent of India. Some of the sublime poetry and mysticism of India is centered in her worship ; while its philosophy has become identical with that of the Vedānta itself.

In modern times this religion became associated with the name of Sri Ramakrishna, who worshipped this Deity as Kālī in the Dakshineswar temple, near Calcutta. The Brahman and Māyā of the Vedānta are conceived as a unity, the static and dynamic aspects of Reality. Śakti or Kālī represents this dynamic aspect, which brings about the birth and evolution of the universe out of itself and finally withdraws it into itself. And Brahman represents that quiescent state.

Though the Sanātana Dharma is based on impersonal principles, it provides plenty of scope for the play of personality as well—personalities come into the religion as illustrations of the principles. So immediately after the age of the Upaniṣads, India saw the emergence of two towering personalities, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, whose influence on the totality of Indian culture, religion, poetry, art, and life has been the deepest and the most pervasive. Their influence has been not only on India, but also on the countries of South-East Asia, where Indian culture had penetrated during the first ten centuries of the Christian era. The Sanātana Dharma looks upon them as incarnations of God, who came to establish righteousness on earth. Buddha's status in the Sanātana Dharma is also the same.

The worship of these *avatāras* or incarnations of God has been long recognized in India as effective spiritual help, and it forms an essential part of India's religion of *bhakti* or love. In fact, the worship of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa forms the major part of the religious life of India. The largest number of temples in the country are dedicated to their worship. This worship consists of a series of rituals and services rendered to the image in the temple, exactly in the spirit of service of a living personality. Devotees join this worship, and especially the evening services, when lights are waved and songs sung before the image, often in chorus. This chorus singing is a prominent part of India's spiritual life ; the chorus song composition in Sanskrit in praise of Rāma, known as *Rāmanāma* or 'Name of Rāma', is especially very popular throughout India. Mahatma Gandhi was very fond of this chorus, and used to have it sung in his prayer meetings. It is very pleasing to the ear and elevating to the heart.

Songs relating to Kṛṣṇa will fill several volumes. He is worshipped as the personification of the god of Love ; but there is also the worship of him as the Child Kṛṣṇa, a worship enriched by relevant poetry, song, and mysticism, which is unsurpassed in its lyric of tenderness and pure spirituality. The birthdays of these two incarnations of God—of Rāma, in March-April, and of Kṛṣṇa, in August-September—are big events in the religious calender of India.

The worship of Śiva seems to have been the most ancient of the worships in India, with the exception of Śakti or the Mother-Goddess. Śiva is conceived as the god of the *yogins*, men of contemplation. He is the ascetic god with

the snowy Himalayas for his natural abode. He represents the state of *bodhi,* the state of illumination attained by Buddha, the soul enjoying the beatitude of its own divine nature. But Śiva is also compassionate; the word 'Śiva' in Sanskrit means auspiciousness, goodness ; and he comes down from his state of divine absorption to bless a seeking aspirant or redeem a soul in distress. Śiva is thus a state as well as a Deity, the latter as the symbol of the former ; he is also the special god of Indian monasticism.

The close kinship of this concept of Śiva to Buddha and his religion made for the blending of the two in several respects in the later evolution of Buddhism. The worship of Śiva is marked by a spirit of seriousness and austerity. This worship is closely allied to the worship of Śakti or the Divine Mother, known also as Kālī, Durgā, etc. In the symbolic language of popular Hinduism, Śakti is the wife of Śiva, and both are looked upon as the parents of the whole universe. This idea of Siva and Sakti as the father and mother of the universe has inspired poets and philosophers, artists and mystics, saints and devotees in India for hundreds of years. The great poet Kālidāsa sang in praise of them in the opening verse of his epic poem *Raghuvaṁśā*: 'Inseparable as "Word" and its "Meaning" are Śiva, the supreme Lord, and Pārvatī, the Divine Mother, whose grace I seek for culturing the soul of language.' Pārvatī literally means the daughter of the mountain, the Himalayas ; her other two names Durgā and Gaurī also derive from her association with the mountain.

The marriage of Śiva with Pārvati or Śakti is the symbol of the union of the Immobile Absolute and the Mobile Creative Energy—the potential and kinetic states of the total energy of the universe. The two are ever inseparable; so are Śiva and Śakti.

This marriage is the theme of another long epic poem of Kālidāsa, known as *Kumārasaṁbhava* (The Birth of the Heroic Child). Śakti stands for the unity of the energies of Mother Nature in all her aspects—physical, biological, mental, and spiritual, and represents a generalization of the energies of Nature far beyond what physical science gives today. Śakti is the unity of the physical and non-physical energies of Nature. It is termed 'Cit Śakti', the Energy of Consciousness, out of which the whole world of conscious and unconscious entities proceeds. It is viewed in the feminine, and is conceived not as 'creating' the world from outside, but as 'giving birth' to the world from within itself. So is it the Divine Mother of all, as Śiva is the Divine Father of all ; both form an inseparable unity, two aspects of the same Reality, the unity of Being and Becoming. Buddha experiencing the immobile state by *bodhi* or *nirvāṇa* represents the Śiva aspect, and Buddha engaged in active public ministration represents the Śakti aspect.

This concept of Śakti and its association with mountains, you will mark, brings it into close kinship with the '*Kamis*' of Japanese religion, especially with the chief '*Kami*', Amaterasu Omikami. But the Japanese Kami concept has not received that treatment from philosophy as the Indian Śakti concept received from the philosophy of the Vedānta. This philosophic nourishment of the Śakti concept has raised the Kami cults of India to the highest level of philosophic mysticism of the most active type. The Śakti is the favourite deity not only of contemplatives and pious devotees, but also of warriors and men of action. This concept and worship, as it has evolved during these several centuries, and especially through the dynamic orientation which it received at the hands of Sri Ramakrishna (A.D. 1836-86) in our time, is winning its way to the hearts of millions of the Indian people today, in view of its capacity to bridge the gulf between the demands of active social ethics and passive contemplation, between reason and faith, and between knowledge of the world and knowledge of God.

India discerns three stages in the expression of man's spiritual life. In the first stage, man's

religious impulse seeks to find expression in outward acts of worship and adoration ; his God is outside. He resorts to temples and churches, images and symbols, hymns and songs, fasting and pilgrimages. This is the first stage of every religion, the effort to capture an intimation of the Eternal through the concrete and the gross. The discipline of this stage must lead the devotee on to the second stage—that of inward contemplation. He has now learnt to feel the presence of God within, close. In this, there is very little of the external expression, there is very little of the noise and show associated with the first phase. In fact, true religion begins only at this stage ; the first one is treated as just the kindergarten of religion. When the heart becomes purer and purer, it is able to experience the pull of Divine within ; and religion becomes a joyous communion of the soul with God. The practice of meditation becomes a delight. Continued practice of this stage draws down the grace of the Divine, and the soul achieves the fullness of realization. He sees God within, in contemplation, and without, in time of action. India considers this as the aim of all spiritual striving ; every devotee in India places this as his or her final spiritual objective ; but he or she knows that it is difficult to achieve this in a single life, but it will surely be achieved some day. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*: 'Out of thousands of people, only a few strive for perfection ; and out of thousands that so strive, only a few realize the truth of My being.' Again, 'Striving through several births, the wise one realizes Me as existing in every being ; such a *mahātman* (great soul) is rare to come across'.

With the knowledge of the above stages in view, the worshipper in India not only engages in external ritual worship, but also practises inward meditation, aided by *japa* or repetition of the divine Name. This repetition of the divine Name is a universal practice in the *bhakti* religions of India ; it is also prevalent in some form in all the religions of the world.

This *japa* and meditation is the central core of the spiritual practices of the Indian people. A devotee chooses a particular form of God or Incarnation as his 'favourite object of adoration'—his '*iṣṭa-devatā*'. India allows perfect freedom of choice in this matter, as the people are taught by the Vedānta that the supreme Truth is One, though called by various names, and conceived under various forms, for the facility of comprehension and approach. In modern times, through the benign influence of Sri Ramakrishna, who had realized God through both Hindu and non-Hindu forms of adoration, this choice of 'object of adoration', which was till now confined to the various deities and incarnations of the specifically Hindu religions, is being extended to Christ and Buddha as well, who also are viewed as incarnations of God, just like Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

Pilgrimages occupy an important place in the spiritual life of India. India's important holy places are scattered over its length and breadth ; some of the holiest are in the interior of the Himalayas, including the holy mountain Kailāsa, the abode of Śiva, in Tibet, holy to Hindus and Tibetan Buddhists alike. At the southern extremity of India are the temples of Rāmeśvara and Kanyākumārī. Two other important centres are on the western and eastern seaboards of India.

A special object of reverence in India is the River Gaṅgā, whose water is treated as the symbol of God Himself. No river in the world is treated with such reverence as the Gaṅgā in India, and this from pre-Buddhistic times. Millions of Hindus bathe in it every year, and carry its water in brass pots and jars to their homes, even to foreign countries, to sip a few drops every day or on special occasions. A few drops of the sacred water of the Gaṅgā are put into the mouth of dying persons by their relatives. On its banks, thousands of people practise meditation and austerity, getting the stimulation of its holy atmosphere. The Gaṅgā with its sacredness has been carried to Ceylon and South-East Asia in the wake of Indian culture. In some of these countries, every river is known as Gaṅgā.

It is conceived as the river of heaven brought down to earth by a great emperor of ancient India, Bhagīratha. This historic-mythical episode has formed the theme of much literature and art. The river fell from heaven on the matted hair on the head of Śiva who was then absorbed in contemplation on the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, and then flowed down in winding streams through the tortuous mountain valleys, eventually to enter the plains at Hardwar (an ancient holy pilgrim centre about 120 miles north of Delhi) to become the great river of material and spiritual prosperity for India. Bhagīratha had to undergo infinite troubles and austerities before he had the satisfaction to see the river flow into the plains. And the name of Bhagīratha in Indian culture now stands for all energetic and holy endeavour for the good of man, just like Prometheus in Greek culture.

Before I close, I would like to say a few words about Indian monastic life, which is such a significant expression of the Indian spiritual life. An institution with hoary antiquity and prestige, it was ancient and well established even at the time of Buddha, who became one of its greatest representatives. The *sannyāsin* or monk, in virtue of his total renunciation and emancipation from personal and social bonds, is given divine veneration in India. And the best representatives of this Holy Order fully deserved this national reverence. Buddha, Śaṅkara, Caitanya, Ramakrishna, and Vivekananda belong to an unbroken line of monastic tradition, which goes back to Śuka, Yājñavalkya, and Sanatkumāra in the prehistoric age. In several monastic Orders, the monastic initiation is preceded by a *homa* (fire) ceremony (*goma* in Japanese), in which the candidate, who is a celibate from birth or has become celibate after a spell of the married state, pours into the lighted fire, which is the symbol of the Absolute, in the form of material oblations, his desires, senses, mind, and the ego, and realizes himself as pure Spirit, without the touch of worldliness. He is then given a new name and a new apparel (coloured with a special kind of earth) to signify his death in the flesh and birth in the Spirit. Homeless and without possessions, he starts a new life of practical direct religion, the 'march of the alone to the Alone'.

India does not believe in a rigidly controlled central church to regulate religion or monasticism. When the new social order evolves a welfare state in India, the monastic Order will become a constructive force for human happiness and welfare in India and abroad ; for the same clarion call of '*Bahujana hitāya, bahujana sukhāya*' (the welfare of the many, the happiness of the many), which Buddha had sounded to inspire his Order, has been sounded in this age by Swami Vivekananda to inspire the monastic life of modern India, before which he has placed the great ideals of 'Renunciation and Service'. The teachings of Swami Vivekananda and of his great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, are the most dynamic spiritual forces in modern India helping her people, both lay and monastic, to evolve a new form of spiritual life adequate to the aspirations and purposes of the modern world.

Our life-blood is spirituality. If it flows clear, if it flows strong and pure and vigourous everything is right; political, social, any other material defects, even the poverty of the land, will all be cured if that blood is pure.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

MAHATMA GANDHI & NON-VIOLENCE

By Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji

In the popular mind of India and elsewhere, Mahatma Gandhi stands as an embodiment of non-violence, of love and compassion for fellow-beings. And rightly so. If sublimity of thought, loftiness of ideals, nobility of character, purity in thought, word, and deed, and a boundless love for all—friends and foes alike—are among the qualities of a saint, the narrowest sectarian and the fiercest opponent cannot conscientiously deny the honour of sainthood to Gandhi.

Gandhi's theory of non-violence and its practice by him in his own life for half a century are matters of history. They have opened up new horizons before a bewildered humanity and added new chapters to human history. Gandhi, however, cannot—he does nowhere, in fact—claim to have invented or discovered non-violence (*ahiṁsā*), which is perhaps as old as man himself. It is reminiscent of the Divine in man. From the grey dawn of history, and even before in the days of prehistory, man has sought to fulfil himself through force and fraud, through violence and brute force. But on occasions, very rare, however, a few have sought their fulfilment through methods of peace and harmony. These latter are among the immortals of history. They are the messengers of God, who have reminded the erring humanity time and again that man is not a brute, that humanity is, in truth, divine. They all preached the gospel of universal love and amity. They were not unoften misunderstood by their contemporaries. Not a few of them had to die for their convictions. A Christ was crucified. A Gandhi was shot down.

The concept of non-violence is thus an ancient one. It is praised in some of the Upaniṣads and also in the *Mahābhārata* which clearly lays down, '*Ahiṁsā paramo dharmaḥ*' (Non-violence is the highest duty). Non-violence is the sheet-anchor of Jainism and Buddhism. Confucius of China, Plato of Greece, Jesus of Nazareth, and a host of others raised their voice in support of non-violence. The ideal travelled through time and space, went round the world, and came back to India—where it probably originated—through Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a young, obscure Indian advocate in South Africa, who had made himself a *persona non-grata* to the English and Boer rulers of the country. Ideas become more practical in course of their sojourn through time and space; they are 'developed, elaborated, and more fully organized'. Genius, like the proverbial philosopher's stone, transforms into gold everything touched by it. Ideas, therefore, become more living and more vital in the hands of men of genius and vision.

A similar transformation befell non-violence —and civil disobedience—when Gandhi adopted them as weapons in his South African struggle. They had been meant so long for the use of individuals only. But Gandhi organized them and made them capable of use by groups, 'provided that they had voluntarily been disciplined in (their) pre-conditions'.

Gandhi's greatness lies not in inventing non-violence, but in investing it with a moral significance and a moral potency. A spirit of genuine non-violence cannot be acquired in a day or two. It requires long and sincere striving and long training 'in self-denial and appreciation of the hidden forces within ourselves'. How could then the masses practise non-violence? Gandhi prescribed that all need not possess 'the same measure of conscious non-resistance for its full operation. It is enough for one person only to possess it, even as one General is enough to regulate and dispose of the energy of millions of soldiers who enlist under his banner and even though they know not the

why and wherefore of his dispositions' (*Young India*, September 23, 1926, p. 332). In later years, however, Gandhi laid an ever-increasing emphasis on the cultivation of individual perfection.

Life, Gandhi rightly held, is a 'unified field'. The pursuit of non-violence, he contended, should not therefore be confined to any one sphere of life. It must be all-embracing and must be firmly established in our domestic relations before it can make its influence felt outside home. 'The alphabet of *ahiṁsā* is best learnt at home' (*Harijan*, July 21, 1940, p. 214).

'Right livelihood', one of the Eightfold Paths enjoined by Lord Buddha, is an essential precondition of the realization of the ideal of non-violence. Service of fellow-men 'as a means of self-transcendance' and not individual gain must motivate all activities of a true seeker of non-violence. The *āśrama* way of life or community living as instituted by Gandhi in South Africa, and followed later on in India by him, was the microcosm of 'a working model of this type of society and a demonstration of the cardinal spiritual discipline in action, on which non-violence is based'. Institutions taken up by Gandhi were invariably moulded by him into the likeness of the *āśrama*.

The constructive programme—Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, and the popularization of the *khādi*—is an integral part of Gandhian non-violence. The fulfilment of the programme was, in his opinion, the real *tapasyā* (single-minded devotion) of our times. The programme was intended to give hope, courage, and inner strength to the seeker of non-violence in days of adversity when everything seemed to be lost. The inclusion of spinning in his constructive programme is one of Gandhi's most significant contributions to non-violence. Anything which can be done by the masses in a body 'becomes charged with a unique power'. He prescribed the spinning wheel as a remedy for the 'psychic illness' of the West. He believed that the spinning wheel symbolizes equality of opportunities for all. 'Mankind must return to handicrafts at home', Gandhi told an American journalist in 1946, 'and thereby repudiate the machine that spawned the device by which mankind can destroy itself. Hand-spinning is the beginning of the economic freedom, equality, and peace. The saving of the entire world lies in the adoption of this little device' (Gandhi to Andrew Freeman, quoted by Pyarelal in *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Vol. II. p. 798).

Non-violence, as such, may be a negative and passive affair. But non-violence, as conceived by Gandhi, was something positive and dynamic. As Jawaharlal Nehru puts it, 'It is not non-resistance. It is non-violent resistance. It was not meant for those who meekly accept the *status quo*. The very purpose for which it was designed was to create "a ferment in society" and thus to change existing conditions' (*An Autobiography*, p. 540). Gandhi preferred a fight and failure to inertia and inaction. Even bloodshed was preferable to retreat and acquiescence. Non-violence was to be preferred to violence, not because it was safer, but because it was a braver and superior method of resistance. Gandhi's non-violence was no cloak for cowardice. He clarifies his position in a letter to K. M. Munshi: 'I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. ... Abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish' (Quoted by K. M. Munshi in *Akhand Hindustan*, p. 265).

Non-violence and passive resistance are, Gandhi held, poles apart. 'Europe mistook', he wrote to Madame Edmond Privat, a Swiss friend, 'the bold and brave resistance, full of wisdom, by Jesus of Nazareth for passive resistance, as if it was of the weak. ... Has not West paid heavily in regarding Jesus as a passive resister? Christendom has been responsible for the wars which put to shame even those described in the Old Testament and other records, historical or semi-historial' (*Harijan*, December 7, 1947, p. 453).

Gandhi's life was a long chapter on non-

violence. He practised it with 'scientific precision' for more than fifty years and asserted that, to his knowledge, it had never failed. What appeared to be failures on occasions were, in reality, the failures of the experimenter, that is, of himself. He sincerely believed that 'the world of tomorrow will be—must be—a society based on non-violence'. He wrote in the *Harijan* a little more than a year before his assassination: 'Thousands like myself may die to vindicate the ideal, but *ahiṁsā* will never die, and the gospel can be spread only through believers dying for the cause' (May 1946, p. 140).

CATHERINE OF GENOA : SAINT OF LOVE

By Mr. Paul Hourihan

If we really believe that God exists, that He is waiting for us, that His love and power and truth will give us all the strength and inspiration we need, why don't we fly to Him? If we sense that He alone exists and that our stay on earth is divinely ordained, why don't we immediately renounce everything and, straight and unwaveringly, go to Him? It is the great achievement of Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510) that she did exactly that, and with no prior qualifications that were visible.

There have been saints whose lives in their worldly and spiritual chapters have been marked by their divergence, but it is doubtful if any major spiritual figure ever grew out of more unlikely soil as that which made up the first twenty-six years of Catherine Adorna's life. In her early life, there was, above all, no sign of strength in any direction whatever, such as there was in the lives of many saints before their awakening, a strength for wickedness or worldliness perhaps, but still a strength of will and character of some definable kind, which they were able to put to advantage when the direction of their lives was altered.

And yet, few saints have ever experienced such a complete and instantaneous conversion from a life of worldly mediocrity to one of absolute devotion to God ; whose transformation was so swift and so total, and out of material traditionally the most unpromising for the making of future saints.

The material in her case was that of a vacillating, colourless woman, who for twenty-six years lived a commonplace and rather desperate existence, married unhappily, weak in will, weak in sinfulness, weak in faith, weak in everything ; a woman who never knew her own mind, never discovered what she wanted out of life—a chronic drifter, a pining recluse inclined to mysterious illnesses and moods of self-pity, during which she shut herself away from everyone and emerged from them unchanged. Yet, out of such inauspicious material, a will power of astounding resolution was forged.

A sketch made of her in middle age suggests what she looked like in her youth. Her face was long and delicately moulded, the features aristocratic, the mouth thin and sensitive, yet firm ; the general countenance suggesting a reticent and yet ardent nature ; a love

of beauty, an aura of refinement is markedly evident. She was tall and slender, and had long, dark chestnut hair. She was of an intense temperament, lacking wit or humour—all her life she took everything literally. (This was a serious handicap in her dealings with the worldly, but it became a mighty weapon when she discovered that a divine and omnipresent Love dwelled in everyone.)

Her biographers have sought in her childhood for incipient signs of piety, but the fact is that there were none that were outstanding. She was brought up in a rather devout family of five children, three of them boys, Catherine being the youngest child, and some of the religious atmosphere of the home clung to her. But as an individual, she seemed no more pious than the average Genoese girl of her time. She had an older sister who became a nun ; and when she was thirteen, Catherine expressed a desire to follow her calling, but it seems that no one paid serious attention to her, since thousands of girls made this kind of gesture at a similar age.

It was not long before Catherine herself seemed to forget about it, and, indeed, she never reverted to the idea at any stage of her life. Moreover, if her girlhood had been of a genuine spiritual character, as some believe, one is at a loss to account for her gloomy behaviour during the ten years of her marriage, a marriage which, paradoxically, gave whatever spirituality was latent in her an ideal opportunity to flourish. Her behaviour during those years suggests that prayer and spiritual devotions were secondary in her scheme of things.

At sixteen, she had been married to a young nobleman a few years older than she, the complete antithesis of her in character and taste, one Giuliano Adorna, the scion of a rival family in Genoa. This Giuliano was a gambler, a libertine, and a drinker ; an aggressive and spendthrift youth devoid of any sense of scruple or self-control. The strange match had been arranged by their families for political reasons, and it never occurred to Catherine to object, brought up as she was in a tradition of obedience to family authority. It was hoped that the marriage would pacify a long-standing feud between the two families, both of whom were still powerful and wealthy, as well as venerable, in the Genoa of that time. (Catherine's, the Fieschis, had given warriors and statesmen to the State during its long history, as well as two Popes to the Church.)

Soon after the marriage, Giuliano began to spend his way through his sizeable patrimony, passed most of his time away from the mansion he had inherited, and was frank to inform his wife of his affairs with other women. Catherine's retiring tendencies evoked only ridicule from her husband. Often, he was drunk in the house and was in the habit of bringing home companions of both sexes who shared his dissolute tastes.

As time went on, Giuliano was constantly away from the house, which must have gratified Catherine. More than ever, she found herself dwelling alone in the spacious rooms, and if there was any obvious spiritual bent in her nature, now was the chance for it to emerge. But mostly she mooned about the house or lay sick in bed. Frequently, she would call on God in prayer for comfort and understanding ; but her prayers were listless, and they brought her no compensation. In the same half-hearted, sporadic manner, she went to confession and received Communion.

At the end of five years of marriage, she seems to have lost most of whatever interest in religion she had had at first. This is the assumption one must make from her decision to discontinue her solitary mode of living and to step out in the world. Undoubtedly, she had made some attempt to find solace in prayer and spiritual exercises during this first period, had found none that satisfied her, and so decided to turn to the 'world' as an alternative. Giuliano's outright desertion of her at this time, and sudden disappearance from her life altogether, was the particular prompting of her decision.

Her illustrious name and the two mansions

she and Giuliano had inherited, as well as an amiable disposition, brought her into contact with all sorts of people, and this mode of living lasted for another five years. Those years are passed over in silence by her biographers, and Catherine herself never alluded to them later. This was due, very likely, less to great sins committed than to the fact that worldly living had simply bored her, that those five years were the most barren and purposeless she had known—though one may also suppose that her worldly efforts were characterized by the vagueness that had marked all her actions hitherto.

Still, the period lasted for five years; and at the end of it, when the experience of the world had proved as unsatisfying as the previous five with her husband, she reached the lowest mental and emotional point of her life and in desperation went to seek the advice of her sister, the nun. She, quite logically, advised Catherine to go to confession there in the convent.

What tipped the scales of the precarious balance she had maintained was probably a combination of gradual, accumulating strain, her increasing discontent with herself, the vanity of worldly living, and her own inability to cope with life on any level—marital, worldly, or spiritual. One thing is clear: what distressed and terrified her more than anything else was the realization that she had lost, or was on the verge of losing, her religious faith entirely. This realization had plunged her into a profound gloom and remorse, mingled with a train of other harrowing sensations that day after day clung to her—guilt, confusion, an increasing fear of the world, a haunting sense of sin and worthlessness, and a complete lack of self-confidence. In the midst of this desolation, she had prayed to God to make her sick for three months.

After talking with her sister, Catherine went to the convent chapel to make her confession. She knelt down in front of the altar; the priest was called away just then; and as she knelt there, alone for this short priceless interval, plunged in an abyss of hopelessness, and a desolate sense of her own unworthiness, the great moment of her life rushed in upon her overwhelmingly and shattered her: she was illuminated with a sudden, blinding, and utterly convincing vision of God as Love. Simultaneously, she had a terrible understanding of her sins and of the wasted, squandered life she had lived up to then. She fell into an ecstasy, murmuring to herself, over and over: 'No more world! No more sin!' ... The convent priest returned to the chapel just then and saw her there, unconscious of the world, impaled upon a 'wound of Unmeasured Love', —enveloped, he said afterwards, in a circle of light. When she rose to her feet, her face was transfigured with joy and power. Haltingly, she said she could not make her confession, and fled from the room, still murmuring: 'No more world! No more sin!' ... 'and she felt that if she had in her possession a thousand worlds she would have cast them all away'.

Catherine Adorna lived for thirty-six more years, and there is no evidence that she ever deviated from the knowledge that had come to her that day. She never hesitated, never doubted; she lived an absolutely dedicated life thereafter. She who had been a woman of weak and undisciplined character was filled with a sudden, tremendous strength that grew as the years passed. All she had needed was that single, obliterating moment. All that had preceded it proved to be nothing. The power of the world, the burden of her sins, her long habit of weakness and vacillation, and her rooted lack of self-confidence—all were as nothing. All that followed was simply an unwavering and utterly logical carrying out of the transcendent truth that had been vouchsafed her: *God is Love.*

When she returned home, she locked herself away from the servants until she had charted her course. With burning tears and sighs, she wept and prayed ceaselessly for three days, crying: 'O my Beloved! Can it be that

Thou hast called me with so much love, and revealed to me at one view what no tongue can describe?' During that time, she had a strange, powerful vision of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, after which she saw blood flowing everywhere in the house. This was the first and last Christ-centred experience for Catherine. Unlike most Catholic women saints, her yearning and orientation were not so much for Christ as for the supreme Love, the blissful and immanent Godhead that had revealed itself to her that day in the chapel, and to which, ever after, she sought exclusively to attach herself. It was the Source of Life itself that she sought.

After the three days of intense prayer, she entered upon a purgative and penitential period that lasted four years. Every morning she went to Holy Communion. She walked with her eyes on the ground. She spent six hours a day in prayer. She wore a hair shirt. At night she slept on thorns. She gave up meat and fruit. She spoke seldom and only when absolutely necessary. And she began the tremendous fasts during Lent and Advent, which were to continue for the rest of her life during which, it was noted, she enjoyed exceptionally vigorous health.

Throughout this first period, she was wholly self-taught, unhelped by anyone, and went through the four years practically unknown. Neither now nor at any time, in fact, did she have the benefit of a teacher. Who taught her, then? Her Love taught her, guiding her steps from the beginning. 'If I attempted to lean upon anyone, Love immediately caused me such great mental suffering that I was forced to desist, saying, "Oh Love, I understand thee".' Nor was this inward instruction a vague and uncertain thing. 'After her early purgation period', says her biographer, 'during which she was haunted by a constant sense of sin, and occupied by incessant mortifications, all thought of such mortifications was in an instant taken from her mind: in such a manner that, had she even wished to continue them, she would have been unable to. ... The sight of her sins was now taken from her mind, so that henceforth she did not catch a glimpse of them: it was as if they had all been cast into the depths of the sea.'

Coincidentally, Giuliano Adorna had come back from his wanderings the summer after Catherine's convent experience—bankrupt, penitent, without hope or substance, having wasted his own and Catherine's inheritance. Without a moment's hesitation, she not only welcomed him back, but made a home for the illegitimate daughter he had fathered somewhere. The impoverished couple were soon forced to leave the family mansion and move into a small house, in a poor section, near the hospital which was to figure importantly in her life. They took one devout servant with them, and Giuliano's child, and lived together henceforth as brother and sister.

Such was the power which she already exerted that Giuliano agreed, readily enough, to this condition—which, considering his character as it had flourished for ten years, was a truly remarkable performance. (Furthermore, in a year or so this same spendthrift and rootless young man was accepted into the foremost lay religious order of Genoa, the Third Order of St. Francis, and for years thereafter, until his death in fact, devoted himself to good works in and about the city.) This phenomenon—the way Catherine possessed the minds and hearts of people—was repeated often in the years that followed. Her humility and purity seem to have awed everyone, and the love that went out from her enfolded all who came into her life. In her own lifetime, she was regarded as a saint by great numbers of people in Genoa, and those who made up the mystical lay circle that later gathered around her felt that her most casual remarks were divinely inspired.

Even during the period of her penances, she had begun to offer her services at the nearby hospital and to seek out indigent people who needed help. When a plague epidemic

swept over Genoa, she threw herself into nursing and tending of the diseased victims. One incident illuminates her character vividly; A certain aged woman, dying of the plague, lay speechless day after day. Constantly, Catherine visited her, urging her to 'Call Jesus'. In vain the old woman tried to move her lips, calling him as well as she could ; and Catherine, seeing her mouth filled with the name of Jesus, was overcome with compassion, and could not restrain herself, at the last moment of the woman's life, from impulsively kissing her on the lips, thereby contracting the plague fever herself. But she soon recovered, and was back again at work among the dying.

During her first years at the hospital, she was in the habit of submitting herself to everyone, including the menials, but the directors of the hospital recognized her services and asked her to superintend the care of the sick in their institution. Catherine accepted, and she and Giuliano took a small house still closer to the hospital, where they passed the rest of their days. Catherine still prayed long hours every day, often experiencing raptures and ecstasies, and gradually her reputation brought to her a number of spiritual seekers, including a few priests, who gathered regularly in her house to listen to her words. But her ministrations to the sick never abated during her active years, nor her frequent visits to the hospital of St. Lazarus, which harboured incurable lepers, horrible to sight and smell, many of them vile-tempered. Cheerfully, Catherine bore their rebukes and tended them with love, bringing their soiled clothing back to her own house to wash and iron them.

Eventually, she was appointed rector of the hospital and invested with unlimited authority. At once, Catherine took up the task of administration as if she had done it all her life. With an important responsibility suddenly thrust upon her, she, like many another mystic, in spite of a naturally contemplative nature, showed a remarkable practical efficiency in worldly affairs.

In this manner, she spent the rest of her active life. Her external activities continued, and her reputation for selfless service spread throughout Genoa, but Catherine herself remained primarily occupied with the increasing purification of her own mind, the steady and relentless purging of every fibre of self-will from her heart and life. The constant meetings with those who came to her seeking strength, the endless giving of her time and words to God-seekers drawn to her, as well as all the services in asylums, hospitals, and impoverished homes, performed with a calm and sureness, a patience and strength of forbearance that caused others to marvel, were a natural expression of the inner current of spirituality and burning, all-consuming love of God, which from the beginning, from that day in the chapel, had been her whole existence—that which gave meaning and radiance to her every act in the outer world.

'Every day I feel that the motes are being removed, which this Pure Love casts out. Man cannot see these imperfections ; indeed since, if he saw these motes, he could not bear the sight, God ever lets him see the work he has achieved, as though no imperfections remained in it. But all the time God does not cease from continuing to remove them.'

'The creature is incapable of knowing anything but what God gives it from day to day. If it could know (beforehand) the successive degrees that God intends to give it, it would never be quieted. . . . When from time to time I would advert to the matter, it seemed to me that my love was complete ; but later... I became aware that I had had many imperfections. I did not recognize them at first, because God-Love was determined to achieve the whole only little by little, for the sake of preserving my physical life, and so as to keep my behaviour tolerable for those with whom I lived. For otherwise, with such other sight, so many excessive acts would ensue as to make one insupportable to oneself and to others.'

When her disciples expressed wonder at the

long fasts she undertook twice a year, she told them: 'This non-eating of mine is an operation of God, independent of my will ; hence I can in nowise glory in it ; nor should we marvel at it, for to Him such an operation is as nothing.'

Her self-surrender to the Lord was total. 'Since Love took over the care of everything, I have not taken care of anything, nor have I been able to work with my intellect, memory, and will, any more than if I had never had them.'

'Let none be astonished when I say that it is impossible for me to live with myself. It is necessary for me. . .to live separate from the self or *Me ;* that is to say, it is necessary for me to live without any self-originated movement either of the understanding, affections, or will. This is what I must be ; and this, by the grace of God, is what I hope I am.'

St. Catherine was one of the 'pure' saints—absorbed more in God than in humanity, more in self-transformation to the highest possible degree than in transforming others, longing for a maximum knowledge and love of God in this life without relying on the hope of the next.

'The holy soul desires to possess God as He is ; just as He is ; pure as He is ; and *all* that He is.'

'If man could but see the care which God takes of the soul, he would be struck with stupor within himself. . . .' If he could only understand how deeply he is the object of divine love, he would be overwhelmed with confusion and astonishment.'

'I stood so occupied in contemplating this work of Love that if He had cast me, body and soul, into hell, hell itself would have appeared to me all love and consolation.'

'I am so placed and submerged in His immense love that I seem as though in the sea entirely under water and could on no side touch, see, or feel anything but water.'

She lived to be sixty-three. In her last ten years, she experienced a number of physical sufferings that forced her to discontinue her hospital work and outside activities. During this last period, a Genoese priest, Don Marobotto, became her confessor and closest friend. She welcomed him into her life to provide a source of human strength which, in her failing health, even she needed ; but he was never a guide or teacher—in fact, he looked upon everything that happened to her as a divine manifestation, and did not distinguish between her spiritual and physiological seizures, an error which Catherine herself never fell into. Once when they were alone, as she lay in a trance-like condition, he questioned her apprehensively, for often she had spoken of longing for death to take her.

'If only one drop of what I feel were to fall into hell', she said, 'hell itself would be transformed into eternal life.'

Don Marobotto was the one who noted down her words during her last years, collected all the scattered notes made of her earlier discourses, and after her death wrote her biography. Her remarks already quoted, and all her sayings copied down by disciples over a long period (she never wrote anything herself), bear the stamp of one who had experienced what she talked about, who had actually lived the greater part of her life in intimate communion with the divine Being. In spite of her love for humanity, she remained to the end a lonely and mysterious woman, whose only companion was the Lord Himself ; and all her love, in a final analysis, was for Him alone.

'There is no creature that understands me', she prayed. 'I find myself alone, unknown, poor, naked, a stranger, and different from all the world.'

On this note, let us leave the remarkable Catherine of Genoa, Saint of Love. The lesson of her story, one of the most extraordinary in the annals of religion, is plain: God seizes the human heart at any time—like a thief in the night He will come to us. And then, and only then, we will have the power to remake our lives, as Catherine so unforgettably did.

THE ART REMAINS AT LEPAKSHI AND TADPATRI

By Sri P. Sama Rao

I

Lepakshi is just nine miles off Hindupur, in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh, and once belonged to the administrative zone of Penugoṇḍa Sīme of the Vijayanagar Empire. In spite of its having been declared a tourist centre, it continues to be a petty village with its dearth of comfort and convenience to tourists.

Excepting the sublime specimen of Nandin (Śiva's Bull), the rest of the art treasures are all housed in the temple of Śrī Vīreśvara, now Pāpanāśeśvara, which has been raised on the mound of a single rock, which, the local tradition says, is the petrified back of the great Kūrma (Tortoise *avatāra* of Viṣṇu). The bull (28 ft. long and 18 ft. high) has been sculptured out of a huge monolith. It is about a furlong off as the crow flies, from and faces Nāgaliṅgeśvara, a monolith again (12 ft. high and 10 ft. wide), an icon which is in the form of the beautiful *nāgaliṅga* flower (Page 121).

The temple seems to have been built and consecrated by Vīraṇṇa (A.D. 1535), the Maṇḍaleśvara of the Penugoṇḍa Sīmè, out of the government funds misappropriated by him, and duly endowed (A.D. 1537) by Acyutarāya Mallappaṇṇa with the Nandiceruvu village, in the Buradakuṇta Sīme, for spiritual benefit to accrue to Emperor Śrī Acyutadeva Rāya, as was then a custom to betoken one's loyalty to the secular head. On being discovered and about to be put on trial, the Maṇḍaleśvara committed suicide by pulling out his eyes and splashing their bloody contents on to the outside of the temple which adjoins Nāgaliṅgeśvara. This is testified to by the two holes resembling the eyes and the dark stains of blood and tears on the rocky wall. To show that he was as great a *Śiva-bhakta* as Kālahasti Kaṇṇappa, the boulder at the back of Nāgaliṅgeśvara has been sculptured with the latter's devotional episode. The crudeness and the incompleteness of this as well as of Nāgaliṅgeśvara indicate that they must be an after thought, not fitting quite the original conception of either the temple or its perfected decoration. Nandin and the other pieces of sculpture found in the temple and its *maṇṭapas* (*antaraṅga* and *kalyāṇa*) are of the same excellence as that of the best of figure ornamentation we find in Śrī Viṭṭhala and other temples at Vijayanagar, and do not fail to remind us of the peerless traditions of the Gupta style evidenced in the sculpure at Elephanta and Badami.

Lepakshi is the Ajanta of the Saiva Siddhānta because of the predominance of its paintings, mostly done in the Fresco-Secco process, on account of which they have all decayed or peeled off much sooner than the ones at Ajanta, done in the Fresco-Buono process more than 1,500 years ago. In painting at Lepakshi, the indigenous Tanjore and the Pot and the Jain styles are discernable; and the most conspicuous of these is the Tanjore. Though the first two are really improvements over the primitive style, yet the first, having achieved a great suppleness of line and grace, is the more sensuous and melodious than the other two. And this attainment of excellence has been not a little at the cost of virility and power. This is patent especially in the portraits of the superhuman personalities of Siva, Pārvatī, and other celestials who participate in the various chronicles of the Siva Siddhānta. Though the specimens done in the Jain style could be compared with credit to the ones of the ancient Kālakācārya Mss., yet they lack the charm of naturalness and rhythmic continuity of line. Their angularism is often piercing to the sight, however justifiable it be according to the ancient traditions that have laid down that, in the drawing of figures in profile especially

nothing should be concealed and all parts of the figure should be represented ; for a defective representation that way was sinful and blasphemous. The Pot style specimens, though crude and graceless, are more powerful, because they are less sophisticated. However, the *genre* paintings done in the Tanjore style are indeed the best ones ; they portray with strengtli and grace the lovely forms of men and women of the Rayalaseema most truly.

Nandin (Śiva's Bull), Lepakshi

Despite the rhythm of line and grace, the Naṭarāja conception of Siva, Gaurī-Prasāda Śiva appeasing the *khaṇḍita* type of Pārvatī, and Kalyāṇa Sundara, the accredited best ones, are not virile and sublime like the sculptured Śiva types either here or at Elephanta, or Badami, or Ellora, but appear comparatively effiminate and tender But Dr. Paramasivan and Dr. Venkataramaniah, however, are not correct in condemning these paintings at Lepakshi as of the lowest grade in Vijayanagar painting, having compared them with the ones of the Bṛhadīśvara temple at Tanjore (A.D. 1646-47) or the ones of the Mīnākṣī temple at Madurai (middle of the seventeenth century), all done under the aegis of the Nāyaka kings ; for the art of painting had by then continuously declined with the huge importation of the Portuguese painters from the time of Emperor Venkaṭa II (A.D. 1584-1614), as testified to by

Śrī Nāgalingeśwara, Lepakshi

Fr. du Jarric. There is not the faintest trace of the Ajanta style even in the best specimens of the Vijayanagar painting.

But what the painter failed to achieve in the way of sublime movement of form, pose, and power, the sculptor bounteously achieved in his representations of the Śaivite Godhead, Naṭarāja, Gaṅgādhara, Ardhanārīśvara, Harihareśvara, Kalyāṇa Sundara, Vīrabhadra, Kālārimūrti, Bhikṣāṭana Śiva, Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardinī, and the other celestials like Mohinī Viṣṇu, Aṣṭa Dikpālas, Sapta Ṛṣis, etc. --which have all been depicted on the panels of the square-cut pillars of the temple, and of its incomplete *kalyāṇa-maṇṭapa* (in full relief) and its completed *raṅga-maṇṭapa* (in half and quarter relief)

Though the temple is called after Śrī Vīreśvara (now Pāpanāśeśvara), it is presided over besides by Gaṇapati, Vīrabhadra, Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu, and, the most prominent of them all, by Goddess Durgā. It is said that this Durgā form quickened with life and power as it was being carved out of the facet of the pillar. This is the most unique instance of a pillared Durgā without the usual *garbhagṛha* being consecrated

Śrī Durgā, Lepakshi

and worshipped. The image has all the strength and sublimity of the dancing Kālī of the Calcutta museum. On the panel, directly at the back of the pillar, is the equally powerful and sublime type of Kālārimūrti, which is certainly a glorious improvement over that of Gangaikonda Cholapuram. Gaṅgādhara Śiva and Mohinī Viṣṇu are no less majestic or charming.

Śrī Vīreśwara, Lepakshi

The sculpture on the pillars of the *kalyāṇa-maṇṭapa* is also remarkable. Pañcānana Śiva's grandeur can only be matched with either the supreme loveliness of Kalyāṇa Sundara or the terrible aspects of either Vīrabhadra or Kāla Bhairava or Bhikṣāṭana Śiva. Each of the Dikpālas or Sapta Ṛṣis or Munis has been rendered individually supreme, what with their own characteristic expressions, their own *entourage*, their peculiar weapons and *coiffures* and ornamentations, their own individual equipments of *maṅgaladravyas*, and their gusto to attend the wedding of Kalyāṇa Sundara with

Pārvatī, the acme of beauty. On the facets of the similarly square-cut pillars of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* are sculptured Viṣṇu's *daśāvatāras, Bharata-nāṭya* poses, and scenes of commoner's life of hunt, of attending fairs, pounding grain, etc. (*genre*). One cannot, however, miss admiring the various ways of holding the *kamaṇḍalus, kṛṣṇājinas, tālapatras,* etc. by the Sapta Ṛṣis (*kalyāṇa-maṇṭapa*) in consistency with their own individual dignity and status. The chasing of some of the jambs and other pillars, especially in the *kalyāṇa-maṇṭapa,* with the ornamental motifs of Gaṅgā, *kalpalatās,* yogic postures, and *Bharata-nāṭya* poses is so varied and delicate that it has become the wonder and emulation of the best of goldsmiths.

II

Tadpatri is also in Anantapur District, and it is about 100 miles from Vijayanagar. It has two temples: the older one was dedicated to Viṣṇu (Rāmāvatāra), and belonged to the earlier days of the empire; the other, most probably a Śaivite one, was called after its builder, Cintalarāya. This is now in complete ruins with only two *gopuras,* one completed and the other not, standing still on the banks of the Pennar (Pinākinī). This later temple belonged to the reign of Emperor Acyuta Rāya (A.D. 1530-42), and is contemporaneous with the temple at Lepakshi. The unfinished tower seems to have been never carried higher than its perpendicular part. These towers are uni-

Kalyāna Maṇṭapa, Lepakshi

Of the bronzes and *utsava-vigrahas,* the most noteworthy, aesthetically, are those of Naṭarāja, Kāla Bhairava, Bhadrakālī, and Bhikṣāṭana-mūrti. These, together with Naṭarāja of Srisaila ; Umā-Maheśvara and Viṣāpaharaṇa-mūrti lately found at Penugonda ; Bhūdevī, Sūryanārāyaṇa, and Gulagiñji Mādhava at Hampi; Śrī Raṅganātha at Holal; etc., duly register the excellent synthesis the Vijayanagar style had attained from out of the Gupta, the Pallava, the Cola, and the Hoysala traditions of iconography.

que in that the perpendicular parts, instead of being comparatively left bald as was usual with the rest of the Vijayanagar towers, are richly decorated with figures and ornamental motifs of creepers, flowers, birds, *Bharata-nāṭya* poses, and *yogāsanas.* This ornamentation 'cut with exquisite sharpness and precision is more elaborate than that on the pyramidal parts'. This having been done out of the fine, close-grained, horn-blende stone has produced an 'effect richer and, on the whole, perhaps in better taste' than anything done at Vijaya-

nagar. As Fergusson has rightly opined, 'If compared with Halebid and Belur (sculptures), these *gopurams* stand that test better than any other works of the Vijayanagar Rajas'.

It would be enough here to describe the artistic glory of one of these towers. The jambs of the main entrance are huge monoliths sculptured exquisitely with *madanikās* in alluring *bhaṅgis,* amid *haṁsas* disporting themselves in infinite poses in lotus pavilions. On each side of the jambs, powerful *dvārapālas* of majestic appearance, like the ones of the Acyuta Rāya temple at Hampi, stand with just the necessary jewelry and characteristic weapons on their persons. Over them are the *vimānas* (*bhāramaṇṭapas*) ornamented with variegated creepers of thick and graceful foliage, amid which seductive forms of dancers, together with their *vādyagāra,* of attractive damsels, and young men trooping up with plates of flower-and-fruit offerings in their hands, to consecrate them to the various deities enshrined in the *vimānas,* and monkeys trying to molest them, all these enspell us, as it were, into visions of the ethereal Beyond. The various poses of the ape-molesters lend a natural gaiety to these scenes. The same perfection of aesthetic composition and execution is in evidence on the pyramidal part of the tower as well. The *vimānas* are of various forms, and enshrine the *daśāvatāras* of Viṣṇu mostly in the *sthānika samabhaṅgi.* The *kalaśas* over these *vimānas* are all supported with delicately chiselled pillars, over which no less delicately carved floral designs, pecked at here and there by the englamoured and graceful *haṁsas,* profusely and gently creep. The horizontal shafts are sculptured, again, with *Bharata-nāṭya* poses of Gandharvas, Kinnaras, and Kimpuruṣas, and of men, together with horse-riders, lions, *yātīs,* monkeys, flower designs, and *haṁsas* similarly disporting themselves with creepers and lotus stalks. All these have been sculptured without the Hoysala overcrowding and with a surprising restraint. If the Jain motifs of decoration have enriched with a swampness, as it were, the temples of Halebid, Belur, and Somanathpur in Mysore State, and Modhera and Mt. Abu in Bombay State, they seem to have both enriched, with the usual Vijayanagar discrimination and restraint, and exhausted their imagination here at Tadpatri.

We hear them, O Mother!
Thy footfalls,
Soft, soft, through the ages
Touching earth here and there,
And the lotuses left on Thy footprints
Are cities historic,
Ancient scriptures and poems and temples,
Noble strivings, stern struggles for Right.

— SISTER NIVEDITA

TIRUMALAI-TIRUPATI AND ŚRĪNIVĀSA-VEṄKAṬEŚVARA

By Dr. K. C. Varadachari

Among the most important and ancient shrines of India, Tirumalai-Tirupati, otherwise known as Tiruveṅgaḍam, occupies a very unique position. It is where the northern and southern cultures meet. Indeed, in a special sense, this is a place of cultural synthesis.

The holy hills of Veṅgaḍam abut Tirupati, a township founded by Srī Rāmānuja, called also Govindarājapaṭnam (on the railway line connecting Renigunta, on the Bombay-Madras main line, with Pakala). It is about 91 miles from Madras. Tirupati is now the seat of Sri Venkateswara University (founded in 1954), and is a growing town, having other educational institutions. An ancient seat of culture, it is now becoming important for the same reason.

Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati
(College Buildings)

'*Tirupati*' is the name usually given to sacred shrines of the South, especially by Śrī Vaiṣṇavas. There are said to be 108 shrines or *tirupatis*. Among these 108, four are said to be most important, namely, Śrīraṅgam, Veṅgaḍam, Kāñcī, and Melkoṭe Tirunārāyaṇa. The first two, however, are pre-eminently important among these four.

Tirumalai, known as Veṅgaḍam, has been the seat of *yogins*, sages and saints. Its glory has been sung by the great devotees or Āḻvārs from verly early times. About the sanctity of this place, *Cilappadikāram*, a Tamil classic of the second century (*sic*), has spoken in glowing terms. This place has also been referred to as the place of liberation (Veṅgaḍam means the place where sins get burnt up, and thus the place of liberation or *mokṣa*; *vīdu* in Tamil). Though there are innumerable local traditions

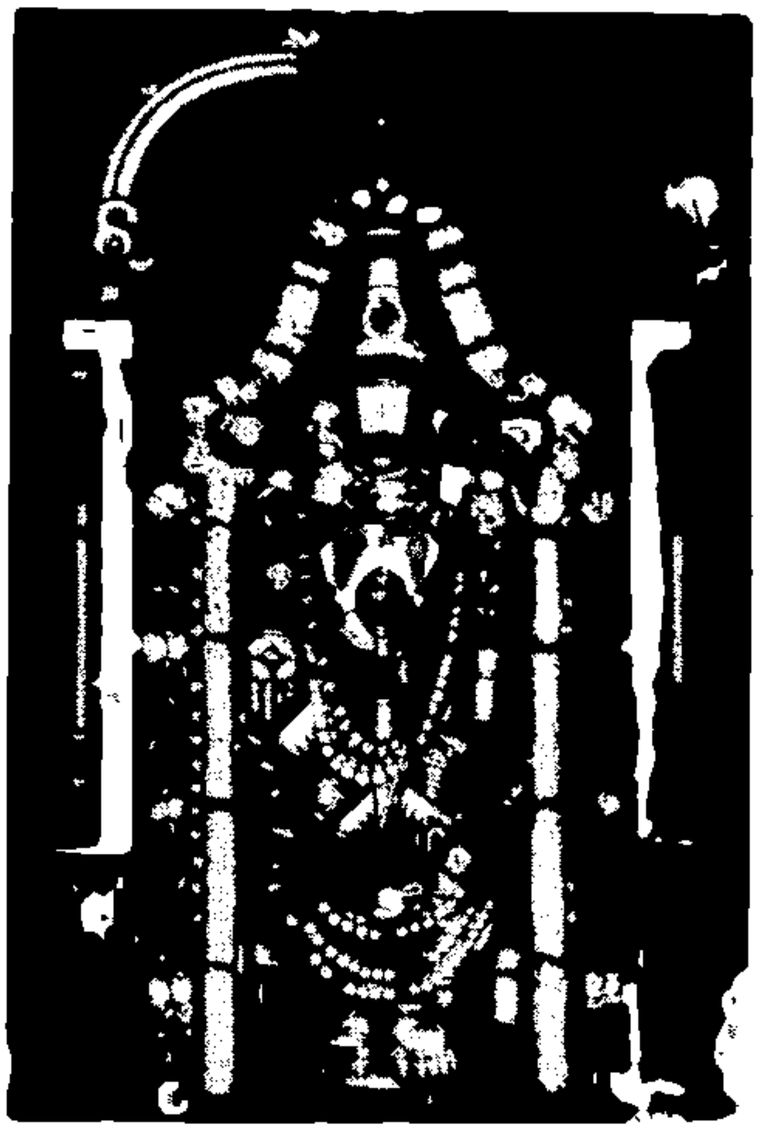
Āñjaneya or Hanumān

in the *Sthalapurāṇa*, one fact stands out clearly, namely, that from the earliest times till today it has immense spiritual power. The greatness of this place as conferring liberation has been well recognized by Kamban, Aṇṇamācārya,

Tarigoṇḍa Veṅkamma, and others. This is the place where Viṣṇu, with other forms of Brahmā, Lakṣmī, and Rudra imbedded in His person, stands receiving surrender of all. Indeed, we get a very important point when we consider the significance of the unique image of Hanumān, bound hand and foot, standing opposite the shrine of Śrīnivāsa. He is said to have come for final stay on earth after Śrī Rāma had left for heaven The greatness of this Hanumān or Āñjaneya shrine has been sung by the untouchable saint Tirup-pān-āḻvār (sixth century) (*sic*) in the third verse beginning with '*mandipāy*' in his magnificent *Amalanādipiran.*

The main icon of the place is called Śrīnivāsa, since Śrī (*Śreyas-kariṇī*) adorns the chest of Viṣṇu. The iconic pose is unusual, in so far as it does not possess *śaṅkha* and *cakra* in the upper two hands, though the hands appear to have had them at one stage ; and it was only during the period of Śrī Rāmānuja that they were restored to the icon. The unusual character of the lower two hands also has to be noticed. The right hand has the pose pointing to the feet, intending that the devotee should surrender at His feet. The left hand is in the pose of *kaṭivarti* or showing, as it were, that to one who surrenders to Him the ocean of *saṁsāra* is only knee deep, or by suggestion not deep at all, in which one does not get caught up, as in clay. It is clear that this unique icon shows with characteristic quality Srī Kṛṣṇa's teaching of surrender as contained in the most famous verse of the *Gītā*: 'Surrender all *dharmas* to Me and seek refuge in Me alone. I shall save you from all sins. Do not grieve' (XVIII. 66).

It is Śrī Rāmāṇuja, again, who has given Him the name 'Śrīnivāsa', for prior to Śrī Rāmānuja, He was known only as Veṅgaḍam or Veṅgaḍanāthan or Veṅkaṭanatha. This is to demonstrate that the Brahman of the Upaniṣads is, indeed, the Godhead who is Śriyaḥpati; who has the nature of creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the universe ; who was vowed to save all those who have taken the right decision to surrender to Him and to lead the good life ; and, indeed, the One Being who can turn our



Śrīnivāsa-Venkaṭeśvara

knowledge into devotion. Thus the opening verse of the *Srī Bhāṣya* runs:

अखिलभुवनजन्मस्थेमभङ्गादिलीले
विनतविविधभूतव्रातरक्षैकदीक्षे ।
श्रुतिशिरसि विदीप्ते ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासे
भवतु मम परस्मिन्नंशेमुषी भक्तिरूपा ॥

It is also to reveal the 'di-unity' of Divine Nature—*ubhaya-liṅga* concept of the Divine that reveals both His *saguṇa* (*kalyāṇaguṇapari-pūrṇatva*) and *nirguṇa* (*heyaguṇarahitatva*) or transcendent nature—that the name Śrīnivāsa was given to Veṅkaṭanātha. The purpose of the *avatāra* is to save those who seek refuge in Him ; it is the act of Divine mercy or *dayā.* And the very function of the iconic worship is to bring God near to man—as a clear pool near at hand, rather than a vast river afar or the ocean of Bliss beyond the worlds and inaccessible. The icon represents the grace of God near and ready at hand, a *siddhopāya.* Thus Śrīnivāsa is said to be the icon of *dayā par excellence*—one who grants Himself to His devotees, and by a play of the word '*da*' (to

give) here, one who makes one give up oneself to Him.

The vicissitudes of history have not much touched this shrine, as they have done with other shrines even in South India. The Mohammedan rulers were content to get large sums of money from the temple, which was, of course, much better than to make all income impossible by destroying it. It was a useful institution for getting money. Thus the Carnatic Nawabs and others did not interfere with the temple and its usefulness, despite their alleged fanaticism and opposition to idolatry. As a matter of fact, this policy was also continued by the East India Company till the *mahantas* came to be the trustees of the temple during the second quarter of the last century. It had royal patronage in the days of the Vijayanagar kings ; especially Kṛṣṇadevarayā and Acyutadevarāya were devotees of the shrine. Indeed, Todar Mal had come here to worship in the shrine, and even today an image of that great personality adorns the compound of the temple, along with those of Kṛṣṇadevarāya and his royal queens.

The temple itself is not comparable at all to the great works of art that can be seen in many South Indian temples. That grandeur is not here ; but a different kind of grandeur marks this quiet spot, lovely in every sense—scenery, climate, and rich associations of spiritual personalities. It is here that all the Vedāntas meet. Śrī Śaṅkara seems to have visited the place, and some believe that he installed a *Śrī cakra* here. It is sacred to the Dvaita Vedāntins in a double way, because it is the place where the great Hanumān had come to rest finally for the entire *kalpa* (being a *cirañjīvi*), who is very important to them, and also because other great *bhaktas* had sung about Veṅkaṭaramaṇa. Quite fully, it is the shrine of greatest importance to the Ubhaya-Vedānta of Śrī Rāmānuja —a twofoldness which had been achieved in respect of the nature of Godhead, in the nature of Scripture (the Vedas and *Divyaprabandha* of Ālvārs, in language (Sanskrit and Tamil so cleverly interlocked as to be called *maṇipravāla*), and in realization (as freedom in God and service of God). There is thus a full synthesis in the very icon of the deity here, as in the philosophy that speaks through the language and grammar of religion.

The North Indian tradition about this Godhead started undoubtedly when Viśiṣṭādvaita religion or *bhakti-prapatti-mārga* began to spread. This deity came to be known as Bālājī or Bālakṛṣṇa, obviously because the stage of the deity is youthful, without a spouse by His side in the sanctum. It is Kṛṣṇa, so to speak, before His marriage, who can be loved. But this is all mere speculation. In this article, we are not concerned with the several stories or mythological or Purāṇic accounts as such. Suffice to say that the deity stands for the supreme purpose of saving the souls and granting them liberation, and incidentally removing all obstacles to divine evolution.

In its form of worship, the temple is following the Vedic pattern as it has been coming to us through one Vikhanas Ṛṣi, who was said to have been the Vedic worshipper of icons. Modern scholars think—some of them at least—that Vedic seers did not worship icons, maybe on grounds of studies of what religion ought to have been. There are, of course, points in the Vedic literature which show that there was symbolic or *pratīka* worship of a temporary nature. The Vaikhānasas seem to have developed it as of more durable nature. This seems to have been also true of another sect called a-vedic, but which claims to interpret the Vedic spirit to which Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself belonged, namely, the Pāñcarātra Āgama. Śrī Vaiṣṇava theologians (Śrī Yāmunācārya, Śrī Rāmānuja, and Vedānta Deśika) had shown that the two forms of iconic worship were not contradictory or even complementary, but identical with such slight differences as arise out of certain modifications that creep in during the adaptations to different kinds of worshippers. This is a further synthesis here, and the daily worship of the deity also includes the use of Tamil *pāśurams* or hymns of the leading Āḻvārs, and chanting of them along

with the Vedas during the festivals and processions of the deity in the streets of Tirumalai.

Today the temple is being administered by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. A number of amenities are being provided for all the pilgrims by the Management, such as spacious rest houses, adequate water supply and other sanitary arrangements, and opportunities for worship, and even transport, which is of great use. The number of pilgrims visiting this shrine is becoming greater and greater. Of course, from the point of view of help and personal experience received by the pilgrims of the Godhead, there are innumerable incidents which speak of the unique spiritual nature of the shrine. The deity is a living deity as they call Him, *pratyakṣadaiva*. And they consider Him to be the only deity for the Age of Kali—*'kalau Veṅkaṭanāyakaḥ'*. Last year, the temple was renovated, and the central tower of the main shrine, called *ānandanilaya*, was goldgilted at great cost.

Ānandanilaya

The future prospect of the religious life of the country is undoubtedly tied up with the institutions of religion and spiritual life. Thanks to the world-vision of the Āḻvārs, who had inspired the Ācāryas of Viśiṣṭādvaita, the intellectual philosophy that pleaded for non-sensual intuition came to be associated with the sensual and supersensual and intuitive perception of God and His work in the world of common men. But it was not mere formal religion, or even the secular religion of the modern man, which looks up to religion as an institution to *serve* man by socializing the deity also. It was mystical religion that urged the individual to grow into divine nature by purifying his appetites and sublimating his aspirations for perishable wealth and earthly happiness. The dynamics of mystic religion, then, cannot adequately be fulfilled by the secularization of the functions of God Himself.

This warning seems to be necessary in an age when the service of God seems to be substituted by the platitude of socialistic service of man. For man is a creature seeking freedom from the misery of birth and death and sinfulness, which is typified by the word *'ven'* in Tamil, and this is sought to be transcended, *'kaḍa'* in Tamil. It is not the attempt to get rid of small miseries (*kṣudra*) that is the main function of religion, though some enthusiasts hold that religious fervour will increase if man were to feel that God is really looking after his physical and material wants as well (*yoga-kṣema*). That is to say, men find reasons for the diversion of temple funds for all sorts of modern conceptions. However, discernment will surely show that there must be limits for this reasoning, and spiritual people will be very happy if the main lines of such diversions are in accord with the development solely of spiritual life and culture in the people.

The hope is not without foundation, and is bound to be realized, provided the faith in the living deity of Tirupati grows more and more, for it is not mere idolatry at any rate, but a living testimony to the descent of Godhead Himself in the form of *arcā* (luminous

presence). Religion becomes real, and spirituality a mystic force, only when men dedicate themselves to realize the best and the highest virtue in themselves and all around. Moral rearmament is really a daily living in touch with God, and it is this that spirituality can offer, and it alone can offer. Śrīnivāsa is not merely a symbol and a heritage for harmony and unity of all, He is also the goal, as the Ālvār said where gods and men meet for mutual glory and liberation.

To conclude, the shrine of Śrīnivāsa is an experiment in synthesis of all religions, to provide a harmony for the world. Where there is harmony, there is peace. The world of the common man and the philosopher's world are not opposites, nor can the realities of the ordinary man be illusions of the saint utterly. It may be that the idol can lead to the vision of heart, and the vision of the Divine in the heart may lead to transcendent experience of the Godhead. However that may be, it is a fact that, thanks to the spiritual love of the saints, God had condescended to show Himself even in this form, so as to serve man to rise to higher levels of wisdom and transcendent liberation. It shows the immense power of God that He can not only be in heaven, but also be on earth without being bound by it. It is not a transitory miracle, but a perpetual miracle of His illimitable power that is testified to by this unique icon, which today is attracting more worshippers than ever.

RĀMĀNUJA'S THEORY OF PERCEPTION

INDETERMINATE AND DETERMINATE

By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

Division of perception into indeterminate and determinate forms is a favourite topic for discussion in Indian systems of philosophy. Such a discussion satisfies the curiosity of the Indian mind, which is always anxious to find out what and how much one can actually grasp while becoming acquainted directly with a new object. Inference, verbal testimony, and memory cannot give us knowledge of things which are entirely new. So no division of inference or of verbal testimony or of memory into determinate and indeterminate forms has been recognized by the Indian thinkers. Although almost all the systems of Indian thought recognize the existence of indeterminate perception and determinate perception, they hold slightly different views about the nature of these two types of perceptual cognition.

This article is a full analysis of the above two forms of perception from the standpoint of Rāmānuja. At the same time, I have made an attempt to compare Rāmānuja's views with the Nyāya theory of indeterminate and determinate perception.

Knowledge gained immediately and not through the mediation of some other knowledge is called perception. This direct and immediate experience is effected through the use of the external and internal sense-organs. A contact between the object and the sense-organ is the pre-condition of perceptual knowledge under ordinary conditions. The sense-object contact necessary for perceptual knowledge is of two kinds, viz, *saṁyoga* and *saṁyuktāśraya*. The perception of substance is due to *saṁyoga*. The sense-organ comes in contact with the substance

when one perceives a jar. The perception of qualities, however, is due to *saṁyuktāśraya* relation, as in this case the sense-organs come in contact with substances in which the qualities inhere.

Perception can be classified into determinate and indeterminate forms from the point of view of fullness and clearness of knowledge. In indeterminate perception, we do not perceive a pure and simple object, shorn of all its characteristics, as such an absolutely unqualified object, according to Rāmānuja, can never become the content of knowledge. Knowledge always reveals an object as qualified by some of its characteristics.[1] Discrimination is the most fundamental condition of knowledge, and so consciousness always involves some sort of differentiation and distinction. Whenever we perceive an object, we perceive the special arrangement of parts. We cannot perceive a cow without perceiving its dewlap and the like. So indeterminate perception, according to Rāmānuja, is the perception of an individual as a specific instance in the absence of any revival in memory of the past impressions of like instances, observed on previous occasions. As recollection of other similar instances is not present, the perceiver perceives the object as the first instance, and no knowledge of its common qualities arises in his mind. Here *prathamapiṇḍa* has been specially mentioned in order to lay stress on the fact that, in the absence of the recollection of the past traces of similar instances of that class, the perceiver is unable to detect its common characteristics or to know the class to which that individual belongs. It seems to him as if he is seeing the object for the first time.[2]

Savikalpaka pratyakṣa or determinate perception is therefore the perception of the object together with the recollection of the other instances of the same kind, perceived in the past in different places and resulting in a thorough understanding of the distinction between common and specific characteristics of the object at the time of perception. Thus, when we see a 'table', we remember the other instances of the 'table' perceived on other occasions, with the result that we are able to know that it is a particular 'table' belonging to the class 'table' and possessing class characteristics along with its specific characteristics. It is because this perception is fuller, richer, and more definite, and is also accompanied by the past impressions roused up in memory, that it is called *savikalpaka* (accompanied by revived impressions) as against *nirvikalpaka*, where revival of such impressions does not take place. In both the forms, the object perceived is a *qualified one*. The difference between these two forms therefore lies mainly in their psychological processes, and it is this difference in the psychological processes that causes difference in the knowledge of the perceiver as well; because in the case of indeterminate perception, even common qualities of the object appear to the perceiver as specific in the absence of *anuvṛtti-jñāna*. The object is perceived as unique, whereas in the determinate perception, due to *anuvṛtti-jñāna*, the object appears as a member of a particular class and also as possessing both generic and specific characteristics.

According to Rāmānuja, the generic quality is grasped as a quality of the object even in indeterminate perception; the only thing is that here the quality is perceived only as a quality and not as a generic feature of the object perceived. The generic feature, however, is not anything different from *saṁsthāna*; so when *saṁsthāna* is perceived in indeterminate form, the generic quality is also grasped. It is only because, in indeterminate perception, all qualities (both generic and specific) are perceived that, in the subsequent determinate perception, the perceiver, on seeing the common qualities and on remembering that these qualities were perceived by him in similar instances on the other occasions, accepts these qualities as class qualities or *jāti-guṇa*. Thus for Rāmānuja, *nirvikalpaka* perception is not *niṣprakārakaṁ jñānam*, but *prakārasya anuvṛttirahitaṁ jñānam*.

[1] *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, I.1.
[2] *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, I.1.1; *Yatīndramata-dīpikā*, p. 5.

The Naiyāyikas, however, have stated that indeterminate stage is the first stage of the non-relational apprehension of an object, and that this stage can be known by people under ordinary circumstances through inference only. In the opinion of the Nyāya school, we cannot have determinate knowledge or *viśiṣṭa-jñāna* without a prior perception of the simpler elements of *jāti, guṇa ākāra, saṁbandha,* etc. in a state of *dvandva* (separation). We are therefore led to infer the existence of *nirvikalpaka* stage as preceding every stage of determinate perception. A prior perception of *viśeṣaṇa* is absolutely necessary for determinate knowledge.

A perusal of the trend of discussion which Rāmānuja held on the topic of perception reveals that, in his opinion, a prior perception of *viśeṣaṇa* is not the cause of the subsequent *viśiṣṭa-jñāna,* which the Naiyāyikas seem to have only in the stage of determinate perception. The real cause for *savikalpaka pratyakṣa,* according to Rāmānuja, seems to be a *saṁskāra* of *viśeṣaṇa,* and so an impression of the attribute, if properly revived, can give a new determinate knowledge of a previously experienced object even in the absence of a prior indeterminate stage.

Indeterminate perception, thus, does not seem to be an absolutely necessary prior stage in every case of determinate perception, according to Rāmānuja. When we perceive an object and remember immediately the attribute, we can have the required *anuvṛtti-jñāna* of the attribute even without passing through a stage of indeterminate perception. Where such revival of *saṁskāra* is not possible, we shall have, first of all, the apprehension of a qualified object unaccompanied by revival of impressions. The apprehension of pervasiveness of some properties in the second and third instances can never be possible unless those properties as properties of the individual are perceived in the very first instance.

Here, we must be very careful in interpreting the meaning of the expression '*dvitīādi-piṇḍa-grahaṇam*'. The word '*dvitīādi*' does not merely mean the second instance or the third instance, but it also implies the recognition of the second instance etc. as such (i.e. as second, third, and so on) on the part of the perceiver (*dvitīāditvena piṇḍa-grahaṇam* etc).

If, on the basis of Rāmānuja's definition of indeterminate perception and determinate perception, we now proceed to analyse further the steps involved in a perceptual process, we shall get the following result:

First moment: *Nirvikalpaka* stage, that is, the perception of the qualified object without the revival of past impressions and therefore without *anuvṛtti-jñāna.*

Second moment: The perception of the second instance together with the revival of past impressions.

Third moment: Recognition of common qualities as *anuvṛtta-dharma* or *jāti-guṇa* with the help of the past impressions.

Fourth moment: Reflection on similarities and dissimilarities.

Determinate perception starts at the second moment, and it becomes full and complete at the fourth moment. Perception of the second instance, being the cause of *anuvṛtti-jñāna,* cannot take place at one and the same moment. Cause is always an event that is prior to the effect. Since perception of the seemed instance and *anuvṛtti-jñāna* (being cause and effect) cannot occur simultaneously, we must place them separately at two different moments. Moreover, in the original sources, everywhere the expression used is *dvitīādi.* From this, we can infer legitimately that, in the second moment, the second instance is perceived, and that the common qualities are recognized as *anuvṛtta-dharma* only in the third moment.

If we compare this process of perception of Rāmānuja with that of the Naiyāyikas, the following differences will at once be detected by us. Firstly, according to Rāmānuja, in order to have determinate perception, we ordinarily need a knowledge of quality in quality (*viśeṣaṇa* in *viśeṣaṇa*). Mere perception of cowness in a cow is not enough for the purpose of determinate knowledge. We are also to possess a

knowledge of the existence of 'cowness' in many cows (*aneka-vṛttitva*). For the Nyāya system, however, the perception of cowness in a cow is sufficient for the purpose of the determinate perception of the cow.

Secondly, according to the Nyāya theory, the whole perceptual process will be complete at the fifth moment and not at the fourth moment.

First moment: *Nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa* or non-relational apprehension of *viśeṣya viśeṣaṇa* etc.

Second moment: Determinate perception or relational apprehension.

Third moment: Perception of the second instance.

Fourth moment: Recognition of the *jāti-guṇa* (*anuvṛtti-jñāna*).

Fifth moment: Reflection on similarities and dissimilarities.

Thus, according to the Naiyāyikas, determinate perception does not need observation of the second instance ; but for Rāmānuja, the perceiver cannot have determinate knowledge unless he perceives the second instance and understands it as such. Further, according to Rāmānuja, the difference between the two kinds of perception arises only when perception is viewed from the side of the subject. When viewed from the side of the object and its manifestation, such distinction disappears immediately. Both *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka* bring the same type of qualified object into relation with the perceiver. In the former, the perceiver is not equipped with a memory of *pūrva saṁskāra,* whereas in the latter, recollection of past impressions by the perceiver is the most essential and necessary condition. According to the Nyāya, however, there is difference between these two forms of perception from the point of view of the object as well. In the *nirvikalpaka* perception, the perceiver does not cognize a qualified object, whereas in the *savikalpaka* perception, the object perceived is a qualified one.

Regarding the duration of time needed for full and complete knowledge of an object, Rāmānuja is able to save one moment, thereby making his perceptual process a bit simpler than that of the Naiyāyikas. According to the Nyāya school, relation between different presented facts takes place after one moment, whereas Rāmānuja has emphatically stated that there is no moment in the perceptual process when facts remain unrelated. Presentation always implies presentation of a qualified object. So, if we follow Rāmānuja, we gain one moment. In the case of the perception of *daṇḍin* (a man with a stick), for instance, a Naiyāyika will say that first we perceive *daṇḍa* (stick) and *puruṣa* (man) and then we perceive the *daṇḍin,* whereas a Rāmānujist will assert that, if we had seen *daṇḍa* on some previous occasions, then, in this case, by simply remembering the impression of *daṇḍa,* we shall be able to perceive the *daṇḍin* at the very first moment.

Although, in the texts, Rāmānuja has not definitely mentioned about such remembering of *saṁskāras,* still it seems reasonable to hold that this was his view, as otherwise, it would be very difficult for a Rāmānujist to explain how perception of a qualified object could take place at the very first moment.

In conclusion, we can say that a close study of the perceptual processes of these two schools will, however, reveal that actually the difference between the Nyāya view of perception and Rāmānuja's view of perception is slight. Rāmānuja differs from the Nyāya school only in holding that the object perceived in indeterminate form is a qualified one. Otherwise, like the Naiyāyikas, he also holds that an analysis of generic and specific features based on our knowledge of subject-predicate relation takes place only in the *savikalpaka* stage.

BLISS IN THE PATH OF DEVOTION

By Sri K. R. Chaudhuri

The protogonists of the path of *bhakti* often claim a monopoly of the bliss or *ānanda* of Godhead in their way of worship. They refer to the travails of the paths of *yoga* and *jñāna* and the distractions of the path of *karma*. This claim is not maintainable and is dogmatic. Against dogmatism Sri Ramakrishna used to say that it narrows the intake channel of spiritual influence and masquarades as *niṣṭhā* or fixity of knowledge. But the hiatus between *niṣṭhā* and *śraddhā* (faith) yawns wide even for men of genius. Witness Einstein, the greatest scientific genius of our time, who declared, 'Truth is eternally unattainable' (meaning the Absolute, with our mental apparatus), say of his faith: 'To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness. My religion consists of a humble adoration of the illimitable superior Spirit who reveals Himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds.'

Take an instance at home. The celebrated Nyāya philosopher of India, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi, opens his famous *Cintāmaṇi-dīdhiti* with words meaning: 'I bow down to the all-pervading Paramātman symbolizing unpartitioned *ānanda* and consciousness and staying alone with the entire creation within His being.' In a similar way, we can take the claim to monopoly of the *ānanda* of Godhead made by devotees as asserting their *niṣṭhā* more than their *śraddhā*.

Śraddhā is the stuff of our spiritual stage; the *Gītā*, XVII. 3 says, 'Whatever a man's faith is, that he essentially is'. It is, according to Sri Aurobindo, the 'wisdom of the race... which he accepts, to which his mind and the leading parts of his being give their assent or sanction, which he tries to make his own by living it in his mind, will, and action' (*Essays on the Gītā*, p. 425). It is the 'soul's dynamics'; and he says, 'This single line contains, implied in its few forceful words, almost the whole theory of the modern gospel of pragmatism' (*ibid.*, p. 429). He takes *niṣṭhā* as 'means of salvation on which men concentrate separately' (*ibid.*, p. 96).

Understandable, therefore, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's reference to the path of action and the path of knowledge only as *niṣṭhās* (*Gītā*, III. 3), as *bhakti* is essentially a system of special type of action infused to a greater degree with knowledge of the greatness or goodness of God. In the *Bhāgavata*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa elaborates this further, mentioning *bhakti* as a full-blooded *yoga* and says: 'The path of knowledge is only for persons who have *vairāgya* established in them and reached disinterestedness, *anāsakti*; the path of action is for the vast majority who are attached to earthly pleasures and full of desires; while the path of *bhakti* is for the middle category—men who are neither too attached nor too dispassionate, but who have *śraddhā* in the accounts of the Lord' (II. 20.6-8). The path is indicated, it would seem, as *karma*, *bhakti*, and *jñāna*, in the order of spiritual evolution marked by the development of *anāsakti*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa similarly indicated the rarity of men who have attained *siddhi* (yogic perfection or *citta-śuddhi*) by hard discipline, and the rarity, among them, of men who attained the realization of the Reality or the Absolute (*Gītā*, VII.3). *Karma*, it is said, leads to *siddhi* in a tardy way; and from the above, it would seem *bhakti* would succeed somewhat earlier, other things being equal. And, then, we need not forget that this life is not all; we are evolving through a number of lives, according to our *śraddhā* or *nisus formativus* (with apology to biologists).

It would not do, then, to cavil at the *jñānin* who is an advanced fighter, nor to despise the *karmin* who also has the full potentialities, or the *bhakta* who is in the middle of the race. Who knows which horse will win? In the words of Sri Aurobindo: 'The orthodox *yoga* of knowledge aims at a fathomless immergence in the one infinite existence, *sāyujya*; it looks upon that alone as the entire liberation. The *yoga* of adoration envisages an eternal habitation or nearness as the greater release, *sālokya, sāmīpya.* The *yoga* of works leads to oneness in power of being and nature, *sādṛśya*; but the *Gītā* envelops them all in its catholic integrality and fuses them all into one greatest and richest divine freedom and perfection' (*Essays on the Gītā,* p. 354). This is echoed in the Koran (translated by Abdulla Yusuf Ali, *Sura,* VIII. *Ayat* 46):

> And obey God and His Apostle
> And fall into no dispute,
> Lest ye lose heart
> And your power depart:
> And be patient and persevering:
> And God is with those
> Who patiently persevere.

Even the Viśiṣṭādvaitins of the South (*Yatīndramata-dīpikā,* by Śrīnivāsadāsa, following closely Rāmānuja's views) discriminate between *sādhana-bhakti* (the means) and *phala-bhakti* (the end, which is an act of gift of God). They say that *phala-bhakti* may be attained in this life or hereafter. In Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature, *phala-bhakti* is termed '*prema*' (pronounced '*prem*' in North India). Indicating its rarity, Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'You people blab '*pyām*', '*pyām*' (parody of *prem*); but is *prem* a common thing? Caitanya (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya) realized *prem.* There are two signs: complete forgetfulness of worldly interests; and God-love culminating in ecstatic oblivion of body-sense. *Prem* is not realized before the vision of God' (*Kathāmṛta,* II.2.3). He characterized *prem* as a rope, with which the devotee secures God, who cannot then escape (echoed in the *Bhāgavata,* IX.4.66: 'They gain control of Me as a devoted wife understands and controls her devoted husband'). Sri Ramakrishna said: 'A devotee who has realized *prem* can pull the rope and have a vision of Him' (*Kathāmṛta,* IV.16.2). He graded the work of devotees in an ascending order: 'Than objective offering of flowers and fruits to the Lord (*pūjā*), repeating the name or *mantra* on a rosary (*japa*) is better; than *japa, dhyāna*; superior to *dhyāna* is God-love; best is *prem*' (*ibid.,* IV.21.5).

Right through the Vedas runs a rich vein of *bhakti,* as can be seen in *Rg-Veda,* I.3; I.32.8; I.56.1; I.57.4-5; I.62.11; I.63.5; I.64.1; and others. Vaiṣṇava devotees subdivide *bhakti* into nine types, the roots of which also are found deep in the Vedas, e.g. *śravaṇa* (listening to the lore of the Lord) in *R.V.,* II.28.1; *kīrtana* (singing the glory of God) in *R.V.,* I.154.1; I.156.3; II.27.1; VII.99.7; *vandana* (salutation) in *R.V.,* II.27.12; II.27.14; II.28.2; II.28.8; *Y.V.,* XVI.17; XXXI.20; *pādasevana* (showing respect by touching feet) in *R.V.,* I.154.4; *arcana* (worship with flowers etc.) in *R.V.,* I.159.1; II.27.2; *smaraṇa* (remembrance) in *R.V.,* I.154.3; *dāsya* (service) in *R.V.,* I.156.3; II.28.6; *sakhya* (friendship) in *R.V.,* I.154.5; II.27.4; II.27.7; *ātma-nivedana* (complete surrender) in *R.V.,* II.27.5; II.27.11 (which says, 'I do not know the right from the left, the front from the back; of immature knowledge and distressed, I throw myself before you that you may lead me into your secure Light'); II.27.13; II.28.3. The *Rg-Veda* describes the path of *bhakti* as, 'Easy is your road yielding unending bliss at all stages' (II.27.6); and says: 'In that great state of Viṣṇu, there wells up the fountain of honey' (I.154.5) and 'In non-violence let us find bliss eternal' (II.27.16).

The Upaniṣads join this chorus: *Muṇḍaka,* II.2.5 says, 'He is the bridge to Immortality' (of course, in many texts of the Upaniṣads Ātman and Brahman are taken as convertible terms); *Kaṭha,* II.2.14: 'Indescribably un-

limited bliss'; *Muṇḍaka,* II.2.7: 'Who shines forth as bliss and immortality' ; *Aitareya,* II.5: 'Other (than ego) is the Ātman full of bliss' ; *Taittirīya,* II.7: 'He is bliss incarnate; His worshipper attains to this blissfulness. Who would have cared to live, if His bliss were not there? He alone gladdens our heart' ; *Chāndogya,* I.1.5: 'He is the most blissful among things blissful'; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* I.4.8: 'He is to be worshipped as dearer than the son, dearer than riches; He is the innermost Reality'; II.4.5 and IV.5.6: 'All dear things in this world are dear for the sake of the Ātman' ; IV.4.14: 'Those who know It become immersed in bliss'.

The *Gītā* speaks of a sort of reciprocity in the relations of the devotee and God, as in the worldly sentiment of love, which is active and mutual, and which grows by feeding from both ends. Speaking of advanced devotees, the *Gītā* says, 'Mind and sense absorbed, I alone am the theme of their discourse: Thus delighting each other, they live in bliss and contentment' (X.9-11). This is the interim 'bliss'. In this state of inner vision, Śrī Kṛṣṇa proceeds to explain, 'I give them the *buddhiyoga,* and I destroy the darkness of ignorance (the chains of worldly existence) with the bright lamp of knowledge'. Thus both *yoga* and *jñāna* come to the true devotee. In Chapter XII (Bhaktiyoga), the *Gītā* refers to it as 'blissful and immortal *dharma*' (20); and later says, 'I am the foundation of the immanent Godhead (Brahman), of life immortal, of perennial *dharma,* and of invariable and absolute bliss' (XIV.27). Earlier Śrī Kṛṣṇa stressed His double aspect, 'I am same and equal in all beings, and have none to hate or love; but he who worships Me with unwavering devotion is lodged in Me, and I in him' (IX.29).

In homely simile Sri Ramakrishna said: 'He is in all beings, it is true, but He is present in the heart of His devotee in a special sense, as a Zemindar may visit and be available in all parts of his estate, but knowledgeable men say that he is to be found almost invariably in such-and-such a house; the devotee's heart is His drawing room' (*Kathāmṛta,* I.2.3).

The Koran (III.171) affirms:

> They glory in the Grace
> And the Bounty from God;
> And in the fact that God suffereth not
> The reward of the Faithful
> To be lost (in the least).

Nārada describes to Vyāsa in the *Bhāgavata* (I.6.23) that he had a vision of God in human form, when He told Nārada: 'Once that I have shown you My form, it is meant to whet your passion for Me; when that comes off, all earthly desires slip off from the devotee's mind.' And the path of devotion employs all our 'enemies' to help us along the way of God. The *Bhāgavata* says, 'So long our earthly desires and attractions are thieves and our home a prison-house and delusions (of Māyā) chains and shackles of the feet, until, Kṛṣṇa! we turn to be your men and proteges' (X.14.36). Any serious and impartial student of the *Bhāgavata* will admit that its author Vyāsa viewed Śrī Kṛṣṇa with two eyes of *jñāna* and *bhakti,* none of which he agreed to close for a moment. For every three *ślokas* dealing with the subject from the angle of *jñāna,* he added two from the angle of *bhakti*; for Nārada had told him that otherwise 'that vision or knowledge is incomplete' (I.5.8). At the end of the book, Vyāsa bows down to Śrī Kṛṣṇa saying that he composed this 'lamp of knowledge' having been attracted by His works and exploits, although he was already filled with the bliss of Ātman, and had given up the relish for anything else in the world. Desires shed their nature and undergo a transformation when directed towards God, as seeds fried in fire cannot germinate (X.22.26). Our emotions so employed undergo a process of sublimation, and when the entire system of sentiments (groupings of emotions disposed in a particular way) is held steadfast in God by daily practice, a complete absorption of personality results and the process cumulates (X.29.15).

On this process of sublimation, analogous to catalysis, Vyāsa builds his bold and brilliant theory of God-love and God-absorption of the Gopīs of Vṛndāvana, immortalized in the Tenth

Skandha of the *Bhāgavata.* He starts off with their maternal affection towards Kṛṣṇa—one of the strongest sentiments in this world: 'Your Majesty (Śuka addressing Parīkṣit), this earthly existence, the work of ignorance, is not for them again who always love Kṛṣṇa as their own child' (X.6.40). Later, when Kṛṣṇa grew up to be 8 or 11 (an age between these limits), they looked upon Him as their husband or lover, and Kṛṣṇa cherished them for their unswerving attachment (X.45.4). The power of unswerving *bhakti* is wonderful; it may easily override social conventions, family obligations, and scriptural injunctions, because these are, in a sense, fetters forged on the libido. The words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are forceful and striking: 'These women, who did not know My reality as God Immanent or Transcendent, were engrossed in My thought, as of a lover or paramour, and attained to Me, who am the Para-Brahman, in their thousands through their absorption in Me' (XI. 12.13). Skandha X, Chapter 29 explains this further: 'Absorbed in Thee (Uddhava says to Śrī Kṛṣṇa), the Paramātman, even in attachment as to a paramour, their fetters fell off, and they cast off the body, the product of *guṇas.*' And Śrī Kṛṣṇa assures Uddhava in the same strain: 'Whatever trifling activity, as may be due to fear etc. (any strong emotion, that is to say), unselfishly meant for Me, becomes an act of religion' (XI.29.21).

Speaking of *prema,* Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes three distinct categories:

Selfish love: 'Mutual affection, glorified as love, that springs from only selfish motives is neither friendship nor lover or *dharma*; it is only selfishness' (X.32.17).

Unselfish love: 'Affection asking for no requital, as that of parents, kind and steadfast, is true friendship and pure *dharma*' (X.32.18).

God-love or Self-love: 'And there are some (Self-realized souls) who do not return the attentions of devotees, far less those of non-devotees, who are Self-delighted, have attained the end of desire, are incorrect according to social standards, and are hurtful to their beloved' (X.32.19). He instances His own behaviour in explanation of this thesis: 'I do not at first return the love of My devotees, so that their love may not be dimmed by elation, like a fabulously rich man turned a pauper who is oblivious of the world (as a Self-realized soul is) in the thought of his riches' (X.32.20).

In this path of devotion, ever-renewed delights await the pilgrim, which the *Bhāgavata* aptly describes as 'sweeter and sweeter at every step' (I.1.19); 'the eternal festivity of the mind, the drying up of the ocean of grief' (XII.12. 49); 'the names of God marked by His glory which the *sādhus* sing, listen to, and praise' (I.5.11). Finally, 'the four types of salvation (*sāyujya, sālokya, sāmīpya,* and *sārūpya*) brought to them through their unwavering devotion are despised by them who are absorbed in My service—what to speak of things mundane?' (IX.4.67). We are to live in this world like the woman with her heart set steadfastly on a man outside the home, performing household duties timely, and tasting the love inside her heart for the man of her heart outside her home. This is the famous simile of the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* (*Upaśama Prakaraṇa,* 74.83), which has been seized upon by the Vaiṣṇavas, and was often quoted by Śrī Caitanya. The *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* asks: 'How can such a woman be made to forget the festive delight that arises in her heart at the thought of her beloved even by the best influence of her husband (whom she does not love)?' (*ibid.,* 74.85). As for her, so for us, this world is a prison-house; nature compels us to be confined here, but we must hold our heart up to '*para-saṅga-rasāyanam*' (which in Sanskrit equally means 'the delight of the company of another' or 'the delight of the presence of the Para-Brahman'). This is an initial stage; later, the 'home' is forgotten, as in the case of the Gopīs. Then follows wholesale absorption and all that it connotes.

INDIA REVISITED

By 'A Wanderer'

Destiny threw me outside of India, and I had been living in the U.S.A.—New York—for more than seven years. It was a unique experience for more than one reason. You understand your country—its good and bad points—better when you are away from it. You can see your country objectively; you can look at it from a distance with reference to the world context. Your personal emotion plays a great part in it, but if you keep your eyes open, your emotion becomes chastened and subdued. For with all your patriotism, nationalism, love for mother country, you are forced to compare the ideas, ideals, and activities of your country with those of other nations of the world. Thereby your love for your country is tested—sometimes it is put to hard test. If you are weak, you succumb to the temptation of the glamour of new experience in foreign countries. The result is some Indians who go to or stay in foreign countries become much more foreigners to India than the foreigners themselves.

My circumstances were such that I did not know when I would be able to return to India —even for a short visit. The first few years of life in the U.S.A. were devoted to the efforts to adjust myself to new conditions and environments, and when things became normal to some extent, I was intensely interested to know how India was facing the situations that arose after Independence. In foreign countries, to get the correct news of your country is very difficult. In this, you cannot always rely on foreign papers, for the news that is published in foreign papers is very often coloured by prejudices or darkened by ignorance. I was trying to get information about the real state of affairs in India from all available sources. But India began, slowly and gradually, to take the shape of dreamland before my eyes. I did not know when I would be able to see India personally. Will my interest in India remain only a theoretical study, a vague feeling of joy, pride, or sadness according to the news that reaches me?

It was hard to believe that it was true. But it was. On April 21, 1958, I found myself in the Idlewild Airport, New York, booked for India, with several friends there to see me off. Then I thought I was really going. From New York to London I travelled in an American Airline; from Europe to India I was in an Indian Airline. It was a great joy to travel in a plane owned and managed by an Indian company. But all the while, I was comparing whether the standard maintained by it was as high as that of other air companies. Several persons said that the Air India Internationl had already built up a reputation for efficiency. I found the crew very eager and anxious to be of any help and service to the passengers.

I did not stop much on the way, for I wanted to come as quickly as possible to India. So in five days—on the 26th April—I was in Bombay, on the soil of India, with the sweltering heat of the city to welcome me. This year in the month of April, too, New York was pretty cold; so from New York to Bombay it was such a great contrast. I got myself rid of my heavy clothing, put on light Indian dress, and got the taste of liberation—at least from the burden of clothes and dress. Specially in hot summer, with Indian clothes and footwear one feels so free and comfortable. Not only that. Within a few hours of my putting on Indian dress and of being in Indian environment, I altogether forgot that I was ever in a Western country. America became a memory to me, which I had to call up with a certain degree of effort. *Vice versa*, when you put on, or are forced to put on, foreign dress and follow foreign customs and manners, do they not affect your outlook on life? However much you may consider them non-essential, do they not slowly and silently work out a change in your life till after

a sufficiently long time you become a foreigner in your own country? Adjustment and accommodation are good and even necessary in life. Without them life becomes a constant warfare, but one should be cautious that one is not carried away by the tide. So Mahatma Gandhi made the wearing of home-spun clothes the symbol of Indian nationalism. During the non-co-operation movement in India, one very sincere and honest person—a Congress worker—told me that putting on Khaddar dress brought in him a sense of purity and a spirit of service. In a way it is right, but carried too far it becomes a superstition.

In Bombay, I stayed very close to a temple. In the evening, I found men, women, and children coming to the temple to attend the evening service. There was so much devotion in the face of almost all of them that it was very striking, specially to one who had just arrived from a foreign land. Is it because of things like this that India is considered to be a land of religion? But such statements might be the outcome of superficial thinking. In America, more than 61 per cent of people attend churches, synagogues, and the like. And the statistics indicate that the number is on the increase. I have heard Indians saying that many of those who go to churches are not very serious about their religious life, they go to churches because of family habit or social pressure. This may not be the whole truth. I have seen groups of Catholics going to churches very early in the morning even in the winter season, and one could see great devotion in their faces. During one Easter time, I went to see St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, and I saw some women telling their beads in silent prayer. Looking at them, one could feel they were deeply earnest in their spiritual practice. Going to St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, one would see, even on ordinary days, groups of people attending ritualistic worship in different parts of the sacred building. On seeing such things, one would be reminded of worship in big temples in India. In this connection, one should remember that there is a great attempt in some churches to bring and keep people in religion through the fear of perdition and hell-fire, whereas in India it is spontaneous. Even the children, whom I saw attending the evening service in the temple in Bombay, came, I believe, not as a result of any pressure, but out of spontaneous feeling.

From Bombay I came to Bengal to stay for some time in a place on the bank of the Gaṅgā. Once you see the Gaṅgā and ponder over what part that holy river has played in the building up of Indian religion and civilization, you seem to be absorbed in its hoary traditions. No wonder the Gaṅgā is considered to be so holy by many Indians. Its reputation of sacredness has travelled beyond the Arabian Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Once in New York, I got an invitation from a gentleman to attend a ceremonial function when the Gaṅgā water would be sprinkled on the bosom of the Hudson river, so that the latter also might be holy. I considered the man to be a crank and did not reply to his letter. But the notable thing is that, even behind his crankishness, there was the idea that the Gaṅgā was holy, and her influence should not be confined to India only.

While in Bengal, I had the privilege and opportunity of talking with several persons on the problems of religious life. If you can talk with them closely and intimately, you realize how high the human aspirations can reach. While the present world is in travail, and knows not how to meet the crisis of civilization, it is good to know that there are sincere and honèst persons who can rise above the immediate problems and look into the fundamental questions of human life, such as who are you, where did you come from, and where will you be going to? Those who deal with these questions sincerely are sometimes considered to be visionaries or indulging in theories. But in laboratories scientific truths are first discovered, and then they are applied in wide fields and on large-scale measures. One must solve one's own problems or see the Truth for oneself, before one can be expected to help others. Otherwise, a blindman wants to lead other blindmen and all are in confusion.

At the time I was in Bengal, an American magazine made some remarks against Calcutta which were likely to discourage tourists to come to this city. That created sensation and resentment and became the subject of discussion even in the Legislative Assembly. A few days after that, there was an American visitor to Calcutta. Without knowing the controversy that was going on about Calcutta, she remarked Calcutta is not only dirty, but filthy. Yes, the problem of refugees from East Pakistan has become so perplexing that it is well-nigh impossible to keep Calcutta clean. If you see the railway station at Sealdah (on the eastern part of Calcutta) and observe the condition in which the refugees are living, you cannot but get exasperated. Bengal has fallen on evil days, and Calcutta has a pathetic look. The external cleanliness may be the object of notice by a tourist, but that is not all of a city or a country. The same American visitor saw Belur Math and Dakshineswar, and she ejaculated that those were the best moments of her life. She had spiritual yearning in her.

While in Bengal, I was invited to see two Sanskrit religious dramas staged in Calcutta by some professors and students of Sanskrit. Each time, the big hall was packed to its utmost capacity. The plays were highly uplifting and dignified. While seeing it, the question occurred to me whether anywhere in the world such an inspiring religious play could be staged and whether that would draw such a large house. From start to finish, both the plays were highly sublime, and had great educative value. Once in New York, with great expectation I went to see a religious drama. In that, good things were mixed up with so many dirty things that I felt sad that I went to see the show.

I felt very eager to know the real state of affairs in India. I would read newspapers—sometimes several. I would talk and discuss things with people of all walks of life, as far as I could come into contact with them. From this I got the impression that there was a great dissatisfaction in the country. The masses have become politically conscious. They are anxious to guard their interests and assert their rights. People are not satisfied with the progress the country has made or is making; they want to speed up the rate of progress. There is a great ferment everywhere. But all these, one should say, are indications of health and not of disease. No progress is ever made by passive acquiescence to circumstances. Out of discontent and dissatisfaction comes the impulse to work hard and achieve success. Some people talked in moods of despair and even anguish. But as I would silently listen to the words of people, I would inwardly feel happy at the thought that the country had shaken off the long-standing lethargy, and was on the march. That does not mean that no longer any serious struggle will be necessary now that Independence has been won. Rather contrary is the fact. Harder struggle will be required to reap the fruits of Independence, or for the country to stand on its own legs. Independence has no value if the country has to look to other nations for this or that help, and sees darkness in front if that help is denied. Quickly has India to attain to a state when she will not merely seek no help from others, but will be in a position to give that to others.

Some are deeply concerned as to whether India will be able to keep up her religious outlook and the ideals of her culture with the process of industrialization that is going on. Industrialization means the concentration of a large number of people in small areas, increasing the tempo of activities, men becoming machines and victims of their own success in commercial sphere. Such an atmosphere does not conduce to the growth of religious feeling, rather that stifles it. Will real India survive her industrial development? Once in New York, a gentleman put to me this question. The answer is, we need not worry about that problem just now. India has produced saints and religious leaders during the period of very adverse circumstances in the past. If that be a fact, India will produce saints even in future, however difficult may be the conditions. And it is the saints and sages who have kept India alive spiritually.

When I boarded a plane to go from Calcutta to Madras, I found that there were only two passengers—myself and a gentleman who was, afterwards I knew, a member of the cabinet of one of the States in India. He was an extremely fine, courteous, sociable young man. We freely discussed many things, sitting together. He wanted to know of the condition of the Negroes in America. He was interested to know of what had happened about the de-segregation question in Little Rock in the Southern States. In American papers, we read now and then sensational stories of the suffering of the untouchables in India. Some in America talk in a way as if India is lost beyond redemption, because the untouchables do not socially receive proper treatment. Perhaps they do not know that in India people are surprised that the Negro question takes such a hideous shape in an enlightened country like America. Certainly, one mistake does not correct another mistake, but a sober person should know that prejudices and superstitions die hard, and that we cannot reform people and change their ways of thinking overnight, though that should not be an argument in favour of inactivity or slowness in efforts to remove an evil. In the course of conversation, it came to be known that my fellow-passenger belonged to the Scheduled (untouchable) class. From him I heard how in his young days he suffered because of caste prejudices in the society. He spoke without much bitterness; that made the stories more moving and touching. But I was happy to see that one who pitifully suffered in his school days from social evils was now a member of the government, receiving equal honours from one and all. It is a great achievement of India which those who criticize India in season and out of season should not forget.

Long, long ago, in the year 1923 when I was sent to work in Madras, for months I felt homesick ; I was forlorn like an exile. But afterwards, very keenly did I begin to like Madras province, Madras coffee, and the Madras newspaper *The Hindu*. That love is still in me. Even in New York, I get the weekly air-edition of *The Hindu* which, I believe, gives very balanced information about India. After many years I arrived in Madras. The memory of my old associations revived, and I was happy to see everything around. Some of my old friends were no longer in the land of living ; that created a painful feeling in one. I was anxious to see who were still alive. I met an old acquaintance. Now he is very advanced in age. He was talking very enthusiastically as if trying to unburden his heart. He was saying how there is great corruption everywhere in the country and how things are becoming hopeless and intolerable. He gave a very sad picture which, if true, was deplorable. Similar things I heard from an official working under the British rule, but now retired. He was telling me how efficiency had sorely suffered in all departments of life. But he tried to give a balanced view. In his opinion, with the sudden change of the government, many came to the field who had no experience of administration. This was an inevitable handicap to efficiency. Yes, many English people thought that Indians would not be able to run the government and the Britishers would have to come again to take the reins. One should take notice of the achievements of India after Independence and not so much of failures. Lapses are inevitable in every walk of life. If there is vitality, life goes on and lapses become less and less in number.

One thing pleased me very much in Madras. I found several old retired persons engaged in works of social service. Some of them were doing big works. One was telling me that he did not care for money, he had no attachment for anything, and his only interest was the work of service he was doing. Fortunate are these who find some good occupation after their retirement. As such, their experience of life continues to be utilized, though they lay down their office work, and there is sustaining force which keeps them young, though they are old in age.

From Madras I flew to Bangalore. Bangalore is known for its bracing climate. But I

was not fortunate enough to enjoy the climate of Bangalore. It was rainy season. The weather was wet. I did not like it. But I stayed in a place where there was much high thinking with plain living. The atmosphere was uplifting. Once we were discussing whether India was really a very religious country as some say or are led to believe. Behind the religiosity of many people, is there not much which is not religious, or definitely irreligious? Do you not find many people in India who do not live very praiseworthy lives? Are there not many villains and wicked people even in this 'sacred' land? Those who come into contact with darker side of life are sorely disillusioned. You live in a good atmosphere, and you consider that the world is all good. But lawyers and members of the police force will have altogether a different view of the world. Many people from foreign countries come to India with great expectations. To them, India is a dreamland where one is likely to meet saints and sages at every turn of the street. Once I actually met an American lady who was wandering in the streets of Varanasi (Banaras). On being asked what she wanted, she said she was 'in search of a Yogi'. All the way from America, she had come to India for that purpose! Just imagine what a great shock it would be to such a person, if instead of an honest man she meets a scoundrel who afterwards cheats her. When these foreigners return to their homeland, some are all praise for India. They came into contact with good, pious, or holy persons. Some travellers from abroad go back home with bitterness and cynical attitude. Their experience was different: they came into touch with undesirable persons! Who knows, it might be their initial cynical attitude which attracted bad people to them.

From Bangalore to Mysore I travelled by railway train. Before that I travelled only by air. When you go by railway train, you are in touch with the soil. You go comparatively slow, and you see much of a country. I enjoyed my trip to Mysore, seeing cocoanut trees and mango gardens on both sides, cattle grazing in the fields, cultivators ploughing their lands, women carrying water, and so on. But it was not all poetry. All on a sudden one's attention was drawn to the cattle so ill-fed, peasants so poverty-stricken, children so sickly. When will the poverty of India be removed, and poor will have better comforts?

A visit to India will be incomplete without seeing Delhi. I do not know why I was eager to see Delhi again, though I had been several times there in the past. Some one asked me if there was any particular purpose behind my going to Delhi. Did I have the intention of meeting some very important persons in the capital city of India? No, I was not eager to see any important person of the government. Nothing of that kind. By being in Delhi, I thought I could get a feel of the whole country. I found I was right in holding that view when I was in Delhi. One came easily into contact with persons who know and discuss how things happened or policies formulated at the centre which afterwards influence the whole country. I heard many things about the callousness and intransigence of persons who were looked upon as custodians of the welfare of the people. I heard equally many good things about the leaders who were eager and determined about seeing the country go forward in spite of all difficulties. So much can be said on both sides, and the general public have a tendency to exaggerate the faults of others.

While in Delhi, one day I went to see the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of the Indian Parliament. That was the question hour when I attended the House. Discussions were lively and excited when the members of the opposition party began to heckle the government for acts of omission and commission. Similar things I had witnessed in the Central Assembly under the British rule. The only difference was that, at that time, the rulers were foreigners working more for their own national interest than for the good of the people, and the opposition was crying hopelessly and helplessly in the wilderness. Now the ruling party is composed of the representatives of the people,

sincerely interested in the welfare of the country, however great may be their failings. And the criticism of the opposition, however bitter, acts only as an incentive to the leaders to be more earnest and careful about discharging their onerous duties. As one attends these heated discussions, one sees how difficult it is for political leaders to work for their country. Firstly, they must be not only capable persons, but also men of character. And no man is free from failings. So the critics will always find room for criticism. Secondly, the leaders are responsible for the actions of their followers whose number is vast. One may talk of high ideals from an ivory tower, but a person who plunges or is thrown into the whirlpool of actions knows to his great chagrin how complex is human nature and how conflicting are the forces at work in the world. From that standpoint, those political workers who genuinely want to do good to their country are willing martyrs. Because they stand on the front line and bear the burden, others can live in peace to develop idealism, which, in turn, helps and supplies inspiration to the political leaders.

In Delhi, I was very much impressed by one thing. I attended a class on the *Gītā* which was attended by an unusually large crowd, numbering over one thousand. And in the audience were persons of different strata of society—simple-minded persons, pious widows, college students, both girls and boys, high officials, and members of the diplomatic corps. New Delhi is known to be a city of administrators, government officials, and diplomats. In such an atmosphere, to find so large a number of people interested in the teaching of the *Gītā* is both refreshing and encouraging. That indicates where is the pulse of the country.

I gave a flying visit to Hardwar, though this time I travelled by train instead of by air, and I visited one or two religious centres in the Himalayas. Hardwar—the place that is known for its supplying religious inspiration to the whole of India and drawing pilgrims from all over the country As I went through the city, again after several years, I found many people going about in that sacred place in search of religion, or for meeting holy men in order to get spiritual guidance. Surely, some of these persons are simple-minded people, but what doubt is there that their search is genuine? From that consideration, even an unbelieving spectator seeing these sights may find his outlook on life changed. I enjoyed very much my visit to Hardwar and its vicinities.

On my return visit, I could not afford to omit Varanasi (Banaras), though I was greatly short of time. I stayed in that holy city barely for 24 hours. Within that short time, I saw some important temples, met some Swamis, and had a longing look at the Gaṅgā. Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India, known to be in existence in the Upaniṣadic days, attracting many spiritual leaders in the past and the present, cannot fail to inspire you, if only you recall its past history. As I was approaching this holy city from the airport, a Western visitor, who was reluctant to divulge from what country he had come, asked me which was the most important temple in Varanasi. In reply, I said that every temple in it is important, if you have the proper frame of mind. Some believe that Varanasi is a sacred place where the very air is sacred.

From Varanasi I came back to Bengal. I could no longer be living in dreams. I had already been in India for three months and a half. I could no longer be away from my place of work. So during the rest of my stay in India, I was busy making arrangements for the return journey, going to the Air office, Consulates, seeing friends, and so on. The last few days were a hectic time for me. Somehow I was able to finish the things which I wished or needed to do. And on August 31, I found myself again in a plane, this time bound for Tokyo. Very much did I want to stop in Bangkok, where there are many temples indicating the influence of Indian civilization there. But circumstances did not permit me to do so. From Calcutta I came directly to Japan, being high up in space for 16 hours and at an altitude of more than 20 thousand feet. In

Japan I stayed less than 72 hours. As such, no visa was necessary, and there was less of troubles as regards customs etc. But within such a short period, I could not see much of Japan. Most of the time, I was in Tokyo which looked more like a Western city than Eastern. The people are not as strong as those in the West, but they are very sturdy. One could easily see that the Japanese were a race of great determination and firm resolve. In Tokyo, I was the guest of an Indian family. Both the husband and the wife were very religious-minded, and they did spiritual practice. In the mornings, I could hear the husband chanting Sanskrit hymns after his devotions. One evening, after dinner, we were talking on different subjects. In the course of the conversation, he gave out some of the secrets of his inner life, and I was amazed to see how deeply interested he was in religion. His wife, though somewhat reserved in nature, was his peer. This couple had been in foreign countries for several years, but their religious attitude was unaffected by any foreign influence. They lived their own lives. They had sympathy for the people of all religions, and they had many friends, but they followed their own religious views. They were just the persons who could maintain or increase the prestige of Indian culture abroad, and they were the real representatives of India in foreign countries. Every Indian who goes to foreign countries has a great responsibility, for through him foreigners see India.

From Tokyo I flew to Honolulu. Honolulu is a land of flowers and sunshine. People are gay, informal, and sport-loving. A lot of visitors go there for vacationing. I met a group of people who were interested in Indian philosophy in its practical aspects. They met together each day for study, meditation, and discussions. They were serious in their outlook and earnest in their practices. I heard that it was customary for people in Honolulu to put garlands round the necks of their friends as they came or left the island. As I was getting on board the plane bound for California, I found a tall, sturdy Hawaiian in gay dress and with a big flag standing near the gangway and greeting each individual. A very friendly gesture. The plane carried not only passengers, but also plenty of flowers and garlands which they received from their friends and took with them as mementos.

In America, there are many pseudo-religious teachers from India or the East, who by their irresponsible acts and behaviour tarnish the fair names of their countries. Both classes of people are to blame: those who do wrongs and also those who submit to wrongs. Though it is considered to be a materialistic age, it is very easy to dupe people in the name of religion. Even the so-called rational persons abdicate their power of reasoning when, in times of crises, they turn to religion for help. If there are gullible persons, there will be many cunning cheats to befool them. Why speak of persons who come to the West and pose as religious teachers for easy means of livelihood? Do not quite a few persons from the West, and specially America, go to India and walk in the streets of reputedly sacred cities in search of holy men? As they want to take to religion as a kind of adventure, no wonder that they become easily cheated by charlatans who can be found in any country.

In California, in three different cities, I met groups of people who were alert, intelligent, discriminating, and extremely earnest about their religious progress. No pains were too much for them to spare, no sacrifice was too great for them to make. They were interested in Indian religions, and they were in no way less devoted than the devoted followers of religions in India. I spent a few days with these groups, and when with them I did not at all feel that I was away from India or the Indian atmosphere. Rather they, with their love and devotion, helped me more in understanding and appreciating the good points of India and her culture.

While coming from California to New York, to kill time on the plane, I looked

through an American publication, on the jacket of which was printed:

'... this astonishing,
unromantic book
.....
revealing an utterly
new India spiritual in myth
passionately materialistic
in practice.'

When I read these lines, I rubbed my eyes and thought within myself, 'Ah God, how could the writer discover that spirituality in India was a myth? He himself must be a highly spiritual man to pass such a judgement!' Jesus Christ said about two thousand years ago, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear'. Nowadays, one sees what one wants to see.

Coming to New York, I read an article written by an English lady on her visit to India in which she said: 'The importance given to the religious life in India has left its stamp upon her people. This is shown by their quiet serenity of bearing, their placid unworried faces, and their friendliness towards the religions and customs of other peoples.

'My visit was both inspiring and rewarding.'

The same afternoon, I read the writing of a noted English author, in which he speaks of India in a very 'unromantic' and realistic way:

'India is a marvellous country and a very romantic one ; but it is romantic in the wrong sense to suppose that you can go there and maintain such a continuous high spiritual mood that you are unaware of the trials of the climate. And, in addition, you will be lucky if you don't get at least slightly sick!

'...It is undoubtedly a great grace and a great privilege to have been able to visit these places (in India). And I firmly believe that everybody who does so must receive some kind of deep spiritual radiations, even if he is utterly unaware of it at the time. I myself will never forget the vivid impressions of my short visit.'

I reached New York on the 15th of September, 1958.

I am caught in the busy life of America, specially of this most hectic city of America. You have to move and keep up the pace, whether you like it or not. India I saw and lived in for precious four months is fading away into a dreamland again. I saw many good things in India which made me happy. I saw many dark things and forebodings which made me depressed and unhappy. But all these are the temporary reactions of passing events and affairs. They will not live; they will not last. India that comes to my mind is the India of spiritual aspirations and achievements, the India striving after some high ideal in spite of miserable failures and deadly setbacks at times, the India with its continuity of life and thought from the Vedic age to the present times, the India which once thought and has never forgotten: 'Who realizes the Truth now and here becomes blessed. He who fails to do that suffers the greatest loss. One who sees Brahman behind everything conquers death and becomes immortal.'

The distinctive spirituality of the modern world depends upon its ability to think of things as a whole, to treat immense masses of facts as units, to bring together many kinds of activity, and to put them in true relation to one another. This is the reality of which map, census, and newspaper, even catalogue, museum and encyclopædia, are but outer symbols. In proportion as she grasps this inner content will India rise to the height of her own possibilities.

—SISTER NIVEDITA.

GURU NĀNAK AND HIS TEACHINGS

By Sri M. V. Bhide, I.C.S. (Retd.)

I

'Now, there is here presented a religion totally unaffected by Semitic or Christian influences. Based on the concept of the unity of God, it rejected Hindu formularies, and adopted an independent ethical system, ritual, and standards, which were opposed to the theological beliefs of Guru Nānak's age and country. As we shall see later, it will be difficult to point to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system' (Macauliffe's Introduction to *Sikh Religion*, Vol. I. p. liv).

Such is the glowing tribute paid to Sikhism by the late Mr. Macauliffe, the author of *Sikh Religion*, which ranks as a standard work on the subject. Guru Nānak, the founder of Sikhism, died in A.D. 1538. According to the latest available figures, the total number of persons in India, who are Sikhs by religion, is estimated to be about seventy lakhs. Judged by mere numbers, the progress made by Sikhism during a period of over four centuries may not appear so great. But in the galaxy of religious saints and reformers, which India has produced, Guru Nānak ranks amongst the foremost, and the pure, noble gospel preached by him and his successors has doubtless an interest for all India and for all times.

Guru Nānak was born of middle class Khatri parents at Tulwandi—now known as Nankana Sahib—in the District of Lahore, on the 3rd Vaiśākha,* Saṁvat 1526 (April 1469). From his early childhood, he showed that piety and devotion to God which were to turn him later into the preacher of a new gospel. When asked by the schoolmaster to learn the alphabet, young Nānak retorted by asking, 'What knowledge of God have you got', and said that that knowledge alone was what he wanted. If Nānak was a failure as a schoolboy, he proved himself no better at agriculture or trade. The crops did not flourish under his care, for as he indulged in his reveries, they were molested by cattle. The despairing father made a last effort to test his son's abilities by giving him a sum of twenty rupees and asking him to make the best bargain he could out of it. But Nānak found no better use for his money than giving it away in charity to a company of needy *sādhus* (holy men).

Nānak's father, who was a practical man of the world, could not understand him, and did not know what to make of the hopeless boy. At last, he decided to send him to his sister's house. At the age of nineteen, Nānak went to stay with his sister and her husband at Sultanpur. There, through the help of his brother-in-law, he got the post of storekeeper to Nawāb Doulatkhān. He was then married, and pulled on for some time. But his heart was not in the world, and only the fact that he found a sympathetic soul in his sister kept him at Sultanpur for some time. At last, the consciousness of his mission grew too strong in him to enable him to continue his daily pursuits. For three days, he is said to have disappeared in a mysterious way, and on his return, he was no more a man of the world. The plan of his life was settled. The storekeeper to the Nawāb had assumed his proper role as a preacher of religious reform. Some considered him insane at first. Physicians were brought by his anxious relatives to treat him; but Nānak told them the simple truth when he said, 'Aye! Mad is Nānak after the "Lord". He recognizes none but Him'.

* The anniversary of the Guru is now celebrated on the 15th of Kārttika. But the correct date of his birth, according to the best authorities, is 3rd Vaiśākha, and the date in Kārttika is probably selected on grounds of convenience.

Nānak's parents and relatives made strenuous efforts to dissuade him. Various temptations were thrown in his way, but Nānak remained firm. To the entreaties of his relatives, replied in his characteristic strain:

My mother is Forbearance,
my father Content ;
My uncle is Truth,
my brother Devotion ;
True Love is my son,
my daughter Endurance ;
Meekness my friend,
Intellect disciple ;
This is my family,
with whom I reside ;
God alone my Master,
my Creator, my Lord.

From this time, he began preaching that religion which recognized but one God for all humanity, which condemned distinctions of class, and which proclaimed futility of rites and ceremonies and laid stress on devotion (*bhakti*) as the sole path to salvation. About the year A.D. 1500, Nānak set out on his travels, during the course of which he is said to have visited even such distant lands as Ceylon and Siam, Arabia, and Turkey. We have no account of these travels, excepting a number of anecdotes. But Nānak appears to have utilized his travels to study men of different countries and different faiths, as well as to develop his own teaching. Everywhere, he seems to have courted an opportunity for religious discussions. Everywhere, his words created a profound impression, and he was listened to with respect, even if his preaching was opposed to the current popular practices. At the end of his travels, however, an unfortunate incident occurred. He was arrested and imprisoned at Delhi as a heretic by the fanatic Sultān Ibrāhim Lodi. Even in the jail, Nānak is said to have continued his preaching, trying to reform the criminals and others confined there. It was not long before the Sultān got his punishment for molesting a saint. In the year 1526, the Sultān was defeated by Bābar on the field of Panipat ; and when Bābar ascended the throne, he had the magnanimity to set Nānak at liberty at once.

The last years of Guru Nānak's life were spent at Kartarpur, in Jullundur District in the Punjab, in preaching his simple faith to an ever-increasing number of disciples. His magnetic personality readily attracted those who came into contact with him. His pure doctrine was impressive and intelligible to all. The simple and vigorous language in which he preached appealed to the common folk. The spirit of peace and harmony which breathed through his preaching drew towards him Hindus as well as Mohammedans. There was no distinction of high or low amongst his followers. As members of a fraternity, they were all significantly called *bhāīs* or brothers. Even Nānak did not rank himself above the rest. It was the faith that he valued more than himself. After describing the characteristics of a true Sikh, he said, 'I pray for the dust of the feet of such a disciple who himself remembers the Lord and makes others remember Him'. Again, he says in another place, 'He who lives the right life is my disciple ; nay, he is my master, and I his servant'.

Two days before his death, he installed his disciple Bhāī Lehnā in his place as the Guru. After the ceremony, Guru Nānak hailed Bhāī Lehnā as Guru Aṅgad, and himself bowed down to him. By the ceremony, the headship of the Sikh brotherhood passed on to Guru Aṅgad. Two days after, Guru Nānak himself departed from this world.

The touching story about the dispute between his followers drawn from amongst Hindus and Mohammedans, who were anxious to pay their last tribute to the departed Guru by cremation and burial respectively, is well known. Legend says that, as this dispute was raging furiously, the body of the Guru had disappeared from under the white sheet of cloth which covered it. This put an end to the dispute. The cloth was then divided into two pieces; one of the pieces was given to the Mohammedans who

buried it, while the other was given to the Hindus who cremated it.

II

Guru Nānak belongs to that era of religious revival in India which set in after the early centuries of the Mohammedan conquest. The Hinduism of that day was in a degenerate state. The simple religion of the Vedas had long given place to a priest-ridden sacerdotalism, and the old religion had lost its true significance in a mass of superstitions and idolatrous practices. The aggressive spirit of Islam at once asserted itself most emphatically as a peril to Hinduism. Even the enemy that attacks does good at times by disclosing vulnerable points, and the fanatic persecution of the early Mohammedans had its utility in turning the hearts of all thoughtful men to the pressing need of religious reform. Thereafter, in India, there was a religious revival which, to use the words of the late Mr. Justice Ranade, 'was heterodox in its spirit of protest against forms and ceremonies and class distinctions based upon birth, and ethical in its preference for a pure heart to all other acquired merits and good works'. This religious revival was the work of masses and not of classes. At its head were saints and prophets, poets and philosophers. During the very period that Luther and Calvin were denouncing the superstitious practices of the Roman Church in Europe, these religious reformers were carrying on a similar crusade in India against the demoralized Hinduism of their day and preaching the doctrine of *bhakti* or salvation by faith. Amongst these, one of the foremost was Guru Nānak, 'the Prophet of the Punjab'. Caitanya in Bengal, Kabīr in Uttar Pradesh, and Nāmdev in Maharashtra had already led the way. But these saints had remaind more or less quiet 'Dissenters'. It was the glory of Guru Nānak that he succeeded in sowing the seeds of a creed which was to serve as a torch light to millions.

Guru Nānak was no speculative philosopher. He did not trouble himself with formulating theories of cosmogony etc. Only the Creator, he says, knows how and when the world was created. 'His limits cannot be ascertained; the more we say, the more remains to be said'. Nor did Nānak claim the authority of any revelation for his doctrines. In fact, his role was that of a religious reformer in the truest and best sense of the term. He found the existing creeds in a demoralized condition. Both Hinduism and Islam had been debased by a mass of superstitions and formalism. Guru Nānak set himself in antagonism to the existing creeds and denounced their formalism as perfectly valueless. He accepted the good points of both Hinduism and Islam, and he built thereon a religion which was free from the fetters of formalism, preaching the great truth that religion was a reality, essentially a matter of right faith and right conduct and not a mere mechanistic adherence to formal rights and ceremonies.

The great merit of Guru Nānak's teaching was its purity and simplicity. Its cardinal principles have been summarized by one writer as, 'Unity of God, Brotherhood of Man, Faith, and Love'. If the Arabian Prophet had proclaimed the creed that 'There is no God but Allāh, and Mohammed is his Prophet', Guru Nānak made the creed even simpler by dropping the latter portion. 'There is but one God whose name is True'—thus opens the *Japjī* or the great Sikh prayer—and the greatest stress is laid on this doctrine throughout the Sikh scriptures. The doctrine of the unity of God is not diluted by belief in Trinity or in divine or semi-divine prophets. Bābar, when he released Nānak from his captivity recommended him to accept the Mohammedan faith, as Nānak's own preaching was so akin to the tenets of that religion and as he would have had thereby the additional advantage of the mediation of Mohammed. But Guru Nānak replied that millions of Mohammeds awaited at the Court of God, and that he had ascertained the truth that 'God alone was pure'.

The brotherhood of man was practically

recognized by the abolition of caste or class. At the very outset of his missionary career, Nānak declared his freedom from caste prejudices by putting up at the house of a carpenter named Lālo, and preferring food at his house to that provided by a high caste rich banker named Mālik Bhāgo. 'Don't ask about caste', says he, 'a man's deeds alone make his caste or creed.' With a remarkable cosmopolitan spirit he associated with Hindu *sādhus* and Mohammedan fakirs, visited temples and mosques, drew upon the Śāstras and the Koran in illustration of his preaching, and made an attempt to reconcile Islam with Hinduism by pointing out the true bases of both. He emphasized the universal brotherhood of man by directing that there was to be no distinction of high and low amongst the Sikhs. The very initiation rite of Sikhism—the Pahul—requires eating food and drinking water from the same vessel, and was intended to leave all caste prejudices. The Sikhs were all termed *bhāis*. There was no distinction amongst them, except that of the Guru and the disciple (Sikh).

Guru Nānak was a thoroughgoing protestant in the matter of forms and ceremonies. From his very boyhood, he lost no opportunity of pointing out their futility. When asked to put on the 'sacred thread' at the time of his *upanayana* ceremony, he said that it was useless to put on a thread on the neck which brought no holiness and which did not accompany a man after his death. 'Make mercy thy cotton', said he, 'contentment thy thread, continence its knot, truth its twist; that would make a *yajñopavīta* for the soul; it will not break, or burn, or be lost. Blessed is that man who goeth with such a thread on his neck.' When he saw the Brāhmaṇas at Hardwar offering libations of water to the manes, he stood up in a prominent position on the river and began to throw water towards the west, contrary to the Śāstric rules. The spectators standing by were naturally surprised at the strange action, and asked him what his meaning was. He told them that he was watering a field of his some hundreds of miles away, just as the Brāhmaṇas were sending libations to the manes in their unknown abode! When he visited Mecca during the course of his travels, he slept with his feet towards the temple of the Kabba, contrary to the practice of Mohammedans. A Moulavi who saw him was infuriated and asked, 'Who is this infidel who is sleeping with his feet towards the house of God'. 'Pray', said Nānak, 'will you turn my feet to the direction in which God does not exist!' The futility of formalism was his constant theme. *Yoga* does not consist, said he, in ragged garments or ashes, but in living passionless in the midst of passions. Again, to his Mohammedan brothers, he said that it was difficult to be a real Mohammedan, and advised them to make truth, righteousness, resignation to the will of God, benevolence, and love of God the five *nimāz* prayers, instead of the mechanical repetition of formulae. Nānak did not consider it necessary to renounce the world and become a fakir for the attainment of salvation. 'You wear ragged clothes', said he, 'and besmear your body with ashes, but go on cheating the world ; you give up your wife and fall a prey to passion. Blessed is he who sits at the feet of the Lord, whether he is a landlord or a *yogin* or a *sannsyāsin*. Hermits and householders are equal, if they remember the name of God.'

Nirvāṇa or absorption in God was declared by Guru Nānak to be the supreme object of human attainment. The individual soul must become absorbed in God, as the river blends with the ocean and loses its individuality. A man who does good work on earth may attain temporary bliss ; but perfect bliss and freedom from the cycle of transmigration can only be attained by single-minded devotion to God. 'Oh Man', says Nānak, in one of his beautiful hymns, 'love God as the fish loves the water! The more the water, the more it is joyous and contented. Without it, it cannot live for a moment.' Devotion to God must, in fact, become a part and parcel of one's existence. 'If I repeat the *nāma*', says the Guru, 'I live; if I forget it, I die.'

Such, then, was the gospel of 'Peace to man

and love to God' preached by Guru Nānak. It was conveyed to his hearers in a number of hymns composed in the simple but vigorous Punjabi language, and sung to the strains of melodious music of the *rabab* by the Guru's constant companion Mardāna. The hymns were subsequently collected and incorporated in the *Ādi Granth* or the *Granth Sāhib,* as the sacred book of the Sikhs is popularly called, in the time of the fourth Guru. Four centuries have elapsed since the Guru passed away, but to this day, his hymns, brimming with devotional ecstasy, continue to give hope and solace to millions of souls. On the site of the birthplace of the Guru now stands a temple, where the *Granth Sāhib,* which contains his preaching, is installed. On the anniversary of the Guru's birthday, thousands of the Guru's followers go to Nankana Saheb, as the town of his birth is now called, to pay their homage to the Guru ; and to this day, there is scarcely a name cherished by the Sikhs with greater love or reverence than that of the first Guru, 'Bābā Nānak'.

ŚRĪ-BHĀṢYA

By Swami Vireswarananda

(Continued from previous issue)

Topic 3

REFUTATION OF THE BUDDHIST REALISTS

There are four principal schools of Buddhism: (1) The Vaibhāṣikas who accept the reality of both the outside and inside worlds, consisting respectively of the elements and their products and mind and things mental. They hold that all these are directly perceived and also inferred. (2) The Sautrāntikas who hold that, though the outside world and inside world are real, yet they can be merely inferred from ideas, and are not directly perceived. (3) The idealists, Vijñānavādins, or Yogācāras who maintain that thought alone is real and there is no corresponding real object outside—that the outside objects are mere shadows, like objects seen in a dream. All the three schools hold that everything is only momentary, and they do not accept any further entity like ether or soul. (4) Finally, there are the nihilists, Śūnyavādins, or Mādhyamikas who maintain that everything is void and unreal.

This topic refutes the view of the realists, viz. the first two schools mentioned above, who hold that the external world is real. According to them, the atoms of earth, water, fire, and air combine to form the aggregates; the elements, viz. earth, fire, etc. Out of the elements, the aggregates, viz. the body, the sense-organs, and other objects, are produced. The series of ideas which give rise to the notion of 'I' residing inside the body is what is called the self. On these, according to them, depends the entire empiric world.

समुदाय उभयहेतुकेऽपि तदप्राप्तिः ॥२।२।१७॥

17. Even if the aggregate (the world) proceeds from its two causes (viz. the atoms and the elements), there would result the non-formation of that (aggregate).

Neither of the aggregates mentioned above, viz. the aggregate of elements and the aggregate consisting of bodies etc., with their twofold causes can produce the aggregate of the world, for, according to the Bauddhas, everything is momentary; so the atoms and the elements are all momentary. These causes, which have a momentary existence, cannot produce the world. First, there is the activity of the atoms, then the connection of the atoms with others, and then the formation of the aggregates. But, then, as the atoms are momentary, when their activity begins, and before they get connected with other atoms, they cease to exist. So how could they combine? Similar is the case of the elements also. They cannot combine to produce material things. Such aggregation is possible only if things last for more than a moment. Again, as the objects are momentary, they cease to exist when they come in contact with the sense-organs, and do not exist when the cognition originates. So cognition itself is impossible. Further, as the self also is momentary, it ceases to exist by the time the sense-organs come in contact with the objects, and so it cannot cognize objects. If what is contacted by one self produces cognition in another, then what comes in touch with the senses of A could be cognized by B. But that is not seen in the world. Moreover, since the objects cognized have a momentary existence, they cease to exist by the time they are cognized, and so no desire or aversion can arise with respect to them.

Due to all these absurdities, the view of the Bauddhas is untenable.

इतरेतरप्रत्ययत्वादिति चेत्,

न, उत्पत्तिमात्र निमित्तत्वात् ॥२।२।१८॥

18. If it be said (that the formation of the aggregates is possible) because of the successive causality (of nescience etc. in the Bauddha series), we say, no, on account of their not being the cause of the aggregation.

The Bauddhas may say that through the successive causality of the members of the series, nescience (*avidyā*) etc., all this can be explained. The series is as follows: Nescience (*avidyā*) is that knowledge which is different from the real one, in other words, illusory knowledge. It creates the notion of permanency in impermanent things; this gives rise to desire and aversion which is grouped as *saṁskāra*; from this is produced *vijñāna* (self-consciousness), the kindling of the mind; from that, name, i.e. the mind and things mental, and the earth etc. having colour etc.; from that, the abode of the six or the six sense-organs; from that, the body called touch (*sparśa*); from that, *vedanā* or sensation and so on; from these, again, *avidyā* and the whole series. These constitute an uninterrupted chain of cause and effect, revolving unceasingly, and this cannot take place without those aggregates of elements and elemental things called earth and so on. So the formation of the aggregates is proved.

The second half of the *sūtra* refutes this view and says that the formation of the aggregates is not possible. Nescience etc. cannot be the cause of the aggregation of the momentary atoms. Though nescience produces the notion of permanency in momentary things, yet they do not really become permanent because of it. It does not, in reality, produce permanent things. Otherwise, the illusory knowledge of silver in shell could produce real silver. Therefore aggregation is not possible. Moreover, as the cognizer, in whom the idea of permanency in momentary things is produced, ceases to exist the very next moment, in whom can desire, aversion, etc. arise? Therefore the series itself is not possible. Without a permanent entity, the continuance of the *saṁskāras* cannot be explained.

उत्तरोत्पादे च पूर्वनिरोधात् ॥२।२।१९॥

19. And on account of the cessation of the previous one at the time of the origination of the subsequent one (the former cannot be the cause of the subsequent thing).

When, for example, the pot of the subsequent moment comes into existence, the pot of the previous moment has ceased to exist, and so cannot be the cause of the subsequent pot. If we, then, accept that non-existence is the cause, it being the same with respect to all things, then anything might originate at any time and place. Hence aggregation is not possible on the view of the momentary existence of all things. Further, as the thing which comes in contact with the sense-organs ceases to exist when the idea originates, cognition of any object would be impossible.

असति प्रतिज्ञोपरोधो यौगपद्यमन्यथा ॥२।२।२०॥

20 If non-existence (of cause) be assumed, (there will result) contradiction of their (Bauddhas') proposition. Otherwise (there would result) simultaneity.

If it be said that an effect may be produced even without a cause, then, apart from the difficulty already shown, viz. that anything might originate at any time anywhere, the Bauddhas would contradict their own proposition. They recognize four causes which bring about the origination of a cognition, viz. the *adhipati* cause, viz. sense-organs; the *sahakāri* cause, like light etc.; the *ālaṁbana* cause, viz. the object ; and finally, the *samanantara* cause, or the knowledge of the immediate preceding moment. If, to avoid this difficulty, they say that the previous jar exists when the next jar is produced, then the two jars would be perceived simultaneously, but such a thing is not experienced. Moreover, it would falsify the momentariness of the pots. If momentariness is still adhered to, then it would mean that the contact of the sense-organs with the object and cognition are simultaneous.

The next *sūtra* shows that it is not possible to establish what the Bauddhas hold, viz. the absolute destruction of a thing which is (*sat*).

प्रतिसंख्याऽप्रतिसंख्या निरोधाप्राप्तिः,
अविच्छेदात् ॥२।२।२१॥

21. Both gross (*pratisaṅkhyā*) and subtle (*apratisaṅkhyā*) destruction would be impossible, owing to non-interruption.

The Bauddhas maintain that destruction is of two kinds, viz. the gross (*pratisaṅkhyā*) destruction which is perceived by the senses, as when a pot is broken by a stick ; and subtle (*apratisaṅkhyā*) destruction, not perceived by the senses, occurring in a series of similar momentary existences at every moment. These two cannot be possible. It has been shown in II.1.15 that absolute destruction of any substance that exists is impossible; that origination and destruction only mean a change of state of the substance which continues to exist in the new condition, and that the effect is non-different from the cause. The clay taking the shape of the pot is the origination of the pot, and the clay's attaining the state of shreds is what is called the destruction of the pot. The substance is never destroyed absolutely. As origination and destruction are by the change of states, there is no need to imagine absolute destruction. The case of a flame blown out may be cited as a case of absolute destruction. There, too, reason would tell that it exists in a subtle form, not perceived by the senses.

उभयथा च दोषात् ॥२।२।२२॥

22. And in either case (viz. origination from nonentity or a thing becoming nonentity on destruction) because of the objections (that arise, the Bauddha position is untenable).

If a thing that has originated suffers absolute destruction, i.e. passes into nothingness on destruction, or if a thing originates from nothingness, in either case, there arise objections, and so they are not acceptable. If an originated thing becomes a nonentity on destruction, then, according to the view of momentariness, the world would be destroyed after a moment and become a nonentity. The subsequent world that has come out of nothingness would be a nonentity also. But the Bauddhas do not accept that the world is a nonentity or unreal. So origination from nothingness or passing away into nothingness on destruction, both are equally untenable.

आकाशे चाविशेषात् ॥२।२।२३॥

23. The case of *ākāśa* also not being different (from earth etc., it also cannot be a non-entity).

Ākāśa cannot be a mere nonentity, for like earth etc., which are proved to be positive things, it also is proved to be likewise by knowledge which is not sublated later. That *ākāśa* is experienced is proved by statements like, 'There a bird flies'.

अनुस्मृतेश्च ॥२।२।२४॥

24. And on account of recognition.

The momentariness of objects as declared by the Bauddhas is also not tenable. We have the experience of the kind, 'This is that jar'. The identity of a thing seen before and a thing experienced at the present moment by the same person, existing at the time of the first experience and the present one, is called recognition. Unless there is the identity of the thing perceived and the identity of the perceiver, such a recognition is not possible. This contradicts the doctrine of momentariness, which therefore is untenable. It cannot be said that recognition is due to the similarity of the successive momentary jars, as in the case of a flame. In the case of a flame, there is valid means of knowledge through inference that there is a real succession of similar flames, but not in the case of the jar. Moreover, who is to realize the similarity of the two jars existing at different times? For the Bauddhas do not admit the existence of the same knower, as he, too, has a momentary existence.

नासतः, अदृष्टत्वात् ॥२।२।२५॥

25. Not from non-existence, because this is not seen.

This *sūtra* refutes an objection raised by the Sautrāntikas, who hold that, though outside objects are real, they are not known through direct perception, but through inferential knowledge. It was shown earlier that the cognition of objects is not possible on the theory of momentariness, for the object which comes in contact with the senses ceases to exist when the cognition originates. The Sautrāntikas say that the existence of the object up to the time of the cognition is not necessary, for before it perishes, a thing imparts its forms etc. to the cognition, and from that the object is inferred. The *sūtra* refutes this argument and says that it is never experienced that an object, when it perishes, passes over its attributes to another. So the Sautrāntikas' position that, when the object perishes, it imprints its form etc. on the cognition cannot be accepted. Cognition is possible only if the thing persists at the time of the cognition.

उदासीनानामपि चैवं सिद्धिः ॥२।२।२६॥

26. And thus (there would result) the attainment of the goal by the effortless.

This *sūtra* refutes both the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas. If everything is momentary, the effortless would attain all their ends here and hereafter, for the person who puts forth effort perishes that very moment, and the benefits are reaped by another who comes after him.

For all these reasons shown above, the doctrines held by these two schools of Bauddhas are untenable.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

We are grateful to Swami Ashokananda, of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, U.S.A., for sending us an hitherto unpublished letter of Swami Vivekananda, which is included in this issue. ...

Recently, India observed the birth centenary of her celebrated scientist Dr. Jagadish Chandra Bose. It is well known that he had to fight a hard struggle against odds of various kinds before his 'discoveries were universally accepted and his instruments made famous'. But the person who stood by him like a pillar of strength, giving him sympathy, inspiration, and help in his work, is very little remembered. That person was Sister Nivedita, about whom Rabindranath Tagore said, 'In any record of his (Dr. Bose's) life's work, her name must be given a place of honour'. 'Sister Nivedita and Acharya Jagadish Chanda Bose', by Brahmacharini Kalpalata, of the Ramakrishna Mission Sister Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta, tells us about the close comradeship that existed between these two great souls....

In the moulding of the national character of India and in preserving the cultural unity of the country through the ages, our two great national epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata,* have played no insignificant part. They expound to the masses of the people, through the medium of fascinating stories, sublime poetry, and philosophical dissertations, the great truths embedded in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. In his paper on 'The Greatness of Our Epics', Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., has tried to show, taking the example of Srī Rāma, 'how it is possible for man to rise to godhood'. ...

At the request of the Government of India, Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the New Delhi centre of the Ramakrishna Mission, went on a lecture tour of Japan in September-October, 1958; and he visited Singapore, and Fiji Islands on his way back. In the course of his countrywide tour of Japan, the Swami addressed a number of university groups and other distinguished gatherings on the life and thought of the Indian people. 'The Spiritual Life of the Indian People' is adapted from the addresses he gave at the universities of Okayama, Toyo, and Tokyo. ...

Ahiṁsā or non-violence was a creed with Mahatma Gandhi. He invested it with a 'moral significance and a moral potency'. Life being a 'unified field', without any divisions in it, he thought what was good and true to the individual was also good and true to the community and the nation. With a religious fervour, he used non-violence as a 'weapon' in the cause of India's independence. Nowadays, when there is so much of misunderstanding and misapplication of Gandhi's *modus operandi* all around, it is refreshing to come across a correct estimate of its salient features by Professor Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, M.A., Head of the Department of History at the Khalsa College, Amritsar, in his compact and lucid article 'Mahatma Gandhi and Non-violence. ...

The way God works is inscrutable. When His grace descends, it works like a flood and washes away everything before it, bringing about a complete transformation in the person who gets it. Divine grace knows no distinction and makes no discrimination; grace means that. 'Catherine of Genoa' was such a blessed soul who had the overwhelming vision of God as Love, which transformed her weak and undisciplined life into one of absolute devotion to God. In his earnest narration, Mr. Paul Hourihan, whose devout study of the life of St. Benedict of Labre appeared in the March 1958 issue of *Prabuddha Bharata,* depicts Catherine as a 'Saint of Love', who had 'discovered that a divine and omnipresent Love dwelled in everyone. ...

Lepakshi and Tadpatri in Andhra Pradesh are places little known in North India. They had their glorious days in the past in art and architecture ; and all that remains of that glory now are the art treasures of painting and sculpture that have suffered and stood the ravages of time. Sri P. Sama Rao, B.A., B.L., of Bellary, pictures to us in his illustrated article the beauty of 'The Art Remains at Lepakshi and Tadpatri'. ...

Tirupati, also in Andhra Pradesh, with its temple of Śrīnivāsa or Bālājī, is one of the most ancient and holy places of pilgrimage in India. Dr. K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D., Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, describes in his illustrated article on 'Tirumalai-Tirupati and Śrīnivāsa-Veṅkaṭeśvara' the significance of the icon of Śrīnivāsa, and says that the deity is 'a living testimony to the descent of Godhead Himself in the form of *arcā*'. ...

It is a delightful experience to come across intelligible and perspicuous presentations of philosophical discussions. One such is the article on 'Rāmānuja's Theory of Perception' by Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of Patna University, who is already familiar to our readers through her lucid expositions of many an intricate problem in Indian philosophy. In her present study, she makes a full analysis of Rāmānuja's theory of indeterminate and determinate perception and compares it with the Nyāya theory of these two forms of perception....

No particular mode of spiritual life can claim to itself the exclusive monopoly of the bliss of Godhead. This point of view has been clearly presented in the scholarly article on 'Bliss in the Path of Devotion' by Sri K. R. Chaudhuri, M.A., I.P., formerly Inspector-General of Police and Joint Secretary of the Home Department, Government of Assam....

The 'Wanderer', who has recorded the impressions of his recent tour in India in 'India Revisited', is no stranger to our readers. Under the same pseudonym, he has in the past contributed several instructive and informative articles to *Prabuddha Bharata*. Visiting India after a long stay of seven years in America, and seeing a number of countries during his extensive travels, he has the advantage of studying the Indian situation more objectively and comparing it with the conditions obtaining in other countries. He sees 'indications of health' in the ferment that is noticeable in the socio-political atmosphere of India ; feels that she is on the march, having 'shaken off the long-standing lethargy'; and expresses his conviction that India will be alive spiritually under all circumstances. ...

The fifteenth-sixteenth centuries witnessed in India a great religious upheaval, in the wake of which many religious-cum-reformist movements headed by saints and prophets took their birth. One such prominent movement, Sikhism, was initiated by Guru Nānak, 'the Prophet of the Punjab'. In his article on 'Guru Nānak and His Teachings', Sri M. V. Bhide, I.C.S. (Retd.), of Poona, touches upon some of the notable events in the life of the great Guru and the cardinal principles of his teachings, namely, 'unity of God, brotherhood of man, faith, and love'. Recognizing no caste or class, Nānak 'made an attempt to reconcile Islam with Hinduism by pointing out the true bases of both'.

SCIENCE NEEDS A NEW INFLUENCE

The advance applied science has made is simply staggering. Modern scientific discoveries have changed the whole conception of the universe around us. We have entered into what may be called the 'Space Era', with artificial satellites whirling round the earth at great speed. Science is ever treading fresher and fresher fields of knowledge in its relentless march. But bewildered man asks, Has science grown in wisdom commensurate with the vast knowledge it has acquired? Is there not an imbalance in the pursuit of scientific knowledge? Of the present plight, Bertrand Russel says, 'We are in the middle of a race between

human skill as to means and human folly as to ends'. And he goes on to warn that 'unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow'.

It is as a result of this imbalance that mankind finds itself in a critical situation. There is the promise of tremendous progress on the one side, and there is the horror of tremendous disaster on the other. However much we may dislike some of the recent trends in scientific technology, its progress cannot be arrested. What is needed therefore is a new influence on science.

This was the remedy that was advocated for the malady of science by Dr. K. S. Krishnan, Director of the National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi, in his convocation address at the Lucknow University last December. Himself an eminent scientist, Dr. Krishnan said: 'The imbalance of science has to be rectified. What we need today is the humanizing influence of art and religion on science.... The only way to keep up balance in scientific developments was to bring together various branches of science and humanities.... There were two aspects of science. On the one side, there was a tendency to grow and widen the boundary of scientific knowledge, while, on the other, the process of consolidation of scientific knowledge was going on. Consolidation was a difficult process, and it was not keeping pace with the process of developments.'

Dilating on the Indian attitude that is behind scientific development in our country, Dr. Krishnan added: 'We, in India, are in an extremely fortunate position, because we have great respect for peace and tolerance. The scientists in other countries have doubts in their minds about the future of scientific advancements. But we have no such doubts, as we have nobler traditions.... Science should be sufficiently deep-rooted in the traditions of the country, and larger the superstructure, the deeper have to be the roots.'

The world has arrived at a turning point. Leaders whose opinions count for much in the affairs of nations have sincerely begun to feel that, unless scientific knowledge is blended with a spiritual quality, the present world crisis may not be averted. They feel that scientists, who are tied to the chariot wheel of the State, should set themselves free and refuse to become mere tools in the feverish hands of power-mad politicians.

Let us recall how Einstein, the greatest scientist of our age, who was fully imbued with a spiritual quality, was horrified by the results of his own discovery and wished he had been only a carpenter and not a scientist. Scientists must become genuine votaries at the altar of knowledge, and bend their energies towards its beneficial expression for mankind as a whole. To their present secular pursuit must be added a spiritual value, not in a narrow way, but in its broader sense. A bridge between scientific attitude and spiritual quality is the crying need of the present—a bridge between philosophy and science.

The 'nobler traditions' in India, referred to by Dr. Krishnan, have developed the right approach towards science as well as spiritual life. Indian philosophical thought is essentially scientific, and it is based on experiment of human feelings; this scientific and yet spiritual approach has been the characteristic of the highest Indian thought. It will be a good augury if scientific research everywhere takes lessons in this tradition, and creates a climate where these two forces can be blended, so that from their union may flow happy results for mankind now as well as in future.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY, VOL. II. By KRISHNACHANDRA BHATTACHARYA. *First Impression, May 1958. Pages xxxi+360. Price Rs. 17.50. Progressive Publishers, 37, College Street, Calcutta-12.*

This volume contains Professor Krishnachandra Bhattacharya's 'The Subject as Freedom' and 'Studies in Kant', besides twelve other papers covering a wide range of epistemological and metaphysical enquiry. Professor K. C. Bhattacharya, as his earlier published work has revealed, holds fast to the general framework of Advaita, though his philosophical thinking is as original as his methodology.

In the volume under review, we find his original contribution at all levels. Philosophy, he argues, is theoretic thinking, not literal thinking; it is not a system of propositions or judgements, but a systematic symbolism. And any metaphysical concept becomes intelligible only when it has a reference to the spirit The organon of philosophy is then reflection. It is divisible into three branches referring to the ohject, subject, and truth. Logic and metaphysics are the two basal branches of the philosophy of the object; and there can then be no metaphysics of the subject. This is a difficult position as evidenced by the reactions evoked by positivism, formalism, and empiricism.

In his epistemology, Professor Bhattacharya contrasts knowledge with awareness. This leads him on to argue that knowing can be studied only in the subjective attitude, for the subjective attitude is taken to yield the self-evidencing truth. He thus appears to identify the knowing-function with knowledge. And yet this is only a symbolic activity involving a free reference of the subject to the ohject. The author holds that truth and error do not belong to the sphere of logic and epistemology. Correction which follows error is a form of reflective consciousness.

Coming to the subject, we find that it is consciousness which is interpreted as freedom. It is here that Advaita and Kant are said to meet. But as against Kant, Professor Bhattacharya argues that the Self is never literally thinkable, though it is knowable. The philosophical study of the subject leads him to develop the doctrine of the triunal Absolute. The Absolute is formulated in a triple way as truth, freedom, and value. Each is absolute; and the three terms are only verbal symbols.

Professor K. C. Bhattarcharya's work is difficult reading for the simple reason that he had to discover a methodology of his own. In spite of the difficulty of the text, it is worth a thorough and careful reading for the new orientation it offers.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

VEDĀNTIC EDUCATION. By DR. CHINMOY CHATTERJEE, M.A., PH.D. *Available at Gauranga Cultural Research Institute, 'Jyoti Kunja', Motinagar, Lucknow. pp. 247+viii. Price Rs. 20 or sh. 40.*

This book, the result of patient research, is fittingly dedicated by the author to his revered father. Dr. Sampurnanand rightly says in his very suggestive Foreward that Dr. Chatterjee has here 'broken new ground and, incidentally, thrown new light on many problems which have been the subject of study by other scholars'. Vedānta, he reminds us, is 'an embodiment of the highest knowledge', of 'man's very nature', capable of bringing 'peace to the individual and peace to his surroundings'.

There are thirteen chapters of which the first six deal separately with what may be called the 'Primary' and the 'Secondary and Higher' grades of education as planned in ancient days. 'Arise, awake'; 'The Self should be realized'; 'Know Him, so that death may not grieve thee'—"Are these pronouncements unsubstantial, flimsy and unreal?" "There is no sense in these sayings" "if they are not supported by any operative method." The entire book is devoted to a well documented explanation of the "approach" of the "master-minds" of the Upaniṣads—an approach aimed at "elevating the inner man above the limits of gross matter." "Two branches of learning—*vidyā* and *avidyā*—spiritual and secular, are inextricably intertwined in the whole scheme", the "former complementary to the latter." The stress put by the author is naturally on those aspects of the ancient system which have been more or less "left unexplored" by other scholars, viz. "investigations on the post-Samāvartana educational problems, various subjects of study, methods of acquiring advanced knowledge from preceptors and the techniques of achieving Supreme Knowledge." "*Nāmūlam likhyate kiñcit*"; nothing is written which is not "based on the authority of the original texts." Earnest students will surely thank the author for bringing together all available scriptural passages whenever an important topic is discussed. "The basis for explanation is Saṅkara's commentary" throughout.

Three out of the twenty *vidyās* mentioned are elaborately explained—Madhu Vidyā, Saṁvarga

Vidyā, and Pañcāgni Vidyā. The amount of labour and devotion bestowed can be gauged from the fact that for the terms *Āditya* and *Prāṇa,* for example, 22 and 56 references have been given and commented upon. This can be taken as a good illustration of the exhaustiveness of the method adopted by Dr. Chatterjee. The book appropriately ends with valuable chapters on the Highest Knowledge, Line of Teachers, and a tabulated description of Vaṁśa.

S. N.

THE PROCESSION. By Khalil Gibran, Translated with Biographical Sketch by George Kheirallah. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15E. 40th Street, New York 16. pp. 74. $ 2.75.*

This little book starts with a nice account of the "hoary and sacred Lebanon", basking "meditatively under the sunny, rarefied skies of Mother Syria"—noted for "the moral and spiritual revelations which their poets, seers, and prophets gave to the world." In a short compass, we have here the remarkable story of the struggles and achievements of Gibran. "The boy of moods", "building hopes", facing calamities, some of which "stunned" him (as they might anyone else, similarly situated), and steadily rising to the "summit of his fame and productiveness"—all these are presented with a delicate touch carrying a powerful appeal. The "Sage" figuring in the poem speaks in the vein: "To steal a flower we call mean, To rob a field is chivalry", while the "Youth" who sits beside him observes: "Song to heart is judge sublime, And the plaint of reed remaineth, After the end of guilt and crime." Gibran's symbolic drawings add to the beauty and value of the book.

S. N.

COSMIC SYMPHONY. By Henry R. Vanderbyil. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15E. 40th Street, New York 16. pp. 54. $ 2.75.*

This is a series of discussions in verse conducted by a Philosopher, a Scientist, and a Sceptic. The starting point is the Philosopher's reading about the Fall of Adam and God's promise: "Mankind shall be freed by My beloved Son." The discussion is so turned that the Sceptic feels his "house of thought" needs remodelling, and the Scientist says to the Philosopher, "Your reasoning and eloquence I, too, find to my taste." "To each his field, his labour, and the harvest that they yield." "Some think existence matter-bound and others, spirit-moved; the wise man knows that many differing petals make the rose." An interesting book in simple English verse.

S. N.

RELIGIOUS GUIDANCE. By Rabbi Leibowitz. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15E. 40th Street, New York 16. pp. 100. $ 2.75.*

"Faulty thinking and incorrect evaluation of reality are", as the author says in his brief Introduction, "in a great measure, responsible for the many mental difficulties people are experiencing today." "The benefits of invention, science and human ingenuity have not brought us an inch closer to our highest goal, happiness." "Human knowledge which does not lead to better human conduct and behaviour will not only fail to bring us to happiness, but may prove fatal to our very existence." The Rabbi has a direct and convincing way of presenting the facts which are often followed or preceded, most artistically, by appealing anecdotes taken from his own experiences in guiding sufferers. "We and Ourselves", "We and Our Family", "We and Our God", and, finally, "We and Our Fellowmen—these, as he says, are the four main areas where there can be "pitfalls and invisible danger points"; and these are separately examined with appropriate subsections. Some of these latter, taken at random, read as follows: "In the College of Life", "Two Answers to: Why Suffering?", "There are no Winners in Fighting", and "It is in Your Hands". This book will impress on the reader that if we make our mind "the place" where all "cunning, conspiracies and betrayals originate", we can hardly expect it to be "the place where God is found."

S.N.

SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI. By Nirmal Kumar Bose. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. pp. 320. Price Rs. 2.*

Mahatma Gandhi was a tireless worker, a consummate speaker, and a prolific writer—all rolled into one. But he was a writer with a distinction. Writing was not a profession with him. Nor did he write for pleasure. 'Thought and writing', points out the learned compiler, 'were always tools with him for more efficient action' (Author's Preface, p. iv).

Gandhian literature is a vast storehouse of refreshing thoughts and ideas. It covers all aspects of human life, viz. personal, social, national, and international. But Gandhi's thoughts lie scattered in newspaper articles, speeches, interviews, and in

his books. They may not be always readily available. There is, besides, the danger of Gandhi being misunderstood when he is quoted out of context. A volume of selections like the one under review will go a long way to save the honest intellectual from many a pitfall. A ready reference book on Gandhian thought, it is sure to stimulate in not a few cases a desire to know more of Gandhi and what he stood for.

An earlier attempt in the same direction as the present one covered Gandhi's writings in English Gujarati, and Hindi. But written in Gujarati that it was, it did not attract much attention.

Professor Bose's work in much-maligned English has a wider appeal and, in Gandhi's words, shows 'the thoroughness with which he (the author) had gone into the subject' (Foreword, p. III). It is undoubtedly a valuable addition to the growing volume of Gandhiana.

Prof. S. B. Mookherji

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI By Gopinath Dhawan. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. pp. 363. Price Rs. 5.*

The philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is humanity's imperishable asset. But as luck would have it, Gandhi has been misunderstood by many and maligned by others. Some regard him as a saint straying into politics. Others, again, look upon him as an astute politician posing as a religious teacher. To others again, Gandhi is a bundle of contradictions. All these schools of thought do injustice to Gandhi. They miss the all-important point that Gandhi is infinitely greater than his deeds.

Self-realization is, according to Gandhi, the ultimate object of a man's life, and self-realization means 'seeing God face to face'. ... To Gandhi, a believer in spiritual unity, 'the immediate service of human beings (is) a necessary part of the endeavour' for self-realization. To see God face to face is to see God in His creation and to be one with it. The individual must work not for his own spiritual emancipation alone, but for that of his fellow-beings as well. Gandhi thus reconciled self-realization with social and humanitarian service. Self-realization is for him 'Sarvodaya' (the greatest good of all). The utilitarian creed, 'the greatest good of the greatest number', has no place in Gandhian philosophy. Gandhi insists, at the same time, that means and ends are convertible terms. The one must be as much pure and moral as the other. 'In fact, the means are to him everything' (p. 54).

Quest for Truth demands self-discipline. The seeker must discipline himself or herself by *abhyāsa* (constant endeavour), *vairāgya* (indifference to other interests of life), and the vows of truth, non-violence, *brahmacarya,* non-stealing, non-possession, etc. Non-violence (*ahiṁsā*) is, according to Gandhi, the very heart of religion. He holds in common with Plato 'that the universe is governed by *ahiṁsā,* or love, for life persists in the midst of destruction' (p. 63).

Truth is within ourselves. The more we take to violence in dealing with those who create difficulties, the farther we move away from Truth. *Ahiṁsā,* in fact, is 'the practical application of the great truth of spiritual unity, or as Gregg terms it, "the spiritual democracy" of all life' (p. 61).

Satyāgraha, a word coined by Gandhi and associated with his name, is the way of life to be followed by the sincere seeker of Truth. *Satyāgraha* is not to be confused with passive resistance, a weapon of the weak. A weapon it is, no doubt, but one that does not hurt or humiliate. It can be used only by those who are morally and spiritually strong. A *satyāgrahi* must build up an inner moral and spiritual reserve by living a strictly disciplined life and by following the constructive programme as prescribed by Mahatma Gandhi.

Dr. Gopinath Dhawan has presented a very readable account of the different aspects of the political philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, which was indeed his philosophy of life ; for Gandhi believed that life is an integrated whole, and cannot be divided into water-tight compartments *Satyāgraha,* non-violent non-co-operation, the constructive programme all lead to the sanctum sanctorum of Truth. The first three are the various jewels strung together by the eternal principles of Love and Truth.

Dr. Dhawan's treatise, we conclude, should find a place on the book-shelf of every student of Gandhian thought.

Prof. S. B. Mookherji

THE LONG ROAD By Arthur E. Morgan. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1958. pp. 130+xxxii. Price Rs. 2.*

The book appeared in the U.S.A. in 1936, the first three chapters having been orginally delivered as lectures on the Alden-Tuthill foundation at the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1936. For the present Indian edition the author has written a long and valuable preface and has added a few pages at the end, thus heightening the value of the book as a whole.

A. E. Morgan is a man of action, who was once the Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority

And yet he is convinced that a social order becomes top-heavy unless it is based on strong individual character. True progress must therefore be measured in terms of the development of character. Without character, 'The checking of anti-social action by laws and surveillance becomes too involved for human management, and the whole process begins to go down' (p. 26). And the author notes the rapid rate at which governmental, industrial, and commercial activities are expanding and sounds the warning, 'a rapidly expanding economy may consume character and culture faster than it creates them' (p. 31). Naturally, it takes long to build up character, but 'the long way round, of building character, in the end will prove to have been the short way home to a good social order' (p. 108).

India is now executing her Second Five-Year Plan, and a Third Plan is in the offing. Her industrial life and governmental activities are expanding rapidly. The question is quite relevant here: 'Is our character keeping pace with this external growth?' The book is a very timely publication, as it draws pointed attention to this basic fact. It is nicely printed and price is moderate.

S. G.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA-VEDANTA SOCIETY TOKYO, JAPAN

Consequent on the recent lecture tour in Japan of Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the New Delhi branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, certain individuals interested in the Vedāanta and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement have formed in Tokyo a Society named Ramakrishna-Vedanta Society. Its office-bearers are Prof. N. Kimura, President; Prof. H. Nakamura, Prof. O. Tanaka, Prof. Doi, and Prof. Miyamoto, Vice-Presidents; Mr. L. K. Mahtani, Treasurer; and Mr. V. S. Row, Secretary.

The aim of the Society is 'the encouragement and study of the Vedānta as propounded by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, as well as the furtherance of mutual understanding and fellowship between different systems of thought and religions'.

The mailing address of the Society is:

Ramakrishna-Vedanta Society,
Room 304, Mitsubishi Naka No. 7,
Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku,
Tokyo, Japan.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SOCIETY, RANGOON

Report for 1957

Free Library: Total number of books (in English, Burmese, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Sanskrit, Bengali, and Gujarati): 20,150. Books issued: 25,884. International system of classification and cataloguing and Newark's method of charging books (slightly modified) have been introduced.

Free Reading Room: Receives 24 dailies and 103 periodicals. Average attendance: 200.

Scripture Classes: Total number of classes: 93. Average attendance: 26.

Cultural Study Group: Several discussions on educational, cultural, and religious subjects amongst small groups of educated people were conducted.

Celebrations: People belonging to all religions met on the occasions of the birthdays of the prophets of diverse faiths and festivals in different religions. Total number of periodical lectures: 28.

Publications: Burmese translations of 2 books have been published and one book is in the press.

Guest House: 21 parties were accommodated during the year.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

Report for 1957

Indoor Hospital: 8 Wards (Surgical and Medical, and for the treatment of Cancer, Eye and Ear-Nose-Throat diseases) with a total number of 145 beds, 44 for female and 101 for male. Total number of patients treated: 3983 (male—2510, female—1116, children—357). Average daily attendance: 141.

Cured and discharged: 2464; Relieved and discharged: 898; Discharged otherwise—415; Died—206; Continued treatment for the following year—150; Death rate—5.3%.

Outdoor Dispensary: *Departments*: 1. General for men; 2. General for women and children; 3. Separate departments for minor operations and dressings for male and female cases; 4. Dental (Number of extractions and minor surgical cases: 8854) ; 5. Eye (14,521 cases treated); 6. Ear-Nose and Throat (8784 cases treated); and 7. Male and Female V.D. Department (6909 cases treated). Total number of cases treated in all the departments: New—70,589; repeated—1,25,502. Average daily attendance—537. Gifts and Donations: A new Dental Unit from the Japan Dental Association and 600 vials of V.D. penicillin from the Union Government of Burma.

Total number of surgical operations: 7150; Injections: 50,759.

Physiotherapy Department: *Details of Treatment*: 1. Diathermy—2231; 2. Ultra-violet—994; 3. Electric massage—632; 4. Infra-red—308; 5. Radium heat—296; 6. Torch bath—78; 7. Galvanic current—126; 8. Faradic current—390; 9. Sinusoidal current—108. Total—3163.

Radium Treatment: Offers facilities for treatment of Cancer and other allied malignant diseases. Number of patients treated: 220. Immediate requirement: K 25,000.

Clinical Laboratory: Equipped with up-to-date apparatuses. Details of clinical tests: Urine examination—3298; Stool examination—6201; Blood examination—2071; Sputum examination—310; Smear examination—620; Biochemical tests—36; Sections from malignant tumours—142. Total—12,678.

Diagnostic X'Ray: Total number of cases: 1761.

Deep X'Ray Therapy: Only Unit in working condition in Burma at present. Total number of exposures: 3336.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADAPITHA
P.O. BELUR MATH

Report for 1957

The activities of this educational institution during the year were as follows:

The Vidyamandira: A wholly residential Intermediate College with 298 students and 26 teachers, including 6 monastic members, and two attached hostels. Provides for various extra-curricular activities. Arrangements are under way to open a three-year degree course in 1960.

The Shilpamandira: 1. Industrial School and Mahesh Chandra Mechanical Section: Training given in Auto-mechanics, General mechanics, Electro-plating, etc. to 235 indigent students; 2. Licentiate Engineering Department: Strength—343 students and 26 teachers; 3. Hostel with 135 students; 4. Research and Production Section; Petrol Gas Plants improved. They could be operated electrically or by hand. Manufacture of Electric Clocks successfully experimented.

The Tattwamandira: Fostered the study of Sanskrit learing.

Samskrita Mahavidyalaya: To house this proposed institution for higher study and research in different branches of Sanskrit learning, a suitable place has been selected and negotiations are under way to acquire the place.

The Janasikshamandira: Spread literacy among the masses and taught rudiments of health and hygiene through its six Adult Education centres, mobile Audio-Visual Unit, Library with 9418 books, 18 magazines, and 3 newspapers, Youth Camp, etc. Free medical care was given to sick children. 57,250 lb. of milk were distributed to 37,961 expectant mothers and 9,53,093 children; 17,719 lb. of milk powder among 1,05,000 distressed people; and also 300 pieces of warm clothing.

The Social Education Organizers' Training Centre: Theoretical and practical training given for training the illiterate masses to 46 and 66 trainees of the third and fourth batches respectively. Mass contact through camps in the villages, study tours, and lessons in first aid.

The Shikshanamandira: Arrangements made for starting this Post-Graduate Teachers' Training College from the session 1958-59 at a cost of about 12 lakhs of rupees.

Other Activities: A Photography and Film Department, a Dairy and Agricultural Wing, and a Publication Section.

Swami Vivekananda at Greenacre