PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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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

21st February 1912, Udbodhan

Radhu was ill with fever and pain. The Mother was filled with anxiety, and kept saying, 'She does not keep well even when I am here, now who will look after her, later on? How will she keep alive then?'

I said, 'How the disciples crowd here all day, you never get any rest!'

The Mother replied: 'Day and night I say to the Master, "O Master, lessen this burden, let me have some rest", but nothing happens. It will go on like this for the rest of my days. . . . I keep telling them, "Go, take your initiation from your family *guru*; they expect it; I expect nothing". But they will not let me be; they weep, and I feel sorry for them. My days are limited, it will be like this as long as I am here.'

I cried: 'No, no, why do you say such things? You are keeping quite fit. You have no particular ailment. Then why do you wish to leave us? Do not say such things.'

For some days, the Mother had been feeling detached and melancholy.

Golap-Ma was arguing with somebody downstairs. The Mother asked, 'Now what is all this argument about?'

I said, 'Golap-Ma is sputtering something'.

The Mother said: 'One should not be so engrossed in words. If one thinks the worst of everything, one feels pain. Golap has got into such a habit of speaking out the truth that she no longer cares about what others will think. I, on the other hand, still care. One should never indulge in unpleasant truths,'

On another occasion, too, Golap-Ma was very outspoken with someone, and the Mother rebuked her, 'Why, Golap, what is this habit you are getting into!'

A crazy fellow had came to the Mother at noon and made a row. Referring to this incident the Mother said: 'The Master never revealed his own powers; he guarded them carefully. Now it is all over the market-place. It is all because of the school-master (Mahendra Nath Gupta); he went and published everything in his book *Kathāmṛta,* and turned people's heads. Because Girish Babu used to bully the Master and abuse him, these people would like to do the same!

'But why should they all wish to be initiated here? There are my sons at the Belur Math, why not go to them? Do they lack any power? They keep on sending all to me. I went so far even as to say that it is sinful to give up one's family *guru*. Still they won't go.'

I said, 'But Mother, when you give them initiation, you do it out of your own free will'.

The Mother answered: 'I do it out of pity for them. They won't let me go; they weep, and I feel sorry. I do it out of pity, otherwise, what good is it to me? If one initiates somebody, one has to take his sins upon oneself. I feel that since the body must perish one day, let it be for the sake of these people.'

24th April 1912, Udbodhan, the Mother's Room

It was half past one. I had gone upstairs after the midday meal in order to fetch *pān*. I heard the Mother talking. . . . She said: 'Men cannot give up their nature. Caitanya Deva once said, "Who forgets his own nature and worships me, I favour him".'

I said: 'I remember you once said at Jayrambati, "It would be all right if one's nature could change". Another day you said, "Some people's nature is such that as soon as one sees them one wants to love them, but when one sees others one has a different feeling".'

The Mother said, 'You are right, my son, one's nature is everything. What else is there?'

I said, 'Speaking of Golap-Ma, Sharat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) said that if she gives away a green cocoanut, she will shout it out to the whole house'.

The Mother said: 'Yes, they have become like that nowadays. They make a scene at the slightest cause. Jogen (Jogin-Ma) used to be so quiet and controlled, but she is not like that any longer. My son, forbearance is a great virtue, there is no other like it.'

I had a headache. When I went upstairs at four in the afternoon, I told the Mother about my headache, and she said, 'Perhaps it is due to the heat'. And she went and fetched ghee and camphor on a leaf, which she kneaded together and rubbed on my forehead with her own hand. .. A little later my headache was gone. . . .

A Polish lady had come to India to study the Vedānta. She had heard about the Mother at Calcutta, and came to visit her. She had some conversation with the Mother, and mentioning the Bahai community, she declared that their teachings resembled the Master's, in that they too sought to unite all religions. The lady herself appeared to be a member of that community.

After she had left, I asked the Mother, 'Well, how did you find her?'

The Mother said, 'Quite nice'.

I said, 'They come from far off. . . . Poland and Udbodhan office are far apart, you can have no idea, Mother, how far apart!'

The Mother said: 'The Master declared in an ecstatic mood, "I shall be worshipped in every house in future. There is no telling of the number of devotees I shall have". Nivedita once said, "Mother, we are Bengalis too. It was our *karma* that made us have our birth there. But you will see, we too shall become Bengalis—true to the core. This was their last birth.'

Beginning of May, 1912
Udbodhan Prayer Room

I asked the Mother, 'Mother, the Master

often spoke of some people as his own, what did he mean ?" ...

The Mother replied: 'The Master said they were his eternal companions. It is as when a king travels abroad ; his people travel with him. When I go to Jayrambati, should not my companions go with me? So people who belong together accompany one another through the ages. The Master used to say, "Those who are close to my heart share my sorrows". He would point to his young followers and say, "They share my joys, griefs, and pains". They come when he comes. He brought Naren (Swami Vivekananda) from among the seven *ṛṣis* (seers), but not the whole of him. He saw Shambhu Mallik behind Mother Kālī, when he was in meditation in the Kālī temple at Dakshineswar. He saw Balaram just as he was. At the very first meeting, he said, "I saw him just like this—a turban on the head and fair of complexion". And Surendra Mitra. "These three are my (divinely appointed) suppliers of needs", he said.' ...

The Mother continued: 'People have grown clever these days, they have taken his picture. This Master Mahashaya now, he is not an ordinary man! He has taken down whatever the Master uttered. ...

I said: 'Master Mahashaya said this about the *Kathāmṛta* that it would take ten or twelve volumes to publish everything. But will he have the time to do it?'

The Mother said, 'Yes, he is getting old ; he might die before he finishes the book'.

I asked, 'Did you not tell me at Jayrambati about the Master's coming among the white people or some such thing?'

She replied: 'No, I only said that many devotees of his will come from among the white people. Do you not notice, for instance, how many Christians are coming now? The Master said he would come again, after a hundred years. For these hundred years, he would remain in the hearts of those who loved him....I told him I could not come again. Lakshmi said she would not come again, not even if she were chopped into shreds like tobacco leaves! The Master laughed and said, "How can you help coming? Our roots are twined together, like the *kolmi* plant; pull at a stem, and the whole clump will come forward". Why waste word? The Master used to say, "You have come into the garden to eat mangoes, well, eat them and go. What does it matter to you how many branches and leaves there are?"'

I asked, 'But Mother, what will all this amount to, unless one sees some visible manifestation?'...

The Mother considered this and said: 'Yes, you are right, one must feel something. Yet one must never lose faith.'

I said: 'The other day Sharat Maharaj (Swami Saradanānda) said, as Swami Vivekananda also said, "Imagine that there is a heap of gold in the next room. A thief in this room has somehow come to know of it, but as there is a wall in between, he cannot get hold of the gold. Do you think that thief will have any sleep? All the time, he will be wondering how he can seize the gold. In the same way, once a man knew for sure that there is God, do you think he could ever lead a worldly life?"'

The Mother answered, 'Quite so'.

I went on: 'Whatever you may say, Mother, to give up the world and have dispassion is the most important thing. Shall we not find fulfilment?'

The Mother said: 'You will, my son. Who seeks refuge with the Master finds everything. His renunciation was his glory. ... I remember, one day he came to the room in the music tower after his midday meal. His spice bag was empty. I gave him a handful to chew and wrapped a little up in a piece of paper and said, "Keep this'. He left the room, but instead of going to his own room, ... he had gone straight southward to the riverside; he could not see his way, he was not aware of anything. He cried out, "Shall I drown, Mother?" I was beside myself with anxiety, the river was in full tide. I never went out, and there was no one in sight; whom could I send after him?

At last, one of the temple Brahmins happened to come this way, and I sent him to call Hriday. Hriday was taking his food, and he ran to the riverside without waiting to wash his hands; and so he brought the Master in. He very nearly fell into the river.'

I asked, 'Why did he go that way?'

She answered: 'Because I had given him some spices to keep. A holy man may never put by anything; that was why he could not see his way. His was a complete renunciation.

'A Vaiṣṇava monk had come to Panchavati. In the beginning, he had no attachments, but alas, in the end, he began to store away things like a mouse—utensils, pitchers, grain, and everything. The Master, observing this one day, said, "There now, this will be the end of him!"—meaning he was getting attached to things. The Master recommended renunciation, and advised him to go away from that place; finally he escaped.'

A disciple had come to bow at the Mother's feet. After he had left, she said, 'I learnt my lesson when I showed tenderness to Harish. Now, I no longer show any affection towards anyone'.

1st May, 1912, Udbodhan

I had gone to read the Mother's letters to her in the morning. ... I said, 'The daughter of a disciple has written from her husband's home wishing to come here. She has sent her respects, and does not wish her in-laws to know that she has written.'

The Mother said: 'Then there is no need to reply. I do not care for this hide-and-seek. At Jayrambati, Jogendra, the postman, used to write our letters. Many people said, "What! the postman reads your letters!" But why not? I have nothing to hide; anybody who likes may see my letters.'

Another disciple had asked when she would be going to Jayrambati. I said, 'Shall I say in the month of Agrahāyaṇa (November-December), at the time of Jagaddhātrī pūjā?'

The Mother said: 'No, no, how do you know for certain? I may be anywhere; it all lies in the hands of God. We are here today, gone tomorrow.'

I asked: 'Why do you say that? It is because you are here that so many people come and find comfort.'

The Mother said, 'True'.

I went on, 'Then remain for our sakes'.

The Mother said in a tearful voice, filled with compassion for her disciples, 'I love these people as much as they love me'.

I was fanning her; in a pitiful voice she said: 'I bless you, my son, that you may live long, be devoted to God, find peace—peace is the principal thing, one must find peace.'

I said: 'Mother, this I ask continually, Why do I never see the Master? If he belongs to us and may appear before us at his will, why does he not do so?'

The Mother said: 'Yes, I wonder why he never appears, although men suffer like this! When Ram's mother (Balaram's wife) was so ill, the Master said to me, "Go to see her". I said, "But how? We can't get any conveyance". He said, "Balaram's family is faced with disaster, and you won't be there? Walk, go on foot". In the end, we did get a palanquin, and I came all the way from Dakshineswar to see her. I came twice. On the other occasion, I was staying at Shyampukur, I went on foot at night to see her. ... Really, if he does not appear in times of trouble, what will men do?'

I said: 'Well, so long as one has a body one must suffer. I never even ask him to do away with my troubles. But surely, he can appear and comfort us in our sorrows?'

The Mother said: 'Alas! Quite true. .. I pleaded with the Master, but he said, "I have millions, I shall deal with them as I like".'

I pleaded again, 'Can he not see how I suffer?'

The Mother replied. 'But he has so many like you'. ...

I continued: 'Mother, people like those men

at the warehouse are quite happy. It is only they who have been awakened, who seek God, that suffer.'

The Mother said: 'Yes, indeed. They are quite happy; they eat and drink and enjoy themselves. It is those who love God that suffer.'

I asked, 'When you see them suffer, do you not feel sorry for them?'

The Mother said: 'What sorrow should I feel? The Master of the world looks after his own.'

I said, 'Would you not like to come back again, for the sake of those who love you?'

The Mother replied: 'To be born is to suffer. Enough, no more, I would not like to come again.' ...

There were letters from the Mother's brothers with prayers for financial help and news of quarrels and disagreements. I said: 'Give them plenty of money. Tell the Master. Let them enjoy themselves to their fill, and then they will have no more attachment.'

The Mother said: 'That will never happen. They will never become detached, however much one may give them. (People who are worldly-minded cannot become detached.)

'They are always complaining about their troubles. Kali is always wanting money. Now Prasanna has begun to imitate him. Barada never wants money. He says. "Where will sister get this money?"'

I said, 'Neither does your crazy sister-in-law ask for money'.

The Mother said: 'On the contrary, if one gives her money, she throws it away.'

I asked, 'Why were you born there?'

The Mother replied: 'Why? My parents were very good people. Father was devoted to Rāma. Mother was most kind-hearted. She would feed people, take care of them; and she had a simple heart. Father was very fond of tobacco, and would call to all those who passed before the house, make them sit down, and ask them to have a smoke. He would get the things ready himself.' ...

IN QUEST OF PEACE

By the Editor

Eternal happiness is for those—and not for others—who are discriminating and who realize in their hearts Him who—being one, the controller, and the inner Self of all—makes a single form multifarious.

Eternal peace is for those—and not for others—who are discriminating and who realize in their hearts Him who—being the eternal among the ephemeral, the consciousness among the conscious—alone dispenses the desired objects to many (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.2.12,13)

Man wants peace. He wants security in his individual life and stability in his social life. If peace endures, man can hope for a stable society, where he will have opportunities for self-fulfilment as a member of society. If peace endures, he can hope for security in his individual life for carrying on the ennobling pursuits of a cultural, religious, and spiritual life. That is the question that is looming large before desperate humanity today in all its nakedness. How will enduring peace come?

Hardly have the wounds of the last war

healed, when the world is again being threatened with destruction on a scale unprecedented in the annals of human civilization. Sensitive and thinking minds the world over are greatly exercised about it. We notice intense activity in the international sphere directed to meet the challenge of the situation and to grapple with the problem. On the one hand, enlightened statesmen of the world are leaving no stone unturned to find ways and means for ushering in enduring peace, so that mankind now and the generations of the future may live in peace, security, and happiness. On the other hand, we are mutely witnessing a breakneck race of armaments among the great powers. It is a strange logic to say that new weapons of war are being mass-produced and piled up by them only to prevent war! Is peace achieved that way? As a great writer has put it, more wars are caused in the world by war-mongers discussing peace proposals than by peace-loving people discussing war measures. The seeds of war sprout in the minds of men. The seeds of peace must also be sown in the minds of men.

In his long quest for peace, man has tried many cures and found them wanting—political cures, economic cures, scientific and technological cures, and many others—both in the international and national spheres. Various types of political regimes have been tried for centuries, autocratic and democratic, monarchical and republican; but none of them could yield enduring peace to man. Several patterns of society based on bold and attractive economic programmes and policies have been experimented. Have they brought distracted humanity an inch nearer its goal? Again, the modern scientific-cum-technological civilization has added so much to the physical comforts of man; it has contributed in a great measure to his material happiness, has given him the many things that have lightened his burden, saved his labour, and improved his standard of living. But has all that provided him with an answer to the inner craving of his soul? Has it fortified him fully, removing suspicion, fear, and agony from his soul? Has it brought him the peace that makes for perpetual security and stability?

Within the first fifty years of this so-called 'advanced and enlightened' twentieth century, this unhappy world of ours was twice subjected to global wars, miscalled 'great wars', which is a standing libel on our boasted civilization. After the first world war, sobered by its lessons, nations made a genuine effort to come together with the idea of putting an end to all future wars. Thus was launched the League of Nations with great hopes and expectations. Unfortunately, it did not live long, as there were certain glaring defects in its very constitution, which eventually proved to be the seeds of its own destruction.

Soon after the second world war, even before its embers had begun to cool off, came into being the United Nations. By its proclaimed aims and objectives, people thought that 'it is the only cure for war and the only hope for a lasting peace'. But as Pitirim A. Sorokin, after analysing the various defects of this world organization, both internal and environmental, points out: 'However commendable this enthusiasm may be, it is bound to fade and to lead to new disillusionment. ... If anything, its inner organization is more defective than that of the League of Nations. ... The United Nations Organization is shot through and through with cancerous self-contradictions' (*The Reconstruction of Humanity*, pp. 12, 13).

Although the many achievements of the United Nations in the fields of education, health, labour, and culture have been praiseworthy, in its primary aim of bringing peace to mankind, it has disillusioned the distressed humanity which had hoped for much benediction to flow from it. Instead the United Nations has become an arena for ideological conflicts and the cold war between great political powers. Can man hope to get peace through the instrumentality of such political organizations either in the international or in the national sphere? Politics and political institutions cannot deliver the goods, because they

lack that something which alone can make for peace.

Let us then consider our modern civilization —the technological civilization—and see whether it holds any promise of lasting peace to man. The present generation has its own special problems, which are entirely different from what earlier generations faced. With the rapid advance of scientific technology, newer problems confront modern man. The new civilization has transformed the individual into a depersonalized unit, as it were. The things he created have begun to control him; he has become their slave. Modern means of quick communication bring him in touch with the different parts of the world. Day in and day out, all sorts of ideas, news, and views, often conflicting, are dinned into his ear, with the result that he finds himself miserably confused. Earlier generations were comparatively happier, because in their case, we are tempted to say, seclusion was a blessing.

The more serious effects of the 'accomplishments' of the industrial civilization are to be noticed in the realm of the ideological. With the onset of rationalism, which served as the basis of the present-day scientific mood and temper, man has been fast losing sight of the deeper values which alone will ultimately count and stand him in good stead in moments of mental and spiritual crises. Moral and spiritual values are at a discount nowadays. In the absence of lofty moral principles to guide man in his daily life, he has degraded to the level of the animal, seeking satisfaction only in the senses. The tragic picture of what is happening in some of the highly industrialized countries should chasten man and awaken him to the hidden truths of his being and to the laws of inner life, religious and spiritual.

The question is, Has the material civilization of the last half a century brought to man mental happiness and tranquillity? Definitely not. Has it not brought about a gradual degeneration in the moral standards of human relationship? Has it not caused man to lose faith in himself and in the higher order of values, call it moral, religious, or spiritual? The answer is an emphatic yes. Preceding generations had a keener awareness of those values, and in accordance with the ideals they believed in, they regulated their life and conduct, for which they were happier and more peaceful too. True, they did not have as much knowledge as the modern man possesses; they did not have the radio, the television, the cheap press, the innumerable labour-saving gadgets, and the hundred and one things that we command to cater to our material and physical needs. But they also did not have the nuclear weapons, which threaten to wipe out human civilization without leaving any trace of its proud achievements. In his quest for peace, man has arrived at death and destruction in the form of the atom bomb and the hydrogen bomb!

The agony and despair of mankind in the mid-twentieth century and its aspirations for survival have been described by P. A. Sorokin in telling words: 'Bleeding from war wounds and frightened by the atomic Frankensteins of destruction, humanity is desparately looking for a way out of the deathtrap. It craves life instead of inglorious death. It wants peace in place of war. It is hungry for love in lieu of hate. It aspires for order to replace disorder. It dreams of a better humanity, of greater wisdom, of a finer cultural mantle for its body than the bloody rags of its robot civilization. Having foolishly maneuvered itself into a deathtrap, and facing the inexorable problem, "To be or not to be", it is forced to pursue, more desparately than ever before, its eternal quest for survival and immortality (*op. cit,* Prologue, p. 3).

Which way, then, lies peace? In the international sphere, there is no hope for it. Neither does one's own environment in the context of political, social, or economic life, nor the modern technological civilization holds out any promise of peace to man. Where should one turn then? As an immediate answer, and

perhaps the only answer man has, to this question, we repeat what Dr. S. Radhakrishnan asserts in the Introduction to his book *Recovery of Faith*: 'Sensitive and informed minds believe that the fundamental need of the world, far deeper than any social, political, or economic readjustment, is a spiritual reawakening, a recovery of faith. Great movements of spirit arise when despair at the breakdown of civilization makes the mind susceptible to the recognition of the insufficiency of the existing order and the need for rethinking its foundations and shifting its bases.'

Does it mean that all that has been achieved by modern man through great labour should be discarded? Leaving everything behind, should he run away from the world? It does not mean that. It means that man should recover his faith and cultivate other virtues which are essential for the preservation of that faith.

It is no fault of knowledge if it is made to serve the baser needs of man. It is no fault of science if it is being abused by unscrupulous men. A thing is good or bad depending on the way it is pressed into the service of man. A machine or nuclear energy is neither good nor evil by itself, even as fire is neither good nor evil. Fire can cook our food, and it can burn our hands. If we get burnt, it is no fault of fire; it is the mishandling of fire. Similarly, if today mankind stands at the edge of a precipice, it is because of a lack of faith and wisdom on the part of man, and the consequent mishandling by him of a great storehouse of power which could have been diverted to more useful channels for greater benefit to his kind.

To repeat, this misapplication and mishandling of knowledge results from a lack of the proper sense of moral duties and obligations towards humanity. A man without such virtues is no man at all. Man is called man because he possesses certain human qualities. Without them, he is like a beast. Man has to live among men, and learn to live well, letting others to to live, too. This spirit of 'live and let live' engenders at once a spirit of mutual understanding, recognition of the rights and privileges of others, and accommodation to those rights and privileges. This will, in turn, generate another virtue, namely, selflessness, which will foster the sense of group life. Which means that one lives and works not merely for the good of oneself, but for the good of the others as well, among whom one lives and grows. Self-interest thus occupies a subordinate place, and the interest of the community takes the first place. The good of the community is one's own good, and not the other way about. Thus a spirit of self-sacrifice is kindled in the individual. All these virtues are indispensable to every individual who wishes to build up a happy, healthy, and stable society.

That society or group is considered good where there are more individuals practising these virtues. Such individuals not only strive to work them out in their own personal lives, but try to inculcate them in the lives of their fellowmen. If we look back with pride to any particular period of human history, it is because that period threw up in greater number such individuals who cherished the deeper values of man and his spirit. It is because of this that such personalities are remembered and glorified even today. As against this, if any generation, or a particular group or society, had fallen on evil days, it was precisely because of the absence of such eminent personalities.

From what has been said at great length in the foregoing paragraphs, it is now clear to us that man's quest for peace must ultimately lead him to search for it within himself. Man himself, his own spirit, is the source of all strength, all virtue; he himself is the home of peace. Man must therefore begin to search within. He must turn inward. And this turning inward is the beginning of religion; it is the beginning of spiritual life. It is on this plane of the spirit that there is a crying need for a renaissance, so that the generation growing before us may be brought up in a new way, not wholly material-minded, but where spiritual values will be given overriding importance.

Pleading for a renaissance of religious and moral values, Sri C. Rajagopalachari, who is greatly respected for his ripe wisdom and for his pious and devoted life, says: 'The nineteenth century had enthroned rationalism ousting all traditional beliefs, regarding a supreme, almighty intelligence. But after a hundred years of the age of reason, we had found that knowledge without restraint was a disastrous possession.

'The "sacred myth" about Eve and the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden was acquiring a new and terrible meaning of the doctrine of temptation of knowledge which, in course of time, unless a miracle saves mankind, would end in the annihilation of civilization. . . .

'Rationalism could not reason; it would not restrain. What restrained men was religion, but religion had been so seriously undermined that selfishness and irresponsibility persisted, even though grave doubts had come upon us about the claims of rationalism. In this present position, we must restore spiritual values. It is a case of "must" if we wish to live. The young should be brought up so as to accept values other than material. But religions should be cleared of all rigidity, . . . should be made gentle and easy like what a mother is to her children. . . . All plans can succeed if men are generally good, and no plan can succeed if men are generally dishonest. The stable foundation for honesty and co-operation and diligence is religion' (Quoted from his presidential address at the centenary celebrations of the Central College, Bangalore, on the 20th December 1958).

Our call therefore is for the restitution of man on the basis of religion. For it is through the inculcation of religious faith alone that the true foundation of ethical and social life can be properly laid. Faith in an ultimate principle and living up to its demands is the essence of spiritual life, which brings to man eternal peace and happiness.

That is what the religion universal teaches. If individuals grow on such spiritual foundations, manifesting purity and perfection in their character, not only do they become ennobled, but they also become benefactors of humanity. They become a power for good in the world. It is to such that Jesus Christ referred in glowing terms:

> 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
>
> Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.
>
> Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
>
> Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
>
> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.'

Man has to become a child of God in order to become a peacemaker, a bringer of peace unto himself and others. The first and foremost task of religion is this building up of the inner man, chastening his emotions, and refining his attitudes and aspirations. Religious practice, or the awareness of a higher purpose of life and living in accordance with that awareness, ennobles and enlarges the human mind, releasing a flood of spiritual power for the good of the world.

Truly religious persons are models of perfect character. From their heart wells up nothing but love and compassion for one and all; and it is they alone that can unselfishly work 'for the welfare of the many and for the happiness of the many'. As Swami Vivekananda said, they are the 'men who bring, as it were, a mass of magnetism into the world, whose spirit works in hundreds and thousands, whose life ignites others with a spiritual fire—such men, we always find, have the spiritual background. Their motive power came from religion. Religion is the greatest motive power for releasing that infinite energy which is the birthright and nature of every man. In building up character, in making for everything that is good and great,

in bringing peace to others and peace to one's own self, religion is the highest motive power, and therefore ought to be studied from that standpoint'.

Man who started his search for peace outside, in things external to himself, in the things of the world, must turn round and seek for it within himself. He has to discover it within himself. That is what religion promises. As St. Paul has exhorted: 'Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.'

CONTRADICTION AND METAPHYSICS

By Dr. P. S. Sastri

1. Contradiction arises when the unreal is integrated to the real to appear as a single entity. There must be the integration of the real and the unreal into one; and then alone we can have error. Such an integrated or synthetic entity is the object of error. The real is the 'not-this' or consciousness when the unreal is the 'this'. On an ultimate analysis, we have one supreme contradiction wherein we apprehend an entity as another. This contradiction appears as many, gives rise to a series; and all are variations of the primal form of contradiction. The difference between one contradiction and another is due to the difference between their conditioning or determining media. That which is responsible for the apprehension of contradiction as true and real is an inexplicable principle which can be defined as non-knowledge. This apprehension is not a mere absence or negation of knowledge. It is a positive apprehension having a content, a meaning. It is not merely an appearance involving error. This apprehension refers to a significant and positive state which in itself is a negation of the real fact. The object is positive, it exists and claims a certain degree of reality. It is not merely unreal or totally false. Such a non-knowledge is the material which issues itself into contradiction.[1]

When an object appears as having the nature of another, when the content of an object is divorced from its existence, we have contradiction. Here two objects are taken as one, and this is what we describe as an erroneous cognition. That it is an erroneous cognition is known after the truth is known, after their identity is rejected. If there is something that cannot be so sublated, then it is not a case of contradiction.

2. We can overcome a contradiction by knowing distinctly the objects that have tended to coalesce. In the absence of this knowledge, we have to suffer the contradiction. There is something in contradiction which prevents the emergence of true knowledge. When the fact of contradiction operates, we do not become aware of true knowledge. But even when the contradiction is absent, true knowledge can arise. That is, the concomitant relation between privation and contradiction does not imply that contradiction is that privation which does not have that which prevents a thing from coming into existence. Contradiction does not prevent the emergence of knowledge. Yet the former can be dispelled only by the latter. As such, the latter may have to be treated as the significant contrary or opposite of the former. The latter is the negation of the former.[2]

3. Contradiction is due to privation. Is

[1] *Pañcapādikā,* IV.13-21; *Vivaraṇa,* XI.1-11; *Tattvadipana,* LIV; *Prameya-saṅgraha,* XIV.26-27.

[2] *Vivaraṇa,* XI. 16-20; *Tattvadipana,* LVI.

this always true? The rope is taken to be a snake because of a certain similarity between the two. It is jaundice that makes an object look yellow. It is the love or hate of the subject that prejudices him for or against the object cognized. All these defects or limitations may be held responsible for making us accept a contradiction as true and real. But these limitations, we should note, are only the conditions, not the actual cause, of the erroneous cognition. If these limitations were to be treated as causes, our interest demands a knowledge of the causes of these causes. And in such a regress, we are bound to accept that, since contradiction is a fact of finite life, privation (*ajñāna*) is the ultimate cause of this contradiction. Everything that is an effect has a material cause, which is a positive entity. In the absence of a material cause, no effect can emerge. The effect emerges along with its qualities and inherent modes of action. These qualities and the inherent modes of action or behaviour have their ground in the material cause. As such, contradiction must have as its material something which is its ground, something which has in essence the nature of the contradiction. Such an entity can be only *ajñāna*.

Can we not take the self to be the ground of contradiction? If the self were to be the material cause, it would have to undergo some change or other; and this is unacceptable for a variety of reasons. Can the ego or the mind be the ground? If we have to give an affirmative answer, we must know whether the mind includes also its relation with the sense-organs. If it does not include this, how can it cognize objects? The mind being internal cannot cognize the objects that are 'outside' without the aid of sense-organs. If it includes its relation with the sense-organs, how is an erroneous cognition possible? The sense-organ does not come into contact with an object like the serpent when only rope is presented. We have to admit that the mind alone cognizes such an object.

In the erroneous cognition, there is a general knowledge of the ground as the 'this' and there is a specific knowledge of the 'what'. There can be no erroneous cognition without a general knowledge of the ground. If the mind cognizes the 'this', what prevents it from cognizing the 'what' also? The mind then cannot be the material cause of the erroneous cognition.

If knowledge is a mental state, we have to admit that the mind is not non-conscious. But by itself the mind is not conscious of anything. The pure mind cannot by itself be the ground of this cognition. Further, we cannot refer error to the mind and the knowledge of truth to the self. Both error and truth must have an identical ground. If error has its ground only in the mind, the self has nothing to do with it. This would also imply that the self has nothing to do even with true knowledge. The self will have to be eternally wise. But facts are too hard against this view.

When the self and the mind cannot be the material causes of contradiction, we have to accept *ajñāna*. Contradiction is an appearance, has an unreal content, and has an unreal significance or meaning. The ground of such an entity cannot be found in the subjective limitations and defects which vary from individual to individual, and from occasion to occasion. Moreover, these limitations are in a sense real, while contradiction does not claim the same degree of reality. And a 'real' entity cannot be the cause of one which does not partake of its nature. We may also note, in passing that when the object is an appearance, its apprehension too must needs be an appearance

The principle of *ajñāna* is in agreement with the nature of all effects; and it is present in all cases of erroneous cognition. It has its ground in the self. Anything that is apprehended by it or through it partakes of its nature. Such an *ajñāna* alone is the material cause of all erroneous cognition. In so far as the self is the ground of this *ajñāna*, it makes some knowledge or other possible. Contradiction as a feature of all finite 'knowledge' thus can be rendered possible.

But contradiction is also a fact of finite existence. What is the ground of this contradiction? In the cognition 'this is silver', we apprehend the silver as external, as lying outside the percipient. The cognized silver has nacre as its ground; and the nacre is cognized actually as the 'this'.

Śaṅkara observes that contradiction is both conditioned (*naimittika*) and natural (*naisargika*). As we have shown earlier, contradiction is a cyclical process and thence is natural; it is in essence identical with its material cause. It is like a process, like a circle where we can make out neither a beginning nor an end. It is conditioned, because it appears in the manifestations of its effects or products. This argument is based on the positive nature of *ajñāna*, which is the material cause of all contradiction.

The positive nature of *ajñāna* can be demonstrated perceptually and also inferentially. Consider the expressions: 'I am ignorant', 'I do not know myself, nor others'. The first sentence makes the 'I' or the self the ground of *ajñāna*. In both, I have the immediate and direct apprehension of *ajñāna*. This is possible only when *ajñāna* is a positive something which is distinct from the self. *Ajñāna*, then, is an object for the self; it is the not-self, and yet it is a positive entity. This is a fact of experience.

Can we take 'I am ignorant' to be an apprehension of the absence of knowledge? This is not possible. When I say 'I am happy', I have an immediate awareness of a positive content; and I have a similar awareness of a positive content in 'I am ignorant'. This is not possible if *ajñāna* is the negation of knowledge. And negation is not cognized perceptually. It is impossible to apprehend perceptually the absence of knowledge in the self. Suppose we experience the absence of knowledge; then do we experience this after experiencing the contrary of knowledge, or without experiencing it? Now the statement 'There is no knowledge in me' expresses an experience in which we have the apprehension of the contrary of knowledge, and of a positive something. This positive something refers to knowledge and not to its opposite. And when knowledge is present, it is impossible to have the direct apprehension of the absence of knowledge. The absence or the negation of knowledge is experienced only when there is the apprehension of its opposite. This apprehension is not 'perceptual'. Yet it is an immediate apprehension in which we can discover the operation of negativity. But whether the negation of knowledge is apprehended in the self or not, we cannot have the apprehension of the negation of knowledge, which has the self as its ground.

It is generally seen that there is a conative urge after apprehending *ajñāna* in the form of 'I do not know what you say'. Even when the objects are known, it is quite possible that their number may not be known. Here we apprehend *ajñāna* as distinct from the objects, and then we proceed in our activities. But one might argue: 'We know that the knowledge of an object and the absence of this knowledge cannot coexist. We cannot have both the knowledge and the absence of the knowledge of the same object at the same moment.' This argument forgets that *ajñāna* is a positive entity which is immediately apprehended. It has the self as its ground; and its contrary or opposite also is the self. Though the negation or absence of knowledge cannot possibly coexist with knowledge, still in so far as it is a positive entity, one positive entity can coexist with another positive entity. In other words, knowledge and *ajñāna* are not mutually exclusive entities. *Ajñāna* can coexist with the knowledge of that ground. which is its contrary.

The ground is the self which is the witnessing consciousness. It is a continuous affirmation of consciousness, which is self-revealing; and it also reveals that which is not itself. It cannot therefore remove or put an end to another positive entity called *ajñāna*; for *ajñāna* being the object of knowledge has to be revealed by the self. And it is a fact that the knowledge of something does not dispel that something.

Here may arise an important objection which can be stated thus: 'The object "gives" knowledge, and knowledge is the exact opposite of *ajñāna*. The object, then, is that which removes *ajñāna*. Further, an object is that whose existence is determined by a valid means of knowledge. Then it cannot be said to be made manifest by a witnessing consciousness. Does consciousness reveal pure *ajñāna* or *ajñāna* as qualified by an object? It cannot be the former, because mere *ajñāna* is beyond apprehension; nor can it be the latter, since every object is apprehended only through one of the valid ways of knowing.'

Before we answer this question, we must be clear about a distinction. An object as apprehended by the pure witnessing consciousness is not the same as that apprehended by a determined or conditioned witnessing consciousness. Any object is an object of the witnessing consciousness as a known or as an unknown entity. The object as known is apprehended by one of the valid ways of knowing. As unknown, it is apprehended in a general or specific form as that which dispels the particular *ajñāna*. The former demands the mediation by a valid means of cognition; and the latter makes no such demand. In either way, *ajñāna* is immediately apprehended; and this is a positive entity.

Inferentially, too, we can establish *ajñāna* as a positive entity. An object in a dark room is not apprehended, because it is not visible. The first rays of light coming from the candle illumine the object; and the object is distinct from the darkness that is dispelled by the rays of light. Likewise, take an object which is at a fixed place and which exists for a certain period of time. Prior to the knowledge of the object, *ajñāna* is at the same place as the object. But it is not cognized by the sense-organs. It dispels itself as the object is apprehended. That is, it is not a non-cognized entity. The object that is not cognized stands as though it is veiled or concealed. Just as the posterior cognition sublates the prior one, we cannot say that the cognition of the object dispels the *ajñāna* that has enveloped it so far. This *ajñāna* is brought forth of nothing outside of itself. Since there is nothing external to it, it itself is the veil, the enveloping medium. When the object is cognized, that which is sublated is this veil, it is itself. The moment it is sublated, the object gets known; and this is possible only if the object and *ajñāna* are at the same place. Since the cognition of the object is not erroneous, *ajñāna* is not an unreal entity. On the other hand, it is an object distinct from that which is known. It is distinct from the object cognized. The object in the dark room is illumined or revealed by the first rays of light. *Ajñāna* is something like the darkness which envelopes the object.

Now we have the cognition of the object which is the not-self. Is this knowledge the contrary of *ajñāna*? Or is it the knowledge of the self? It cannot be the former, since *ajñāna* which has its ground in the self cannot be said to be veiling the object. Nor can it be the latter, since it is the object which is said to be known. But the object as known, as intelligible, has its ground only in the self. The object of perception is that characteristic of reality which comes alive, which in developing a meaning becomes a phase of consciousness. It is this phase of consciousness which is veiled by *ajñāna* prior to our knowledge of the object.

Knowledge is rooted in the self; and *ajñāna*, too, has its ground in the self. Both are directed towards the same entity. When one operates the other is not. This *ajñāna* is the same as *avidyā*, which has a power of its own. It is capable of fulfilling the functions of the self; and it is the general matrix of the finite universe. Hence it is said to have a power or potentiality which is not external to it. It is identical with its power. This power is closely united to the being of the universe; and this is the being of consciousness which is active or which may be waiting to come alive. When we cognize the objects which are 'outside', or when we speak of the ego whose ground is the self, we do implicitly accept that *avidyā* is

closely attached to the being of the self. The self as such is the ground for all the objects that constitute the not-self.

Implication, too, can determine the positive nature of *ajñāna*. In the absence of the operation of *ajñāna*, we cannot offer a consistent and satisfactory explanation of the object apprehended erroneously, and of the apprehension of such an object. For instance, we have referred to the ego as being grounded in consciousness; and the ego is generally taken to be the same as the self. Silver has its ground in nacre in the erroneous cognition. This silver is identified with nacre. The object silver and the knowledge of this object are not real; both are cases of contradiction. Knowledge, we should remember, presupposes the existence of an object. Now the material from which such an object and such a 'knowledge' are derived must share their essential nature. If the material cause is real, the effect too ought to be real, since the effect partakes of the nature of the cause. Since the effect called silver is not real, its material cause too cannot be real. Has the material cause a beginning? If it has, we must seek another cause for this, and so on. That it has no beginning can be proved by no valid means of knowledge. As such, we have to assume that the material cause of an entity which is not real is itself not real, that it is beginningless, and that it is no other than *ajñāna* which has a direct relation to the self. Apart from *ajñāna*, there can be no material out of which contradiction might arise with regard to the existence of the objects and the knowledge of these objects as well.[3]

4. Here we have to notice a sharp distinction. Anything that manifests or reveals or brings forth the nature of an entity has the latter as its object. It is the self that reveals an entity. As such, how can there be an object for *avidyā*? This question is easy of an answer. Earlier, we have said that prior to the knowledge of an entity, the entity lies as if it were under a veil. It is due to *ajñāna* that there appears an enveloping veil round the not-self. *Ajñāna* cannot envelop the self, for it cannot hide it or illumine it. There is nothing to show that it envelops the self which is its ground. It is inconsistent with its nature and function to envelop the self. Admitting that it is only an enveloping veil for the objects, how do we know that it exists? When we know that this is a blue pot, the veil (*āvaraṇa*) has ceased to exist for the pot; and it is then impossible to know the veil. When we do not know that this is a blue pot, even then we cannot know that there is a veil enveloping the object.

One might argue that prior to knowledge, *ajñāna* was enveloping the object. That is, we apprehend the object and at the end of the apprehension we have the knowledge. Then the apprehension in the first moment may be said to be cognizing *ajñāna* which is veiling the object. But knowledge is something like a continuous stream; and the object cognized in the subsequent moments is the same as that cognized in the first moment. Further, we have the cognition and we know that it is a blue pot. Here we do not become aware of our prior non-apprehension of the object. Such an awareness comes only later or in a mood of reflection.

We might be asked to consider at least recognition, which seems to show that *ajñāna* is a veil, spread, as it were, over the objects. An object was cognized yesterday, and now I recognize it. During the interval, there is non-apprehension and therefore *ajñāna* veiling it. If there is no such veiling, there ought to be the cognition even in the intervening time.

But one can ask, Is this non-apprehension? An object may be known, and it may be cognized at two different times. In the interval, there is no cognition, because there is no relation of the subject to the object; and as such, we do not apprehend any non-apprehension at the time of recognition. Further, the apprehension or otherwise of an object is determined by a valid means of knowledge; and there is no such valid means through which we may be

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[3] *Vivaraṇa*, XI.24-XIII.17; *Tattvadipana*, LVII-LXVI; *Prameya-saṅgraha*, XIV-XVIII.

said to apprehend the non-apprehension. This non-apprehension and the object are grounded in the witnessing consciousness. That is, the contradiction arising from *ajñāna* and the objects as well are grounded in this consciousness. This alone explains experience.[4]

5. The object cannot be apprehended if the veil enveloping it is not destroyed. Is this accomplished by any valid means of knowledge? Or is it done by the witnessing consciousness? It cannot be the former. Consider the perception of the two moons. Here we do not overcome the 'veil' with the aid of any valid means of knowledge. It cannot be the latter, since even the 'veil' is dependent on consciousness. It is consciousness that makes *ajñāna* possible. There is no argument to show that *ajñāna* envelopes the not-self. The not-self is essentially dependent, and to that extent it cannot reveal itself. And a veil for the non-conscious not-self serves no purpose; nor is it essential to the not-self. *Ajñāna,* then, does not have the not-self as its object. Padmapāda, therefore, observes that the power of *avidyā* does not prevent the manifestation of the form of the non-conscious object. The form of the not-self is of the nature of *ajñāna*; and since it is a non-conscious form, it cannot possibly reveal itself. It is only a conscious principle that can reveal itself and the not-self. Hence *ajñāna* does not prevent the manifestation or the revealing of the non-conscious not-self.

We have earlier shown that contradiction is the basic principle at work in the finite world of persons and things. It is a principle which makes such a world possible. That is, though *ajñāna* does not function like a veil over the objects, it gives rise to the objects of the external world. This is technically spoken of as the power to diffuse, *vikṣepa-śakti.* It is the cause whereby an entity appears as something other than itself.[5]

If the form of the not-self is veiled, we have to say at a given moment that the object is now unknown. Since this is absurd, we should say that the unknowability is due to some other reason. But this is faulty, since we are not aware of not-knowing any object as a given object. This awareness of unknowability is a consideration arising from the abstract reflective ideas.

The not-self cannot reveal itself; and it is revealed because of its contact with consciousness. If this is taken to be the self-revealing of the not-self, it will have to be real and eternal. And since it is revealed only at a specific occasion, we have to accept *ajñāna* as functioning like a veil for the not-self. Then the not-self would cease to be the not-self, and with this is the problem destroyed. We have therefore to understand the problem differently. Consciousness is real, and it alone can reveal the not-self. This consciousness can reveal or manifest the object only when it is not veiled. Then the object can be apprehended only when consciousness is subjected to the limitations imposed on it by *ajñāna,* which is not different from it.

Further, *ajñāna,* which has the self as its ground, cannot have the object for its application for a still more important reason. Unless the enveloping veil is destroyed, the object cannot be apprehended. And with the knowledge of the object, the *ajñāna* which is grounded in the self ought to disappear completely. This is contradicted by experience. We can therefore speak of the reference of *avidyā* only to the self. Prior to the cognition of silver in the nacre, during the cognition of silver, and even after this cognition is sublated, we have *avidyā* operating; and this means that *ajñāna* has no direct reference to the not-self.[6]

6. *Ajñāna,* however, does bring a change to the nature of the object. It causes the object to appear in a form other than its own.[7] Here we have to face a serious objection, which can be stated thus: 'When we have the knowledge

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[4] *Vivaraṇa,* XIII.18-XIV.3.

[5] *Pañcapādikā,* IV. 24-26; *Vivaraṇa,* XIV. 3-6; *Tattvadipana,* LXVIII-LXIX.

[6] *Vivaraṇa,* XIV. 7-15.

[7] *Pañcapādikā,* V. 1-2.

of nacre, we find that silver—which is its other form—is dispelled along with the *ajñāna,* which is the material cause of the form of silver. Now when the contradiction due to *ajñāna* is dispelled by the knowledge that it is nacre, how can there be *ajñāna* having its ground in the self? If it is there, *ajñāna* must differ from object to object. If a plurality of *ajñānas* cannot be accepted, we cannot also accept *ajñāna* as the material which issues itself into contradiction. We cannot have a real entity as the material cause for a mere appearance. If *ajñāna* is the general matrix, and if it remains grounded in the self even after the sublation of an erroneous cognition, then we may have to admit that contradiction can disappear even if the matrix continues to operate.'

7. This objection calls forth an explanation of the nature of the effect. The effect called pot is destroyed. What kind of existence does it have? There is the involution of the effect in its cause. Likewise, when we have the knowledge of nacre, the erroneously cognized silver finds its involution in its cause called *ajñāna.* We can also argue that, though *ajñāna* is one, its manifestations are many. These manifestations are the material causes which result in the cognitions of silver and the like. It is these that are dispelled when we have the true cognition.

In ordinary experience, however, true cognition dispels only that which is based on contradiction. It does not remove the root cause of contradiction, namely, *ajñāna*; for there is every possibility of having the erroneous cognition in future. This being the case, how can the knowledge of Reality dispel both the contradiction and its cause called *ajñāna*?

In answering this question, we have only to point out that knowledge dispels that which is not knowledge. *Ajñāna* is that which is not knowledge. Non-apprehension, apprehension of an appearance, erroneous cognition, and the like are the exact opposite of truth, of that which reveals truth; and they are dispelled in actual experience by the knowledge of truth. When truth reveals itself, its opposite is sublated. This opposite is the positive entity called *ajñāna*; and it is resolved in truth.

Ajñāna, we have said, cannot be the veil cast, as it were, over the objects; for, if it were like that, it cannot be known. Such an objection cannot arise in the case of that power of *ajñāna* whereby it is said to give rise to the manifold particulars of sense. It is a fact that erroneous cognition makes us apprehend an object as something other than itself.

But can the self be veiled by *ajñāna*? Can *ajñāna* distort the self and make it appear as something other than itself? A veil is something which hides or conceals the revelation or manifestation of an entity. But the self being self-revealing cannot be hidden. Nor can any effect prevent it from revealing itself. Knowledge arises as having the nature of revealing an object; and since the self is not an object, we cannot say that the knowledge regarding self does not emerge because of *ajñāna.* As no useful purpose is served by this positive entity called *ajñāna,* can we not say that it does not have its ground even in the self?

Padmapāda answers such an objection by reminding us of the nature of the self. The self is consciousness which is self-revealing. If such a reality is not revealed or manifested, it cannot be due to any reason or factor that may lie outside the self; for the self is the only Reality. We have to say therefore that this non-manifestation is due only to *avidyā* which prevents the manifestation. This *avidyā* is natural to the self, in the sense that it is a limitation imposed on the self by the self.

Reality is self-revealing. It exists and reveals itself. Its nature is one, and the way it is apprehended is another. This difference cannot be explained unless we assume a veil-like positive entity called *ajñāna.* There is light and no darkness, and then we are able to apprehend the pot which is nearby. Hence empirical statements like 'Reality is not' and 'Reality is not self-revealing' go to imply that there is a positive *ajñāna* coming in the way

of true apprehension. This is the procedure involved in arriving at *ajñāna* through inference and implication.

Consciousness is the ultimate ground. The form in which it is apprehended is its product or effect. Only when there is something preventing the manifestation of the ground, can we apprehend its product as other than itself. That which prevents the manifestation is a form of *avidyā*, and its exact form is inexplicable.

8. Consciousness reveals itself. Yet we do not apprehend the knowledge of another person. Why can we not accept the same non-apprehension here too? We cannot do so. In apprehending the knowledge of another, that person is another. Because of this otherness, we can speak of non-apprehension in that context. Reality or consciousness is not other; it is one's own self. And if we do not apprehend this self truly, we can only say that this is due to *ajñāna*. It is *ajñāna* that satisfactorily explains the non-manifestation of the self as the self. This *ajñāna* prevents the true manifestation; and it can do so only if it is naturally grounded in the self, that is, if it is a natural condition imposed on Reality by Reality.

This Reality is the self, the subject that has no object. The moment anything appears as the not-self, then we have the emergence of the product of *ajñāna*. *Ajñāna* arises from the perception of an effect or product. It makes an object, and it also makes an entity appear as something other than itself. It alters an object, and therefore its apprehension by the self. Both the object and the knowledge of the object are the products of *ajñāna*.[8]

9. Non-apprehension, erroneous cognition, and the impressions left by the erroneous cognition are some of the factors which cannot be identified with *ajñāna*. But one may ask, Is *ajñāna* really distinct from these? When I know an entity as other than itself, it is a case of illusion; and you may call it contradiction arising from *ajñāna*. Such an illusion persists throughout the empirical life in some form or other; and it is the very basis of finite life. Can we not then identify *ajñāna* with illusory knowledge?

As an answer to this question, we have to ask, What is illusion? It may be defined as the cognition of an entity as other than itself, as its opposite. The not-self being cognized as the self is a case of illusion. A black cow, for instance, is identical with a red cow, inasmuch as both are cows; but they differ from one another because of the difference in colour. Similarly, the expression 'I am a man' might be taken to be constituting an identity-in-difference. The 'I' is identical with the self or Reality, while the qualification 'man' is different from it. This cannot be taken to be a case of illusory knowledge like the cognition of nacre as silver. The 'I' is identical with and yet different from 'man'. If this were an illusion, the expression 'a black cow' ought to be also an illusion. 'It is not a red cow, but a black one.' Here the redness is negated, but not the cowness. In the same manner, the manness of the 'I' (the self) is negated in the higher immediacy, while the self continues to be identical with itself. The identity of the 'I' with the man is a pragmatic necessity. This pragmatic sanction is seen to be erroneous when there is the experience of identity. Consequently, truth or reality cannot be defined in terms of identity-in-difference.

However, one might argue that error arises when there is no identity-in-difference. The relations that subsist between the universal and the particular, quality and substance, effect and cause, determinate being and mere being, part and whole, may all be taken to be the cases of identity-in-difference. There can be no such relation between the existent nacre and the perceived silver, or between the existent soul and the perceived body.

But we have only to ask how the relation between the body and soul differs from any one

[8] *Pañcapādikā*, V. 2-4; *Vivaraṇa*, XIV. 21-XVI. 2; *Tattvadīpana*, LXXI-LXXV.

of the relations enumerated above. Is there not a similar relation between the perceived silver and the existent nacre? It is meaningless not to extend that relation to such cases. And consequently, there can be no erroneous cognition in such a doctrine.

If the illusory cognition is only a state or phase of the mind, the illusion gets its ground in the mind and not in the self. Then what is the part played by the self in cognition? If the epistemic act is said to be grounded in the self, then there can be no direct relation of *avidyā* to the self. The absence of any such direct relation makes even error impossible. Nor can the illusion be taken as a modification of the self, since the self is ex hypothesi beyond any modifications. Further, is knowledge a property of the self? If it is not, then it is identical with the self. If it is, then we cannot say that such a self can undergo a modification in the form of another property called knowledge. The clay which is the ground for this pot cannot be the ground for that one. Likewise, the self which is said to be the ground of one knowledge cannot be a ground for another knowledge too. That is, two properties that differ in their nature from one another cannot have an identical relation to the identical ground.

There is the erroneous cognition which is self-contradictory. It arises from *ajñāna* which is like a stream. This *ajñāna* has no beginning; it cannot be dated. The relation of *ajñāna* to the self is without a beginning. Yet it is a temporary relation. The erroneous cognition and *ajñāna* can be transmuted into a true cognition and knowledge. *Ajñāna* is related to the self like the blue colour to the sky. Such a relation does not and cannot come in the way of the self-contained nature of consciousness.[9]

[9] *Vivaraṇa,* XVI.22-XVII.21; *Tittvadipana,* LXXXIII; *Prameya-saṅgraha,* XXII-XXIII.

DOES RELIGION LEND ITSELF TO BE ADAPTED AS A PROFESSIONAL CAREER?

By Swami Vimalananda

There are politicians who openly denounce religious profession on the ground that it is economically non-productive and politically retrograde, if not reactionary. The religious orders are generally conservative and not enthusiastic about change and reform. The controlling forces of religious institutions proceed from doctrines that cannot be demonstrated as facts of natural science; and the customs that mould religious communities are inherited from antiquity. We therefore find that religion is slow to adapt itself to the mobile society. Further, professional religion has often been held responsible for sectarian feuds, chauvinistic nationalism, and inter-religious wars, which they produce by erecting social barriers and perpetuating prejudices that have blocked the progress of rational thinking. It is also said that individuals and groups that offer religious service to the public fix their own values to religion, which they intend to employ as an instrument for the preservation and well-being of the society. They build up a separate interest which has to compete or reconcile with other social interests. As a competitive interest, religion cannot conduct gainful activity, for it

cannot then be an instrument for facilitating the good of the entire society. Even when religion works for public good, it is found to discriminate between the believing brotherhood and those who are outside of it. On the other hand, when religion reconciles itself to economic and political interests, it loses its moral quality. For all these reasons, it is contended that religion should not be encouraged as an organizational profession, although as a private affair it need not be an offence to any society, so long as it does not clash with the accepted *mores* of the society and abides by the laws of the state to which it is subject. What is not welcome as an accepted profession can hardly be an opening for public or private career.

The arguments set forth above are advanced by those who view religion from outside of it and as one of the social forces seeking dominance among the various social currents in any society. From within the fold of religion itself, the voice is often heard that religion cannot be professionalized, because that would negate the principles on which it is based. Man is conditioned by innumerable factors rising from his own natural drives and factors made ready for him by the society in which he lives and grows. In order to conduct his daily life in the currents and cross-currents of existence, he gets himself conditioned to an accepted pattern of behaviour and conduct by his own choice or by the pressure of events around him. He selects himself a profession or he is pushed into one to meet his sustenance and his satisfactions; he gets himself trained for it and offers his services to those who need them; he makes an announcement of his expert skill supported by credentials, titles, degrees, diplomas, and decorations; and he persuades others to accept his service if they found it profitable, sometimes setting a price for it in a tangible form, and at other times perceivingly disclaiming all return, but expecting compensation by way of gratitude, admiration, or adherence. Religion, which on principle demands utter humility, complete self-abnegation, and utmost deconditioning of oneself, can therefore by no means lend itself to be a profession, just as one offered by other departments of human activity. Whitehead's epigram that religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness covers the central area of religion viewed in the above light. The sharp contrast between Mīmāṁsā and Sāṅkhya-Yoga in the traditional philosophy of India brings this truth into bold relief. The mechanism of the former is *pravartanā* or impulse to prescribed activity calculated to produce good, and that of the latter is *nivartanā* or extinguishment of all impulses from the psyche, so that the agent of action and enjoyment may be left in isolation untrammelled by the conditionings of nature. Asceticism and contemplation are the natural outcome of the latter discipline based on introspective self-absorption or exclusive God-mindedness.

But a protean and universal experience like religion cannot be neatly defined and circumscribed in this manner. The Sāṅkhya idea had to accommodate the claims of Mīmāṁsā, as we find in the development of later theism. Evidently because obliteration of all impulses from the pschye is by no means easy or common. Great teachers like Srī Śaṅkarācārya have made it clear that the path of the aspiring soul winds onward and forward through the realm of *pravṛtti*, the sphere of sanction and endeavour, to the peak of *nivṛtti* or spendid isolation. Thus religion emphasizes *dharma* or righteousness not only as a preparation for the singleness and purity of the soul, but also as a socially significant motive calling for proper individual attitude and concerted action. The purely mystic and rigorously subjective experiments of religion and the results that would follow them deserve to be considered as individual achievements less dependent on social forms and sanctions. But even such a subjective form of religion requires an advancement of thought and action which is not widely met with and for which few are really competent. The active type of religion animated by ethical or aesthetic fervour therefore holds the stage as a sociological and historical phenomenon, seeking

expression through action in a community and affecting its tastes and values. From this point of view, religion is always looked upon as a nursery of human arts and cultures and a happy ally of all ethical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual activities of humanity. Asceticism and monastic communism of the type of early Buddhism and Christianity, the Sāṅkhya-Yoga type of hermetic discipline, and the way of the solitary *parivrājakas* or gyro-vagrants of early Hinduism have for the most part given their place to religious communities organized into orders with their own creeds, codes, hierarchies, and forms of activity.

The subjective aspect of Hinduism is represented by *yatis* or *maskarins*, who have a distinctive life based on intense personal conviction and emotional habit of the mind; they do not always seek to establish an organization whether it is a *pīṭha*, a *maṇḍala*, a *panthā*, or a church. The *sampradāya* or method of transmission which they maintain is only a way of the handing on of knowledge and spiritual practice from the preceptor to the pupil. Such a condition of self-discipline, disentangled from a special church discipline, was the result of the acceptance of the highest caste as the depositary of the social and objective part of a religion. Buddhism, which rebelled against the religion which made a hereditary caste the custodian of religion, was the first to organize and recruit members to build a church, which gradually came to combine in itself under a flexible government the subjective and objective functions of religion. Buddhism gained from the powerful personality of its founder its unifying symbol. From its carefully preserved traditions it evolved a universally binding law; and from its widely recruited, graded, and trained clergy, it built up the medium for its preservation and transmission.

Christianity, which was ascetic, monastic, and subjective in the patristic age, developed a universal church, first as an ally of the Roman Empire, then as its successor, and finally as the religious magistrate and spiritual overlord of the national states that sprang up in the place of the distintegrated Empire. The personality and teachings of the founder of Christianity, however, remained a vitalizing force always; this fact is evident from the current of its partly independent mystic traditions and its civilizing moral influence.

Mohammed declared that there is no monasticism in his religion; and he gave its place to religious wars, because he thought that the braveries of this world were in no way short of the martyrdom sought by monastic religious communities of other religions. Not only that, Islam did not tolerate the duality of church and State or religious and secular orders. In Mohammedanism, Mohammed is accepted as the unique spokesman of God, leader in worship, chief executive, sole legislator, supreme judge, military commander, and treasurer; therefore the distinction of the religious and the temporal does not appear to be sharp. Law, ethics, government, and etiquette are all but a unified whole in the Islamic religion, and therefore Islam is the profession of every one who is a Muslim and not merely that of a group.

It may even be said that religion is not a separate career in Islam, because it does not have an order to minister religion; its priesthood is part of the common Islamic community, sharing also in its other interests and activities.

In the strict sense, religion as a whole-time profession pertains only to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. The Buddhistic Saṅgha was not a rigorously organized community under a single head who had sway over the whole Buddhistic world. Its nature, form, and colour have varied from country to country. It may also be noted that entrance into the Buddhistic Order on a temporary vow has made the Order mobile. In ancient Hinduism, religion was no doubt, in a general sense, a profession of the highest caste; but the services they rendered were not exchanged for a price. The conception of *pratigraha* and *dakṣiṇā* was scripturally controlled and, being a form of

voluntary gift, it was neither economic nor commercial. Later, when a member of the same hereditarily determined religious community entered a profession, he did so as a layman, and so no claims for religious superiority were conceded.

The *parivrājaka,* who represented the mystic side of religion, dissociated himself from social duties and made no ostensible offer of religious service to others. He was inconspicuous and retired, *avyaktaliṅga* and *avyaktācāra*; he was merely a religious symbol—of course, a potent symbol—the meaning of which was clear to the community that produced him, and of which he was often an actively functioning member in an early period of his life.

It is chiefly in Christianity and monastically organized modern forms of Hinduism as well as in Buddhism that we find individuals completely absorbed in religious work as a profession. Any profession comes into existence when there is a demand for it from the society in which it appears, and a profession, in turn, creates new needs in a society, so that it may supply its service in novel ways. Music may be cited as an analogy. It is practised not merely for the delight of the singer; but because the singer has an aesthetically sensitive audience, ready to appreciate him; nevertheless the range of the audience, its variety, extent, and degree of tastes are enormously influenced by the expert singer.

The two terms 'profession' and 'confession' are semantically related. A person confesses his own private thoughts, feelings, and experiences before another chosen as his auditor, and a person professes before the public what he is, what he thinks he is capable of doing, and what he represents. Civil, military, industrial, commercial, artistic, and religious professions imply an offer of service to others, and all who supply or demand service have a right to lay down mutual conditions, demand mutual terms, and accommodate to mutual interests. That religious profession, organized into orders, has always done this, directly or indirectly, is clear to observation.

Jesus Christ, for instance, taught the ideal of life based entirely on the love of God and love of His children, which meant love of all mankind viewed as a single family. All the members of this universal family had equal claim to the Father's love, and in it none was greater or less than the other. All were expected to meet the physical necessities of life by honest labour Each member of such a community served his Lord cheerfully, and each was contented with his own lot. All looked upon the needs of any one as the concern of all, and they arranged mutual relations entirely depending on personal love and trust. Such Christian communities existed during the apostolic times, but were soon replaced by a growing organization with its own government and administration of common funds. Great saints like Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas worked with their hands, shared all things in common, and lived by the law of love and trust. These were succeeded by the great Catholic theologians and apologists, among whom were Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine, who provided the developing Church with its framework of dogma and apologetics, its legal support, and its philosophic foundations. The world-wide organization of the Church of Rome was but a natural outcome of their attempts at harmonizing, consolidating, and unifying the past traditions under its trusteeship. A very large professional body recruited and trained for the purpose became necessary to carry on the establishments for the relief of the indigent and the distressed, and other works of philanthropy launched by the Church.

The conditions in Europe raised Christianity to a State religion, and the Roman Empire was converted into the Holy Roman Empire, a large Christian brotherhood. In this new role, the simple, original, inward Christianity had to adapt and absorb elements which were foreign to it. It had to reconcile the law of the State and the law of love; it had to run courts to punish criminals, to proceed with law, to guard private property, to allow accumulation of wealth, to sanction slavery; and, in short, it

had to run a parallel State which cut in through the frontiers of the national States. In a sense, the Church of Rome ruled the entire Christendom with its *jus divinum* and *jus canonicum* through the vast army of monks, canons, and officials on a professional footing.

From the above short description, it is clear that the Christian religion has afforded an honourable, efficient, widely diffused professional career, which has on its role some of the past and present benefactors of humanity who have distinguished themselves like their compeers in other departments of human activity.

The question whether religion lends itself to be a profession or not can be answered only depending on the emphasis laid on, and the content given to, the term 'profession'. To a purely subjective religion in which the aspirant seeks inward illumination and mystic communion and adopts as a means to it ascetic disciplines, the background or support of a significant profession and a professional mould might be superfluous or harmful; the true inwardness required for such subjective religious pursuits may be better attained with least dependence on outward circumstances. The number and quality of those who seek this goal, however, may be correlated to the religious temper of a particular age. The objective type of religion described above is relative to the needs and tastes of the community or culture it purports to serve. The wonderful adaptations of living Christianity have always been more alive than other religions to the need of fitting the inherited past to the emerging present. Other religious organizations also now recognize this principle of presenting their eternal truth in a new garb fitting with social changes.

A dynamic religion operates in a society making use of specially trained individuals as its instrument for advancing its plans and preserving its inherited traditions. A world-wide religion has to develop procedures and principles drawn from its past experience for several centuries and by constantly refining the technique for developing the potential capacities of the recruited candidates. The strength of any organization is entirely based on the morale of its personnel and the *esprit de corps* developed within the profession. If religious service is to become an efficient instrument of morality and a powerful tool of social uplift, the amateur attempts of individuals and groups who render humanitarian and spiritual service will have to be supported by completely dedicated and rigorously professional orders which set its standard and guage its quality. When this point is kept in view, none can oppose the subjective and objective types of religion or assess the objective developments of religion as a social expression by purely subjective standards; that would only complicate the problem and hinder effective implementation of religious schemes formulated for common weal.

In order to make religion a harmonizing, unifying, uplifting social power, its technical personnel should possess a stability which gives continuity to its efforts; it should have a hierarchical order that will ensure seriousness in all its transactions; and it should acquire a professional efficiency which will prevent misdirection and blunders. That organization which fails to provide a proper career for the talented and a suitable place for the personnel enlisted on merit can hardly succeed in its attempt to generate and confirm the enthusiasm required to achieve its own ends. When these facts are recognized, the view that religion is a private affair, or that it will lose its pristine quality if the status of a worthy profession is accorded to it, cannot raise any difficulty. When one is willing to raise the religious vocation to the high place it deserves, one cannot afford to ignore the fact that a profession cannot be efficient unless it be made of absorbing interest not only by the attractiveness of its glorious sentiment, but also by the enhancement of its value to the individual and the society. It must evoke unceasing aspiration, and it must present opportunities for advancement. It must encourage innate talent which can find expression in a noble career; for a discontinuous profession, or diversified superficial training, which produces only factotums, can never attain a

high level of efficiency required for the achievement of a high order. A worthy end which calls for continuous work that leads to it alone can make for a distinguished career attractive to the flower of the country. The term 'careerism' is coined and employed by some in an invidious sense; a career mainly meant for personal advancement and success has no place in any true welfare scheme. But opportunity for advancement does not necessarily imply any reproach, so long as it is kept away from dangerous ambition which shuns the pains required for achieving the purpose it has in view and which is neglectful of moral virtues inseparable from it.

Ambition in itself as a motive force is neither moral nor immoral, but the intention behind it makes it the one or the other. The ambitious person is looked upon with fear or distrust or secret admiration, because he uses his power with an ulterior motive. It is his excessive love of glory and desire for worldly self-aggrandizement that make him an object of suspicion. But none should condemn due and proportionate desire seen in any person for enhanced activity, for the exercise of his innate faculties, or for the furtherance of ends beneficial to him and others. Ambition becomes a menace when it is unlawfully self-assertive and when it is consumed by an appetite for power and domination.

Apart from individual merit, a career requires support from appropriate social situation for its success. That which is valued by humanity flourishes, and that which is disapproved by it languishes. A society in which religious vocation is held in repute directly contributes to the increase of religious values, and in it the profession of religion becomes an instrument for immense good. Careerism deserves condemnation only when it leads to monopoly, arrogance, and misuse of power. But as a means of bringing out the best in an individual and placing it before the entire society for its well-being and progress, it deserves the highest place in our consideration. To condemn it *in toto* will only cripple social action and alienate a worthy ally. Within and out of various professions, there are men who are not ignorant or dull, idle or dissipated, and possessing the kind of ability and required kind of attainments, condemned to inactivity or under-employment either because of the absence of opening for proper career or because of the prejudice and disapproval of persons who hold the keys to it.

In the monarchic system, the tastes and preferences of the king and his courtiers set the stamp of approval on artistic and cultural creations. In the democratic scheme, on the other hand, the discovery, training, approval, and reward of talent in various departments of human effort is the prime duty of the various organizations which are the mouthpiece and training ground of the entire community. The encouragement of specialized profession by religious organizations through the proper development of physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers of the individual is therefore a *sine qua non* not only for the effective discharge of its own functions, but also for communicating its spirit to wider fields of activity.

The conclusion may be summarized as follows. Monasticism as a subjective and ascetic discipline leading to self-illumination and mystic experience may not have outward social significance, except in so far as the preservation of it is made the concern of the preceptor and the disciple. Objective expression of religion—whether it is based on, or productive of, such mystic results or not—has the social medium for its perpetuation, and so it demands professional organization based on merit, fitness, training, and loyal dedication. The condemnation of the dynamic urge of the objective religion, miscalled careerism, would leave organized religion inane and forceless. True spirit of religion, whether institutionalized or not, always induces a person who is susceptible to its influence to render voluntary, unrestricted, life-long service without thought of personal advantage or even regard for self. Examples are not wanting in any age to bear witness to this truth.

BHĪṢMA'S INSTRUCTIONS TO YUDHIṢṬHIRA—1

By Professor J. N. Chakrabarti

The *Mahābhārata,* India's greatest national epic in Sanskrit, is not merely a history of the war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas on the plains of Kurukṣetra, but also a mine of information regarding the conditions of life—social, political, and religious—which obtained in ancient India some two to three thousand years before Christ. It is a treasure of ancient wisdom and tradition, handed down through the ages. The legends and anecdotes date back to hoary antiquity, affording glimpses of the ideals and principles which the rulers of the people set before themselves for the administration of the various departments of government.

The *Śāntiparvan,* the Twelfth Book of the epic, is mainly concerned with the organization of social life and the foundations of law, morality, and philosophy. Manu and Māndhātṛ are cited as the pioneers in forging the path to a civilized and humane social order.

In the *Śāntiparvan,* again, there is a special canto entitled *Rājadharmānuśāsanaparvan,* dealing with the duties and obligations of an Aryan king. This canto is supposed to formulate the instructions of Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the Pāṇḍava brothers, as to the ways and means of achieving success as a virtuous ruler and protector of his widespread kingdom and of the people under his charge. This interesting topic is introduced very dramatically in the following manner.

Yudhiṣṭhira, at the close of the war, instead of feeling elated by the victory he had won, was seized with extreme depression and sorrow at the fall in battle of his nearest kith and kin, his cousins of the Kuru family, and hundreds and thousands of Kṣatriya warriors, involving well-nigh the very extinction of the whole body of princes and rulers of the land. In the grip of his melancholy, he was on the point of renouncing his throne and withdrawing to a forest retreat to do penance. Kuntī and Draupadī pleaded with him. His brothers reasoned with him and tried persuasion of the weightiest kind to make him assume charge of the imperial throne, won by the valour and might in arms of his loyal brothers and friends, helped and guided by the wisdom of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But Yudhiṣṭhira would have none of it. He was sunk in gloom, desolate and inconsolable. The situation was at last saved by Vyāsa, the great sage who had compiled the Vedas.

Two other great personalities, Vāsudeva himself and Nārada, the divine sage, had argued with Yudhiṣṭhira in order to win his will to the work that was for him to do. They agreed in recommending to Yudhiṣṭhira the traditional *dharma* of royalty, that is, upholding justice, punishing crime, looking after the best interests of the people in their different classes and communities, maintaining law and order within the realm, and keeping the frontiers of the kingdom safe and strong and the royal army always ready for action against possible foes. Still Yudhiṣṭhira gave no sign, and remained quiescent. Then came Vyāsa with his sage counsel. Supporting the views of Vāsudeva and Nārada, he awakened Yudhiṣṭhira to the responsibilities that devolved upon him after the great war, which could only be discharged by his assuming the power and authority of the crown. If Yudhiṣṭhira still had any qualms of conscience, he was told, he could perform the traditional horse-sacrifice and other *yajñas.* This would set him right in the eyes of gods and men, and cleanse his soul.

Next, Yudhiṣṭhira requested Vyāsa to tell him how he should live and act as a dutiful sovereign, labouring for the happiness and well-being of his subjects. The venerable sage in his wisdom set forth sound, general principles

of enlightened government for the good of the people and the state as a whole. Yudhiṣṭhira in his eagerness to learn appeared inclined to go into particular details of the problem. Vyāsa, then, recommended to him an interview with Bhīṣma, who was pre-eminent in knowledge and learning, unrivalled in the mastery of the Vedas and all sacred lore, beloved of heaven and earth, the premier war-lord whose might in arms was, as a rule, crowned with the glory of victory in every campaign he had fought against champions, human or divine. If Yudhiṣṭhira sought further enlightenment about *dharma* and the discipline of life appropriate to the role he was to fill, who could deliver the goods better than Bhīṣma, the savant unique in the knowledge of all that was to be known in earth and heaven?

Urged by this solemn injunction from the venerable Vyāsa, Yudhiṣṭhira became somewhat perplexed. How could he get himself to face his grandfather, the living image of righteousness, after the deliberate sharp practice they had played off on him in the battle-field in order to fell him down to the ground? Yudhiṣṭhira began to fight shy of the proposal to meet Bhīṣma, now lying on his bed of arrows, praying to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and awaiting the moment of his passage to heaven. Then the all-knowing Vāsudeva, out of compassion for the Pāṇḍavas and the world in general, came to the rescue. He very kindly reassured Yudhiṣṭhira and offered to introduce him to the presence of Bhīṣma at the proper moment; but Yudhiṣṭhira would have to be reasonable and carry out first things first. He should fall in with the cherished wishes of Kuntī and Draupadī, and gladden the hearts of his devoted brothers, by cheerfully accepting his new position as sovereign king. This admonition from Vāsudeva turned the scale, and Yudhiṣṭhira made up his mind to fill the role imposed upon him.

As soon as he declared his willingness to follow the counsel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, preparations were made for a solemn procession and public state entry into Hastināpura. When the Pāṇḍavas entered the city after their thirteen years in exile, the citizens gave them a hearty welcome and a rousing reception. Dhaumya, their family priest, got ready to perform the proper sacred rites of election to kingship. Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī were made to sit side by side on a broad tiger skin rug, and sprinkled with holy water. Śrī Kṛṣṇa completed the ceremony by showering sacred water on them with his famous conch, the *pāñcajanya*. The performance of these traditional rites amounted to a formal election to the throne. The king was thus lifted to the rank of a god among men, rendering his person sacred and worthy of worship. Once installed on the throne of his forefathers, Yudhiṣṭhira proceeded to attend to the duties of the state.

Next morning, when Yudhiṣṭhira approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he found him in deep meditation. Yudhiṣṭhira approached him with prayer and praise, making grateful acknowledgement of the benefits received at his hands. But there was no response; Śrī Kṛṣṇa remained immersed in deep meditation. Yudhiṣṭhira gazed at him in wonder and anxiety. Seeing that he still took no notice, Yudhiṣṭhira was driven to inquire as to the reason of it: 'O Keśava, of immense power, why are you sunk in this astonishing reverie? ... Oh, why, in the name of heaven, are you like this? ... I beseech you on my bended knees; do take me into your confidence about this strange absorption of yours.' Thus implored by him, Śrī Kṛṣṇa collected himself and smiling sweetly replied, 'The Kuru grandfather, Bhīṣma, like a dying out blaze, on his bed of arrows, has committed all of himself to me against the moment of his passage from this world, as soon as the sun takes his turn on the northerly course'.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued: 'It concerns you to know that with that great soul's exit from this world will pass away the priceless store of learning and wisdom—the essence of religion and culture, the knowledge of the Vedas, and all sacred lore that ever fell to the lot of any man

to possess. I would therefore advise you to go at once and sit at his feet to learn from him the secret of success in fulfilling the noble tradition of an Aryan king—the methods of efficient administration of the affairs of the state for the well-being of the people and the kingdom.'

Yudhiṣṭhira, on his side, was glad to declare that he readily believed all that Vāsudeva stated about the glory and greatness of Bhīṣma, and ended by requesting Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be kind enough to usher him into the august presence of the heroic son of Śantanu (Bhīṣma).

A large party proceeded from the capital to the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, in a secluded corner of which Bhīṣma was lying on his bed of arrows in a kind of arbour prepared for him. They found him intently engaged in earnest prayer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was greatly pleased at his devotee, and made kind enquiries about the present condition of his body and mind, and presently mentioned Yudhiṣṭhira's tribulation, the qualms of conscience he was feeling for having caused the death of a great many of his kinsmen in battle and the slaughter of hundreds and thousands of Kṣatriya princes on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra. Vāsudeva requested the dying hero to pour the balm of his noble wisdom on the troubled mind of Yudhiṣṭhira. Bhīṣma was pleased to hear that Yudhiṣṭhira was seeking enlightenment, but expressed surprise that while Vāsudeva, the *guru,* was there in person, his disciple (meaning himself) should be called upon to impart instruction. In the end, however, it was settled that Bhīṣma should fill the role of the teacher and initiate Yudhiṣṭhira into the right ways of achieving success as ruler and protector of the kingdom of his fathers. It was agreed that the lessons should begin on the morrow.

The interview with Bhīṣma was an epoch-making event in the history of the human race. The scene on the first day in the spacious arbour was worth the sight of the gods. The central figure, Bhīṣma, was like the sun setting in a blaze of glory, and all around him were the great luminaries—Vāsudeva, Vyāsa, Kṛpācārya, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Pāṇḍavas, like planets surrounding the sun. Nārada was there, too, and he opened the conversations with the sage remark: 'Bhīṣma is now like the setting sun, on the point of passing away to his well-earned seat in heaven. He is past master of the four Vedas and of *dharma* for the advancement of social life and solidarity of mankind, and specially of *rājadharma* for the guidance of kings and princes charged with the protection and well-being of the people under their rule. It behoves you, O princes, before the great soul crosses the border, to ask him questions in order to get your doubts and difficulties on the path of duty cleared up for your future guidance.'

Thus enjoined by those whom he held in highest honour, Yudhiṣṭhira quietly stepped into the enclosure where a galaxy of distinguished visitors were seated round Bhīṣma, and then shamefacedly stood apart holding down his head. Vāsudeva gently invited Bhīṣma's attention to him by explaining that Yudhiṣṭhira was in attendance to pay his respects to his noble grandfather, but was waiting tongue-tied with a sense of guilt, because of the slaughter of so many of his kinsmen in the recent war He was afraid to look Bhīṣma in the face, lest he bring down a curse on his own head. The large-hearted and merciful Bhīṣma turned a look of compassion upon Yudhiṣṭhira and at once reassured him saying: 'You have done no wrong. A true Kṣatriya is in duty bound to fight and slay whosoever confronts him in arms in the field of battle, be he a relative, a brother, or one's father himself.'

Yudhiṣṭhira, comforted by the gracious remarks of the venerable grandfather, at once went forward to do him reverence and kiss his feet. Vāsudeva lost not time to propose that Bhīṣma, for humanity's sake, should enlighten Yudhiṣṭhira about the duties and functions of a true king of the people. 'Is it not preposterous, O Keśava,' Bhīṣma asked, 'that the pupil should start lecturing, while the teacher (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) was there in person? What may

be your object in such a topsy-turvy arrangement?' Pleased with the great savant's modesty, Vāsudeva cut short the discussion by saying that his purpose was to glorify Bhīṣma before the world: 'For, be very sure, thou renowned son of Śantanu,' continued Vāsudeva, that the instructions thou wilt impart to Yudhiṣṭhira shall be treasured by untold generations as religiously as the Vedas, and will be followed by the rulers of men, now and ever after, for the advancement of culture and the progressive well-being of humanity. ... You are my beloved *bhakta* (devotee); I am resolved to see to it that you live in your glory and fame as the best and wisest of men through the ages to come.'

For Yudhiṣṭhira and his party, the scene of the interview closed for the day with Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glowing tribute to the dying hero. Next morning, as he got ready to start for Bhīṣma's arbour, Yudhiṣṭhira told Arjuna that he did not wish to worry his grandfather with a crowd of visitors, but would much rather wait upon him with a small company of his intimates. So from the following day onward, Yudhiṣṭhira had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Bhīṣma to learn *dharma,* and especially *rājadharma* or the duties and responsibilities of a king.

'Be of good cheer, O Dharmarāja (Yudhiṣṭhira), fear not,' greeted the saintly hero, 'you are free to ask me questions, in all purity of heart, about the science of *dharma.*'

'I have heard it said, grandfather,' began Yudhiṣṭhira, 'by great souls, wise in the knowledge of *dharma,* that for kings *rājadharma* is the greatest of *dharmas.* It is, indeed, very hard to bear the burden of what *rājadharma* implies. Would you therefore very kindly tell me all about it, for it seems to me that *rājadharma* is the sole support of this world of life?'

This earnest question started Bhīṣma on his long discourse. It covered a variety of topics of primary human interest. It told how social life began on earth, how Brahmā, with the support of Viṣṇu, composed a treatise on *dharma,* and so on. For Yudhiṣṭhira, it was, indeed, a rich harvest of knowledge. But at the moment, his chief concern was to learn the secrets of statecraft. So he requested Bhīṣma to give him special instructions as to how he should carry on as the king of the people and look after the interests of the kingdom.

It is worthy of note that in these talks Bhīṣma laid the greatest stress on *dharma.* 'Hold on to *dharma* in all that you do or say, and *dharma* will keep you without fail'—this was the sum and substance of his instructions.

'The first and foremost object of the king's solicitude should be to do the pleasure of the gods in heaven and the holy Brāhmaṇas on earth. If this is accomplished in accordance with the rules prescribed by the proper authorities, he is sure to win the love and respect of the people at large; and, what is more, he will have cleared himself of his debt to *dharma.* Success in each enterprise is the outcome of two factors—force of will and the favour of heaven.'

'But one must know', continued Bhīṣma, 'that, of these two, will-force, i.e. one's manhood, is held by wise men to be the prime mover. Therefore, my child, you should always be up and doing in whatever you undertake. If you meet with a check anywhere on the way, do not throw it up as a bad job, but pull yourself together and go ahead again with a firm resolve to win the goal.'

Yudhiṣṭhira asked: 'What should be my bearing, how should I behave, towards the various orders of my people?'

In reply Bhīṣma said: 'You will take care to keep each to its accustomed way of life and work, and make all of them co-operate in harmony towards the well-being and prosperity of the sum total—the population of your dominions as a whole.... You should hold the rod of *daṇḍa* (i.e. punishing the wrong) with a firm hand, dispense justice without bias to any party, and thus win the love and confi-

dence of all classes of your subjects. Kingship was created to establish law and order on earth. To hold the scales of justice even should be your primary function as the king and ruler on the throne.'

'The burden of kingship, O revered grandfather,' rejoined Yudhiṣṭhira, 'is very heavy indeed, and hard to carry; I have a sinking feeling as I try to realize the wide range of my own proper responsibilities.'

'Sink or swim, you have got to face them, my boy,' said Bhīṣma, 'as the custodian and upholder of the noble tradition of the line of Kuru monarchs. To maintain it in honour is your sacred charge. You cannot turn your back on it. You must shoulder the burden like a man, and carry on.'

'The main spring of the king's power to do good is *character*. It is not material strength and physical might alone that uphold the power of a great king. Sterling character, purity of heart and mind, love of truth, charity and generosity towards the world of life are the principal elements that go into the making of a true king of the people. While the king should be gracious and kindly to those under him, he should be firm as a rock in upholding the authority of the crown.'

(*To be continued*)

THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL IN THE WORLD:

THE HINDU EXPLANATION

By Sri Sanat Kumar Ray Chaudhury

The minds of philosophers, thinkers, and theologians have been exercised over the question of evil in the world, the creation of God whose attributes are goodness, mercy, and bliss.

We will, for the purpose of this article, leave aside the Vedāntic doctrine that the whole visible universe is an illusion, Māyā, an appearance, and there is in reality neither good nor evil. But taking the world to be real, we find that both good and evil are existing. Some of the great religions of the world have attributed the existence of the evil to Satan, Iblis, Ahriman, and similar beings. They are represented as being intrinsically bad, and as always having designs on men to lure them into the paths of evil, so that they and not God will have power over them. These religions suggest that there is a contest between God and one of His created beings, who is evil personified, as to supremacy. This explanation of evil belittles the intelligence, the goodness, and the might of the Creator. God must have created them without proper consideration of the effect of such creation; or He may have been unaware that the being He was creating was wholly evil, and likely to destroy the peace and happiness of His creation; or if He had created it with full knowledge of the consequences, then He must be a Person of sadistic tendencies, who takes pleasure in seeing the pain, the struggles, and the sufferings of the beings He creates, and in having an opportunity to condemn them to eternal perdition. In any case, we are not left with a very high idea of the Creator, as made out in these religions.

The explanation the Hindu gives for the existence of evil in the world is quite different; it depends on his theory of creation. Accord-

ing to the Hindu, creation is the self-expression of the supreme Being. Before creation, He was without attributes, inscrutable, unknowable, inexpressible. On the desire of creation arising, the *guṇas* (different aspects of cosmic energy), which were in a state of equilibrium in Him, became disturbed. The *guṇas* are three in number: *sattva,* the principle or energy from which good action comes; *rajas,* the principle or energy of activity, the cause of acts of a mixed kind, both good and bad; and *tamas,* the principle or energy of inactivity, from which arise delusion, stupor, and wrong perception. These *guṇas* having lain quiescent in the Creator, and their disturbance being the cause of creation, all creation must have them—all created things having the one or the other in a preponderating measure. Nothing in creation, according to the Hindu, can be wholly evil, or so evil as to merit punishment for eternity.

The Hindu in his *stotra* (hymn of adoration) describes the supreme Being as the two opposing extremes of each and every attribute; He is *dharma,* religion, cohesive force; He is *adharma,* irreligion, disruptive force. He is *satya,* truth; He is *anṛta,* untruth. He is *amṛta,* nectar, life-giving elixir; He is *viṣa,* poison, destroying life; and so on. In the physical world, we find energy in static as well as dynamic conditions. Latent or potential energy becomes patent or kinetic on polarization, and then we have two opposite poles, the positive at one end, the negative at the other. They are not really separate and distinct, but two aspects of the same thing.

Creation is the manifestation of the Unmanifest, the *avyakta*; it is due to the play of *śakti* or energy of God that what was latent or inactive becomes patent or active, and produces the universe. On the analogy of the rule relating to physical energy, creation, being the activization of God's energy, should similarly show two opposite poles—good and evil. Good cannot exist unless evil exists; in fact, we cannot have any conception or appreciation of good unless evil exists. Both good and evil, according to this theory, are the results of the interplay of *guṇas* mentioned before, where sometimes the one or the other of the three prevails. With the *guṇas,* good and evil were also latent in the Creator, and we need not be surprised at the manifestation of evil in God's creation.

To the Hindu, creation is the *līlā,* pastime, of the Creator. He was one, and there could be no play with only one in the field. The Upaniṣads say that He contemplated *'Eko'haṁ bahusyām'*—I am One, I shall be many; this is the secret of creation. His play continues until He chooses to withdraw the creation unto Himself, when there is *laya* or dissolution. Here, therefore, there is no question of eternal damnation. The Hindu doctrine of *karma,* no doubt, says that a man suffers for his sins, and is rewarded for good actions, but both these results, reward or punishment, are limited in point of time. A creature is born again and again, which gives him an opportunity to retrieve his position. He is enjoined by his scriptures to acquire the knowledge of his Self (*ātmajñāna*); and when he acquires the knowledge of the Self, he attains *mokṣa,* liberation, from the bondage of this world. He rises above the worldly plane of *pāpa* and *puṇya,* good and evil, and becomes one with his Creator. At that stage, the ordinary rules of reward and punishment for acts do not apply, because he has no worldly mind, which alone makes acts good or evil.

The Hindu explanation thus has a message of hope for all in the world. In the creation of God, there can be nothing wholly and intrinsically evil. Even such a thing as the snake's venom, whose ordinary quality is to destroy life, can be used to revive ebbing life; a flood which devastates also fertilizes. The Hindu says that every creature, even the meanest, will ultimately reach God, in whom it will merge on the dissolution of the creation. Good and evil will always exist together; only one has to avoid evil in thought and deed, and attain purity of mind, without which knowledge of the Self and liberation cannot be attained.

ŚRĪ BHĀṢYA

By Swami Vireswarananda

(Continued from previous issue)

Topic 7

Refutation of the Pāśupatas

The Pāśupatas accept an Īśvara, whose existence they establish through inference. They do not depend on the authority of the Vedas for it. Again, from ordinary experience, we find that the efficient cause and the material cause are different. The potter uses the clay to produce a pot. Basing their arguments on this experience, the Pāśupatas hold that the Īśvara is only the efficient cause of the world and that the material cause is the Pradhāna. He, like the potter, uses the Pradhāna to create the world.

पत्युरसामञ्जस्यात् ॥२।२।३५॥

35. The system of the Pāśupatas (should be discarded) on account of the inconsistency (of their doctrine).

The view held by the Pāśupatas, the followers of Paśupati, is contrary to the teachings of the Vedas. The Upaniṣads declare clearly that the ultimate Reality, the supreme Person, can be known only through the Vedānta texts and not through any other means of knowledge. 'I ask you of that supreme Person taught by the Upaniṣads' etc (*Bṛ. U.*, III.9.-26). Again, the Vedānta texts declare that this supreme Person is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. 'He desired, "Let me be many, let me be born". . . . He created all this that exists' etc. (*Tai. U.*, II. 6); 'That Being willed, "May I become many, may I grow forth". It created fire' etc. (*Chā. U.*, VI. 2.3). They also declare that the realization of this supreme Person alone is the way to final release. 'I have realized that great Being. On realizing Him alone, one passes beyond death. There is no other way out from this cycle of birth and death' (*Śve. U.*, III. 8). The view held by the Pāśupatas goes against these teachings of the Vedas. Moreover, they prescribe various rituals, meditations, and rules of conduct which are at variance with the Vedic teachings. Therefore their system has to be discarded by those who aspire after liberation.

अधिष्ठानानुपपत्तेश्च ॥२।२।३६॥

36. And on account of the rulership (of the Lord) being impossible.

The Pāśupatas infer the existence of the Lord and say that He directs the Pradhāna and creates the world, even as the potter directs the clay to produce the pot. The potter, however, is able to direct the clay, because he has a body with limbs. It is only such an agent that can direct external material. But as the Lord has no body with limbs, He cannot direct the Pradhāna. If, to avoid this difficulty, we assume He has a body with limbs, we will be landed in difficulties, whether we regard that body as eternal or non-eternal. If the body is eternal, it would mean that something with parts is eternal. Again, if it be non-eternal, then there will be no cause of the body, for the Lord without a body could not have created it. Nor can we say that the Lord gets embodied by means of some other body, for that would lead to a *regressus ad infinitum*.

करणवच्चेन्न भोगादिभ्यः ॥२।२।३७॥

37. If it be said (that the Lord rules the Pradhāna etc. even as the *jīva* rules) the body and the senses (the instruments of enjoyment), (we say) no, because of the enjoyment etc.

It may be said that the Lord rules the Pradhāna even as the *jīva*, though without a

body, rules the body and the senses through which it enjoys. This view cannot stand, for the rulership of the *jīva* is due to *adṛṣṭa*, the result of the good and bad deeds performed by it, and is for the sake of enjoyment of pleasure and pain, the fruition of those works. So if the Lord rules the Pradhāna, He too will be subject to *adṛṣṭa*, and as a result enjoy pleasure and pain. Such a Lord cannot be the ruler. The Pāśupatas also do not accept this position.

अन्तवत्त्वमसर्वज्ञतावा ॥२।२।३८॥

38. (If the Lord be subject to *adṛṣṭa*) He will be subject to (creation and) dissolution and will not be omniscient.

The Pāśupata view is therefore inconsistent, and so should be discarded by all who aspire after liberation.

Topic 8

THE AUTHORITATIVENESS OF THE PĀÑCARĀTRA SYSTEM

In the last section, it was shown that the Pāśupata system was not in accordance with the Vedic teaching, and so it was to be rejected. Lest a doubt should arise that, for the same reasons, the Pāñcarātra system also is unacceptable, this section is begun to remove such a doubt and to establish the authoritativeness of this system. In the first two *sūtras*, the view of the opponent is given, and in the next two *sūtras*, that view is refuted.

उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् ॥२।२।३९॥

39. The origination (of the individual soul from the Lord) being impossible (the Pāñcarātra system is untenable).

Though the Pāñcarātra system, like the Vedāna, recognizes that the Lord is both the efficient and the material cause of the world, yet it propounds certain other views which are objectionable. According to it, Vāsudeva is the supreme Person. From Vāsudeva is born Saṅkarṣaṇa, the *jīva*; from *jīva*, Pradyumna, the mind; from mind, Aniruddha, the ego. These are the fourfold forms (*vyūhas*) of Lord Vāsudeva. The origination of the *jīva* is against Vedic teachings. So the system is untenable. Again, Sāṇḍilya is said to have promulgated the Pāñcarātra system, as he found that the teachings of the Vedas could not help man to attain the goal. This disparaging statement about the Vedas shows that this system is opposed to the Vedas.

न च कर्तुः करणम् ॥२।२।४०॥

40. Nor (is it seen that) the instrument (is produced) from the agent.

As an instrument, like the axe, is not seen to be produced from the agent, the wood-cutter, the Bhāgavata doctrine that from the *jīva* is produced the mind cannot be accepted. Moreover, it is against the teachings of the Śruti, which clearly declares that the mind and everything else originate from Brahman. 'From Him originates the vital force as well as the mind, all these senses' etc. (*Mu. U.*, II.1.3).

विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः ॥२।२।४१॥

41. Or if they (the four *vyūhas*) are of the nature of that which is intelligence etc., there is no contradiction to that.

The 'or' refutes the view expressed by the previous two *sūtras*.

Saṅkarṣaṇa and others are also of the nature of intelligence, i.e. Brahman. According to the text 'Though unborn, yet He is born in various forms' (*Puruṣa-sūkta*), He assumes of His own accord these four *vyūha* forms for the good of the devotees. So there is no ground to declare that this system is unauthoritative. Saṅkarṣaṇa and others are called *jīva* etc., because they are the presiding deities over the *jīvas*, the mind, and the ego, and hence the nomenclatures are appropriate, even as Brahman is declared as Ākāśa, Prāṇa, etc.

विप्रतिषेधाच्च ॥२।२।४२॥

42. And on account of denial (of the birth of the *jīva*).

This system, moreover, clearly denies the origination of the *jīva*. 'The connection between Prakṛti and the self is of an inseparable nature; that self is known to be without beginning or end.' So it cannot be said to be unauthoritative. As regards Sāṇḍilya's statement quoted in *sūtra* 39, it is a statement like Nārada's in *Chā. U.*, VII.1.2-3, where he says that though he had gone through all the Vedas, Itihāsa-Purāṇas, etc., yet he is in a state of grief. Such a statement is not meant to disparage the Vedas, but meant only to praise the *bhūmā-vidyā* that Sanatkumāra teaches later. Similarly, Sāṇḍilya's statement is not meant to say that the Pāñcarātra system is opposed to the Vedas, but is meant to praise the system which gives in a clear and succinct manner the teachings of the Vedas, and which can be easily grasped by even the dull-witted. Moreover, Vyāsa in the *Mahābhārata* praises this system and says that it is consistent with the Vedas and beneficial to man. 'Fully agreeing with the *Rk*, the *Yajus*, the *Sāman*, and the *Atharvan*, the doctrine will be truly authoritative.' So the same Vyāsa could not have maintained in the *Brahma-Sūtra* the non-authoritativeness of this system. The reference to the origination of the mind from the *jīva* is like the Vedic statement, 'That fire willed. . . . It created water' (*Chā. U.*, VI.2.3), which means that the Lord Himself, so far as embodied in fire, creates water (*vide Brahma-Sūtra*, II.3.14). Similarly, the Pāñcarātra doctrine also has to be understood when it says that the mind originates from Vāsudeva.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The theory of *vivarta* or illusory appearance is fundamental to Śāṅkara Vedānta. It is a very abstruse problem, and yet intensely absorbing. The post-Śāṅkara Advaita, specially the Vivaraṇa school, has elaborately dealt with this problem in all its ramifications. The scholarly paper 'Contradiction and Metaphysics' by Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M. Litt., Ph.D., of Saugor University, who is a regular contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*, discusses this problem in detail with arguments mainly based on the source books of the Vivaraṇa school. . . .

Religious life has two expressions, subjective and objective. A purely subjective religion is concerned with spiritual aspirants seeking 'inner illumination and mystic communion', while the objective type of religion is 'relative to the needs and tastes of the community'. To the former, a professional mould is superfluous and even harmful, while the latter 'demands a professional organization based on merit, fitness, training, and loyal dedication'. Swami Vimalananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, strongly pleads for an efficient religious profession in the objective sphere in his thought-provoking article entitled 'Does Religion Lend Itself to be Adapted as a Professional Career?' . . .

In 'Bhīṣma's Instructions to Yudhiṣṭhira', Professor J. N. Chakrabarti, M.A., formerly of Serampore College, introduces us to the famous discourse of Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira on *rāja-dharma*, principles of statecraft. In the first instalment presented here, we are told about the mental condition of Yudhiṣṭhira after the great war, how Srī Kṛṣṇa takes him to Bhīṣma, and other connected events; and the discourse begins. The second instalment, comprising the instructions proper, however, is proposed to be given in the next issue. . . .

To the problem posed by the phenomenon of evil in the world, almost every religion and

every system of thought has offered an explanation. Sri Sanat Kumar Ray Chaudhury, M.A., LL.B., a prominent member of the Calcutta bar, and formerly Mayor of Calcutta, presents in his short article on 'The Existence of Evil in the World: The Hindu Explanation' the Hindu point of view based on the theories of creation and *karma*.

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

Christianity in India, according to tradition, is nineteen hundred years old, with its roots very deep in her soil. The number of Indians professing it is not inconsiderable. The Indian Christians are a self-conscious and enlightened minority, and they are bound to be reckoned with in any progressive movement in the country. The Indian Christians are part and parcel of our national life, and their future is perfectly assured.

The picture was somewhat different in pre-independence days. Because of the common faith that they professed with the foreign rulers of the country, and the influence of the unfriendly foreign missionaries who had their own axe to grind, the Indian Christians felt that they were a class apart from the rest of the community. This resulted in an unhappy situation in so far as their national ties were concerned. During this period, they not only got alienated from their glorious cultural heritage, but even got estranged from their compatriots, though, it must be said, there were rare and notable exceptions both among the leadership and the rank and file.

Even from about the turn of the century, sensitive nationalist Christian leaders were keenly feeling the need of a reorientation of the Church in India, which would shed the pernicious influence of foreign-dominated missions and enable its adherents to march with the rest of their fellow-countrymen.

With the dawn of independence, however, the whole complexion of the Church in India has changed for the better, particularly the Protestant Church. Breathing freely the Indian atmosphere, and recapturing the genius and spiritual tradition of India's hoary past, it is itself undergoing a transformation, becoming more and more liberal-minded, and imbibing the spirit of toleration and reverence towards other faiths—the distinguishing feature of the national character of India.

The inauguration of an indigenous Church, known as the Church of South India, in 1947, after India gained her independence, owing allegiance to no outside masters, is an event of great significance to the future of Christianity in this country. Such an organization, work ing in the truly Indian spirit, is now free to grow and develop into a pattern that will have a better appeal to the Indian mind. Its activities will be less liable to be misunderstood, because Christianity will no more be regarded as a religion of the foreigners.

In the wake of this change in the mind and mood of the Indian Christians, there is noticeable both among individuals and institutions an earnest endeavour to understand the profound spiritual ideas and ideals that have sustained the Hindus through the centuries, as well as the forces that are now at work behind the new expressions of renascent Hinduism. One of the Statements of a Consultation on *A Christian Approach to Renascent Hinduism* held at Nagpur, in October 1958, entitled 'A Christian Interpretation of Renascent Hinduism', is published in the January 1959 issue of the *National Christian Council Review*. The 'Statement' calls upon the Christians in India, especially of this generation, to have a fuller knowledge and deeper understanding of contemporary Hinduism, which is reasserting its time-old spiritual values and restating them in terms of modern thought and knowledge. It further says: 'The times call for a "conversation", a careful listening to what Hindus themselves have to say about the fundamentals of their faith, the new meaning-content they put into time-honoured Hindu religious terms and concepts, and their modern exposition of the texts

of their Scriptures which provide the authoritative sanction for their new stand.'

The 'Statement' also makes some significant observations indicative of this new attitude. To extract only a few:

> (a) 'We are aware that there are other approaches to the universal phenomenon of religion.' . . .
>
> (b) 'God is concerned with all men and is at work among them. . . . In the practice of all religions, including Christianity, God's gifts are used against God. There is no easy way of discerning and interpreting the activity of God in one religion or another. We humbly acknowledge our blindness.' . . .
>
> (c) 'The Vedanta is still the primary religious basis of modern Hinduism. Influenced by the Ramakrishna Movement and a large number of contemporary scholars, Hindu intellectuals believe that the Vedanta is adequate to comprehend not only all forms of Indian religion, but also every other religion known to man. They affirm that religion consists in realizing God by man, and that any religion is as valid for this goal as any other. . . . In essence every form of religion is a valid path to the attainment of this supreme goal.' . . .

Now, against the background of the sentiments expressed in the extracts quoted above, certain other views found in the 'Statement', emphasizing the sectarian doctrines and theories purely from the Christian theological standpoint, are not unfamiliar to the religious tradition of India, which upholds one's steadfast devotion to one's own ideal. *Niṣṭhā* or exclusive devotion to a personal or chosen form of God is an accepted ideal highly valued and venerated in India. That right of the individual to hold on to his personal convictions is recognized, and cannot be questioned. But any affirmation of uniqueness or exclusiveness of a faith, with a contemptuous attitude towards other faiths or beliefs, is foreign to the religious temper of India, and it cannot therefore thrive on her soil. In India Christ has to be 'Indianized', and that is the only way that he can be accepted and assimilated by the religious mind of India. Witness in this connection what Sri S. K. George, a true nationalist and a liberal-minded Christian, says of the future of Christianity in the context of what is an essential feature of Hinduism:

> 'Hinduism is a term of foreign coinage and is not really expressive of the genius of a religion that claims no single founder and enforces no single creed or cult upon its votaries. That genius is one of genuine synthesis, of active assimilation, of the diverse elements that have gone into the making of Indian Dharma. . . . Christianity (in India) may indeed have to go down the throat of Hinduism and get digested within, so that it may be thoroughly assimilated into the life-blood of Hindu Dharma, in order to produce the fruits of the spirit that its Master intended it to produce in all mankind. . . . Indian Christianity, if it is at all alive to the situation, at all sensitive to the signs of the times, has to rethink itself, reorient itself to the new India, rediscover its basic substance, and interpret that in terms acceptable to the Indian mind and genius' (*Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity*).

By and large, this ought to be the true position of Christianity in India, both at present and in future, viewed against the background of India's national tradition and genius.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A MODERN INCARNATION OF GOD. By A. C. Das. *Published by General Printers and Publishers (Private) Limited, Calcutta-13. Pp. ix+310. Price Rs. 15.*

'This volume is a commentary on the life and teaching of Sri Ramakrishna.' As all sincere and appreciative studies of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna are dear to us, and particularly so when the author is an erudite scholar, we have read every page of the book with the attention it deserves. But we must frankly say that we have finished the reading with a mixed feeling.

The Introduction deals with the conception of Incarnation in a scholarly way. The next chapter 'The Precursors of Ramakrishna' is equally illuminating. The third chapter 'Ramakrishna—A Modern Incarnation of God' is a biographical sketch. The remaining chapters present analytically the author's views about the conception of God, liberation, etc. contained in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. At the end are given a long bibliography and a brief index. The printing and get-up of the book are quite good.

All this goes to the credit of the writer and the publisher, and readers who like critical and comparative studies will get here much food for thought. But we shall be failing in our duties if we do not point out some of the inaccuracies occurring especially in the biographical portion and some metaphysical speculations with which we cannot agree. As, however, we have not space enough to discuss each point, we shall simply quote the passages and leave them to the readers to judge for themselves. Words in brackets are ours, and doubtful words are italicized by us.

'His notes ... he (Mahendra Gupta) *often* showed to the Master for *verification*' (p. vii).

'Knowing that Christianity was a religion founded upon the conception of Jesus Christ as the Son or Incarnation of God, Swami Vivekananda was *shy* of presenting Sri Ramakrishna in the *proper light*' (p. x).

'Sri Krishna does not assert *absolute identity* between God and human spirit in the state of perfection' (p. 51).

'At Anur ... there was the *statue* of ... Bishalakshi. ... They worshipped the goddess in her *temple*' (p. 114).

'... That he (Gadadhar) should choose a low-caste woman as his god-mother, not to speak of taking *cooked food* from her hands' (p. 116).

'She (Rashmani) sat down before the temple *to say her prayers* and *to meditate.* After a while Gadadhar *rushed* agitatedly towards her ... and slapped her mildly.... She appreciated his act and *spoke out to all*' (p. 125).

'Santa means *filial piety*' (p. 136).

'Tota gave Gadadhar *a new name* Ramakrishna' (p. 140).

'Ramakrishna was suffering from *liver* trouble' (p. 140).

'Gobardhan was considered holy and *no one was allowed* to set foot on it' (p. 142).

'(At Brindavan?) The Vairabi *came to see* her disciple (Ramakrishna) and was with him during his stay there' (p. 142).

'Ramakrishna was ... *shy of meeting a Christian* (Michael Madhusudan)' (p. 153).

'Ramakrishna told Mathur Babu that his many devotees were to come. ... When they did not turn up, Mathur became rather *sceptical*' (p. 167).

'Ram's orthodox relatives objected to Moslems eating at the same *table*' (p. 171).

'He (Girish) owned the "Star Theatre"' (p. 173).

'One group under Narendra ... argued that there was *nothing to worry* about (the illness of the Master), as birth, growth, disease, and death were natural. ... Girish and others took a deeper view' (p. 175).

'Girish, however, on *his own initiative* arranged for the worship (of Kali at Shyampukur)' (p. 177).

'(When at Cossipore) Narendra was *a Vedantist and so did not believe* in Incarnation' (p. 182).

'One day Ramakrishna went into samadhi and *on awaking from the state* touched Narendra and said, "Today I have given you all" ...' (p. 182).

'Ramakrishna died on *August 15,* 1886' (p. 182).

On p. 173, a list of the *sannyāsin* disciples is given, which omits Swami Trigunatita, but strangely enough includes Swami Nirmalananda.

Such spellings as 'bivuti', 'Vairabi', etc. are quite unusual, and even wrong.

From chapter V onward the author deals with the conceptions of God, Brahman, liberation, etc., as understood by him to be presented by Sri Ramakrishna. He rejects Śaṅkara's ideas and finds a synthesis of the personal and impersonal aspects of God in the conception of Puruṣottama, with which

Sri Aurobindo has familiarized the public in recent years, though our author does not accept his philosophy *in toto*. In criticism of Śaṅkara, he writes such sentences as the following:

'The Undifferentiated and the Unconditioned is the end of the Advaita method of realization, which has *nothing* to do with God the Personal *either as an end or as a means*' (p. 188).

'The knowledge which the *illusionist* calls the peak of mystical experience is only another name for ignorance' (p. 189).

'The state in which the devotee appreciates that he has realized the Absolute is evidently a higher one than that in which he is completely merged in the Absolute' (p. 204).

'Ramakrishna ... never said that the Undifferentiated is the sole *reality* and that all else is *illusory*' (p. 204).

But we cannot go on multiplying such passages. Suffice it to say that, in spite of our differences with the author both as regards facts and interpretation, we recommend the book to all lovers of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, for it is written by a sincere scholar in all good faith; and Sri Ramakrishna who declared all religions to be true can certainly be approached from diverse points of view.

S. G.

THUS SPAKE RAMANA By Swami Rajeswarananda. *Published by Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, Madras State. 1958. Pp. 118. Price As. 10.*

In this slender pamphlet are collected one hundred and twenty-five select sayings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, who lived, moved, and had his being in God. Coming from such a realized soul, these utterances possess a power of profound conviction and authority. These sayings breathe a spirit of 'the unity of existence, the non-duality of Godhead, and the harmony of religions'; they are free from any dogma or doctrine.

The printing and the get-up of the book are quite commendable.

S. A.

SLOKAS OF GURU TEG BAHADUR. By Har Krishan Singh. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Yoga-Mandir, Una. Punjab. 1957. Pp. 21. Price 35 nP.*

Guru Teg Bahadur's noble martyrdom in the cause of his religion is one of the most unforgettable events in the annals of the religious history of mankind. A true mystic who had reached the heights of spiritual realization, his writings reflect the awareness he possessed of the divine presence and of the ephemerality of the world and its objects. Here in this little compilation, Sri Har Krishan Singh has rendered into English fifty-seven verses of Guru Teg Bahadur from the original Punjabi. These verses in the original form the concluding part of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the holy tome of the Sikhs. The rendering is faithful, and breathes the atmosphere and melody of the original.

S. A.

SERMONS AND SAYINGS OF THE BUDDHA. By Sudhakar Dikshit. *Published by Chetana Ltd., 34 Rampart Row, Bombay 1, for the Buddha Jayanti Charities Society, Bombay. Pp. 104. Price 3.50.*

Sri Sudhakar Dikshit's book is a commemorative publication issued by the Buddha Jayanti Charities Society, Bombay, to mark the 2,500th anniversary of the *mahāparinirvāṇa* of the Buddha, which was observed all over the country a couple of years ago. The main object of this book is 'to present in simple language the essence of the teaching of the Buddha'; and the present book is only one among a series of books that is yet to be published by the Society.

The sermons and sayings of the Blessed One presented in this book are culled at random from the vast treasures of *Dīgha-Nikāya, Majjhima-Nikāya, Aṅguttara-Nikāya, Saṁyutta-Nikāya, Sutta-Piṭaka, Udāna,* etc. The translations of the texts are given in clear and simple language, and can be understood by the common man.

Sri Harekrushna Mahtab, Chairman of the Society, has written a Foreward to the book. The beauty of the book has been heightened by a few line-drawing illustrations found inside its pages as well as by the coloured cover design. The book bears the stamp of Chetana publications; it is elegant and attractive.

S. A.

SPARKS FROM A DIVINE ANVIL: ŚRI ŚAṀKARĀCĀRYA OF ŚRṄGERI. By R. Krishnaswami Aiyar. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd.. Madras-17. 1958. Pp. 103. Price Rs. 2*

The author, through his earlier publications *Dialogues of the Guru* and *The Call of the Jagadguru*, has already familiarized us with the pleasing conversational method of teaching adopted by His Holiness the late Swami Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, the previous Head of Śrī Śṛṅgeri Śāradā Pīṭha, founded by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. The Swami believed more in the efficacy of help given to individuals through personal contact than through 'mass propaganda'. In this book are brought together some of the 'scintillating thoughts' that found expression in the course of such contacts the disciples had with

the Swami. To those who think that the practice of religion is a complicated, burdensome process, quite impracticable in this workaday, busy world of modern times, the conversations recorded here serve to bring home the truth that 'however adverse our surroundings may become, there is still opportunity open to us to remember and worship the ever-present God; though not with elaborate rituals yet with a heart full of gratitude for His gracious blessings which we have ever in abundance'. These conversations, as also some of the incidents of the Swami's life given here, reveal his universal love, sympathy, and solicitude for the welfare of one and all, and his extreme detachment and deep absorption in divine moods at all times. Instructions about the different aspects of spiritual practice, such as *japa,* image worship, *ahiṁsā,* faith, are made highly interesting through illustrations drawn from ordinary walks of life. They are sure to be found useful by spiritual aspirants. We feel, however, that the following incorrect statement has been wrongly attributed to the Swami: 'But being a Kṣatriya and a Gṛhastha and in the midst of the world with its attractions and repulsions, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) could not full exemplify in Himself the Ideal (of *samatva*).'

S. K

THE CALL OF THE JAGADGURU: ŚRĪ SAṀKARĀCĀRYA OF KĀNCĪ. COMPILED AND TRANSLATED BY P. SANKARANARAYANAN. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. 1958. Pp. 244. Price Rs. 4.*

The book gives the substance in English of some of the discourses delivered in Tamil by His Holiness Swami Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati, of Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha, during his recent stay at Madras. Two other lectures delivered by the Swami at Kumbakonam and Mayuram nearly twenty years ago have also been included.

The Swami is well known in South India for his high spiritual attainments and his simple, austere life of devotion and prayer. He is an erudite scholar both in Sanskrit and in Tamil and is also proficient in some other languages. His knowledge of other religions and modern arts and sciences is also not inconsiderable.

In these talks, the Swami constantly reminds us of the futility of all plans for peace and material progress without a basis in religion and spirituality, and exhorts us to follow the *anuṣṭhānas* or spiritual practices enjoined by the Vedas. He calls upon us to 'engage ourselves in acts which will contribute to the welfare of others and to our own upliftment', as preached by the Vedas. 'What is the place of Vedic religion in sputnik age?', he asks, and replies, 'Well, what is the use of the entire world to one who has no peace in himself, to one who, in the process of acquiring world-dominion, loses his own soul?' And 'the noblest words of peace that the world has ever heard have come from men of religion'. 'The most intense love that humanity has ever known has come from religion.' The Swami's enlightening explanations of the rationale of the theory and practice of the Vedic *karma* and its philosophy should go a long way in helping people to govern their daily life and conduct in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas. The Swami gives a timely advice when he says: 'It is not necessary that we should try to bring about uniformity in religions. . . . Each one of us must follow his traditional religion with the fervour and devotion due to it, and all of us may unite in our adoration of the One God of all religions.'

S. K.

ACHARYA SANKARA. BY HEMANTA KUMAR SEN *9|2 H. Type, Eastland, P. O. Khamaria, Jabalpur (M.P.) Available at Yogoda Math, Dakshineswar, 24 Parganas. Pp. 151.*

This life of Śrī Saṅkara has been written closely following the details given in a Bengali book, *Ācārya Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja,* by the late Rajendra Nath Ghose. Many of the incidents given here are not universally current in all parts of India, and many of them are not accepted by scholars as authoritative It could not also be said that all of them equally add to the glory of Śaṅkara. However, the author deserves our congratulations for the trouble he has taken in presenting to the readers this account of Śaṅkara's life.

S. K.

THE UNIVERSE VIEWED FROM THE WORLD OF SPIRIT—II. BY YONOSUKE NAKANO. *Published by Ananai-Kyo, 481 Shimoshimizu. Shimizu City, Shimzuoka-ken, Japan. 1956. Pp. 182.*

Ananai-Kyo is an organization founded in 1949 with the lofty ideal of restoring spiritual values in a world ridden by materialistic ideas. It believes in the essential unity of all religions of the world, but at the same time it feels that the followers of the different religions have strayed away from the true doctrine preached by the original founders who 'walked faithfully with God'. That is the reason why, in its opinion, the religions, of late, have failed to make themselves felt effectively in the affairs of the world as they should. It is therefore of the greatest importance now that the followers of each religion should 'revert to the original spirit of the founder'.

The book under review contains the teachings of the founder of Ananai-Kyo, Yonosuke Nakano, dic-

tated to some of his followers during the period October 23, 1953-December 25, 1955. There is a good deal of mystery, ritualism, ceremonialism, and spiritualism mixed up in the exposition of the teachings. There are also statements here and there which savour of sectarianism. Shorn of these, one will find the teachings quite thought-provoking. To state briefly the essence of the teachings: Science today has made remarkable progress conferring great benefits on mankind. But it has advanced without the necessary spiritual background. As a consequence, there is fear that the present 'biased' science would be used for destroying mankind. Strifes and conflicts in this world arise, because man is trying to solve the problems confronting him through the help of his 'materialized intellect' without any spiritual foundation. The goal of happiness is not reached by the 'uncertain intellect', but by following the path of righteousness in accordance with the will of the divine principle, the 'Great Spirit of the universe', the 'Transcendental Divine Soul'. Man is the child of this 'Great Spirit', the only one true God; and to 'perceive' the activities of this Great Spirit, he has to practise the *Chinkon*, the divine art of tranquillizing soul, free of all evil thoughts and ideas. A person's learning which is not communicated with God has no life in it. It is only when the individual finds the Spirit of this universe that his knowledge is raised to perfection. The world will become peaceful only when all subjects of learning are united with Divine wisdom.

The peculiar terminology, and the 'English' of the translation make the reading a little uninteresting.

S. K.

FROM YERAVDA MANDIR. By M. K. Gandhi. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1957. Pp. 67. Price As. 6.*

This booklet contains the letters written by Gandhiji to the Satyagraha Ashrama from Yeravda Central Prison during his incarceration there in 1930. In these letters, Gandhiji has made a 'cursory examination of the principal Ashrama observances' like truth, non-violence, etc. The translation from the original Gujarati into English has been made by Valji Govindji Desai.

S. K.

PANCHAYAT RAJ. By M. K. Gandhi. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1959. Pp. 41. Price 30nP.*

Gandhiji firmly believed, and rightly so, that India lived in its villages, and the prosperity of the former depended upon that of the latter. And he had his own scheme for the all-round development of the villages. In his comprehensive scheme, every aspect of village life—sanitation, health, craft, art, food, and education—received its due attention. Gandhiji's views on how this scheme has to be worked out in all these departments of village activity have been brought together in this booklet by Sri R. K. Prabhu. Gandhiji's idea of Village Swaraj was that of a 'complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity'.

S. K.

HINDI

KALYĀN (MĀNAVATĀ AṄK), Vol. xxxiii. No. 1. *Published by the Gita Press, Gorakhpur, U.P. Pp. 704. Price Rs. 7.50.*

We heartily congratulate the Gita Press for bringing out this special number devoted to a study of humanism as understood and interpreted by the sages and seers of India. The number contains several thoughtful contributions by notable writers who have discussed, against the Indian traditional background, such topics as the meaning and purpose of human life, what differentiates man from animal, life after death, and other cognate problems. The truly ennobling ideals of humanism, such as love, compassion, self-sacrifice, forgiveness, service to others, charity, *ahiṁsā*, etc., as demonstrated in the lives of the great sages and seers of India, past and present, as well as in the lives of some of the great personalities of other countries, have been presented in such a way that even a cursory perusal fascinates the reader. The Indian point of view stresses that a mere mechanistic, utilitarian, or even humanistic interpretation of life does not cover the whole ground of human existence. Man has divine potentialities in him; and only when he is able to fully manifest them is he said to have grown to his full stature. This is the main theme that runs through the pages of this magnificent volume.

As is usual with the *Kalyāṇ* special numbers, the present number, too, is replete with significant illustrations, quite a few of them being coloured plates. We take pleasure in recommending this valuable volume to all lovers of Hindu religion.

Swami Nirgunananda

PARAMĀRTH (BHAGAVAD-DARŚAN AṄK), Vol. x. Nos. 1 and 2. *Published by the Mumukshu Ashram, Shahajahanpur, U.P. Pp. 194. Price Rs. 4.*

The main object of publishing this special number of *Paramārth*, as its editor says, is to turn the attention of the people to search for the spiritual glory that is latent in them, and to kindle in them a desire for God-realization. The various moods and methods adopted by *sādhakas* in their spiritual struggle, to

have a vision of God, have been unfolded in the pages of this number. A few inspiring utterences of these god-men have also been included here and there, which point to God-realization as the main purpose of human life.

Certain inaccuracies, however, have crept in. For instance, the dialogue between Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, as given in pages 138-39, should have been verified and correctly quoted. On the whole, the number presents valuable material which deserves and amply repays a serious reading by all earnest lovers of spiritual life.

SWAMI NIRGUNANANDA

MALAYALAM

KARMAYOGAM. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. *Pp. 154. Price Rs. 2*; BHAKTIYOGAM. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. *Pp. 200. Price Rs. 2;* RAJA-YOGAM-I. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. *Pp. 147. Price Rs. 1.50. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, P. O Puranattukara, Trichur District, Kerala State.*

The books under review contain lucid and accurate translations of Swami Vivekananda's *Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga,* and the first part of *Raja-Yoga,* published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. An attempt has been made here for the first time to show that Swami Vivekananda's philosophy enshrined in his immortal 'Yoga' books is essentially Vedic, and Hindu, by giving in copious footnotes the traceable corresponding references from the Hindu scriptures like the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā,* and the *Bhāgavata.*

'If you want to know India', said Tagore, 'study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative.' That the message of the scriptures of India has never been different from this positive approach to life's problems is well brought out in these publications. The indices at the end of the volumes add to their usefulness.

S. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, BOMBAY

The Bombay branch of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission is soon going to build a big temple dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna, the foundation-stone for which was laid in the Ashrama grounds by Srimat Swami Vishuddhanandaji, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, on the 11th March 1959, which coincided with the 124th birthday of Sri Ramakrishna. Invoking the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, after laying the foundation-stone, the Swami said, 'May this Sri Ramakrishna temple that will soon be built here, through his grace, be a perennial source of spiritual inspiration and solace to one and all who visit it from far and near'.

On the 15th March, a public meeting was held in the Ashrama premises to celebrate the occasion, presided over by Srimat Swami Vishuddhanandaji. In the course of his presidential address, the Swami touched upon the significance of the life, spiritual practices, and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna; and he ended his speech by saying, 'May this temple be a true memorial to Sri Ramakrishna, the embodiment of universal harmony, peace, and blessedness'.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SHILLONG

REPORT FOR 1947-57

The inspiration for the Mission work in Assam goes back to 1901, when Swami Vivekananda visited the famous temple of Kamakhya, Gauhati, and Shillong. Twenty-three years after this memorable visit of the Swami, in the year 1924, the Mission started its work at Shella in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, at the instance of a few Khasi friends. A band of workers, headed by Swami Prabhananda, started work on a humble scale with a free Primary School. By 1933 the educational activities had spread to Mawlong, Mongwar, Sohlap, Umwai, Wahlong, Jawai, and Cherrapunji. In these areas the Mission was running at the time 4 Lower Primary Schools, 3 Upper Primary Schools, 1 Middle English School, and 1 High School, besides maintaining 5 Season Schools, 2 Students' Homes, 2 Libraries, and conducting a Charitable Dispensary. The Mission also carried on preaching and publication work.

Ashrama at Shillong: To organize the work on a more stable foundation, the need for an Ashrama at Shillong, the headquarters of the State, was keenly

felt. Definite steps in this direction were taken in 1929. In 1937 the centre became a recognized branch of the Ramakrishna Mission. By 1939 the construction of the Ashrama with its temple was completed.

During the period 1939-46, the educational activities were organized on a better basis. The Mission also undertook various philanthropic and religious activities. At the time of the Burma evacuation in 1942, during the last war, relief measures were undertaken in the frontiers of Assam.

A building for the Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary was constructed in 1940 in the Ashrama premises.

The period 1947-54 was marked by the expansion of the Mission's activities in different fields A Students' Home and an Allopathic Charitable Dispensary were started in 1949 and 1951 respectively. The Mission undertook refugee relief work at Lumding, and also earthquake relief work in 1950. A cultural institution named Sarada Samsad was started in 1951, with a view to giving training to children in music etc. On the 25th March 1953, a marble statue of Sri Ramakrishna was installed in the Ashrama temple. The birth centenary of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, was celebrated in the same year. A library named after Swami Vivekananda and a reading room were opened. The centre published Assamese versions of *Thus Spake Vivekananda* and *Sri Ma Sarada,* and also some books in Khasi by Swami Prabhananda.

During 1955-57, the centre continued the following activities:

Medical: The Charitable Dispensary has a good laboratory, an electro-therapy unit, a homoeopathic section, an eye-section, and a women's section. Number of patients treated: 1955: 25,071; 1956: 39,140; 1957: 50,023.

Educational: (i) *Lower Primary School*: *Strength*: 16. (ii) *Vivekananda Library and Reading Room*: Number of books in 1957: 6,082; number of dailies and periodicals: 9 and 26. (iii) *Students' Home*: This is meant normally for boys reading in secondary schools, and can accommodate 26 boys. Strength in 1957: 10. (iv) *Sarada Samsad*: Daily as well as weekly sittings of music, recitation, literary discourses, etc.

Cultural: On an average, annually, 104 religious and cultural classes were conducted in the Ashrama and outside. Average attendance: 85. Ramanama *bhajanas,* documentary film shows, lecture tours, celebration of birthday anniversaries of great men and other festivals are other items. *U Ramakrishna,* a booklet on the life of Sri Ramakrishna in Khasi language, was published in 1955.

Relief Work: Was undertaken in 1955 in the districts of Lakhimpur, Kamrup, Goalpara, and Nowgong.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

REPORT FOR 1957

Started in 1937, the Sanatorium possesses at present all the amenities of life available in a small township—water system, post office, its own telephone system, electricity, recreation hall, etc. Following are the details of its activities:

Number of Beds: General wards: 124; special wards: 9; surgical ward: 10: cabins: 18; cottages: 14; others: 2. Total: 177.

Number of Patients: (i) patients of the previous year still undergoing treatment: 127; (ii) patients admitted afresh: 176; (iii) discharged: 147; (iv) patients requiring further treatment: 156; (v) patients suffering from diseases other than tuberculosis: 22.

Results of the Treatment of Patients Discharged: 77 declared arrested; 11 quiescent; 21 improved; 11 stationary; and 3 worse. 2 died.

Outdoor Department: Number of patients given medical advice and assistance: 254.

Free Patients: Old cases: 17; new: 36. Treated at concession rates: old: 6; new: 21.

Expansion during 1957: Two wards were remodelled so as to accommodate 16 more beds. Construction work of the proposed kitchen and store and laboratory, as also quarters for monastic workers, was hegun.

Free Homoeopathic Dispensary: Number of cases treated: 12,103.

U. S. Food Gifts: 2,287 lb. of milk powder, 276½ lb. of butter oil, 510 lb. of chéese, 375 lb. of corn syrup, and 400 lb. of dal received from U.S. Food Gift Agreement through St. Barnabas Hospital, Ranchi, were distributed among indigent villagers of the locality.

Some of the immediate needs of the Sanatorium:

Endowment for free beds ..	Rs. 30,000 per bed
Endowment for ordinary beds	Rs. 6,000 per bed
After-care and Rehabilitation Centre	Rs. 1,00,000