

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXV

NOVEMBER 1960

No. 11



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

July 22, 1930

'I had no sleep at night,' said Mahapurushji, 'let me lie down for a while. Lata Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda) never slept at night. He spent the whole night in meditation, *japa*, and chanting God's name. Now let me lie down a little to make up for the want of rest at night. Sleeplessness at night does not trouble me nowadays; I have adjusted myself to it. Now is the time "to keep awake with *yoga* and meditation".' And he sang:

'Now I have got hold of a fine spiritual mood,
Having learnt it from a man of divine moods.

I have come across a man from the land
Which has no night.

To me morning and evening are the same,
For practices have lost their formal appeal.
My sleep is gone. Can I sleep again?

Now I keep awake with *yoga* and meditation.

I have returned sleep to Her to whom it
belongs,

And laid sleep itself to sleep." (Rāmprasād)

'Swamiji used to say that Rāmprasād's style is exquisite. He was familiar with many styles and appreciated them; but he liked Rāmprasād's very much. About the Master's style also, he would say, "Superfine!" and would add, "How forceful! He (the Master) knew what manner of delivery would produce the desired result. . . . I never came across anyone who could talk like our Master. He would use emphasis or lower down his tone just as the occasion demanded." Language is the index of one's mind, which is apparent even in the best of writings. Those who have not heard the Master will miss that personal touch in the *Kathāmṛta*. When people hear a person directly, they get at his meaning at once. But when they read his writings, they get diverse meanings, and doubts crop up according to the different moods they are in.'

July 23, 1930

Mahapurushji was singing, 'Glory to Sītārāma, glory to Sītārāma', with the clapping of his hands. He remarked: 'Tukārāma is a very well-known saint of Maharashtra, as much as Mahāprabhu is this side. His songs

are exquisite. He was a great devotee. In him knowledge and devotion, form and formlessness, found a harmony.'

July 27, 1930

'Just as the children approach their mother,' said Mahapurushji, 'whenever they are in any difficulty, so do I. I called God Mother, and still do I call Him so. But now that Mother of mine has become very great; She now pervades the whole universe. She is all this. She has the whole universe in Her womb; everything is within Her.'

July 28, 1930

When he was told that the monks had spoken many things about Swami Ramakrishnananda on the previous day, which was his birthday, Mahapurushji said: 'Shashi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) was very pure, absolutely spotless. Anybody who studies his life will be benefited. How greatly Swamiji loved him! His was a life of endless activity. It was not for him to undertake austerities in the Himalayas. Once only did he move out of the monastery; and that, too, only up to Mankar in the district of Burdwan. It happened thus. One day, he said to Swamiji, "I want fourteen betel rolls for the Master". But Swamiji replied, "We cannot manage so many, my brother. At most we can arrange for four". We passed through very hard days then, and four betel rolls meant half a pice a day. But Shashi would not consider it that way; his anxiety was to have his worship with all punctiliousness. So he said, "Then I leave this place". At this, Swamiji said, "Go wherever you want". Shashi left, and went as far as Mankar. He was not used to long walks; so he got fever on the way. But a devotee of God is never left uncared for. A man carried him to his house and served him well. Then he wrote a letter to us; but we were at a loss what to do. Finally, Swami Niranjanananda went to him and said: "Now come back; you had enough of it; yours is not to tread that path." When he returned to the monastery, he told

Swamiji: "I won't go anywhere again, and shall do as you direct and live wherever you want me to." He never left the monastery again.'

As he felt difficulty in speaking for long, he stopped for a while, saying: 'The Master is very merciful. *Om*, salutation to Śiva. In difficulty, one should turn to Madhusūdana.' After some rest, he started talking about Shashi Maharaj again: 'Shashi Maharaj knew grammar, but he was more at home in mathematics. He had a mathematical brain, and spent his leisure solving problems of mathematics. Mahimacharan started a high school at Baranagore, called Kashinath High School. To us he said, "Why don't you take up a little of the teaching?" Shashi agreed to teach arithmetic. He got fifty rupees a month for this, some of which he remitted to his poor father, and the rest he spent for the Master's worship. He earned a good name as a teacher, but he did not continue for more than a month or two.' ...

August 4, 1930

Being told that a donor had contributed a big sum for the sake of humanitarian service, Mahapurushji remarked: 'Swamiji used to say that Mother Kālī is the truest symbol of God. On one side, She is death itself with a sword in Her hand—a veritable symbol of disease, sorrow, famine, and pestilence. On the other side, She protects Her children with kindness, charity, and service. How much of Her can we know or understand? The Master would say: "Mother, I don't want to know you, for nobody could ever know you." She is the merciful Mother. That is enough for me; I don't want to know Her intellectually. May She grant full faith and devotion; may I have devotion for Her; and I want nothing else.'

When the talk turned to the *Kālī-kīrtana* party of Andul, he said: 'When Swamiji performed the worship of Durgā at the Belur Math, I was not here. I was then at Meerut on my way to Kankhal in connection with some work there. I remember to have heard

that the party from that place sang the *kir-tana* at that time too. In the Kālī temple at Meerut at that time, they were having the worship of the Mother on a grand scale through public subscription. And I said to the Mother: "Mother, I had not the good fortune to be present at your worship at Belur; and so you have revealed yourself to me even here out of your mercy." Can anybody foretell when, why, and how Her mercy will be manifested?"

August 8, 1930

'Hope and fear will be there in this struggle for life, of course. A monotonous life is no life at all. If there is no struggle in man's life, if he wallows for ever in sense-enjoyment, then he can never have any higher thought about God or Self. In that case, what is the difference between him and a beast? But fear and sorrow dwarf a man; they do not allow him to progress. That is why I say that those who keep men down by brute force are the worst of sinners.'

He also talked about the *jhūlan* festival, and said: 'The worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is performed beautifully in the temple of the Daws at Belur. On this day, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhā are worshipped wherever they have their temples. The ceremony is held on a grand scale at Khardaha and Vrindaban. The temple of Madanamohana in Calcutta is beautiful. Yes, there also the celebration is observed on a grand scale. The building is very commodious; the hall in front of Madanamohana is quite large; and a fair is held in this connection. I saw all this long ago.' ...

August 10, 1930

Being questioned by Professor Jayagopal Banerji and Sri Shyamacharan De (Registrar of the Banaras Hindu University), Mahapurushji said: 'It is by the Master's will that I am still here as one of those of the older generation. He may keep me as long as it pleases him; I have no complaint on that score. If the body withers, it matters little to me.

Through his mercy, he has granted me this knowledge that I am not the body—I am the Self that is different from the body. Through his grace, he has granted me that awareness. I pray that you all live long and perform great works for society. And may you have great faith in and love for God. Learning is a very good thing if it brings divine faith, love, and knowledge in ever increasing measure. Love and faith are the things that really count; all else is mere trash. With your permission, I retire now. Please stay on and have *prasāda* (consecrated food). I have been sitting here for two or three hours now; for many came today to be initiated with the Master's name; and my body is old and feeble as you see.'

August 13, 1930

Mahapurushji spoke to the monks: 'If you continue meditating on God with form, He Himself will let you know His real nature. There are realities beyond forms. This is only the gross that you see. Above this is the subtle state, which is the outcome of the causal state. Beyond that is the cause of all causes; and then there is that which transcends all causality. It is very difficult to meditate on the Formless; still the Vedas prescribe space as a symbol of the Formless. Other things like the ocean or a vast plain may also be taken as its symbol, but space is better. He is "subtler than the subtle and greater than the great". He is, again, "lodged in the heart of every creature". But then one has to start with some form. There is no question of inferiority or superiority in this; it is a question of temperament. Whatever suits a person is the best for him. Form melts into the Formless; and, again, the Formless assumes form. He is with form and without form, and also transcends both. One cannot know Him through this mind; but He is realizable by the pure mind. The Master used to say, as you must have heard: "The pure mind and the Self are one." When the mind becomes free from mentations and desires, it cannot properly be called a mind. Then there exists only an all-pervading infinite Con-

sciousness, an infinite Power, or Brahman, or whatever you may choose to call it. From that, again, emanate different forms, consisting of impartite consciousness, according to the temperaments of the aspirants. All this is hard to comprehend. It is impossible to grasp the truth of the Vedānta unless one engages oneself in constant selfless work, hearing and meditating on ultimate truths, worship, scriptural studies, *japa*, and contemplation. If He is gracious, all these come of themselves, and one feels inclined to practise them. Without His grace, man feels no desire to call on Him; he finds no taste in His name; and to him talks about God appear insipid. God's grace is already on a person in whose mind thoughts of God come spontaneously; such a one is on the upward course. There is no such thing as higher or lower between the form and the formlessness of God. For it is all He. The Gaṅgā is one and the same, be it at Kalighat, Belur, Dakshineswar, Varanasi, Allahabad, or Hardwar.'

August 17, 1930

Today is the birthday of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rising from the bed in the morning, Mahapurushji offered his salutation with the *mantra*: 'Salutation to the Deity who is gracious to the knowers of Brahman, who is bounteous to the cattle and the Brāhmaṇas, and who is the benefactor of the universe. Salutation, again and again, to Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the senses.'

The talk went on about the birthday of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Mahapurushji then sang: "Glory to Gopāla, to Govinda, who removes the burden of the earth. Glory to Hari, to Nārāyaṇa, the establisher of religion."

'In those days, we used to sing such songs as: "It is a day of Nanda's delight, of Nanda's indeed. At Gokula dances the cowherd (Nanda) at Govinda's advent."

'Have an elaborate worship of Devaki's son (Kṛṣṇa) today, and *homa* at night. In what diverse ways did the Master express his delight! What a good fortune it is for me to have this human birth to witness so many divine plays of the Lord through this human incarnation! Glory to God! Glory to Śiva! Glory to Śambhu!'

August 21, 1930

'Be it huge like a hill or slender like a wick, the body is bound to disintegrate; the culmination is just this', saying thus, he pointed to his own body.

August 22, 1930

When he was told that an invitation for preaching had come from Argentina in South America, Mahapurushji commented: 'All this is the play of the Master. We can hardly understand what takes place and how. Only the other day, there was an invitation from Algeria in North Africa. Now you have to learn French, Spanish, and other languages in advance. The Master used to say: "Many will be the devotees who will come—from different climes, with diverse languages, and with different colours." His devotees are spreading over the whole earth gradually. These are all divine acts. Look silently to enjoy all these joyous developments, and go on working under his protection. See how his message is slowly penetrating into Australia, Switzerland, and Germany!'

Let me mention the great Shri Ramakrishna, the fulfilment of the Indian sages, the sage for the time, one whose teaching is just now, in the present time, most beneficial. And mark the divine power working behind the man. The son of a poor priest, born in an out-of-the-way village, unknown and unthought of, today is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and tomorrow will be worshipped by thousands more. Who knows the plans of the Lord!

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

HINDUISM: ITS IDEAL OF SOCIAL SERVICE

If you wish to find God, serve man. . . . It is not compassion for others, but rather service to man, recognizing him to be the veritable manifestation of God—*Jive Śivajñāne sevā*.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

I

The distinctive character of Hinduism lies in the fact that it is not a single religion with a rigid creed to which every Hindu must subscribe. Rather, 'it is a federation of different kinds of approach to the Reality that is behind life'. Hinduism does not insist on any one particular set of dogmas for all those who go under the name of 'Hindus'. Nor does it prescribe one uniform and unalterable creed for all, as do the other scriptural religions like Christianity and Islam. Hinduism is a synthesis of religions. It 'shelters within its capacious bosom every form of belief and practice that will agree with its few general conventions'.

There are a few cardinal tenets, however, which form the common bases of all the different expressions of the Hindu religion—Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, or Śākta, or any of their sects and subsects. These cardinal beliefs constitute the essentials of Hinduism, and they are accepted by all the Hindus. Most important among these beliefs are: the Vedāntic ideal of the spiritual oneness of all existence, the divinity of the human soul, the emphasis on spiritual discipline for the realization of the Self, the doctrine of *karma*, the theory of transmigration and rebirth, and the recognition of the fourfold *puruṣārthas* (ends of human existence) culminating in *mokṣa* or spiritual emancipation.

The Hindu concepts of the oneness of life and existence and of the divinity of the human soul spring from the Upaniṣadic teaching that speaks of 'the one God, hidden in all beings, pervading all, the inner Spirit of all beings, the overseer of all actions, who dwells in all creatures, the witness, sentient, all alone'. This idea underlies the peculiar attitude of the Hindu mind towards all creation. Because of this attitude, the Hindu is prepared to worship every

living being and adore every object in creation. According to the Hindu view, there is sanctity in every form of life, and each and all must come in for a share of divine honour. It is this attitude of the Hindus, again, that forms the basis of the ethics of self-sacrifice and service, which constitute an indispensable part of the religious life of the Hindus. When it has been stated that all beings in creation are worthy of divine honour, it is needless to add that man, in whom divinity expresses itself in a greater degree, occupies a high place on the altar of universal worship. Man, it has been said, is the moving temple of God. To serve him therefore is to serve God; the service of man is equal to the worship of God.

When the Hindu speaks of service to humanity, he at once recognizes two facts of profound spiritual significance: one, that humanity is, in essence, nothing but divinity, and, two, that service to humanity is tantamount to the worship of divinity, both of which confer spiritual blessings on one who serves. It is his firm belief in these truths that has given rise to such lofty sentiments as '*Mānavasevā* is *Mādhavasevā*' (service of man is service of God); '*Janatā* is *Janārdana*' (humanity is divinity); '*Jīva* is *Śiva*' (man is God).

The Hindu looks upon the opportunity to serve others as a privilege given to him. It is a moral exercise for him in the school of life. He is grateful that there are persons needing his service. He is thankful that he is allowed to exercise his power of benevolence and mercy in the world. He considers himself blessed as occasions present themselves to serve others as manifestations of God, knowing fully well that 'it is not the receiver that is blessed, but it is the giver'.

Social service, *samājasevā*, as conceived in Hinduism, can and does become a spiritual

sādhanā, if performed in the right spirit and proper attitude, as much efficacious as any other spiritual path. To the Hindu, the supreme goal of life is to develop his spiritual being and attain perfection. To this end, any means or method is welcome. The good of society, or social service, is not an end in itself. It can be turned into a mode of moral and spiritual discipline. It is an opportunity through which one can spiritually evolve by means of dedicated service. Social service should not be undertaken with a self-conceited idea that through one's endeavour all social evils can be eradicated. Service of others must flow from a spirit of humility and devotion, which is the right attitude of service. While society stands to gain physically and materially to the extent that such devoted service is effectively applied to the problems affecting it, the performer of disinterested service, too, stands to gain morally and spiritually. This is how selfless service is turned into a spiritual *sādhanā*, which lays due emphasis on an attitude of detachment, devotion, and dedication.

II

The Hindu scheme of social organization, as it has come down to us through the centuries, is meant to facilitate the gradual evolution not only of individual members in it, but also of society as a whole. The division of people into four *varṇas*, vocational classes, based on natural temperaments and aptitudes; the ordering of human life into four *āśramas*, natural stages of life, based on the principles of self-fulfilment and sublimation; the recognition of the four *puruṣārthas*, aims of human existence, and being guided by the ideals of *dharma* and *mokṣa*—all these are meant to help the individual and society to grow and evolve in an orderly manner, without causing any friction, confusion, and competition in the smooth running of the social order.

Human birth, according to Hinduism, is a rare chance given to the soul in the course of its self-evolution. The highest that the soul is capable of achieving, namely, *mokṣa* or spirit-

ual emancipation, is attained through the medium of the human birth. That is the reason why human birth is regarded as very sacred. As a rule, Hinduism lays emphasis on opportunity and obligation, rather than on right and privilege. Every individual in society is expected to perform certain duties according to his *guṇa* and *karma*, inborn aptitudes and abilities. A Hindu is called upon to observe certain primary obligations, called *ṛṇas*, i.e. debts to be discharged to the gods, to the *ṛṣis*, to the progenitors of the race, to fellowmen in society, and to all other creatures belonging to the sub-human species. The wonderful scheme of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, actuated and guided by the four *puruṣārthas* of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*, was formulated by our wise ancestors chiefly to aid man in his evolution from the biological to the spiritual plane of existence.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan gives a correct picture of the Hindu scheme of society when he says: 'The scheme of the ends of life, classes, and stages has for its aim the development of the individual. It helps him to order and organize his life, instead of leaving it as a bundle of incompatible desires. It looks upon him not as a mere specimen of zoological species, but as a member of a social group, which reflects in its organization the scheme of values for the realization of which the group exists. By education and social discipline, the individual is helped to develop the inner conviction essential for social stability. But throughout there is insistence on the fact that the highest values are super-national and truly universal.'

Hinduism regards the whole of society as a universal or social Man. Of Him, society is only a reflex; and the various vocational groups are His different limbs. We get the first glimpses of this social Man, or Puruṣa, in the R̥g-Vedic *Puruṣa-sūkta*. He is pictured there as 'thousand-headed, thousand-eyed, and thousand-legged', who spreads over all the earth and rules over all living creatures. According to the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, the mouth, or rather the head, of this Puruṣa—of society—is the Brāhmaṇa, the man of knowledge, of science,

of thought and learning, the preserver of its spiritual heritage; His arms are the Kṣatriya, the man of action, of valour, the preserver of law and order in society; His trunk is the Vaiśya, the man of desire, of acquisitive nature, and of business enterprise; His legs are represented by the Śūdra, the man of little or ordinary intelligence, who is unable to deal with subtle and abstract ideas, and who is chiefly suited to do physical work. These four types of people are to be found in every clime, though the classification gradually became crystallized in Hindu society because of some *varṇas* claiming exclusive privileges and superiority over others. It should, however, be pointed out here that the *varṇa* classification was made on the basis of the congenital vocational temperaments and aptitudes of the people, and not to uphold the superiority or the privileges of some individuals because of their birth and heredity.

The concept of society as a universal Puruṣa is at the background of the Hindu ideal of service to humanity. From this issue forth such sentiments as generosity, charity, and hospitality, as well as the inspiration for the performance of *pūrta* or establishing various things of public utility. In this concept of the universal Man, or Virāṭ puruṣa, not only are human beings included, but subhuman species, like birds and beasts also receive their due share of attention and adoration. The worship of the Virāṭ Puruṣa is the highest form of worship. And the gist of all worship is to be pure oneself and to do good to others. As Swami Vivekananda rightly points out: 'He who sees Śiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased really worships Śiva; and if he sees Śiva only in the image, his worship is but preliminary. He who has served and helped one poor man seeing Śiva in him, without thinking of his caste, or creed, or race, or anything, with him Śiva is more pleased than with the man who sees Him only in temples. . . . He who wants to serve the father must serve the children first. He who wants to serve Śiva must serve His children—must serve all creatures in this world first.'

III

Hinduism lays down that all service to society should be performed in the spirit of *yoga*. This is the ideal of *karma-yoga*, of which the *Gītā* speaks in glowing terms, and which requires that no service should have any personal motive or gain in view. Social service should be permeated with the spirit of selflessness. It should become *niṣkāma-karma*, performed without any self-interest. Work for work's sake, in a spirit of dedication to God and without an eye for the fruit of work, is the ideal of *karma-yoga*: 'To work you have the right, but not to the fruits thereof.'

Service offered in the spirit of *karma-yoga* contributes to the spiritual evolution of the person who serves. It purifies his heart and removes all selfishness from his mind. *Karma-yoga* insists that work should be done in the attitude of worship to God. All work gets transformed into worship under the elevating influence of *karma-yoga*. The attitude of the *karma-yogin* is like that of a devotee, seeking satisfaction only of God. There is no personal gain in view. The personality of the performer of work is totally effaced. The natural and ego-centred man becomes transformed into a spiritual and God-centred soul. All his works take the form of sacrifice, and are directed towards 'the good of the many and the welfare of the many'. In him, self-abnegation becomes complete.

The religion of service, *sevādharmā*, requires that no selfish desire should taint the man of service. If it does, then service loses its very soul, and it is no longer a religion worth pursuing. *Sevādharmā* should have the ideal of *niṣkāma-karma* as its basis and inspiration. Renunciation should go hand in hand with service. That is the test of real service. Service is to be coupled with renunciation. Hinduism has always upheld these two ideals together, and, as Swami Vivekananda says, they have become the national ideals of India: 'The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels, and the rest will take care of itself.'

Vedānta in practice, too, points in the direction of social service as an exalted ideal. Vedānta teaches that there is a spark of divinity latent in every being, and that all life is fundamentally one and spiritual. The selfsame spirit is appearing in multifarious forms having various names. And man is the highest expression of God. His body is the temple of God, the tabernacle of the spirit. Any service done to him is raised to the level of the worship of God in spiritual significance. Swami Vivekananda, the paragon of practical Vedānta who preached and practised it till the last day of his life, exhorts: 'Look upon every man, woman, and every one as God. You cannot help anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. . . . Do it only as a worship. I should see God in the poor, and it is for my salvation that I go and worship them. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner!' Again: 'What vain gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the god that we see all round us, the Virāt? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods.'

IV

There is a basic difference between humanism and Hinduism in their approaches to the ideal of service. Both of them, no doubt, insist that real joy consists in one's identification with the stream of life. The difference, however, lies in their understanding of the reality behind life. While the egalitarian principle of humanism holds good on the psycho-physical level of humanity, the Hindu view of life goes deeper into the spiritual level and points to the common spiritual basis, and so to the equality of all humanity, recognizing the truth of the divine nature that is the essence of every being. Because of this basic difference between the two modes of approach to life, there is a world of difference in their attitudes to service as well.

In humanism, service flows from an entirely

different sentiment. It is out of compassion, arising from pity, that one seeks to serve one's fellowmen. The idea of the divinity of man, or the ideal of service to humanity as equal to the worship of God, is not present in the humanistic attitude and approach. In it, the suffering of man, physical and mental, is the cause for the milk of compassion to flow from one's heart. Service therefore depends on an external circumstance, and is occasioned by an objective condition. There is no spiritual principle or subjective attitude involved in such acts of kindness and compassion, although these sentiments are noble in themselves as far as they go. On this basis, the inspiration for service is not perennial. It is momentary and objective, inasmuch as it is stimulated by an external condition. There is no spiritual value attached to this kind of service. Nor does it serve to elevate spiritually the person engaged in such service.

A person suffers from some ailment. Naturally, our heart goes out to him, and we try our best to relieve him of his suffering. Pity, kindness, compassion, charity, etc. are indeed powerful sentiments to work for the amelioration of the conditions of the suffering, the poor, and the needy. Nobody can or will deprecate them. But they must have a deeper spiritual basis to be truly effective not only to the receiver, but also to the giver of help. Where compassion flows prompted by an external situation, material benefit comes to the receiver of help; true. But there is no spiritual benefit accruing from it either to the receiver or to the giver of that help. At the most, the giver may derive some mental satisfaction which is but fugitive. To cite an example: A doctor treats a patient and cures him of his ailment. The patient regains his health, and is happy. The doctor, too, perhaps is satisfied that his efforts proved successful. In this kind of service, there is no spiritual ideal involved. There is no spiritual elevation either of the patient or of the doctor in this act of kindness.

But the whole act takes on a different aspect if performed in the spirit that we have been discussing here. If the spirit of divinity in

humanity permeates the act of treatment, and if the doctor offers his services as an act of worship, then not only is the patient elevated to the high pedestal of divinity, but the doctor also will, in addition to deriving mental satisfaction, get spiritual benefit and solace as a result of his act. He evolves spiritually and comes to feel the divine presence in humanity more intimately. Herein lies the fundamental difference between the two approaches of humanism and Hinduism, that is, service to man as inspired by ordinary human sentiments, and service to man as the veritable manifestation of God.

V

Hinduism prescribes a threefold scheme of social service. It takes into consideration all the aspects of the human personality, and provides for the all-round development of his body, mind, and spirit. Swami Vivekananda terms the three types of service as *annadāna*, *vidyādāna*, and *jñānadāna*: providing physical needs, imparting secular knowledge, and finally giving spiritual knowledge that liberates man from the shackles of mundane life. This scheme of service meets the requirements of each individual at the level where he stands. Service is offered to every one according to his need, looking upon him as the manifestation of God. To offer food to the hungry is the right type of worship at that level. To offer him religion is like offering stone to one who needs bread. *Annadāna* must come first in his case. Physical growth and sound health are essential for having a sound mind, as well as for nourishing the spiritual aspirations of the soul. Next comes *vidyādāna*, helping man to develop his intellect, to improve his power of understanding, and to enable him to grasp subtle ideas. Finally comes *jñānadāna*, imparting spiritual knowledge and supplying spiritual food to the soul of man, in order that he may have self-knowledge and fully unfold his essential divine nature. *Jñānadāna* lifts man to the highest stage of development that is possible for him to attain. It enables him to realize that he is one and identical with

the Divinity itself. Therefore it is that *jñānadāna* is considered to be the greatest service that one can offer to another.

The traditional Hindu attitude of *sevā* or service to man has been beautifully expressed by Sri Ramakrishna in the following words: '*Jive Śivajñāne sevā*—It is not compassion for others, but rather service to man, recognizing him to be the veritable manifestation of God.' By his words, this prophet of new India, and the consummate representative of the noblest traditions of Hinduism, infused a fresh life into the age-old path of *sevādharmā*, and set before the world an ideal by which all the activities of man can be spiritualized. Referring to these words of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda exclaimed: 'What a strange light have I discovered in those words of the Master! They throw an altogether new light upon the path of devotion. By realizing Him in and through all beings and serving Him through humanity, the devotee acquires real devotion. The embodied being cannot remain even for a minute without doing any work. All his activities should be directed to the service of man, the manifestation of God upon earth, and this will accelerate his progress towards the goal. However, if it be the will of God, the day will soon come when I shall proclaim this grand truth before the world at large.'

Ever since the physical disappearance of these two personalities, who came on the crest of a mighty tidal wave of spiritual resurgence, revitalizing every department of our national life, the country has been treading a new path of self-realization through the service of man. Hundreds of men and women, fired with the spirit of renunciation and sacrifice, have taken up this ideal of service of man in the attitude of worship of God. This is one of the chief characteristics of modern Hinduism, in the fashioning of which the contributions of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have played a vital role.

The Ramakrishna Mission, founded by Swami Vivekananda in the sacred memory of his Master, is a reflex of this revitalized spirit of

neo-Hinduism. It draws its inspiration and spiritual sustenance from the sacred wisdom of India's hoary past, as well as from the divine realizations and utterances of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The activities of the Mission, as enunciated by its founder, flow in three distinct channels, enumerated above as *annadāna*, *vidyādāna*, and *jñānadāna*—ministering unto the physical, intellectual, and spiritual needs of society. All its activities, throughout the world, fall under one or the other of these three categories. But all of them have

only one motto, namely, '*Ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya ca*—For the realization of the Self and for the welfare of the world'.

Thus Hinduism, in all its expressions, old and new, requires from us not a passive self-denial, but a positive and dynamic self-identification on a spiritual level with the larger self, which is society. Service to society, looking upon it as the manifestation of God, brings a joy and a security which are beyond the reach of those who are imprisoned within the narrow bounds of their own little selves.

THE CONCEPT OF IMAGE-WORSHIP

BY SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

The gift of fashioning idols or images and worshipping them is not peculiar to India alone, but is common to many civilizations in various stages of development. From time immemorial, human beings have longed to possess the image of an object or a person whom they loved or adored; so they tried to exteriorize and reproduce the characteristics of a natural or supernatural being, the form of a sentimental object, a scene taken from a myth or ancient history or the celebration of a ritual. If the primitives made crude representations of objects which they loved or feared, the moderns reflect the same spirit by keeping photos, statues, or paintings for sentimental purposes. The representations need not necessarily be realistic; very often, they become symbols: the lotus-flower in Hinduism, the wheel in Buddhism, the lamb and dove in Christianity, the golden calf in Judaism, etc.

A common belief among many moderns is that image-worship is a degeneration, being a relic of fetishism. Man is supposed to have begun with a sublime notion of the Divine. Then, desiring to have a concrete picture of his god, he represented him by anthropomorphic image, the only familiar thing known to himself. Slowly, he began to treat these represent-

ative images as real and not ideal, and ended by regarding them as Divine. Idolatry, if this term could be used without its disgusting aroma, is an invariable general fact. Images of gods were known to Vedic Aryans.¹ Even Buddhism which was apparently opposed to idolatry, reinstated the images of Hindu gods and goddesses, enveloping them with new myths and legends. This is nothing but the logical development of the human mind.

Though Hinduism accepts one Reality, which is beyond the reach of speech and mind, no religion can rival it in the richness of its images. The ancient seers of India attempted to intuit the Real in its manifold forms and qualities, and exteriorized their inner realization by conceiving the images for worship and meditation. Here it is necessary to point that the Hindu concept of religious image does not fall under any of the well-known divisions. In the first place, it is not *representative*, since no image is believed to represent the true features of the

¹ 'The existence of idols in Vedic times has been asserted in the cases of a painted image of Rudra, of Varuṇa with a golden coat of mail, in the distinction drawn between Maruts and their images' (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VII. p. 142). Cf. *Śaḍvīmśa-Brāhmaṇa*: 'The houses of the deity shake, the idols of the deity laugh.'

Reality; for the ancient seers never believed that they were producing the prototype of the Reality by making or drawing an image. It is also not a fetish in which dwells the spirit that gives it power. Though relics of totemism and fetishism are found among primitive tribes, it is fruitless to trace them in the highly evolved Vedic culture and religion.

Before we proceed to explain the concept of image-worship, it is worth while to note how this is viewed in traditional Hinduism. The image may be viewed in two aspects: as a symbol bringing close to the mind the idea of God, and serving to inspire the meditation of an aspirant; or it may be viewed as the indwelling abode of God, in which—when properly consecrated—God specially manifests. God becomes the image, and is not in the image. The first is the view of idealistic Vedānta, and the second is that of theistic Vedānta. The justification for the idealistic view lies in the fact that the formless Absolute, unrelated to time and space, cannot be grasped by the finite mind. Symbolic image aids concentration, integrates the feeling, and finally becomes the means for breaking the barriers of relativity.

While commenting upon the *Brahma-sūtra*, IV.1.4-5,² both the great commentators, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, assert that, where certain symbols (*pratīka*) of Brahman are used for meditation, the meditator should not think that they are identical with Brahman. 'The word "*pratīka*" means going towards,' says Swami Vivekananda,³ 'and worshipping a *pratīka* is worshipping something as a substitute, which is, in some one or more respects, like the Brahman more and more.' When Brahman itself is the object of worship, and *pratīka* stands as a symbol of Brahman, the meditation is beneficial. In meditation on symbols like mind etc.,⁴ the latter may appropriately be viewed as Brahman and not *vice versa*. Here the principle is that something higher may be superimposed upon

something lower, as when we view a king's chamberlain as a king, while, on the other hand, to view a king as a chamberlain would be lowering. For it is only by viewing an inferior thing as superior that we can progress, and not in the reverse way. 'And after all, Brahman also is meditated upon (in the cases under discussion) in so far as a contemplation of Brahman is superinduced on its symbols, analogously as a contemplation on Viṣṇu is superinduced on his images', says Śaṅkara.⁵ Śaṅkara, while accepting the logic that the Infinite cannot be finitized or spatialized, does not fail to recognize the psychological needs of the aspirant. Passages like 'He to whom belong all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes' (*Chā. U.*, III. 14.2) speak of Brahman, who is the cause of everything, as possessing qualities, while texts like 'That which is without sound' etc. (*Ka. U.*, I. 3. 15) indicate the nature of Brahman in so far as it is devoid of qualities. Śaṅkara comes to the conclusion 'that the highest Lord also may, when He pleases, assume a bodily shape formed of *māyā*, in order to gratify thereby His devout worshippers'.⁶ God with form and attributes becomes inescapable, though He is an appearance of the Absolute. Hence the adoration of God in images, even according to Advaita Vedānta, is not illogical. When someone questioned the wisdom of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, a great scholar and saint, in his worshipping the image of Kṛṣṇa, he seems to have exclaimed in no uncertain terms that he knows no other Truth than Kṛṣṇa: 'With flute in hand, of the colour of a new (dark) cloud, dressed in yellow raiment, of face lovely like the full-moon, and eyes like lotus—other than this Kṛṣṇa, I know no other truth.'⁷

⁵ ईदृशं चात्र ब्रह्मण उपास्यत्वं यत्प्रतीकेषु तद्दृष्ट्यध्यारोपणं प्रतिमादिष्विव विष्ण्वादीनाम् ।

(*Sūtra-bhāṣya*, IV. 1.5).

⁶ परमेश्वरस्यापीच्छावशान्मायामयं रूपं साधकानुग्रहार्थम् ।

(*Sūtra-bhāṣya*, I.1.20).

⁷ वंशीविभूषितकरान्नवनीरदाभात्

पीताम्बरादहणबिम्बफलाधरोष्ठात् ।

पूर्णन्दुसुन्दरमुखादरविन्दनेत्रात्

कृष्णात्परं किमपि तत्त्वमहं न जाने ॥

² न प्रतीके नहि सः । and ब्रह्मदृष्टिस्तर्कात् ।

³ *Bhakti Yoga*, p. 48.

⁴ 'Let a man meditate on mind as Brahman' (*Chā. U.*, III.18.1).

While Śaṅkara makes no distinction between a *pratīka* (like mind or the sun) and a *pratimā* (an image of God), the theistic Vedāntins go further and develop the unique doctrine of *arcā* or image-worship. The Viśiṣṭādvaitin, who has inherited the Pāñcarātra-Bhāgavata tradition, does not accept the distinction between Saguṇa Brahman and Nirguṇa Brahman, i.e. Brahman with qualities and Brahman without qualities; nor is he, like Bhāskara and other Bhedābheda-vādins, prepared to attribute qualities to Brahman and deny Him divine form. The Absolute conditions itself by assuming a *formless form* for the sake of devotees. This divine auspicious figure is the symbol of the divine will to redeem humanity. It is not made of matter. It is not also a concession to inferior aspirants. It is made of love and compassion. The supreme Brahman, whose essence is infinite knowledge and bliss, possesses a divine form and attributes of highest excellence. 'And in order to gratify His devotees, He individualizes that form so as to render it suitable to their apprehension', says Rāmānuja.⁸ This divine form, known as *śubhāśraya*, becomes accessible to all as the *arcā*. Vedāntadeśika says that the worship of the *arcā* will lead easily to liberation.

The worship of the Deity in the *arcā* form, into which He 'descends' with a 'non-material body' and in which He is ever present, goes back to the ancient doctrine of the Pāñcarātra-Vaikhānasas and Bhāgavatas. According to their doctrine, the Deity manifests in five modes (*prakāras*) of existence: *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmin*, and *arcā*. *Para* is the highest, absolute, and transcendent Reality. *Para* as the divine figure (*divya-maṅgala-vigraha*) is adorned with nine ornaments and weapons, which represent the principles of creation: *kaustubha* represents the souls, the *śrīvatsa* the *prakṛti* (nature), a club *mahat*, a conch *sāttvika ahaṅkāra*, a bow *tāmasika ahaṅkāra*, a sword knowledge, its sheath ignorance, the discus

the mind, the arrows the senses, and a garland the elements.⁹ It is qualified by infinite, auspicious attributes, such as knowledge, power, etc. In *vyūha*, the Deity abides in a fourfold form, such as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha, which have creative as well as ethical functions in creation. *Vibhava* is the basis for the conception of *avatāra*. The Deity descends among beings by means of forms similar to that genus 'for the protection of the good and destruction of the evil'.¹⁰ The Deity as *antaryāmin* is a very old idea based on the *antaryāmibrāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The *antaryāmin* dwells in the 'lotus of the heart' of the soul as its most intimate friend in all the states of experience. The *yogins* can perceive this form in their meditation.

There is, finally, the *arcāvatāra*, which is a special form of divine mercy. Though the other forms are realizable through knowledge and meditation, the devotee's heart will not be content without adoration, worship, and personal service of the Deity. Devotion and self-surrender are the invulnerable and invincible means to open the gates of divine grace. *Arcā* serves the purposes of love and adoration in a supreme way. It is no wonder that the school of *bhakti* reaches its highest point of evolution in the concept of image-worship. It is no longer idolatry. To the loving devotee, the notion of image as the 'symbolic concretization of the Absolute' is too lukewarm to stimulate his heart. He never sees an earthen image, but an image of consciousness and bliss.

In the *arcā* manifestation, the Deity accepts for His body any substance chosen by the devotee, and 'descends' into it with a non-material body (*aprākṛta-śarīra-viśiṣṭaḥ*) as soon as the consecration is done. The Deity, it is said, owing to His omnipotence, is capable of 'descending' into such images with a portion of His

⁹ Vide *Astra-bhūṣaṇa adhyāya* of *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, I.22.

¹⁰ परित्राणाय साधुनां विनाशाय च दुःकृताम्
(*Bhagavad-Gītā*, IV.8).

⁸ तदेव उपासकानुग्रहेण तत् तत् प्रतिपन्न्यनुरूपसंस्थानं करोति ।
(*Śrī-Bhāṣya*, I.1.21).

power. The *arcāvatāra*, it should be noted, is not considered less real or important than *para* or other manifestations. Another unique aspect of the *arcā* is that it is unrelated to time and space; for instance, Śrī Rāma lived in Ayodhyā in the age of *tretā*, but the image of Śrī Rāma can be consecrated anywhere and at any time for communion and realization. *Arcā* is an unusual instance where junction between the natural and non-natural takes place. The Deity as *arcā* becomes dependent, as it were, on the worshipper for bath, food, etc. The devotee is provided an opportunity to practise the presence of God by daily service. Though the Deity is replete with the highest attributes, He bears everything and permits self-limitation for the sake of devotees.¹¹ The Deity is specially present in houses, sacred places, hills, etc. where He is invoked and worshipped. The image need not necessarily be handmade, for it can be self-manifest also (*svayam-vyakta*).

That great scripture *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* calls image-worship as *kriyāyoga*. For purposes of worship, it gives (XI.27) a description of images and the method of worship. The Deity may be worshipped in an image, on the bare ground, in the heart, in the sun, fire, or water. The image may be made of stone or wood or metal or mortar or sand, or it may be a picture; it may be formed in mind or carved out of jewel. The ceremony of bathing and decoration with ornaments in the cases of images is considered highly desirable, as far as the worshipper is concerned. In fact, *abhiṣeka* and *alaṅkāra* are integral parts of worship. The Deity is highly pleased when offerings are made with devotion. The *Bhāgavata* exhorts the devotee to instal an image of the Lord in a temple surrounded by beautiful flower-gardens, and make endowments for the due performance of daily worship and for processions and festivals.

While the Supreme can be approached only asymptotically from the finite human standpoint, the Supreme by His mere will not only can assume any shape, human or non-human,

but can 'divinize' any image, so as to render it suitable for the comprehension and satisfaction of the devotee.

Sri Ramakrishna, who demonstrated in his own life the nature and essence of true worship, has illuminated this concept in his own inimitable language. He justified image-worship on the ground of the aspirant's qualification. 'You were talking of images made of clay. There arises a necessity for them too. These various forms used for worship have been provided to suit the needs of different men at different stages of spiritual evolution', said he to a disciple of his.¹² He also emphasized that the images worshipped are divine. He once said to Keshab Chandra Sen: 'Why do these images rouse the idea of mud and clay, stone and straw, in your mind? Why can you not realize the presence of the eternal, blissful, all-conscious Mother even in these forms?'¹³ It is the ignorant person who holds the images to be nothing better than stone and straw, and receives no spiritual benefit. Without spiritual eye, the worshipper of stone becomes stone himself. Even a man of realization does not repudiate image-worship. Says Sri Ramakrishna: 'When one sees God, one realizes that everything, images and all, is a manifestation of the Spirit. To him, the image is not made of clay, but of Spirit.'¹⁴ He who sees God in everything sees Him in the image as well.

With this perspective, it is easy to realize the significance of image-worship as also the importance of temples in the religious life of the Hindus. In India, whenever the land has been flooded by fresh spiritual waves, there has been tremendous activity in the efflorescence of culture. What was that spark which ignited the minds of great builders to raise such marvels of architecture? The recognition of the presence of God in images could only be the adequate cause for the great renaissance in temple architecture, iconography, fairs, and festivals.

¹² *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 116.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹¹ *Vide Yatindra-mata-dīpikā* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras), p. 139.

THE VALIDITY OF TRANS-EMPIRICAL INTUITION

BY DR. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

In the combined April and July 1958 issue of *Philosophy: East and West*, Professor Herbert Feigl, of the University of Minnesota, has published an eminently well-written and thought-provoking article captioned 'Critique of Intuition According to Scientific Empiricism'. The article is singularly lucid in its exposition of the point of view of 'scientific empiricism', particularly as it bears on the question of intuition. The writer has made an attempt 'to assess the possibility and the validity especially of trans-empirical intuitive knowledge in the light of the epistemology of scientific empiricism' (p. 1).^{*} I wish to make a few observations here on some of the points touched by Professor Feigl in the course of his article, and thereby take the opportunity of ventilating my own epistemological views, which, I hope, may throw some helpful light on the rather puzzling question of the validity of trans-empirical knowledge.

In the first place, I should like to make it clear that I regard epistemological principles and implications as universal, in the sense that they are applicable to *all* knowledge or to *knowledge as such*, knowledge wherever it be and at whatsoever level it be, and that all human awareness is knowledge and none infra-cognitive. There can be no variation in the generic nature of knowledge, whether it be empirical knowledge or trans-empirical knowledge. 'Empirical' and 'trans-empirical' designate factual orders of the *known*, not radically different kinds of *knowledge*; they demarcate spheres of the *known*, and do not indicate variety in the structural essence and universal implications of *knowledge*. *Knowledge as such* has no kind. It is by a subtle, though all too natural, error that we transpose the kinds of the 'known' to the 'knowledge' of them, and speak of this kind of knowledge and that. If there are no kinds

of knowledge, there can be no kinds of epistemology, too. There should then be no point in singling out 'the epistemology of scientific empiricism' from other possible varieties of epistemology. This initial indication of my approach to the problem of knowledge will, I hope, enable the reader to appreciate my remarks that follow.

Feigl is perfectly right in pointing out that the word 'intuition' is used in a variety of senses, and I have nothing to comment on his account of the varieties of intuition, beginning with the awareness of simple qualities, like red and green, hot and cold, etc., and ending with the mystical or trans-empirical intuition, with *immediacy* as the common core in them all. I am particularly concerned here with a critical examination of his arguments and the epistemological assumptions employed for denying the validity of mystical or trans-empirical intuition. My question is: Do these arguments warrant the conclusion that 'the mystic is misled by the power of his experiences to regard them as genuinely cognitive insights'? In the lines that follow, it shall be my endeavour to show that the conclusion is not warranted.

I now proceed to examine Feigl's salient arguments and the epistemological issues raised by them:

(1) His first argument, stated in his own words, is this: 'A description of immediate experience, be it in phenomenological or introspective terms, is genuinely cognitive, in that it consists of statements which may be either true or false. But it simply does not make sense to ascribe truth or falsity to immediate experience itself. As merely "had", lived through, enjoyed, or suffered, it makes no truth claim; it does not assert or deny anything. It just occurs. (Mystics, as I understand them, do make knowledge claims, albeit of a very special kind; and they never restrict these knowledge claims

^{*} All the page numbers given within brackets here refer to Feigl's above-mentioned article.

to a mere description of their direct experience.)' (p.9)

Now, the assumption, so commonly accepted by all critics of mysticism, that the mystic experience *simply is*, or is merely 'had', lived through, or enjoyed, *without* any truth claim, is just the thing which is questionable. No human experience, for the matter of that, be it empirical or trans-empirical, or at whatever level it be, if it *is* at all, can be without a truth claim. Even a hallucination, for the time it lasts, claims to be true. Its claim to truth is contradicted only by a subsequent experience. Claim to truth is the inexpugnable feature of all knowing or experiencing. The dream experience also claims to be true all the time it lasts. Its claim to truth is contradicted by the waking experience. The criterion of ultimate and absolute reality for any experience whatsoever is its non-contradiction by a subsequent experience. The claim to veracity of mystical experience cannot be rejected on the ground of its alleged immediacy. There may be or may not be genuine reasons for rejecting the veracity of mystic experience, but immediacy as understood by Feigl, at any rate, is *not* one. Mystic experience cannot be regarded as inauthentic or illusory, *because* it is immediate. The whole theory of immediate experience being inherently destitute of truth claim is wholly baseless and altogether untenable. The whole confusion arises from thinking of immediate experience as some sort of infra-cognitional or infra-judgmental or inarticulate feeling which 'just occurs', and does not assert or deny anything. Such a conception of immediate experience is a pitfall to be avoided by all means. There can be no human awareness which is pre-cognitional or pre-judgmental. For man, to be aware at all is to judge; and there can be no judgement which does not claim to be true and which does not assert or deny something. An unjudging human awareness is a chimera, a myth, an impossibility *per se*. All attempts to discredit immediate experience in respect of its claim to veracity invariably rest on misconstruing its nature as an infra-cognitional or infra-judge-

mental awareness. Mystical knowing is certainly immediate, in the sense that it is a mode of knowing where the object is not inferred or argued from proposition to proposition, but is directly apprehended; none the less, it is *knowing* and inevitably is what all knowing is, viz. judging and inevitably implies all that judgement implies, including its claim to be true.

Mystic experience is self-authenticated, and its authenticity can only be called in question by another experience contradicting its veracity. The claim to veracity of mystic experience rests not on its being simply 'had' or enjoyed, but on its self-authenticity and subsequent non-contradiction. Were it not so, the mystics the world over and down the ages would certainly have found their experiences to be on a par with dreams and hallucinations.

(2) Here is a second argument of Feigl: 'Trans-empirical knowledge claims, mystical intuitions, as I understand them, cannot be tested empirically. Mysticism, especially religious mysticism, claims to give us knowledge about something which cannot be independently reached through ordinary channels, knowledge which cannot be checked, which cannot be tested in the usual empirical way' (p.7).

Is it logical or reasonable to demand an empirical test or verification of what is avowedly or *ex hypothesi* trans-empirical? Is it not sheer dogmatism on the part of the empiricist to take empirical experience as the arbiter and exemplar of *all* experience? Of course, philosophy cannot abjure its business of being critical, and it would perfectly be within the legitimate duties of philosophy to attempt a critical appraisal and evaluation of all experiences, and to that end demand a test or verification of experiences; but the test or verification demanded must be appropriate to the level of experience which is sought to be tested or verified. There is no point in spreading the Procrustean bed of empirical experience for the appraisal of admittedly non-empirical experiences. The case for mystic experience *does not fall* because of the inability of its being 'tested in the usual empirical way'.

(3) A third contention of Feigl is this that 'intuition in the sense of direct experience is never the finished product of knowledge. It is, rather, either the raw material of knowledge, i.e. the confirmation basis of genuine knowledge claims, or it is a way of arriving at hypotheses which may or may not be found tenable on the basis of further evidence' (p.16).

I regard every theory of knowledge which regards it as a synthesizing, compounding, interpreting, or in any way manipulating activity of the mind, which manoeuvres any kind of 'raw data' which are given *prior* to this activity, as entirely mistaken. The conception of knowledge as a finished product of the manoeuvring by the mind of certain pre-given data is an unfortunate legacy of Kant to modern epistemology. Kant took a misleading *faux pas*, which continues to befog and bedevil the minds of philosophers to this day, when he explained knowledge as resulting from the synthesizing by the understanding of pre-given sensations, the raw data which the understanding manoeuvred. The whole theory of a bare awareness of pre-cognitional or pre-judgemental data *preceding* cognition proper or genuine knowledge is an unfounded epistemological dogma, and to suppose that mystic awareness is an awareness of this variety is nothing more than a gratuitous assumption. With the dismissal of the misleading epistemological theory that knowledge comes as a finished product of manoeuvring of pre-cognitional raw data, the supposition that mystical experiences are such raw data has no legs to stand upon.

(4) Lastly, I come to Professor Feigl's allusion to the 'naturalistic' explanation of religious or mystical experience, which has been attempted in recent times, and his allusion to 'the general lines of argument as presented in the psycho-analytic theory of religious experience' (p.12). Feigl reflects the naturalist and positivist temper of the age, when he says that the communalities of religious experience are 'explainable in terms of the natural condition of man, and do not require anything beyond that' (p.12). He sums up the central psycho-

analytic theory of religious experience, as expounded by Freud, in these words: 'What Freud points out is simply this: the reason so many people, in such varied cultural situations, believe in, or even have the experience of, a personal God, is that they were all helpless infants and children at one time, surrounded by comparatively all-powerful adults on whom they depended, at first for physical sustenance, and later on, very significantly, for moral encouragement and discouragement. No wonder that human beings, when emancipated from their natural parents, need a substitute, and erect God in man's image' (pp.12-13).

I shall only very briefly comment here on the general line of argument of contemporary new psychologists and psycho-analysts, at which Feigl has hinted above. My criticism of this fashionable contemporary trend of argument would boil down to this: A psychological explanation of the origin and development of the idea of God in the human mind, howsoever scientific it may be, and whatever measure of correctness it may have as a sheer psychological account of the genesis of God idea, is not *in itself* a disproof of the reality of God or of religious experience. In other words, to show how the idea of God comes to the human mind is not to show that there is no reality answering to the idea. Nor is this conclusion warranted by the relativity of the idea of God to different times and climes or by the evolution of the idea of God through the ages.

A notable argument of contemporary psychologists against the reality of God is this that God is unreal, because the God idea is a 'projection' of the human mind, its needs and fears, hopes and wishes. It is this argument which Feigl is endorsing, when he says that out of their needs human beings 'erect God in man's image'. According to A. G. Tansley, there is a kind of projection which he terms 'idealization', in which the mind projects an ideal of personality from the mind's own need of harmony and unification, and God is such a projection. The projected ideal of God varies according to the changing needs of

human society. Tansley calls this *idealization* 'a common frailty of the human mind', because it 'confuses the ideal and the real, and such confusion can never form a sound basis for action or opinion'.¹

Two important questions arise in connection with the projection of an ideal by the human mind: (1) Is the ideal projected by the human mind peculiar to the field of religion, or, is it found in all fields of human knowledge and experience? (2) Is the ideal projected by the human mind a *mere* fancy, or, has it any relation to the Real? My reply to the first question is this that projection is by no means peculiar to the field of religion, but is present in all fields of human experience. Let me quote here some words from an article I published elsewhere some time ago: 'Science projects the ideal of the unity and uniformity of nature—the ideal that the world is a cosmos, that, in the whole range of existence, everything is connected with everything else in an orderly and intelligible manner, and this *for all time*. This is a *projection*, because no one can peruse the whole range of time and space, while nature, obviously, is a congeries of varied and particular things. The principle of uniformity of nature is not only the basis and presupposition of science, but of all knowledge and experience. Deny it, and all knowledge is invalidated. Yet, strictly speaking, it can never be demonstrated, for it pertains not only to the past and the present, but also to all time to come. Shall I say, "There is no uniformity in the real world. The principle of uniformity is an ideal of my own mind, my own mind's demand projected on the real world"? Can the ideal of the real world itself be unreal? Projection, then, can no more invalidate religious knowledge than it can scientific or other knowledge.'²

In every specific field of investigation, the mind accepts an ideal present to it as the very basis of its investigation, and progressive advances of knowledge in that field progressively

realize the ideal. This is because the ideal, though coming from the mind and present in the mind ideally, is not a mere fancy, but a reflection of the real. 'We usually think that the ideal of knowledge, or the ideal of morality, or the ideal of aesthetic experience, or the ideal of religion, is *projected by the mind* on reality; rather, we should think the *reality itself* is reflected in these ideals in our minds, or *the ideal is the real become self-conscious in us*.'³

The entire argument of Professor Feigl in the article we have been considering rests on the assumption that mystic experience is either some sort of elementary awareness, infra-cognitional in nature and *not knowledge properly so called*, or some kind of 'hunch', which cannot be relied upon without a large-scale confirmation of its truth frequency. The assumption seems to me wholly unwarranted and altogether baseless. Human awareness being what it is, a judging awareness with a claim to truth, a knowledge of reality, to talk of an elementary infra-cognitional awareness is to talk of a pure myth, a chimera. You can deny outright that there is anything at all like mystic experience, but once you admit that there *is* an experience to be called mystical experience, you have to concede to it what has inevitably to be conceded to every human experience, viz. that it is a judgement, a knowledge of reality with a claim to veracity—a claim which must stand sovereign and invulnerable, unless it be negated by a contradicting experience. Mystic experience is also not 'hunch' of the ordinary variety, though the word 'intuition' is ambiguously applied to both. Mystic experience is self-authenticated knowledge of Reality—self-authenticated to the mystic, of course—and, as such, does not require to be statistically supported or supported *ab extra* by inferential processes. That is the unanimous verdict of the mystics of all ages and climes. One cannot but agree with Feigl when he says that 'Independent inter-subjectively accessible evidence provides the only justification that can be accepted as "rational"' (p. 16); but it has to be added that, when the

¹ A. G. Tansley, *The New Psychology and Its Relation to Life*, pp. 159-61.

² My article 'The New Psychology and Religion', *Prabuddha Bharata*, November 1957.

³ *Ibid.*

justification in question is that of mystic experience, the pertinent evidence would be the inter-subjective agreement in the experiences of the mystics of different countries and ages independently arrived at, and that evidence is available to us in the world's mystical literature. The evidence asked for is not available, in the very nature of things, in empirically accessible experience. To demand an empirical justification of the trans-empirical is to demand the impossible *per se*.

In closing, I should like to clear away a confusion which is apt to arise from a perusal of the lines I have written above. It will possibly be objected that, on the one hand, I have said that there are no kinds of knowledge and that knowledge is the same everywhere, and, on the other, I have suggested that there is a radical difference between empirical and trans-empirical experiences. This, it may be urged, appears to be contradictory. My answer to this possible objection is this. All experiencing is *knowing*, and the generic nature and properties of knowledge are the same in all experiences. All human awareness is a judging awareness, an assertion about reality, and claims to be true. Nothing in human experience can be singled

out as an infra-judgemental or infra-cognitional elementary awareness, as a raw datum to be worked upon, and therefore its veracity as capable of being suspected or challenged on that ground. The attempt to discredit the veracity of mystic experience on the assumption or supposition that it is an elementary awareness of this nature is an attempt based on the hypostatization of a pure *abstraction*. Mystic experience, qua experience, is full-blooded knowledge, like any other experience. Once we dismiss the fiction of the possibility of an awareness which is *not knowledge in itself*, but below the level of knowledge, a raw material to be worked upon, we shall have knocked down the very bottom of the contention that mystic experience has no claim to veridicality.

But the admission that knowing has the same generic nature in all experiences does not preclude us from a classification of, or distinguishing between, experiences from the point of view of their *objects* or *contents*. Thus, there comes to be a distinction between empirical and trans-empirical experiences. The objects to which the former pertain are sensible, and those to which the latter pertain are supra-sensible or spiritual.

THE HINDU POSITION WITH REGARD TO SOME PROBLEMS OF MODERN LIFE

BY DR. SHASHI BHUSAN DAS GUPTA

MAN AND HIS FELLOW-MEN

The dominant feature of Hinduism, as a religion, is the stress it lays on the realization of the Self as the supreme Divine—the Brahman—the all-pervasive One. It is said in one of the Upanisads that, when a man realizes his true Self as the supreme Divine, he sees every being in himself and himself in every being. This determines the attitude of a true Hindu to his fellow-men. In the correct perspective,

there is no scope for viewing anyone or even any being as the 'other', for everybody or every being is a manifestation, under a specific spatio-temporal condition, of one and the same Divinity. The Hindus would therefore base the idea of universal brotherhood and the idea of equality on this idea of fundamental 'sameness' or 'oneness'.

But a discrepancy exists between the ideal and the practice: one may refer to the rigidity of

the Hindu caste system, which, it is alleged, perpetrates racial, social, and cultural injustice. The caste system is originally a system of social organization on the basis of merit or ability (*guṇa*) and profession (*karma*). Though not essentially linked with the Hindu faith, the caste system has been traditionally sanctioned by religious codes, and it had its justification in the desire of letting every ethnic group retain its particular ways of life and its beliefs—a desire for co-existence and co-operation among the various component tribes and races—each to tolerate the other without forcing its own culture and belief on the others. Whatever may be said of the past, there is a consensus of opinion among the modern Hindus that this system has now become artificial because of the free-mixing that prevails today among ethnic groups, and because of the gradual disappearance of professional distinctions. As a matter of fact, the caste system is rapidly losing ground with the process of social disintegration, particularly in the industrial and urban areas. The injustice perpetrated on a section of the people by making them ‘untouchables’ has been strongly condemned as a curse or sin by all the Hindu social and religious reformers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mahatma Gandhi dedicated his whole life to the upliftment of the untouchables, whom he preferred to call ‘Harijans’, people belonging to the caste of God, the Saviour. As for the attitude of the modern Hindus towards the starving or semi-starving masses, we quote Swami Vivekananda: ‘It is an insult to the starving people to offer them religion; it is an insult to a starving man to teach him metaphysics.’ The higher life presupposes a minimum of security. Before these starving masses can develop their innate religious ideas, they must first be raised to a condition where they feel that they are not mere animals. To improve the living conditions of these toiling masses is therefore the first religious duty incumbent both upon themselves and upon us all. But in this connection, the Hindus would not favour the idea of the end justifying the means; the

means should itself be justifiable.

Religious tolerance of the Hindus is closely related to the principle of non-violence—a principle ultimately derived from a sense of the cosmic unity so peculiar to Hinduism. The spirit of tolerance proceeds also from the Upaniṣadic ideal of universalism and syncretism, which has made Hinduism accept, absorb, and transform diverse forms of beliefs and traditions. The belief which is altogether primary in the Hindu religion is the belief in an infinite and transcendent Absolute, which manifests itself in every being; the Hindus traditionally venerate and worship this Absolute in whatever man or object its greatness and glory are expressed. A Hindu therefore feels instinctively inclined to pay respect to all saints and religious teachers, at times considering them as the self-manifestations of the Lord.

MAN IN HIS SOCIAL SETTING

Traditional forms of the Hindu religious ceremonials and rituals have been undergoing a rapid change during the last few decades, due to the revolutionary transformations of our social structure caused by industrialization, urbanization, and agrarian reforms. Every social structure is to a large extent dependent upon the economic structure, and Indian economy had been predominantly an agricultural one. Besides, Indian agriculture had continued following the same age-old mode of production. These are the factors responsible for the stability of our social institutions and the consequent fidelity of the people to their religious traditions. But the change from agricultural economy to industrial economy has been bringing about revolutionary changes in the economic pattern as well as in the traditional social pattern.

Large-scale urbanization and industrialization are affecting the traditional forms of religion. The majority of the Hindus rather welcome the changes that are taking place, and they are strongly of the opinion that religious superstition and taboos should not hamper the progress of industry and the pursuit of science. Even the agriculturists welcome the present mecha-

nization of agriculture. There is, however, a section of the people, with a fundamental difference in ideology, which is opposed to large-scale industrialization that would cause wanton havoc to handicrafts and village industries. They also oppose the modern capitalistic policy of exaggerated centralization and consequent urbanization.

The change in the social pattern does not, however, fundamentally affect our religious values. The modern tendency is towards a re-orientation of traditional values along humanistic lines, rather than a total surrender of such values or their replacement by entirely new ones. On the social side, the effect of the changed conditions may be noticed in the breaking up of the village communities, gradual loosening of caste rigidity, inter-caste marriages, and the growth of collectivism in the performance of religious ceremonials and rituals.

HINDU RELIGION AND THE FAMILY

Changes in the economic structure are bringing about changes even in our family life. Joint families or large families are disintegrating, and many of the urban families are acquiring a migratory character. Families in the villages, who live on land or are engaged in crafts and small-scale industries, and settled families in the urban areas are, on the whole, faithful to religious traditions. The marriage ideal is being honoured, and duties to the dead are done with reverence. Even though there is the sanction of law, the Hindus generally dis-favour even today the ideas of divorce, widow-remarriage, and birth control. Though the Government of India does encourage very actively birth-control, Hindu India, generally speaking, is not in favour of this, and, with Gandhiji, recommends self-control and continence. Our scriptures and traditions are definitely opposed to sexual pleasure-seeking, as dissociated from the desire of child-bearing. Economic pressure, however, is bringing in a new psychological change even in this sphere.

With regard to the family, another problem has arisen out of the turmoil of changing social

and economic conditions. Until recently, Indian women lived inside the home; they were responsible for the unity of the family. Many of them, now equipped with liberal education and driven by economic pressure, have begun to look for outside employment. Mechanization of labour has again made them fit for work in special types of factories and laboratories. The large-scale employment of women outside the home, in urban and industrial areas especially, is affecting the family life, particularly with regard to the education of the children. With many mothers outside the home, the responsibility of children's education is devolving on the State, and new arrangements have to be made by organizing various types of nursery schools, boarding schools, and creches in industrial centres. This considerably lessens the influence of the mothers on the children, and may endanger their religious formation.

RELIGION AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATIONAL CULTURE IN A WORLD COMMUNITY

From the cultural side, we see that in Hinduism the myth has preserved much of its religious importance and value. These myths are beautiful and meaningful, full of poetry and mystery; they pertain to the whole of nature, the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, and, above all, the infinite loveliness of the Divine. These myths, which have been the theme of some of our religious texts, remain to this day the theme of a considerable portion of our songs and dramas—and even of our dance—and they exert an immense power on the minds and hearts of the masses. The education of a young Hindu boy, though more orientated than in the past towards science and technology, is still to some extent influenced by our ancient religious tradition. Our classics, unlike the Western classics, are representative of our religion as well as our culture. The *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* still shape our imaginations and minds; our songs are mostly religious; our dances, our

dramas, and our art in general are all very much dominated by our religious ideas.

The Hindus are naturally proud of their cultural heritage, as the adherents of the other great religions are of their respective cultures. But loyalty and attachment to national culture raises the problem of loyalty to the world community. Attaching too much of importance to the spirit of nationalism may be harmful in the religious field, but we should not go to the other extreme of cherishing the ideal of a world community based on absolute homogeneity. It is neither possible nor desirable to have a world unity based on absolute homogeneity; world community should grow as a unity in diversity, by emphasizing the fundamentals of various cultures and by a sympathetic understanding of these fundamentals.

MAN AND THE NATURAL WORLD

Science is a powerful force in our present-day life, a force playing an important role in shaping and influencing the individual man as well as the whole history of mankind. The Indian scientists have not until now manifested any aggressively anti-religious attitude; their attitude is rather one of non-interference, at times of indifference or of agnosticism. As regards the impact of science on the religious beliefs of others, we feel that science has become a serious force which exerts a purifying effect on our religious consciousness, forcing us to turn our attention to the essentials of religion and to shake off undesirable primitive beliefs. Science, challenging as it does these traditions, is enabling us to understand our religious ideas in the light of its new discoveries. We cannot deny that the new geological researches, for instance, have compelled us to modify our old traditional views on cosmogony and cosmology. The theory of evolution and the latest experiments in biology have aroused doubts regarding the belief in transmigration and, consequently, the Hindu belief in the law of *karma*. The recent trends in psychology have indeed challenged our belief that the mind was

a separate substance, entirely distinct from the body and somehow associated with the spirit. Nevertheless, it is a groundless apprehension to believe that the modern Hindu is in danger of becoming irreligious, just because his religion is being purified of its primitive elements.

MAN AND THE ULTIMATE REALITY

The world we live in is a highly industrialized and technological one, and this process of industrialization and mechanization will go on increasing, unless national planning, in an international context of co-operative understanding, succeeds in reducing this process to reasonable limits. Against this background of technology, we must consider the other fact, namely, the kernel of every great religion is contemplation, i.e. the interior life of detachment and prayer. The objective conditions in which we live may seem an insurmountable obstacle to this cultivation of interiority. There may be a misunderstanding here: man has not developed his contemplative nature for the sole reason that he had leisure and lived in congenial circumstances. These may have helped him, but the very nature of man urges him to contemplation. It has been said in the Upaniṣad that all those who attain to greatness do but reap the effects of meditation. It is difficult to believe that industrialization and mechanization could ever destroy this very essence of man. Contemplation can be reconciled with the sternest and the most baffling realities of life, because true religious contemplation is no escapism or denial of this world with all its struggles and problems. This habit of contemplation is all the more necessary now, because our present-day world is more agitated and restless. Hinduism emphasizes the ideal of equanimity—to keep the soul calm and unruffled in the midst of all conflicts. This equanimity or spiritual balance can be attained through the cultivation of an interior and contemplative life, which may go hand in hand with our active life, the interior life giving to our activity a greater strength and inspiration.

ADVAITA VEDĀNTA :

ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE AND ACCORDING TO REASON

BY DR. HAROLD BARRY PHILLIPS

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

The essence of Advaita Vedānta can be summed up in the following statements: (1) Brahman alone exists, (2) but due to ignorance, (3) each of us thinks he is a separate individual soul, and (4) sees Brahman as the external world; (5) could one but realize the Truth, (6) one would know oneself as identical with Brahman, and (7) the external world would be seen to be unreal.

1. Brahman alone exists

In the account of creation, we read: 'In the beginning, dear boy, this was Being alone, one only, without a second (*advitīya*)' (*Chāndogya*, VI.2.1). From this last word, *advitīya*, comes the related form *advaita* (non-dual). To the same effect is *Aitareya*, I.1: 'In the beginning, verily, all this was Ātman alone. There was nothing else existing as a rival.' The reality behind the universe is called Brahman; the reality behind the individual is called Ātman; it is the thesis of Vedānta that Brahman and Ātman are the same. Hence the words are often used interchangeably, as here. Or, if it be objected that it is the present with which we are concerned, not the state of affairs some 6,000 million years ago, then we cite *Kaṭha*, IV.10: 'Whatever is here, that is there; what is there, the same is here. He who sees here as different meets with death again and again.' That is, the Real is one without a second, but those who are in the world see difference, which brings us to the next point.

2. Ignorance is the cause of the world.

Why does one see manifoldness, as stated above? Because of ignorance, *avidyā*. Because it is rooted in ignorance, the world as perceived

is often termed illusion, *māyā*. Thus, 'Know then that nature is *māyā*, and that the great God is the Lord of *māyā*' (*Śvetāśvatara*, IV.10). Again, 'On account of false notions (*māyā-bhīḥ*), the supreme Being is perceived as manifold' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.5.19). These Upaniṣads are the only ones using the term '*māyā*' in this sense; but we have the analogous use of *avidyā* in the following places: 'Fools, dwelling in the very midst of ignorance, yet vainly fancying themselves to be wise and learned, go round and round' (*Kaṭha*, II.5); 'He who knows this supreme immortal Being, as seated in the cavity of the heart, rends asunder the knot of ignorance even here in this life' (*Muṇḍaka*, II.1.10). But the same idea is conveyed by the use of metaphors, thus: 'Like a lid, Thy shining orb covers the entrance to the Truth in Thee' (*Īśā*, 15); 'Take me from darkness to light' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, I.3.28). The notion of Brahman being falsely perceived as the manifold world also occurs in these passages: 'Just as, though people who do not know the field walk again and again over the treasure of gold hidden underground, but do not find it, even so all these creatures here, though they go daily into the Brahman world, yet do not find it, for they are carried away by the untrue' (*Chāndogya*, VIII.3.2); again, 'For when there is duality, as it were, then one sees another' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.4.14); and, finally, 'The self-existent God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal self' (*Kaṭha*, IV.1). From these references, Śaṅkara worked out the doctrine of superimposition (*adhyāsa*): that what we see is not the Real, but is an illusory appearance which the mind superimposes on the Real: 'Just as blueness in the sky, water in the mirage, and a human figure in a post are but

illusory, so is the universe in Ātman' (*Aparokṣānubhūti*, 61).

3. The *jīva*

If there is really nothing but Brahman, but in the state of ignorance we see a world, by the same token, 'we' are Brahman in the state of ignorance, having thereby become manifold. Hence there is a lot of evidence in the scriptures for the difference between Brahman and the individual soul or *jīva*, or more properly, between the real Self (Ātman) and the *jīva*. So *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.4.5: 'The Self, my dear Maitreyī, should verily be realized; should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon.' If the Self is to be realized, then the realizer or *jīva* must be different from the realized or Ātman. Again, 'Two birds, bound to one another in close friendship, perch on the self-same tree' (*Muṇḍaka*, III.1.1-2). Here the two birds represent the *jīva* and the Ātman. Further, 'When this self that is associated with the intellect is thus asleep, it . . . lies in the supreme Self that is within the heart' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.1.17), and to the same effect is *Chāndogya*, VI.8.1: 'When a man is said to be sleeping, then, dear boy, he has become united with being.' Here the *jīva* must be different and separate from the Ātman, if in sleep it becomes united therewith. Indeed, in *Śvetāśvatara*, IV.10, we have the explicit statement that the *jīva* is a part of Brahman: 'The whole world is filled with beings who form His parts.'

4. *Jagat*

In *Kaṭha*, IV.10 quoted above, we saw a reference to Brahman as both here and there, i.e. as both in the subject and in the object, in the seer and in the seen. The same notion lies behind these famous lines from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, V.5.1: 'That Brahman is infinite, this universe too is infinite. The infinite universe emanates from the infinite Brahman. Assimilating the infinitude of the infinite universe, the infinite Brahman alone is left', which signifies that in meditation one should strive to realize the universe (*jagat*) as an embodiment of Brahman, as is stated in *Īśā*, I: 'Whatever there is changeful

in this ephemeral world, all that should be seen as pervaded by the Lord.' Hence, there is an external world, which is, in fact, Brahman, but to our senses it appears as manifold—it is but the appearance of Brahman. Or rather, it is one of several different appearances, as is enigmatically stated in *Kaṭha*, VI.5: 'Brahman is seen in the self as one sees oneself in the mirror; in the world of manes, as one perceives oneself in dream; in the world of *gandharvas*, as one's reflection is seen in the water; in the world of Brahmā, as light and shade.'

5. *Knowledge or samādhi*

In the last two quotations, it is implicit that, in the state of superconsciousness (*samādhi*), we realize the universe as Brahman; by the same token, in that state, we realize our true Self as Brahman. This is evidenced by many references, especially the following: 'The self-existent God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward. . . . Only perchance some wise man, desirous of immortality, turns his eyes in, and beholds the inner Ātman' (*Kaṭha*, IV.1), where the process of attaining *samādhi* is referred to. So also, 'Being covered by *māyā*, which is a mere sound, it does not through darkness know the *ākāśa* (i.e. Brahman). When ignorance is rent asunder, it being then itself only sees the unity' (*Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, 15). Here knowledge (rending ignorance asunder) is described as seeing through or transcending *māyā*. Next, we have *Śvetāśvatara* I.10: 'By meditating on Him, by uniting with Him, and by becoming one with Him, there is a cessation of all illusion (*māyā*) in the end.' Finally, *Kaṭha*, III.14 is worth quoting because of the famous metaphor therein mentioned: 'Arise, awake, O man! Realize that Ātman, having approached the excellent teachers. Like the sharp edge of a razor is that path, difficult to cross and hard to tread—so say the wise'; cf. *Muṇḍaka*, III.2.4. (Only very exceptional aspirants are able to attain the superconscious state by their own unaided efforts. A *guru* is needed.)

The philosophical basis of this state is the *turiya*, the superconsciousness that lies as the witness beyond the three states of waking, dreaming, and sleeping. The *locus classicus* for this is the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, but a shorter reference is the *Sarva Upaniṣad*, 2: 'When the essence of consciousness, which manifests itself as the three states, is a witness of the states, but is itself devoid of states, positive or negative, and remains in the state of non-separation and oneness, then it is spoken of as the *turiya* or the fourth.' That is, the Ātman, when it enjoys the states of waking, sleeping, and dreaming, is the *jīva*, but it is to be realized in its true nature by transcending these three states, by getting behind them, so to speak. Just as we waken from sleep, so we must awaken from the waking world, as it were, and enter into the world of Brahman.

6. *Tat-tvam-asi*

It is in this superconscious state that the *jīva* becomes identical with the Ātman, as in the *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, 8: 'Realizing "I am that Brahman", one becomes the immutable Brahman.' To the same effect is *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV.4.25: 'He who knows the Self as above indeed becomes the fearless Brahman'; also *Muṇḍaka*, III.2.9: 'Whoever knows the supreme Brahman becomes that very Brahman' where it is clear that the *jīva* is not Brahman in its normal (waking) condition, but only when it realizes Brahman, or attains the state of *samādhi*. It might be mentioned here that this identity is expounded by means of four aphorisms: (i) 'That thou art' (*Tat-tvam-asi*) (*Chāndogya*, VI.10.3); (ii) 'This Ātman is Brahman' (*Māṇḍūkya*, 2); (iii) 'Consciousness is Brahman' (*Aitareya*, V.3); and (iv) 'I am Brahman' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, I.4.20).

7. *The unreality of the external world*

In the state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, the distinction between the subject and the object vanishes; there is no longer any external world, no personal body even. So says *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV.5.15: 'For when there is duality, as it were, then one sees another. . . . But when all has

become the very Self of the knower of Brahman, then what should one see and through what?' This clearly describes the real nature of the universe; it is a mode of that Consciousness which is Brahman. In the state of waking, the external universe is there; in the state of *samādhi*, it vanishes. The fact that Brahman is actually Consciousness, pure Intelligence, is witnessed by *Aitareya*, III.1: 'The whole world is founded on Consciousness (*prajñā*), and therefore Consciousness (*prajñāna*) is Brahman.' Compare *Śvetāśvatara*, VI.2: 'Him who is the master of the *guṇas* and the maker of time, who is omniscient, who is pure Consciousness itself (*jñā*)'; also *Taittirīya*, II.1: 'Brahman is Existence, Intelligence (*jñāna*), Infinitude.' Also *Kaivalya*, 18 and 21: 'I, the Witness, the pure Consciousness (*cinmātra*), the eternal Good' and 'I am always the Intelligence (*cit*)'. Again, it is stated that the universe was created by this pure Intelligence by an act of 'thought', as in *Muṇḍaka*, I.1.8: 'From brooding thought (*tapasā*), Brahman swells with the joy of creation', and *Chāndogya*, VI.2.3: 'That Being willed (*aikṣata*), "May I become many, may I grow forth".' Similarly, there are numerous other passages where Brahman or the *turiya* is said to be the reality behind the states of sleep, dream, and waking, as in *Kaivalya*, 17: 'That which manifests the phenomena, such as the states of wakefulness, dream, and profound sleep, I am that Brahman.' And, again: 'The Puruṣa who remains awake shaping all sorts of objects of desires even while we sleep—verily that is the pure, the Brahman' (*Kaṭha*, V.8).

Hence the scriptures testify that Brahman is Consciousness, which has various states, in at least one of which (*avidyā*) there is a plurality of souls (*jīvas*) and a manifold world (*jagat*); and in another (*samādhi*), these vanish, and Brahman alone exists. Such is the conclusion of reason also, as will now be shown.

ADVAITA VEDĀNTA ACCORDING TO REASON

1. *Māyā*

The table which I see is oval, shining, and four-legged; the table which you see is round,

dull, and three-legged; the table which perhaps a third party sees has a flat top, and is two-legged. All this can be verified from experience. Thus we say that each person perceives a different world; that each person has his own private world. In philosophy, we term such a private world 'the object'. Now the basic fact about such private worlds is that they are primarily constituted by colours of various shapes, patterns, and sizes; and as it is difficult to conceive how any colour can exist *as that colour* apart from an eye and a brain, we say that the brain constructs these colours, and therefore constructs the object entirely. That part of the brain concerned with this construction is termed the sensorium (*manas*, in Sanskrit), so that the object, the world as revealed to the senses, has no existence apart from the sensorium.

One of the strongest arguments for this position is the nature of dreams and hallucinations. The essence of a dream or an hallucination is that the external object seems to be there, but there is no external stimulus. The stimulus, we say, comes from the sense-impressions buried in the *manas* itself. Now, if the external world appears as it does when the sensorium is stimulated from outside, and the dream or hallucination appears when it is stimulated from inside, it is surely obvious that the appearance is of the same nature in both the cases: it is the creation or construct of the sensorium. (We shall deal with the nature of the external stimulus below).

Or, take the case of the rising moon, especially the full moon. As it rises, the moon appears to be of a certain size; when it is up, it appears much smaller. But reason assures us that the size of the moon is constant. Thus, its differing size is evidence that the moon, as seen, is the construction of our minds.

If we saw objects directly, then when we look in a mirror at something behind us, we should see it behind us. But we see it in front of us, nay, as inside the mirror, but the mirror has no inside! That is where the sensorium constructs it, because it reacts in the same way irrespective of the provenance of the stimulus.

Finally, we know that when we see a rainbow, there is, in actual fact, nothing there of that kind at all, but only water vapour, with the sunlight playing on it. But we see a rainbow there. Such is the nature of the sensorium. It creates its own world of colour (and of sound, smell, taste, and feeling as well), and indeed perceives by reason of that very projection of the object. As reason must be based on perception, we are therefore imprisoned within our own minds: we can know nothing that is not the creation of our own minds. This is the doctrine of *māyā*: the world is my idea, and I can know only my own ideas. So thought Śaṅkara also: 'In dreams, when there is no actual contact with the external world, the mind (*manas*) alone creates the whole universe consisting of the experiencer etc. Similarly, in the waking state also; there is no difference. Therefore, all this phenomenal universe is the projection of the mind' (*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 170).

2. *Avidyā*

It is this projection of the world of appearance that is meant by ignorance: 'Hence, sages who have fathomed its secret have designated the mind as *avidyā* or ignorance, by which alone the universe is moved to and fro, like masses of clouds by the wind' (*ibid.*, 180). And, again, in *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 252: 'As the objects ... called up in dream are all unreal, so is also the world experienced here in the waking state, for it is all an effect of one's own ignorance.' Thus, by ignorance is meant that state of consciousness in which we are aware of the existence of the 'rainbow' world of colour etc., and this is normally the waking state. This world vanishes in the states of sleep and *samādhi*, which latter is termed knowledge (*jñāna*); and *only because it thus vanishes* is the world termed unreal: 'If the universe be true, let it then be perceived in the state of deep sleep also. As it is not at all perceived, it must be unreal and false, like dreams' (*ibid.*, 234).

3. *Jīva*

We have reached this point that the object

is a construct. Now 'object' entails a 'subject ; and the problem now is, who or what is the subject of which the object is a construct? The object is not *my* construct, for I cannot create the object by a mere act of will. Indeed, I cannot even will an hallucination to appear before me—otherwise, it would not be an hallucination at all! But such hallucinations can be made to appear in the state of hypnotic trance. And this is the key to the nature of the subject. For when we talk about 'I', we mean the self-conscious, thinking principle (*buddhi*), which is termed 'ego' in philosophy. The hypnotic trance depends essentially on just this fact, that the ego is suppressed. So it is not the ego, the 'I', that projects the object, that is responsible for hallucinations, that dreams, but it is that principle in man which is present both in the waking and in the dream or trance state. This persistent mind is termed 'transcendental Self', or simply, the Self, *Ātman*. Therefore, we conclude that dreams, hallucinations, and the object itself are the creations or constructs of the Self. They seem to be given to the ego independent of its own activity, and hence they are termed real—real, at least, as long as they last. In a word, in the dream state, we are living in one world; in the waking state, we are living in a different world; indeed, in each case, it is a different 'we'. This 'I' or ego is, in Sanskrit, the *jīva*, and as we refer to it as 'I', we can state that, just as the object is the creation of the Self, so the ego, too, is the creation of that Self; and 'I-making', in Sanskrit, is *ahaṅkāra*.

4. The external world

Now, we said that what distinguishes the object from the dream or hallucination is that, in the former case, the sensorium projects the object in response to an external stimulus. But we can never directly know this external thing, for our idea, the object, always comes in between. We can know it indirectly by means of reason. Clothes hung near the sea-shore grow moist; hung in the sun, they become dry. A ring on the finger is worn thin; a plough-

share cutting through the soil wears away; dripping water hollows out a stone; wheels wear grooves through the cobble-stones of a street; and the hands of bronze statues are worn away by the kisses of devotees. Such are the arguments that led the ancients to the conclusion that the unknown and unknowable thing of the external world is made up of atoms.

We cannot suppose that the object is some sort of illusion, like the snake which may be seen when we are really looking at a rope, because we cannot then explain why we always see two eyes above a mouth, and not, say, three eyes, or two eyes below a mouth, or no eyes at all. Or, to keep to the Vedāntist example, why we do not see sometimes a worm, sometimes a dragon, or even a stick. The answer to the former set of questions must surely be that we see two eyes above a mouth, because there are analogues of two eyes and a mouth in the thing-in-itself. The object parallels the thing; that is, the laws of thought (which determine the object) parallel the laws of nature (which determine the thing). For this to be the case, there must be a pre-established harmony between the ideal world and the real or physical world. That is, the same activity, which is productive *with* consciousness in perception, is productive *without* consciousness in the formation of the world. In other words, we have the following choice (reason can go no further than this): either we must accept, as did the atomists, an ultimate pluralism of an infinite number of basic corpuscles and explain, as best we can, how mind can emerge from inanimate matter; or we must follow Plato: 'Can we be persuaded that the Completely Real does not share in motion and life and soul and thought, neither lives nor thinks, but remains motionless and without mind, solemn and holy?' Let us then seek for this Mind, the workings of whose laws run parallel to the workings of our own minds.

5. *Ātman*

First, let us digress a moment. The simplest forms of life (germ-cells and amoebae) repro-

duce by total division. At one moment, there is one such cell; at the next moment, there are two; then four; and so on. Since consciousness is not a 'thing' that can be cut with a knife, we may say that, at the germ-cell level, there is continuity of consciousness. Now, biology teaches us that any particular human being arises in the first place from a germ-cell. There is a continuity of consciousness from Adam to myself—but only at the germ-cell level! Before 'I' attain to individuality, that germ-cell must divide and subdivide; and while there is one consciousness embracing the millions of cells that constitute 'me', this consciousness has become different from the consciousness that constitutes 'you'. We can see this individual consciousness at work in the lower forms of life. Pull off a crab's leg, and he grows another. Cut a worm in half; the one half will grow a head, and the other half will grow a tail. Is it any marvel, then, that, in the Ratieb, the subject can plunge a sword into his abdomen, or a skewer into his chest, and suffer no harm? This is because, at that level of consciousness, the body ceases to be real in the same way that it is real in the waking state; and this is the level of the Ātman. But if one goes beyond this level, death ensues, because the Ātman has returned to its source, or has betaken itself to heaven or some other place—it makes no difference.

6. Brahman

Let us, in conclusion, return to that Mind which works along the same lines as ours, but with infinitely greater power. A simple idea exists ideally in my mind, but it exists factually in the infinite Mind. A feeling in my mind is just a feeling, but a feeling in the infinite Mind is a living soul.

Now, if I visualize such an infinite Mind existing by itself alone, with no mental content at all, I could say that, at such a point of 'time', the infinite Mind exists, and there is no second thing. This is Nirguṇa Brahman. This is the first level of consciousness. But a mind must 'think', and when this Brahman has simple

thoughts, we have a mind with a mental content, which can be figured as Brahman with a subtle body—Saguna Brahman. Modern science believes that this state, this second level, is symbolized as the state of the universe before creation (in *pralaya*?), when existence was confined to a whirling mass of protons, electrons, etc., prior to the formation of any molecules. The nearest approach to such a state might be visualized as the sun, our sole source of energy. An electron is the embodiment of a law of repulsion, and a proton is the embodiment of a law of attraction. Hence, science could, were it so inclined, regard this state of affairs as centres of energy existing as 'ideas' in an infinite Mind.

The third level is when these ultimate particles are combined by the infinite Mind into molecules, as complex ideas. (The ancients misconceived these as indivisible atoms.) This is the gross body of Brahman, the world as it must have existed before there was any life on it, or as conditions are on the moon. But into certain aggregations of molecules, termed cells, the infinite Mind infuses a 'feeling', and these cells normally develop into individual organisms, such that each is a 'finite mind'. This 'finite mind' corresponds roughly to the Puruṣa of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system and to the Ātman of Vedānta. At the lowest level (plant life), these 'finite minds' are chiefly concerned with bodily organization and the so-called vegetative functions in men and animals. At this level (the fourth), one enjoys deep sleep, or perhaps, we should say, the trance level of lethargy or suspended animation. However that may be, this 'finite mind' may develop, so that it can project the object (level five). This is the level of the animal part of our nature, and it characterizes the dream state, or, we should rather say, the state of medium hypnotic trance. It is due to the presence of this level of consciousness in us that we are bound by *māyā*, which is normally beyond our control, at any rate of our direct control, because the 'I' is at a still higher level of consciousness (the sixth). For the 'finite mind' may eject a feel-

ing of personality, and this is the ego, the *jīva*. At this level, we enjoy self-consciousness and reason; this is the waking state, the state of 'I-ness' or *ahankāra*.

At the levels of Saguna and Nirguna Brahman, there is an identity of subject and object, but subject and object separate out, the one from the other, in the state of so-called deep sleep (the unconscious) in the vegetable state of life and in inanimate matter respectively. This distinction between subject and object is maintained at the next higher level, where the sensorium acts as subject with the 'rainbow' world as object, characteristic of the subconscious. And, again, at the level of self-conscious thought or waking state, the ego is the subject, which contemplates percepts and concepts as its object. But there is a higher (seventh) level, at which subject and object again unite; this is the superconscious ex-

perience of *samādhi*, when the *jīva* becomes united with the Ātman. Now observe, at the level of the continuity of consciousness in the germ-cell, the individual is a *part* of Brahman; it is only at the other end of the scale, in *samādhi*, that the individual becomes *identical* with Brahman. So, 'It is the identity of the implied, not literal, meaning which is sought to be inculcated. . . . The wise man must give up the contradictory elements on both sides' (*Vivekacūdāmaṇi*, 242, 248-49).

Thus the whole universe and all its contents are but 'thoughts' and 'feelings', as it were, of the infinite Mind or Brahman. But owing to the separation of subject from object, the 'finite minds' have an individuality of their own, which is ignorance. The aim of life, as conceived by *yoga*, is to reunite subject and object in mystical communion with God.

GURU GOVIND SINGH

BY SRI M. V. BHIDE

I

Guru Govind Singh, the tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs, who succeeded Guru Tegh Bahādur, was only ten years of age at the time of his father's death. He had been brought up with great care under the supervision of his father, and was given good religious as well as secular education. In addition, he had been given training in horsemanship and archery.

Govind Singh became the Guru of the Sikhs at a very critical period in their history. Emperor Aurangzeb was a sworn enemy of all non-Islamic creeds, and was vigorously pursuing his policy of persecution against them. For some years, however, Govind Singh was too young to take action, and had to continue his studies and lead a quiet, but watchful life. He soon realized clearly the tremendous work of social reconstruction which was necessary, before any

reasonable hope of a successful combat against the government of the day could be entertained.

It was with this object that Govind Singh started the Khālsā Panth or 'the Pure Creed'. The inauguration of the new faith was made under dramatic circumstances. The Guru, in an open *darbār*, asked his disciples if any one of them was ready to lay down his life at once, as a human sacrifice was needed for a sacred cause. Silence reigned for a time. The Guru repeated his demand three times, and one of the disciples named Dayā Rām came forward. The Guru took him inside an enclosure. There was a thud, and the Guru, coming out with a blood-smeared sword, asked if there was a second disciple ready to follow the example of Dayā Rām. This time the audience remained silent longer, but ultimately one Dharma came

forward. The Guru took him also behind the enclosure. Again, there was a thud, and blood flowed out from the enclosure. Once more, the Guru came out and repeated his demand. Some among the audience began to think that the Guru had lost his reason. But such was the confidence he generally inspired that a third 'Sikh' (disciple) came forward to lay down his life. The Guru repeated his demand five times, and five of his disciples were thus taken behind the enclosure and sacrificed—to all outward appearance. As a matter of fact, the five disciples were standing unharmed behind the enclosure, and only five goats had been sacrificed instead! The Guru came out triumphantly with the five brave disciples and explained to his followers that he had only tested the courage and devotion of his followers, and was convinced that a body of disciples that included such brave hearts was bound to have a glorious future before it. 'These disciples', said the Guru, 'shall lay anew the foundation of Sikhism, and the true religion shall become current and famous throughout the world.'

The Guru then proceeded to initiate the five disciples—who were thenceforward called '*pañc pyāre*' (five favourites)—into the Khālsā Panth (as the reformed Sikhism was called) by the ceremony of *pahul*. The disciples were asked to repeat '*Weh-i-Guru*' (hail to Guru) and meditate on God. *Amṛt* was then administered to them. Till then, it was the custom to administer the water in which the Gurus had washed their feet. But Guru Govind Singh used water mixed with sugar and stirred with a two-edged scimitar, to symbolize the martial character of the new faith. The disciples were required to share *karā prasād* (sacred food, cooked with equal quantity of flour, ghee, and sugar) from the same vessel, to impress upon them the obliteration of all caste distinctions. They were asked to add the distinctive suffix 'Singh' (lion) to their names and to wear the five 'K's, viz. *keśa* (uncut hair), *kaṅgi* (comb), *kada* (iron bracelet), *kach* (short drawers), and *kirpāṅ* (dagger), and to practise arms. They were also asked to lead a simple and abstemious life, ab-

staining from drink, tobacco, etc., to regard themselves as members of one church and one brotherhood, and to stand by each other at all times. The Guru himself went through the initiation ceremony and assumed the name 'Govind Singh'. 'Henceforward', said the Guru, 'the Khālsā is the Guru, and the Guru is the Khālsā. There is no difference between you and me.' The initiation of the Guru and the five disciples was immediately followed by that of a large number of the Guru's followers into the new faith in a similar manner.

The new church answered well the purpose for which it was started. The disciples were bound not only by common articles of faith, but were also united by common bonds of association and fellowship in a tangible and practical manner. The lowest castes found themselves on the same level as the highest by embracing the new faith, and the social elevation brought in its train a feeling of self-respect and a spirit of self-reliance. Numerous persons of the Jat peasantry of the central and the southern Punjab readily became converts, and the number of the Guru's followers continued to increase daily. The members of the new church learned to recognize each other as brothers. Common aims and aspirations engendered a feeling of nationality, and the pure and active life enjoined by the Guru made them fit for the vocation of soldiers.

The success of the Khālsā, however, was not pleasing to the high caste Hindus. The Rājput princes apprehended danger to themselves, owing to the militant character of the Khālsā, and complained to the Muslim rulers about its military preparations and the fortifications erected by Govind Singh for self-defence. As a result, the Guru was brought into a conflict with the Muslim rulers, which lasted throughout the rest of his life. The events of this conflict are well known to history, and it will suffice to refer to them here only very briefly. The Guru was besieged in his fort at Anandpur by a large Muslim force. With his valiant followers, he held out for a long time; but ultimately starvation faced them, and the Guru had to es-

cape with his family. He was, however, hotly pursued. During the battles which followed, two of his sons were killed, and the remaining two, who fell into the hands of the Muslim Governor of Sirhind, were cruelly put to death by him on their refusal to be converted to Islam. The Guru had to take shelter thereafter in different places and try to collect his followers. So great was the respect in which the Guru was held by his disciples, and so was the confidence inspired by him, that, even in those difficult times, he was helped by a large number of his followers who were ready to sacrifice their lives for him, and he was able to continue his fight, against great odds, till the death of Aurangzeb.

Thereafter, Govind Singh started on a journey to South India. It is not known whether this journey was undertaken with the object of propagating his faith, or with the political object of an alliance with the rising Maratha power, as surmised by some historians. As it happened, however, his career was cut short abruptly, as he was stabbed to death by a Pathan near Nanded, in the present Andhra Pradesh. Guru Govind Singh had realized the danger the community might face from the disputes about succession, which had arisen earlier on the death of some of the preceding Gurus. He had therefore told his disciples that no one was to be appointed as a Guru to succeed him, and that the *Ādi Granth*—which embodied the teachings of the Gurus—should be treated as the Guru after his death. So, with the death of Guru Govind Singh, the line of the Sikh Gurus came to an end.

At Nanded, where the Guru breathed his last, an imposing *gurudvāra* was built in commemoration by Rañjit Singh, himself a brilliant product of the Khālsā, of which the Guru was the father. The place is fittingly called '*avical-nagar*', immortal city, by the Sikhs, on account of the immortal fame earned by their Guru. The priests of the *gurudvāra* hold a seal of Guru Govind Singh in their keeping and still issue *hukamnāmās* under it, in obedience to

which contributions are made by devout Sikhs for the maintenance of the institution.

II

In the annals of India, the personality of Guru Govind Singh is truly unique. In him were combined the qualities of a warrior and a statesman, a prophet and a lawgiver, a poet and a philosopher. While the previous Gurus had made the propagation of the faith their chief concern, Govind Singh was forced by circumstances to give a warlike character to his followers, in order to defend the Sikh religion. Aurangzeb, in his dream of converting the whole country to Islam, was bent on propagating that creed by the sword. If the young faith of Guru Nānak was to survive, it could only do so by fighting for its existence. Realizing therefore the necessity of a struggle for existence, Govind Singh conceived the idea of reorganizing his followers into a martial community. In his position as the spiritual head of the Sikh fraternity, he found a vantage-ground of supreme utility for the purpose. He therefore inaugurated the Khālsā Panth, and made the practice and profession of arms a part and parcel of the creed.

Guru Govind Singh loved the Khālsā with parental affection. Even a Rangreta (a man of the lowest caste converted to Sikhism), he said, was to him like his own son. When four of his sons met death at the hands of his enemies, he consoled his wife in the presence of his disciples thus:

For the sake of these my sons (disciples)

I sacrificed four.

What if four are gone,

When so many thousands live!

The Khālsā fully returned the Guru's affection, and its members were always ready to sacrifice their lives for his sake. Even at the lowest ebb of his fortunes, after the defeat at Chamkaur, the Guru was able to secure a good following and retrieve his position; and within a few years, he was strong enough to help Prince Muazzim to obtain the throne after the death of his father Aurangzeb.

As a religious teacher, Guru Govind Singh preached the same gospel of love of God and love of man that Guru Nānak d'd. In the *Vicitra Nāṭak*, Guru Nānak is described as the true prophet of the *kali-yuga*, and Govind Singh claims to be the chosen servant of God for the propagation of his teachings. Govind Singh's religious poems are mostly an amplification of Nānak's doctrines. He emphasizes therein the foremost doctrine of the unity of God, and warns his disciples against mistaking prophets, *avatāras*, or *gurus* for the Almighty. 'All who call me as the supreme Being', says he, 'shall fall into the pit of hell. Recognize me as God's servant only.' Like Nānak, he condemns in strongest terms caste distinction, idolatry, and priestcraft. Like him, he points out the futility of asceticism, pilgrimages, and external forms, and lays stress on inner purity and devotion to God as the true means of salvation. But if Govind Singh introduced no new theological doctrines, he invested Nānak's faith with a distinctive character. Till then, that faith had been more or less of a theological creed. Govind Singh turned it into a 'discipline, a law, an indissoluble engagement'.

He recognized the value of clearly defined rules, as against abstract theories, for the edification of the masses, and proceeded to lay down, in the spirit of the Hellenic lawgivers, positive laws for the guidance of his followers. The *Rahatnāmā* (rules of conduct), for instance, contains categorical commandments, such as 'Put not thy faith in the Koran or the Purāṇas'; 'Worship not images or graves'; and so forth. The *Tuṅkhanāmā* is a code of penalties, and prescribes punishments for the infringement of rules. By these means, the Guru gave a distinctive social character to his disciples. Most of the prominent features which mark out a modern Sikh in his outward appearance and conduct, such as the wearing of the five 'K's, objection to eating *jhatka* meat, and so forth, date from the time of Govind Singh.

In matters of ecclesiastical government also, the Guru introduced wholesome reforms. The *masands*, who were originally agents employed

by the Gurus for collecting voluntary offerings of their followers, had degenerated into a selfish and rapacious set, and had been oppressing the Guru's disciples. The Guru did away with this body altogether, when this scandalous conduct came to his notice. He gave up the rather princely style of living, to which he was accustomed in his earlier days, and instead adopted a thoroughly simple and abstemious style of living. He looked upon wealth with contempt and discouraged costly offerings from disciples.

Guru Govind Singh was also gifted with poetic imagination and literary skill of no mean order. Since the death of Guru Arjan, no addition had been made to the Sikh scripture, i.e. the *Granth*, except some devotional hymns composed by Guru Tegh Bahādur. The original copy of the *Granth* was with Bābā Dhīrmal, uncle of Guru Har Kiṣan. When Govind Singh requested him for the copy, he received the taunting reply that, if he was a true Guru, he ought to be able to compose a *Granth* of his own. This is said to have stimulated the Guru to write what is now known as *Daśam Granth* or *Daśvin Pādshāhī Kā Granth*. This work, as it stands now, is not wholly a production of Guru Govind Singh, but certain portions of it, such as the *Vicitra Nāṭak* etc., were doubtless written by him, and bear testimony to his poetic and literary attainments. In the *Vicitra Nāṭak*, the Guru gives an account of his family and his mission, as well as a stirring description of his military adventures. The *Sawayās* (stanzas in a certain metre), *Akāl Ustat*, *Gyān Prabodh*, *Śāstra-nāmamālā*, etc. are also amongst the well-known compositions of the Guru to be found in the *Granth*. It is customary to repeat the Guru's *Sawayās* at the time of administering *amṛt* during the Sikh baptismal or initiation ceremony. The writings of the Guru are full of fire and force.

With Govind Singh, the line of the Sikh Gurus came to an end. Govind Singh had preached in his lifetime that the Guru and the Khālsā were identical, that the Guru was present spiritually wherever five true Sikhs assembled, and that the *Granth* alone was to be

looked up to for spiritual inspiration. The abolition of the apostleship was in conformity with the doctrine. Although he left the Khālsā without a Guru, he had bestowed upon it an individualistic existence, which saved it from dying out as an insignificant sect of dissenters. He had sown in its midst the seeds of a democratic organization, which brought it a glorious future. He taught the Khālsā a new religious faith which combats and prays, which bids men advance on the ways of God and humanity, 'with the sword of the people in hand, the religion of the people in heart, and the future of the people in their soul'.

III

In concluding this article, we may briefly refer to the main teachings of the Sikh Gurus, which have given the Sikh religion its distinctive character. Guru Nānak began his teaching with a view to bringing about religious reform, but eventually the movement developed into a separate and militant creed.

The *Ādi Granth* embodies the teachings of the Gurus. It consists of hymns—chiefly devotional in character—by the different Gurus. The foundation was supplied by Guru Nānak, and additions were made by the other Gurus from time to time. These compositions are set in different *rāgas*, musical patterns, and are arranged according to them. The *Ādi Granth* also includes some devotional compositions of other saints, like Nāmadeva, Kabīrdās, and others.

The tenets of the Sikh religion are to be found in the *Ādi Granth*, and the quotations given below are from that holy book.

Sikhism is a pure form of monotheism. *Japji*, the great Sikh morning prayer, which every orthodox Sikh is expected to know by heart, begins as follows:

'There is but one God, whose name is true, the creator, the powerful, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, and self-existent.'

God is the creator of the world, but He Himself is self-existent. 'He is not established', says

Guru Nānak, 'nor is He created; the pure One exists by Himself.' 'God pervades the whole universe.' 'He who sees himself in all living things finds greatness. In each and every body, there is eternal light; know this, the essence of the Guru's teachings.'

From the above follows the principle of the brotherhood of man, the second great principle of Sikhism. Like Islam, Sikhism recognizes no castes, priestly or otherwise. All men are equal. 'Let no one be proud of his caste. . . . Recognize divine light in every one. Do not inquire about caste.'

According to Sikhism, devotion to God and remembrance of His name constitute the path to salvation. 'Devotion to God's name is the door to emancipation; devotion to God's name is the means of knowledge of the three worlds. Says Guru Nānak: Devotion to God's name gives eternal Bliss.'

Sikhism does not believe in rites or ceremonies, pilgrimages to holy places, etc., but insists on inner purity.

'Performance of ceremonies is of no use', says Guru Arjan in the *Sukhmanī*. 'Only the name of God does unite the mind with God. Pure and spotless is he who recites God's name with love in his heart. Visiting holy places, fasting, etc., without devotion to God, bear no fruit.'

Says Guru Nānak: 'Make the mind the farmer, this body the earth, good deeds the seed, and irrigate it with the rain of devotion. Let God be in your heart, and (you) gain imperishable merit.'

What is needed is restraint of desire and passion. 'When desire dies in the heart, man finds God in its secret places.'

Guru Govind Singh commanded the Sikhs to look upon the *Ādi Granth* as their only Guru and object of worship, as already stated above. Accordingly, the holy *Granth* is placed in the *gurudvāras* (Sikh temples) as the only object of worship.

Subtle philosophy was foreign to the purpose of the Sikh Gurus. But some of the principles of Hinduism, like *māyā*, *karma*, and *mokṣa*, were accepted in the teachings of the Gurus.

'By *māyā*', says Guru Nānak in the *Japji*, 'God did bring to birth Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. He, by His orders, directs them according to His will.' In another part of the same prayer, he says: 'Of that, which man has sown

in this life, the fruit he will eat. By His orders, men go on from birth to birth.' Salvation, according to the Gurus, consists in the merger of the self in the supreme Being, and this can be attained by following the Guru's teachings.

SECONDARY EDUCATION AND ITS REORGANIZATION

BY SRI KAILAS CHANDRA KAR

Education is no longer synonymous with imparting a course of instruction—a hammering into the child's tender brain a mass of information to run riot there. It has come to mean a harmonious development or rearing up of the faculties that lie dormant in the child. Swami Vivekananda gave a fillip to this conception of education when, in vital rapport with Indian philosophic thought, he defined education as 'the manifestation of the perfection already in man'.

The fulfilment of this aim of education depends on judicious planning of its contents and provision of proper environmental conditions. If we stretch our imagination back into remote past, we find that the experiment has been tried here in this country with great success. We visualize the old *gurukula* system of education, under which batches of scholars sat at the feet of their preceptors, who designed courses and devised projects for the training of their pupils under natural, familiar, and, therefore, congenial environmental conditions.

When we analyse this system, two things stand out as significant. The first is preparation for life—man-making education as it is called—through carefully devised projects and vocational training. The second is the residential nature of the institutions, which protected the students from being distracted by the dissipating influences from outside and facilitated their training for character by constant touch with teachers and by a rigorous course of discipline.

In the changed social order of the present

time, we cannot, with profit, fall back upon this old and obsolete system *in toto*; but we can certainly incorporate its special features in modified forms into our present system of education.

The most vulnerable point in the prevailing system of education is that it is predominantly academic in nature and not related to life. With its stress on bookish learning, if it trains up the student for anything, it is only for desk work and not for the practical world, where he finds himself an utter misfit. Consequently, there has been a cry for man-making education, that is, an education which will prepare the student for the battle of life.

Fortunately, with the reorientation of educational thoughts, a move in that direction is well in advance. The Mudaliar Commission, set up by the Government of India, carefully examined the standard of secondary education in the country, went deep into all facts and factors, and made recommendations bearing on all its aspects, particularly its organizational pattern and the curriculums to be followed in its two suggested stages, viz. the middle, junior secondary, or senior basic stage and the higher secondary stage. The recommendations of the Commission are being followed up, *mutatis mutandis*, by the State Governments by a thorough reorganization of the whole system of education, and we are soon going to have a new organizational pattern of secondary education, which marks the end of the student career of the majority of our student population.

The curriculums constructed on the lines laid down by the Commission will, in the words of the Commission itself, not only help in the evolution of a balanced personality by touching the life of the student at all points and allowing for individual differences and adaptation to individual needs by providing for enough of variety and elasticity, but also bring him in vital relation with community life, as under the *gurukula* system, by giving an important place to productive work, which is the backbone of organized human life, and which, when intelligently organized, can unlock his latent energies much more successfully than the traditional subjects which address themselves only to the mind, or worse still, to the memory.

The Commission has, however, suggested only the broad outlines; the details have been or are being worked out in each State by its respective Department of Education. In order that the curriculum in each subject may be thorough and not sketchy, and, at the same time, suitable to the particular age-group for which it is meant, it is desirable that it should be worked out or at least reviewed by a committee of experts in the subject—experts not only in the sense of academic qualification, but also in respect of practical experience in actual class teaching.

Here, I would like to make mention of two things—one relating to the place of religious instruction in schools and the other about the position of our educational institutions with respect to the physical education of their students. Generally speaking, there is no provision for religious instruction in our schools, and most of them are also not in a position to provide for the regular physical training of their pupils. Our pretension is that we are going to have a man-making education. But man is constituted not only of the mind, but also of the spirit, and the physique along with it. By feeding fat the mind alone and starving the other two constituents, we cannot expect to get the balanced personality or man of our desire.

Every nation has its own peculiar ideal, and it becomes great by a devout and determined

pursuit of that ideal, which provides the motive force for progress. The stability of a nation depends on the standard of its ideal, on how far the ideal conforms to the supreme Reality. History shows how nations with purely materialistic outlook had to disappear, in spite of having reached lofty heights in the scale of material civilization.

The ideal of India has always been religion. It constitutes the life-blood of the nation, and whether we now like it or not, it is a fact that cannot be denied. By the term 'religion', however, I do not mean a bundle of forms and formulas, or dogmatic religion as we call it, but rational religion based on a non-parochial system of philosophy, which embodies the highest immutable truth and develops liberal and loving attitudes in the hearts of its followers. It is this religion that has sustained and upheld the Indian nation through many a vicissitude, extending over thousands of years. We must therefore be respectful towards this noble heritage of ours.

We want unity, we desire peace; but these cannot be attained without a feeling of love and sympathy which, in its turn, can be stirred up in human heart only by the divinization of education, providing for a proper exposition of the relation between man and man in a truly philosophic light and not by didactic maxims which are mere counsels of perfection. So, if it is desired that our students, our future citizens, should develop a liberal and loving attitude towards their fellow-men and not be 'concentrated all in self', as is very often the case at present, there should be provision, in our schools, for well-coded religio-philosophic instruction at least on a voluntary basis. This will not clash with the provision of the Constitution of the secular state.

As regards the value and importance of the physical education of students, it is to be said that they have come to be recognized and appreciated, and increasing stress is now being laid on this aspect of education. But, unfortunately, a large number of our schools have no playground to carry on games and sports

and other extra-curricular activities. Like productive work that is going to be included in the curriculum in the new set-up, these activities, too, serve to relate education to life by providing scope for physical culture and training in disciplined citizenship, as well as for the development of the *esprit de corps* and the master sentiment of self-regard that lays the foundation for character. They also offer the students opportunities for the sublimation of the predominant instincts with which they are born, and which, if repressed, lead to serious consequences.

If education means an all-round development of the students, this need of our educational institutions cannot long be ignored with impunity. This will, as it has already been doing, lead to the gradual deterioration of the health of our student population. To my mind, next to unfavourable home conditions, physical weakness, coupled with want of opportunity for healthy and joyous activities, is responsible for juvenile delinquency among our students. Swami Vivekananda, whom I regard as the central figure in Indian renaissance, regarded weakness as a sin.

Again, living as we do in a scientific age, the blessings of science should be availed of in the domain of education, and modern scientific aids to education should be made available to our educational institutions, as is done in all the progressive countries. Considerable headway may be made in this regard if the affluent public interest themselves in the matter, and the rest may be done by the governments concerned. For example, the radio and the gramophone may be profusely utilized to do away with the elements of time and space from the field of education by reaching the lone voice of a single teacher, either living or dead, to the doors of the student in the remotest corner of the country. Similarly, the movies may serve to impress the minds of the pupils with educative materials much more effectively than many a class lesson. Of course, it is too much for us to hope for this audio-visual aid in individual schools with immediate effect; but so far as

town schools are concerned, the benefit may be made available to the alumni of these schools without delay. If the government arranges for the installation of a projector in a public hall and places it in charge of a science teacher trained for the purpose, it may be utilized by a group of schools according to a set programme. Or, the government may issue a directive to the owners of cinema houses that each of them must demonstrate at least one educational film every month to a group of schools, irrespective of loss or gain. This involves no financial implication either on the part of the government or on that of the schools; neither can it be grudged by the owners of the cinema houses themselves, for they have a duty towards the children of the public, on whose munificence they thrive.

Now, coming to the point of efficiency in teaching, I should like to stress upon the necessity of training teachers of all grades and not only the graduates. In order that teachers of all categories may have the opportunity of getting themselves trained in large numbers, existing arrangements for the training of teachers should be considerably extended, at least for some years to come.

Again, just as there is provision for the special training of science, geography, and English teachers, so there should also be provision for the special training of teachers of mathematics, which is rapidly growing in importance, and which may be called the subject of the day, for the progress of the nation in scientific and technical fields depends on proficiency in this subject. Of course, there are teachers who are naturally gifted, and can teach the subject very well even without training; but it has to be admitted that, more often than not, we lack in the capacity of presenting the different concepts in an interesting and methodical way. To cite a concrete example, I may say that the majority of our students, even of the top classes, do not come to have a clear conception of G.C.M. and L.C.M., and try mechanically to work out problems relating to them. This lack of scientific

approach is what engenders in the bulk of the students a dread and a dislike for mathematics.

Let us now come to the organizational side of secondary education. The new organizational pattern aims at doing away with the existing high schools, developing them into higher secondary ones. Though it will not be possible to convert all of them into higher secondary schools immediately, considerable improvements will have to be effected in them, in order to make them more efficient and to enable them to be converted ultimately into higher secondary schools. The Mudaliar Commission recommends that these improvements should include better equipment, better laboratory and library facilities, and better organization of co-curricular activities. But this aspect of the scheme does not seem to have received the attention it deserves. In order that the difficult transitional period, with its parallel systems of education and examination, may be as short as possible, it is incumbent on the government to hold an extensive survey in this regard without loss of time and to tend all the deserving high schools towards their ultimate goal in the light of that survey.

The major difficulty with respect to a large, if not the greater, number of high schools is that of insufficient space. This is due to paucity of funds in certain cases, to public indifference in some, and to both in others. Whatever may be the cause, it is up to the government to come forward for its removal by providing funds where necessary, as well as by adopting such measures as are calculated to awaken the local public to their own share of responsibility in this regard.

A mere change in the organizational pattern and curriculums of secondary schools will not lead either to the removal of the enormous wastage that the country is sustaining due to an alarming number of failures every year in the school final and matriculation examinations, or to the production of disciplined citizens of ideal character. The attainment of these objectives depends mainly on the teacher factor.

What is the state of this important factor of

education in the secondary stage? It is anything but satisfactory. A Cinderella of both public and governmental neglect, the poor teacher has to dissipate his energy outside the school, in eking out his pittance with odd jobs, in a desperate attempt to conform to the social standards and keep up appearances as his position demands. This being his fate, he cannot normally be expected to do full justice to his job at the school. There are exceptions, no doubt, but this is the general picture. A situation like this is quite untenable, and cannot be allowed to continue without disastrous consequences.

The service conditions of the teacher must therefore be substantially improved to relieve him of all pre-occupations. When that is done, he may quite reasonably be held responsible for the progress of the pupils under his charge; and as a result, there will be almost an automatic change for the better. This will also have the effect of attracting the best stuff available for public service to the teacher's job, thus leading to a general improvement of the teaching profession and the fulfilment of the objectives in view.

Again, as a result of the impact of various forces, our social structure has undergone a thorough transformation, and home conditions have generally grown uncongenial for the development of healthy spirits. For want of proper vigilance on the part of over-busy or indifferent parents and guardians, the children get the opportunity of chumming with undesirables and contracting anti-social vices to the utter neglect of their academic interest. There is also the chance of their falling easy victims to every random gust and of being used like tools by interested parties in the achievement of their designs. To counteract these tendencies, it is necessary to establish residential schools for the children of those who can afford the expenditure. This will not only offer the student better facilities for study, but also insure the building of his character, as under the *gurukula* system of yore, by providing constant teacher-pupil

contact, systematic courses of discipline, and immunity from evil influences from outside.

Residential schools are bound to be limited in number and located only at suitable places. The majority of the schools will naturally be day schools. For the attainment of the end in view, there should be, as far as possible, hostels attached to those schools; or there should be students' homes, where students of different schools will reside under proper supervision and guidance. The students residing in such school hostels and students' homes will serve as patterns to the other students of their schools, and thus the purpose will be realized at least partially.

If India is keenly in need of anything at the present moment, it is citizens of good character to man her public services. It is a fact admitted on all hands, but it is a pity that sufficient

stress is not laid on this character-building aspect of education.

Lastly, a few words must be said with regard to the co-operative nature of education. For the success of an educational institution, there should be a cordiality of feeling and consequent co-operation not only between the teacher and the taught, but also between the school and the community outside—mainly the guardians. In the case of day schools, the home of the pupil should be regarded as an extension of the school, and both should function in a co-operative, and not critical, spirit for the achievement of the common objective—the well-being of the child. Otherwise, the five hours' work done by the pupil at school is utterly nullified during his nineteen hours' stay at home. This spirit of co-operation on the part of the guardians is a necessary precondition to the success of an educational institution.

ŚRĪ-BHĀṢYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

TOPIC 7

BRAHMAN IS THE HIGHEST REALITY : THERE IS NOTHING BEYOND OR SUPERIOR TO IT; AND EXPRESSIONS WHICH APPARENTLY IMPLY SOMETHING ELSE AS EXISTING ARE ONLY METAPHORICAL

परमतस्तेतूमानसम्बन्धमेद्वयपदेशेभ्यः ॥३॥३॥०॥

30. (There is something) superior to this (Brahman), on account of terms denoting a bridge, measure, connection, and difference (used with respect to It).

From *sūtras* I.1.2 to III.2.29, Brahman, the first cause, has been established. Now an objection is raised, based on fallacious reasoning, that there is something beyond this Brahman too, on account of Its being designated as a

bridge, thereby hinting that it leads to something beyond, even as a bridge leads to the other bank. This shows that there is something superior to be attained through It. For the texts say: 'Now, that Self is a bridge' etc. (*Chā.U.*, VIII.4.1); that Brahman is crossed over 'Having crossed this bridge' (*Chā.U.*, VIII.4.2). That Brahman is limited, and as such there is something else that limits It: 'That Brahman has four feet' (*Chā.U.*, III.18.2). That Brahman leads to immortality shows that there is something beyond Brahman, the way to which is through Brahman: 'Which constitutes the supreme bridge to immortality' (*Śve.U.*, VI.19). Lastly, the following texts clearly show that there is something different from Brahman and beyond It: 'By that Being the whole universe is filled' (*Śve.U.*, III.9);

having said thus, the Śruti tells in the next verse, 'What is beyond It is formless, sinless' etc. (*Śve.U.*, III.10). *Vide Mu.U.*, III.2.8 also.

सामान्यात् ॥३१२१३१॥

31. But (Brahman is called a bridge) on account of similarity.

The word 'but' refutes the position taken in the previous *sūtra*. There can exist nothing different from Brahman. It is called a bridge, not because there exists something beyond It to be reached, but because It binds the sentient and insentient worlds to Itself avoiding confusion, even as a bridge keeps things separate. 'Having crossed this bridge' (*Chā.U.*, VIII.4.2) means having attained Brahman fully, even as we say he passes Vedānta, meaning thereby that he has mastered Vedānta.

बुद्धयर्थः पादवत् ॥३१२१३२॥

32. (Brahman is depicted as having size) for the sake of easy comprehension (i.e. *upāsanā*); just like (four) feet.

The statements describing Brahman as having four feet or sixteen digits are meant for the sake of *upāsanā* or meditation. Brahman, which is infinite, as declared by texts like 'Truth, knowledge, infinite is Brahman', cannot be limited. The texts which declare such limitation are meant only for meditation, even as Brahman is imagined to have the organ of speech, nose, eyes, and ears as Its four feet (*vide Chā.U.*, III.18.2) for the sake of *upāsanā*.

स्थानविशेषात्प्रकाशादिवत् ॥३१२१३३॥

33. (The statements about limitations with respect to Brahman) are on account of special places; as in the case of light etc.

In so far as Brahman is connected with limiting adjuncts like ears, eyes, speech, etc., It may be conceived as having measure; just as light etc., though spread everywhere, is viewed as limited, owing to its connection with different places like windows and so on.

उपपत्तेश्च ॥३१२१३४॥

34. And it is possible.

'Which constitutes the supreme bridge to im-

mortality' (*Śve.U.*, VI.19)—from this text, one need not necessarily conclude that, through Brahman as the means, there is something else to be attained, for Brahman Itself can be the means to attain Itself. 'He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained' (*Mu.U.*, III.2.3).

तथाऽन्यप्रतिषेधात् ॥३१२१३५॥

35. Similarly, on account of the express denial of everything else (there is nothing beyond Brahman).

'The Puruṣa higher than the higher' (*Mu.U.*, III.2.8); 'He is superior to the superior immutable' (*Mu.U.*, II.1.2); 'What is beyond It' (*Śve.U.*, III.10)—all these texts seem to indicate that there is something beyond Brahman. This cannot be accepted, as the Śruti texts expressly deny the existence of anything else beyond Brahman. 'There is nothing else higher than this "not so"' (*Bṛ.U.*, II.3.6); 'Of Him none is the Lord' etc. (*Mahānārāyaṇa*, I.10); 'There is nothing higher than or different from Him: ... By that Being the whole universe is filled' (*Śve.U.*, III.9)—these texts deny anything beyond Brahman. What *Śve.U.*, III.10 says, 'What is beyond It', is to be interpreted consistent with verses III.8 and III.9. 'I know that great Person; knowing Him alone, one goes beyond death' (*Śve.U.*, III.8)—this verse declares that the knowledge of Brahman is the only way to immortality; and the next verse says about this Person, Brahman, 'Higher than whom nothing exists'. To be consistent, verse III.10 can be interpreted only as giving a reason for what has been said. Because that which is the highest, the supreme Person, is formless and free from misery, therefore those who know Him become free. Further, verse III.10 says, 'They who know this become immortal' etc., which clearly refers to what is said in verse III.8: 'Knowing Him alone, one goes beyond death.'

अनेन सर्वगतत्वमायामशब्दादिभ्यः ॥३१२१३६॥

36. By this (Brahman) everything is pervaded, as is known from scriptural statements etc. regarding (Brahman's) extent.

'By this Person, this whole universe is filled' (*Śve.U.*, III.9); 'Whatever is seen or heard in this world is pervaded inside and outside by Nārāyaṇa' (*Mahānārāyaṇa*, XIII.5); 'The eternal, all-pervading, omnipresent, subtle (one), which the wise conceive as the source of every-

thing' etc. (*Mu.U.*, I.1.6)—these texts declare that Brahman pervades everything. This all-pervasiveness of Brahman negates the existence of anything higher than Brahman. Hence Brahman, the first cause, is the supreme Person.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

'The Concept of Image-worship' according to the Hindu tradition and the significance of image-worship in the religious life of spiritual aspirants are discussed in the short but learned article by Swami Adidevananda, Head of the Mangalore branch of the Ramakrishna Mission.

That mystic experience has the same validity as any other human experience is the theme of the article on 'The Validity of Trans-empirical Intuition' by Dr. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A., D.Litt., Head of the Department of Philosophy, Jabalpur University, Jabalpur. ...

'The Hindu Position with Regard to Some Problems of Modern Life' is a statement submitted to the UNESCO, in connection with the Pax Romana Conference recently held in Manila, the Philippines, by Dr. Shashi Bhusan Das Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Modern Indian Languages, University of Calcutta, Calcutta. ...

An earnest student of Indian philosophic thought, Dr. Harold Barry Phillips, D.Litt., Ph.D., of Johannesburg, South Africa, contributes learned articles to *Prabuddha Bharata* occasionally. In the article included in this issue, he makes an instructive study of 'Advaita Vedānta: According to Scripture and According to Reason'. ...

The article on 'Guru Govind Singh' by Sri M. V. Bhide, I.C.S. (Retd.), of Poona, is the last of a series of three articles contributed by him to *Prabuddha Bharata*. The first article on 'Guru Nānak and His Teachings' appeared in the March 1959 issue, and the second article on 'The Successors of Guru Nānak' appeared in the November 1959 issue. ...

In his article on 'Secondary Education and Its Reorganization', an experienced educationist, Sri Kailas Chandra Kar, B.A., B.T., of Shillong, analyses the problems that secondary education is facing all over the country, and offers suggestions for its reorganization in tune with India's national heritage.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

1. THE ILLUSION OF IMMORTALITY. BY CORLISS LAMONT. 1959. Pages xv+303. Price \$3.95.

2. THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY. BY MARY BURT MESSER. 1959. Pages 239. Price \$5.

Both published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16.

1. For sheer force of logic, consistency of argument, and overpowering array of quotations and opinions, the book *The Illusion of Immortality* is unbeatable. Grant the validity of the assumed premises of the

author, you must travel with him the entire way. But the starting point itself is *illusory*! That it is so springs to light when we probe into the author's conception of the self. If the self is identified with personality, as psychologists are prone to do, then immortality is more or less an illusion; but if the self is the Ātman, then the author of the book is under an overpowering illusion.

Reading through the book, the reviewer got the impression that the author is using all his powers of persuasion to keep the reader away from the true

vision of the self. The third chapter, where laws of memory are pressed into the service of the author, is a striking example of this attitude.

The reviewer is convinced that all the arguments used by the author in support of his thesis can be turned against him. Wishful thinking and reasoning are there in abundance. At a critical time like the present, a powerful book like the one under review can easily disorient young minds. Our boys and girls will devour the contents avidly. However, they must be persuaded to read through to the end and come out into the light of Vedānta. They will then see that the illusion of immortality is itself a great illusion.

2. In utter contrast to the depressing book *The Illusion of Immortality*, here comes *The Science of Society*, where the author proclaims that 'Man is actually God Expression. ... Because man is the reflection of his Maker, he is not subject to birth, growth, maturity, decay' (p. 12). How very refreshing and inspiring!

Socialism, society, sociality, etc. are maddeningly obsessive terms in current circulation. The individual is reduced to an insignificant unit in the group. Individuality has to be rescued from the clutches of

the monster of sociality, and, at the same time, it has to be spiritualized. This is exactly what is being done by the author of *The Science of Society*.

Cultured men and women of the present age will have some idea of Christian science (or faith healing) which created quite a sensation a few decades back. The operative concepts of this discipline are being used in this book for healing, not the physical body, but the body politic, of all its ills. The Bible is the basic source of this healing, and all the chapters of the book draw their inspiration from this source. Problems relating to family, marriage, politics, etc. are resolved with firm faith in Christian science, which affirms that 'there is no matter' (p.182). And the great beauty of the book is that the individual is spiritually integrated with 'society' through fellowship in Christ. The 'whole' (society) derives sustenance from 'holy', and society is meaningless unless rooted in this holiness.

It is really a marvellous book, which has come pat to the occasion. The language is slightly unusual, due to the manner in which the book was composed. This book *must* be studied by all young people in our country.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION WOMEN'S WELFARE CENTRE, CALCUTTA

REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1956-1959

This Centre, situated on C.I.T. Road, Entally, Calcutta, came into existence in 1956. It was started for disseminating the spiritual and cultural ideals of India, and to give a practical shape to the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, through various social and educational activities. It is the first institution to be started by the nuns of Sri Sarada Math, Dakshineswar.

During the years under review, weekly classes on the *Gītā* and the *Lilāprasaṅga* (Life of Sri Ramakrishna in Bengali) were conducted at the Centre. Number of classes held: 1956: 20; 1957: 35; 1958: 38; and 1959: 35. The average attendance was 54, 69, 76, and 78 respectively. Besides, lectures on different subjects of cultural and religious interest were held regularly on Saturdays.

The Centre also conducts literacy and social education classes, for which the Community Project of the Government of West Bengal gives a small recurring grant. 28 women, belonging to the literacy class,

passed the literacy test conducted by the District Inspector, Social Education. 61 women and grown-up girls were given education in the social education class. All-India Social Education Day was observed in 1956, 1957, and 1958.

The institution maintains a small library with 760 books. Number of books issued: 1957: 300; 1958: 444; and 1959: 447. In 1957, the institution opened a free Textbook Library for Intermediate students. 114 students made use of the library in 1958 and 1959. The students were also given free coaching in certain subjects.

A weekly study circle, with a few members, met to read and discuss the works of Swami Vivekananda, lives and teachings of other great men, and various other topics of general interest.

In 1958, Hindi classes were started to encourage and promote the spread of Hindi among girls.

Special programmes with lectures, debates, symposia, filmshows, music, *kathakatā*, were organized. On the occasion of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, programmes extending from three to six days were organized. Many students, belonging to different colleges, took active part in these programmes.