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

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Belur Math, March 10, 1916

The evening services and prayers were over at the shrine. The *sannyāsins* and *brahmachārins* were at their *japa* and meditation either on the veranda, south of the shrine, or in the meditation room at its back. Mahapurush Maharaj (Swami Shivananda) and Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) were sitting on the long, wide bench, with a table in front, on the veranda, east of the Belur Math courtyard. Addressing some devotees who had come from Radhikhal (in Dacca), Mahapurush Maharaj said:

‘You all hold on to the Master (Sri Ramakrishna), accepting him as your very own; make all who are yours—wife, son, brother, friend, and all others, wherever they may be—his devotees. What good does it serve if a whole village takes orders? What need does one feel for the monastic life if all the members of the family—wife, son, mother, and father—become devotees? A son has to run away from home only when the parents happen to be worldly-minded.’

Belur Math, March 23, 1916

Mahapurush Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj were sitting facing the Gaṅgā on the lower veranda overlooking the river. In front was the protection wall, beyond which flowed the sacred Gaṅgā. Some college students and schoolboys had come to visit the Belur Math. They saluted Mahapurush Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj and sat on the small bench in front, facing west. They had just finished their examinations, and had now a vacation for two or three months. As they all hailed from East Bengal, and were about to leave for home for the vacation, they came to the monastery for a hurried visit.

Mahapurush Maharaj (addressing the boys): ‘Now that you have a two months’ vacation, how do you propose to spend it? Is it any good to idle away the time by talking, merry-making, and playing cards? Then why should you have come to this monastery? Now that you have come to the monastery before leaving for home, would your visit be worth while if you return after seeing the buildings only and taking some consecrated food (*prasāda*)?’

Carry some ideas from here and try to do something practically. You have read Swamiji's (Swami Vivekananda's) books; you will find the ideas there. And also listen to what we say and try to work them out practically as far as you can.

'Collect a small amount of money yourselves and purchase a box of homoeopathic medicines before you start for home. When you are there, go to some village where the poor and the afflicted live. Serve the poor and give them medicines; mix freely with them and inquire about their wants and grievances. Know it for certain that if you so much as talk with the people of the depressed classes, touching them with your hands, they will be yours for ever. And if in addition you serve them and distribute medicines, you can buy their hearts. Start a night-school to teach them. Along with that tell them as far as possible about the Master and Swamiji, and talk even about our country if you get an occasion. Teach them morality; teach something about sanitation and general welfare. At times you can organize (congregational) *kīrtans* and (other forms of) religious songs. Then offer some ordinary sweets to some deity and distribute them among those present.

"Thus are they to be taught and aroused. Maybe, they will suspect some motive in you and keep aloof in the beginning. But when they find at last that you have no selfish motive, they will be entirely at your disposal. What is more, along with that you yourself will also develop to be unselfish. Through such unselfish work the mind will be purified. When the mind is pure, the slightest suggestion will fill you with thoughts of and love for God. Unless that is there, unless the mind is purified, nothing will avail, however hard you may practise your *japa*. What can you gain by the mere repetition of God's name, so long as you harbour in your heart selfishness, jealousy, and hatred? It is just because the country is steeped in such darkness of the mind (*tamas*) that Swamiji talked constantly of such work. Of what worth is your education, if you cannot give

up your selfishness for the good of the many even after finishing your examinations, and passing them, and getting educated? What do you gain by slaving it all the time? You are the descendants of the Aryan *ṛsis*; even now the pure Hindu blood courses through your veins. Are you not ashamed of this slavery? You talk of patriotism? What else can be greater patriotism? Does merely singing of "O my golden India, I love you" or delivering lectures constitute patriotism? If you want to be a practical Vedāntin or a real patriot, then go and do what we say. Spread this kind of mass education. You are young Bengal; on you Swami Vivekananda built the future hope of the country.

'The revolution that is passing over Europe (the First World War was then in progress) is just meant to bring into fruition the seed that Swamiji sowed by going to Europe and America. They have taken up a destructive science. Just look at the Zeppelins, machine-guns, submarines, and various other machinery that have been invented for human slaughter. Millions are dying thereby. And see what improvement is brought to science by Jagadish Chandra Bose. He is demonstrating with his instruments that plants have life and feelings. Is this an inconsiderable improvement? How many foreigners are eager to learn this science from him! That is the kind of science that we would have. As soon as the carnage in which Europe is steeped at present is over, you will see that the seed sown by Swamiji will sprout. The spiritual wave will travel from this country to that, and for this you, too, must prepare yourselves. . . .

'If you want to love the country practically, then here is the great opportunity to shake off lethargy and rise up. "Awake, arise"; rise yourselves by giving up inactivity, and then help others to do so. Do be established in truth by thus imparting education and teaching moral laws to the masses. Do be up and doing, spreading education and rules of sanitation among the depressed classes in every village, every sub-division, and areas within each police-station, just as Swamiji wanted. The country

will be awakened at the sight of your sacrifice and unselfishness. Thus you engage yourselves during the vacation. Of course, along with this you will have play, recreation, and outings. If you go on working thus during the few months of the vacation, even something permanent may take shape. Or if you will, some of you may go out on an excursion—seeing hills and rivers. But what will you gain if you idle away the time and sing, “O my golden India, I love you”?

Madhupur, November 1927

As Mahapurush Maharaj had been in bad health for some time, he came for a change to Madhupur, where he put up in ‘Seth Villa’. I started from Jamtara with Brahmachari Su— at 8 a.m. to see Mahapurush Maharaj. Reaching ‘Seth Villa’ a little after 9 a.m., I saw him seated in the veranda in his winter clothes. After we had saluted him, he enquired about our health, etc. . . . A little later he went for bath. He had a rheumatic left hand for which it was bandaged. After lunch he returned to the veranda. I said that Brahmachari Su— had composed a hymn to the *guru*. He replied, ‘We can wait for that, I shall hear it later’. A little later, he left for his room for some rest. After rest, he asked me, ‘Where is Su—? Did he not want to read a hymn?’ I called him in, and he began reading. It was written in Sanskrit. Having read the first verse, Su— started translating it into Bengali, when Mahapurushji said, ‘I want to hear the Sanskrit; the translation is not necessary’. Having listened to it completely, he said: ‘It is well written. Many people write hymns nowadays. There are quite a number of them in existence; one has simply to consult a few and then arrange one’s words afresh for a new hymn.’

‘But one must have a little idea of metre’, I said.

‘Yes, that is true’, he said.

After a long pause, he added: ‘The *guru* is not just a human being to be sure; he is divine. God’s power descends through man. As for

ourselves, we cannot even remember all the disciples; the Master looks after them.’

The talk then turned to education. ‘The Master used to say,’ he continued, ‘it is not really passing, but getting a *pāśa* (meaning bondage).¹ The more passes you get, the more are the *pāśas* (bondages). After getting the B.A. and M.A. degrees, they think, “How great we have become!” What difference does it at all make? He reads some writings of others, keeps them in mind, and at the time of examination puts them in black and white. Another person sees it all and says, “You have passed”. After passing, he secures a job, say, worth two hundred rupees a month. Then he marries, and there it ends. And the pity is that even jobs are hard to get nowadays. There are quite a good number of young men who passed with distinction, but are sitting idle, or doing some insignificant work. Then they think that the passes were useless. Why, have you yourself been able to secure any lucrative job after passing your M.A. examination? It is also a fact that many do not get as good a job as you have. The Master used to consider a pass as a *pāśa*. He would, however, add that when a boy had passed a few examinations, it meant that his mind had become trained, that he had through his education acquired the habit of applying his mind fully to one subject, and that when he wanted to dedicate his mind to God this concentration would help him.’

Then he called Si— Maharaj to himself and said, ‘You may not know them?’

‘Just now we got acquainted’, replied Si— Maharaj.

Then we started talking about the austerities Su— had practised at Rishikesh.

Si— Maharaj: ‘How did you find it all there? Do the monks engage themselves in their religious practices or do they spend their time in gossip and merry-making even at such a place?’

¹ In Bengali, the word is pronounced as ‘*pāś*’, and the English word ‘pass’ has also the same sound when used in spoken Bengali.

When we were there, we noticed many monks reading newspapers or whiling away their time in vain talks. They did not practise much of meditation etc.'

Mahapurush Maharaj: 'How many, indeed, can keep on meditating all the time? Quite a number spend the time thus in gossiping. But even that is good in a way. It means much if one can live a pure life. It is not a small gain that one can thus live away from the world, full as it is with its miseries, lost hopes, wails, and repentance, and the castigation, jealousy, and hatred of relatives.'

Si— Maharaj: 'We noticed that it was not possible to carry on meditation beyond a certain length of time; the brain felt empty. One has to live on mere *dāl* and *rotī* (lentil soup and unleavened bread) at Rishikesh, for one cannot get milk and ghee. So the brain cannot bear the strain. In Mount Abu, a monk one day fed all the monks sumptuously and sat down at a place with the determination not to leave his seat without attaining success in spiritual life. But after some days, he could meditate no longer; he seemed to have lost his balance of mind. I said, "At this juncture, lessen your meditation a little and do some humanitarian work; you will get peace". But he did not believe those words.'

Mahapurush Maharaj: 'Is it easy to realize God? There is no contract that so much of

meditation for so many days will bring Him to you. It is a hard task to get Him.'

We then drifted to a talk about the flood at Hardwar. Mahapurush Maharaj said: 'A young man came to be a monk after passing his M.A. examination. While engaged in his spiritual practices at Hardwar, he was washed away by the flood. His brother was studying at the Hindu University of Varanasi for his M.A. degree. A few days before his examination, he came to join the Advaita Ashrama at Varanasi. The monks there asked him to do so after the examination; but he would not listen. Sa— was then there; he took him to Deoghar and made him work at the Vidyapith (residential school) there. A few days later, the memory of his parents came to his mind, and the parents also pressed him hard to return home. His resolution failed, and he returned home. His father was a head master in some school in the western parts. He went there, and after a while secured his M.A. degree. In the mean time, his parents negotiated for his marriage and pledged their words. The young man could not resist them; and so he was in wedlock. Now he is working somewhere. But he has still the spirit of detachment; he comes to the Advaita Ashrama whenever he gets leave. He may even renounce the world if God gives him an opportunity in the future. This is also good in a way, better than being altogether immersed in the world.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: HIS VISION OF AN AWAKENED INDIA

Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen, who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

Ten years ago, India became a sovereign democratic republic and gave herself a constitution which secures to all her children 'justice—social, economic, and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and wor-

ship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation'. This month, our young republic celebrates that great event in every city, town,

and village. This month, again, India celebrates the birth anniversary of one of her immortal sons, Swami Vivekananda, who roused the national consciousness of her oppressed millions and took her spiritual message to the different corners of the world. On this doubly significant occasion, we would invoke the spiritual presence of Swami Vivekananda, the patriot saint who took the world by storm, so that the wisdom, the spirit, the fire that was raging in his seraphic personality might inspire and guide us when we are busily engaged in our national reconstruction, which we have launched on a grand scale.

In the long chain of saints and patriots that India has produced, and who have left behind them a hoary tradition and handed to us a rich legacy in spiritual values and practical living, the name of Swami Vivekananda rises as a beacon. For the first time, he broke with the tradition of the recluse and carried the message of the Vedānta philosophy, that is, the message of India, to the world outside and placed India, his dear motherland, on the map of the world.

In the context of the rapid strides that free India is taking in building up a new social and economic order, it will be of immense value to us if we have a glimpse of the mighty personality that Swami Vivekananda was, of his vision of an awakened India and of the role she was to play among the nations of the world, and of how, according to him, India was to reconstruct herself. Let us recall, in his own words as far as possible, the ideals the Swami placed before the men and women of this vast country, so that we may follow in his footsteps and work for and help build the India of his dreams.

II

This new India of today and Swami Vivekananda are inseparably bound up together. We cannot think of the one without thinking of the other. Happily, India is free today and marching ahead hand in hand with other nations of

the world. Among the galaxy of great men that worked for this culmination, and who were responsible for inaugurating the new India movement by giving a fresh impetus to and revitalizing the different departments of our national life, the personality of Swami Vivekananda was one of the most outstanding. For his contributions have been diverse and have touched almost all the aspects of our national resurgence—political, social, cultural, and spiritual. Hardly has there been any institution in recent times, during the last half a century, which has not borne the impress of his forceful message, or a movement which has not drawn inspiration from this patriot monk of modern India. Directly or indirectly, he has powerfully influenced the India of today.

Swami Vivekananda, first and foremost, was a realized soul, who had himself experienced the highest truths of the Vedānta and touched the very core of Reality. He had realized the spiritual oneness of all existence, which is Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. This he had achieved at the feet of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who appeared on the Indian scene as the consummation of her age-old spiritual ideals and aspirations. The advent of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda was the nation's response to the challenge that faced India a century ago. For that was the time when the national urge to re-establish itself and to set its moorings properly was beginning to assert. The spiritual conscience of the nation, which had become anaesthetized, as it were, owing to a sort of paralysing materialistic outlook and scepticism, was gradually coming to itself. Earnest attempts were being made to rediscover and to restore in the heart of the nation the eternal spiritual and moral values for which India had always stood.

The experience of the One Religion amidst many religiosities and the perception of Divinity in humanity which Sri Ramakrishna had realized and taught, the Swami treasured and, having realized their import himself, set out to preach them in India and outside India. By

the one, he taught the universal aspect of Religion and its lofty principle of 'Unity in Variety'; and by the other, he endeavoured to lift humanity to its divine consciousness. This was the keynote of his life and mission.

His personality, however, was not confined to the sphere of the spirit alone. He was a man of the people at large. A patriot of the first magnitude, his spirit would never rest until the queen of his heart, India, reoccupied her rightful place in the world. He was second to none in his love for his motherland, which was to him, Sister Nivedita tells us, 'the queen of his adoration'. 'Like some delicately poised bell, thrilled and vibrated by every sound that falls upon it, was his heart to all that concerned her. Not a sob was heard within her shores that did not find in him a responsive echo. There was no cry of fear, no tremor of weakness, no shrinking from mortification, that he had not known and understood. He was hard on her sins, unsparing of her want of worldly wisdom, but only because he felt these faults to be his own. And none, on the contrary, was ever so possessed by the vision of her greatness.'

For the first time in that formative period, he raised his powerful voice 'in defence of India and her people'. Wherever he went, he expounded the grand, universal principles of Hinduism and brought India, her people, and her thought before the world more prominently than ever before. India rediscovered herself once again. A certain pride in her own inheritance was instilled in her heart thenceforward, and it marked the new beginning of India's influence on Western nations. Since then the process has gone on paving the way for a respectful understanding of her spiritual, moral, and cultural ideas and ideals.

III

What was Swami Vivekananda's plan of work for the regeneration of India?

First of all, he kindled in us a burning love for India and her people and taught us to be proud of our glorious heritage. He infused in

us a sense of living faith in India's future and a spirit of self-confidence and self-respect. He wanted us to believe that India had not only a great past, but she was destined to play a greater and a brighter role in the future history of mankind. Although he was firmly rooted in the past, drawing all his inspiration from the ancient wisdom of our sages, he was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and 'was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present'.

With his clear vision, freed from all obstructive predispositions and born of true understanding, it was possible for the Swami to view India in her true perspective. Of that vision he says: 'I stand in awe before the unbroken procession of scores of shining centuries, with here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance in the next, and then she is walking with her own majestic steps—my motherland—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth or in heaven can check—the regeneration of man the brute into man the God.' In all that he said and did, the Swami was fully conscious of the significant part he was playing, for he says: 'I am one of the proudest men ever born, but let me tell you frankly, it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry. The more I have studied the past, the more I have looked back, more and more had this pride come to me, and it has given me the strength and courage of conviction, raised me from the dust of the earth, and set me working out that plan laid out by those great ancestors of ours.'

The Swami's inspiring call roused the nation from a deep slumber of self-forgetfulness and made her stand on her feet once again with a fresh vigour and enthusiasm. That was his very first task—to arouse in the people a national consciousness and a respect for India's past greatness and her spiritual tradition, and an unshakable faith in her future mission. He reminds us: 'From time immemorial, India has been the mine of precious ideas to human society; giving birth to high ideas herself, she

has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world. . . . This is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such ideas must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind.'

As a true reformer, Swami Vivekananda believed in root and branch reform, and not in reform of titbits. He was never blind to the social and economic ills that were eating into the very vitals of the nation. He went to the root of the problems and talked of our weaknesses and failings unsparingly. He pointed out, like the diagnosis of a physician who had felt the pulse of a diseased man, that the decadence of our country was due to various reasons, such as (1) not taking inspiration from the past and working on those lines, (2) developing a narrow and isolationistic outlook with regard to other countries, (3) perversion of the life-current of our national existence—religion and spirituality, and (4) tyranny over the masses by the so-called higher castes and the neglect of our women.

IV

Years before Swami Vivekananda burst upon our society as a patriot and a reformer with his message of practical Vedānta, he had walked the length and breadth of India as an unknown wandering monk. During that period, he had come into intimate touch with the 'real India' and seen the grinding poverty of her teeming millions. On the one hand, he saw rank materialism, and on the other, arrant superstition, ruling the minds of the people. An utter absence of the practical appraisal of the precious inheritance from the past was noticeable all round. The land of the *ṛṣis* was fast going to be overwhelmed by godless and irreligious people. The nation was losing faith in itself. The so-called reformation movements that were in the field were either unnational or anti-national, leading the country away from her tradition and genius. The heart of the nation

looked as if it was exhausted and could supply no more energy to the coming generations. The Swami's heart bled at what he saw.

Despite what he saw during that unhealthy interregnum of our country's career, the Swami knew, because of his firm faith in the future destiny of India, that that was but a passing phase in her colourful history. Even during his own time, he had already perceived the undercurrents of national resurgence and the signs of an 'Awakened India'. For he charges the nation: 'Up, up, the long night is passing, the day is approaching, the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury. Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy. Rejoice! The flood of spirituality has risen. I see it rolling over the land resistless, boundless, all-absorbing. . . . Behold, the sleeper is awakening!'

Having diagnosed the maladies that were making the country weak and sterile, the Swami set himself to the task of reconstructing India on national lines. As the very first step in this direction, he wanted to deluge the land with spiritual ideals. He says: 'The first work that demands our attention is that the most wonderful truths confined in our Upaniṣads, in our scriptures, in our Purāṇas, must be brought out from the books and scattered all over the land. . . . After preaching spiritual knowledge, along with it will come that secular knowledge and every other knowledge that you want; but if you attempt to get the secular knowledge without religion, I tell you plainly, vain is your attempt in India, it will never have a hold on the people.' To carry on this work, his plan was that 'a hundred thousand young men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social rising-up—the gospel of equality'.

V

Although Swami Vivekananda's attention was primarily focussed on the awakening of a new India, he never lost sight of the great mission she had to fulfil in the wide world. He was never tired of narrating to his countrymen how, in the past, India had flooded the different countries of the world with her life-giving waters of spirituality time and again. And he saw before his eyes the new India, freed from all narrowness of vision, rising once again for a similar mission. For he says: 'We are destined by the Lord to do great things in India. Have faith. We will do—we the poor and the despised who really feel. . . . Furthermore, understand that India is still living, because she has her own quota yet to give to the general store of the world's civilization. . . . For a complete civilization the world is waiting, waiting for the treasure to come out of India, waiting for the marvellous spiritual inheritance of the race which, through decades of degeneration and misery, the nation has still clutched to her breast. . . . Therefore we must go out, exchange our spirituality for anything they have to give us; for the marvels of the regions of the spirit, we will exchange the marvels of the regions of matter.'

While thus India went out with her gems of spirituality, she was to bring back in exchange the marvels of science and technology for the material betterment of her people; she was to sit at the feet of the Western nations to learn their systems of social organization, governing the country, and other items connected with the social, the economic, and the political life of the nation. For the material prosperity of the nation, the Swami had deeply felt the need for grafting on the Indian soil the boons of the Western concept of life on the socio-economic level. He wanted all the gifts that the West could give—its economic technique for raising the standard of living of the millions of India, its scientific and technological knowledge for our industrial development, and its political system and social organization for the governance and welfare of the country. But all these he wanted not at the cost or in the place of our

precious national heritage. Says he: 'Now, this is to be brought about slowly and by only insisting on our own religion and giving liberty to society. Can you make a European society with India's religion? I believe it is possible and must be.'

The Swami urged his countrymen to come out of their narrow shells of isolation and to compare notes with other nations of the world: 'I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others, and whenever such an attempt has been made under false ideas of greatness, policy, or holiness, the result has always been disastrous to the secluding one.' India's past history itself bears ample witness to this phenomenon.

VI

The next thing that Swami Vivekananda put his finger on was to reinstate the pristine religion of the Upaniṣads in the heart of the nation. The religious life of the country had drifted away from the main current, and its pure waters, by a gradual process of degradation, were caught up in little, stinking mud puddles of weakening mysticisms and debasing and primitive superstitions. Religion was getting confined to the kitchen, and the cooking-pot was replacing the deity! In order to liberate that pure religion from the incrustations that had grown over it, the Swami's only method was to bring out the truths of the Upaniṣads and make them accessible to one and all, irrespective of caste, creed, or sex. He points out: 'The truths of the Upaniṣads are before you. Take them up. Live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand. . . . Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. . . . The most wonderful truths confined in the Upaniṣads, in our scriptures, in our Purāṇas, must be brought out from the forests, brought out from the monasteries, brought out from the possession of selected bodies of people, and scattered broadcast all over the land, so that these truths may run like fire all over the country from north to south,

from east to west. . . . National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces.'

VII

In the social sphere, the most important item, however, in Swami Vivekananda's programme for the regeneration of India was the uplift of her masses and women. In this regard, he sums up our national problem in two words, 'the women and the people'. 'In India, there are two great evils,' he says, 'trampling on the women and grinding the poor through caste restrictions.' 'Can you better the condition of your women?', he asks, 'Then there will be hope for your well-being.' He could not bear even a remote suggestion of the superiority of man over woman. He would come down like a thunderbolt upon anyone who suggested that women could not solve their own problems, saying: 'Are you the Lord God that you should rule over every widow and every woman? Hands off! They will solve their own problems.'

What stirred the Swami's heart to its depths was the condition of the poor and the uncared for masses of India. He knew that they were the real backbone of the nation, and unless they were raised, there was no hope of India rising once again. It was this intense feeling for his suffering brethren that drove him from place to place in search of some help and succour for them. He says: 'I travelled twelve years all over India, finding no way to work for my countrymen, and that is why I went to America. . . . Who cared about this Parliament of Religions? Here was my own flesh and blood sinking every day, and who cared for them? This was my first step.' 'I love my God, my religion, my country, above all—myself, a poor beggar—I love the poor, the ignorant, and the downtrodden. I feel for them.' In sheer agony, he asks: 'Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? They cannot find light or education. Who will

bring the light to them—who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way. Him I call a *mahātman* whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is *durātman*. Let us unite our wills in continued prayer for their good. . . . My heart is too full to express my feeling; you know it, you can imagine it. So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed for them.'

Swami Vivekananda's recipe for the improvement of the condition of our masses was to give them secular education and to prepare them to work for a better standard of life. But he believed that even this secular education should be imparted through religion only, for it was only through religion that even ideas of political or social advancement could take root in India. He exhorted his people to go forward and 'complete the practical realization of the scheme of human progress that has been laid out in the most perfect order by our ancestors. I only ask you to work to realize more and more the Vedāntic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature'. 'These conceptions of the Vedānta must come out,' says the Swami, 'must remain not only in the forest, not only in the cave, but they must come out to work at the bar and the bench, in the pulpit, and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with students that are studying. . . . If the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better student. . . . and so on. . . . And that is what we want, no privilege for any one, equal chances for all; let every one be taught that the Divine is within him, and every one will work out his own salvation.'

VIII

This was Swami Vivekananda's practical Vedānta, as applied to his country and her people, to work for the ushering in of a new

India. He had the vision of her future and uttered those prophetic words nearly sixty years back. Fiery words were they; and the fire that raged in his heart has kindled in the hearts of hundreds and thousands of our countrymen the fire of patriotism since his time and is still doing so. The programme of the Swami has been there before the country during the past sixty years, and every movement started in India during this period—social, educational, cultural, or religious—undoubtedly bears the impress of his personality and thought. As Sri Aurobindo says: 'Vivekananda was a soul of puissance, if ever there was one, a lion among men. . . . We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India, and we say, "Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his motherland and in the souls of her children".'

Now, India is her own master and can shape

her affairs, without any external influence or interference, according to her own tradition and genius. For the future of India, the Swami has given the nation enough work for centuries to come, as he himself says, 'I have done enough for fifteen hundred years'. It is for us, his countrymen, to take up the scheme he has formulated and work on for the future glory of India, which, he believed, would be far greater and more glorious than her past.

In conclusion, let us sing with this immortal son of our motherland the song of an 'Awakened India': 'Let new India arise out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, besides the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emerge from the factory, from marts, and from markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains.'

'Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached.'

GĪTĀ, THE GOSPEL OF HARMONY

BY PROFESSOR BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA

An age of restless curiosity, critical inquiry, and growing secularism must needs be a challenge to an ancient scripture. But ours is also an age of anxiety with bursting crowds, incessant scramble, mounting tension, and multiplying human problems. Its moral temper has been assessed as an attitude of indifference, in which everything is possible, nothing is certain. An increasing number of people are feeling confused about everything—work, politics, and morals—and they believe this very confusion to be a normal state of mind. In this state of chronic disequilibrium, man is groping for the experience of unity and harmony in all spheres of being, to regain his lost balance. He has a

dim sense that, by scanning the ancient heritage of culture, he may from its truths of intuition or revelation eke out what he misses in the truths of science—the light and guidance he needs in his perplexities.

The message of the *Gītā* has a unique claim to meet this need. It sums up and distils the Upaniṣadic teachings. It is said to embody all the institutes of *dharma*. It makes a deeper probe than any other scripture into the science and ethic of life and the mystery of existence. It has been a lamp of wisdom from pre-Buddhistic times to many races and creeds. With the passing ages, its light is travelling to the far ends of the world of culture. The text with

glosses and translations and expositions makes up a sizable library calling for a life's study. It is a rosary of pearls of thought; its mnemonic verses are piously cherished and revolved in life's problems. As the major formative influence on the ethos of the Indian peoples, no scholar or thinker of distinction but has wrestled with the sacred text and attempted to read its awful sphinx-like look. Without meditative thought and the *Gītā* way of life, to attempt an exposition of it, therefore, is a venture which can have only the excuse as in the 'Hymn to Divine Majesty' (*Mahimnahstotra*): 'He can appreciate up to the limit of his understanding and cannot be blamed if he cannot do more.'

The *Aśvamedhaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* has a section called *Anugītā* or post-*Gītā* discourse. Arjuna says there: 'When the war arose, O mighty-armed son of Devakī, I came to know your majesty and also your divine form. O Keśava, what was formerly discoursed by your magnificent self through love—all that is now lost to me from mental lapse. But my curiosity about that recurs often.' Vāsudeva replies: 'I related to you the hidden lore and unfolded the Religion Perennial as apparent in my own self as well as the enduring worlds. But through mental weakness you could not contain it, which pains me much. The memory of it all I cannot recall again. The rule of righteousness which I then set forth suffices for knowledge of the Brahman state, but it cannot be detailed again. The supreme Brahman I then made known to you in meditative trance.'

Other suggestions that it may have apart, this curious episode points to the difficulty which most minds find in assimilating the inspired wisdom of the *Gītā*. Like the spirit of God which bloweth where it listeth, it is caught in flashes and lost in the descents to the levels of common-place thought.

The opening word of the sacred text is 'dharma', and the last one is 'mama' (mine). This is most likely a chance coincidence. But for long ages the Indian mind has turned to it with the question, 'What is my religion, duty,

or proper function in life? And each according to his desire had the response he sought, whether it was solace in suffering, the solution of his problem, or the spiritual discipline to suit him.

In its multiform teachings, religious leaders and moulders of schools have found support for their particular tenets and for the way of realization each upheld. The union of knowledge and action is the path of salvation, according to an ancient gloss. Intuitional wisdom—the sense of oneness of Brahman and the self—is the sole means, according to Ācārya Śaṅkara. This being attained, work loses its use and worth; devotion and action are only helpful to this end. Another view gives the primacy to devotion, work being secondary, although the duties appointed for the *varṇas* are imperative. 'Emancipation is solely through grace' is another conclusion. It restores the *jīva* (creature)—the disjoined part—to the whole; their separateness is not mere illusion, but real. The *Gītā*, in yet another view, prescribes the *yoga* discipline according to Patañjali's system as the instrument of liberation. There is also the view to which the modern mind, keenly aware of life's struggle and with its practical bent, naturally inclines, viz. that mainly and pointedly it is a gospel of work—desireless and fruit-disregarding.

There is a general agreement among modern scholars that the doctrines of the *Gītā* present well marked divergences from the historic Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Vedānta, and Bhakti systems of thought in regard to cosmogony, theology, and ontology—the origin and evolution of Being, the nature of the ultimate Reality, and the relations of the world, the self, and the Supreme. Sri Aurobindo says: 'The thought of God in it is not pure monism, nor Māyāvāda, nor qualified monism, nor Sāṅkhya, nor Vaiṣṇava theism. It avoids all such rigid determinism of the polemic commentators.' One may rather say that, in its breadth and elasticity, it negates none of these, it subsumes them, and is somewhat more besides. For a connected view and a logi-

cal analysis, the *Gītā* as a whole, in its eighteen chapters, has been fitted into different schemes and figures. 'She is the mother that sprinkles the nectar of unitive knowledge.' 'Her feet are the last two chapters, her waist the sixteenth, her face the first five, and her arms the remaining ten.' Three sections of six chapters each have been made out, each of the section inculcating either work, knowledge, or devotion; or Thou (*tvam*); That (*tat*, the Absolute), and Art (*asi*), positing their oneness. Such fanciful schemes cannot avoid overlapping of the topics altogether. It is a mosaic of thought of an intricate pattern. But any mechanical division apart, three subjects necessarily stand out, namely, the goal, the way, and the pilgrim, or the aim, the means, and the striver's outfit, howsoever their treatment may be spread over the text.

The later chapters—the fourteenth and the last three—are largely taken up with the impulses and motives of men. For testing the aspirant's fitness, these are closely searched and sifted. Hence perhaps the lengthy psychological exposition—the detailed analysis of the three *guṇas* or primal qualities which permeate all thought, action, and emotion. 'The *guṇas*—*sattva* (serenity, harmony, or equilibrium), *rajas* (restlessness), and *tamas* (inertia)—which are born of Prakṛti (nature, matter), bind fast in the body the embodied soul.' 'Not on earth nor among the gods in heaven is there a creature who is free from the three *guṇas* born of Prakṛti. By these three states made up of the *guṇas*, this whole world is held in spell.'

Faith (*śraddhā*) or inborn spiritual trend, intelligence or understanding (*buddhi*), hold or firmness (*dhṛti*), the agent or doer (*kartr*), knowledge (*jñāna*), action (*karma*), pleasure (*sukha*), renunciation (*tyāga*), sacrifice (*yajña*), penance or austerities (*tapas*), gift or charity (*dāna*), and even the diet (*āhāra*) one likes, all these are made to pass through the prism and yield their psychical elements. This threefold classification of the innate endowment finds a parallel also in modern psychology. Man

does not exist in general, it has been said, he differs by his particular blending of character, as he differs at his finger-tips. He is not a blank sheet of paper on which culture can write its text, but one charged with energy and structured in specific ways. Dr. William Sheldon makes out three basic types: (1) the *viscerotonic*, which loves creature comforts and company, is emotionally disposed, seeks help and support; (2) the *somatotonic*, which is aggressive, combative, and callous; (3) the *cerebrotonic*, which is shy, sensitive, moody, and introvert.

In the sixteenth chapter, the predispositions of men are sharply divided into the *daiva* (divine) and the *āsura* (demoniac). The marks of the latter are rather too familiar in the world today.

'They know not what to do nor what not to do; neither purity nor right doing nor truth is in them.' 'The world is without certitude, they say, lacks a moral basis, and is devoid of God. It is produced by the union of male and female, and sex is its cause, what else can it be?' 'Holding to such a view, these lost souls and petty minds bear sway—fierce in deeds—to destroy the world as its enemies.' 'This have I won today, and that desire will I gain next. That enemy I have slain, and others also I shall slay. I am the lord of all; I am successful. I have power and am happy. Rich am I and of high birth, who else is my equal?'

Did not Nietzsche say, God is dead? Is He not an irrelevance in the Communist creed? To lose the old faith is not, however, to have no faith at all. For man is not free to choose between ideals and no ideals. He can only choose between different ideals. Missing the old and traditional, he has to invent other gods. Paganism is the life of man in God's absence. And the neo-Paganism of the present phase of civilization is the worship in implicit faith of pleasure, profit, power, and publicity.

Opposed to the demoniac is the divine makeup. Its elements are listed in the first few verses of the sixteenth chapter. This divine

treasure makes for liberation, as the other brings bondage. This twofold division is like the two types of orientation—the productive and the non-productive—of the character-system of humanistic ethics. The former shows the exploiters, the hoarders, the cynical, the passive. These are mentally or emotionally crippled, and worship values men generally crave, and go by aims and standards of outside imposition. Productive living, on the other hand, belongs to those who have found, and are true to, their own selves. They have found, and they are true to, their human self, and realize the ends of being. The *Gītā* also repeatedly calls upon Arjuna to assert and realize his clear inborn potentiality, to summon himself back to his own self, to live productively. 'It beseems you not to waver, seeing your own true function. For a Kṣatriya, nothing is better than to wage a just war.' Conscience is roused within him. And Arjuna's self reacts to itself. He sees the larger spiritual motive in the supreme moment of his appointed work. He replies: 'Gone is my delusion, memory is regained through your grace, O everlasting One. I am steadied and freed from doubt. I will do your behest.'

If this, indeed, is all that was aimed at, no reader of the *Gītā* can escape this moot question, Why this long field-day through which all our wits are kept on the stretch? Why this long discourse on the ultimate Reality, the many spiritual disciplines, the goal, and the consummation that sages and aspirants are to strive for?

The answer in part may be given in William James's words: 'Ought all men to have the same religion? Are they so like in their needs, hard and soft, healthy-minded and despairing, strenuous and lazy, proud and humble? Some would need a religion of consolation and reassurance, and others one of terror and reproof. This is not an anarchy of thought and despair of truth. Different functions in the organism of humanity conform to different types.' In numerous passages, the *Gītā* sets forth this diversity of human nature and the validity of the

pursuits that result. 'Predispositions of the *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* quality, know them all to emanate from Me.' 'Fine perception, spiritual insight, presence of mind, truth, self-restraint, quietude, joy and grief, birth and death, fear and courage, non-violence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and infamy, all these states inure to men and proceed from Me.'

The inner mechanism, the springs of action, being thus flood-lit, the *Gītā* sounds a serious call to mankind to realize the jewels of the spirit and to cast aside the other store that weighs him down. Like existentialism, it solemnly adjures man, 'the thinking reed', to make up the mind to choose the productive style of living. 'Existential truth has no criterion beyond fruitfulness for life.' Nor has the *Gītā* any significance except for those who seek a worthwhileness and to profit by it as the lamp of life. 'Speak not about it to one who is not austere in life, nor reverent, nor is eager to listen, nor to one who holds Me in disesteem.'

The formulation of a doctrine, like a mariner's chart, is pointless unless a voyage is intended. 'Let self in him be raised by self alone. Let him not sink the self. For self alone is self's true friend and self alone is its foe.'

The aim of the *Gītā* to be a help-book to life and conduct appears strikingly from the definition of *jñāna* or knowledge in the thirteenth chapter. There it does not stand for the substance of any knowledge, but a number of virtues which, like 'the divine riches', help to attain it. 'Meekness and uprightness, indifference to sense objects, the even mind and steady devotion to God, love of solitude, self-control and service of the teacher, insight into and constancy in pursuing self-knowledge—this is declared to be knowledge, what is other than this is ignorance.'

The colophon to each chapter describes the *Gītā* as the *yoga-sāstra*. This word 'yoga' with cognate forms 'yukta', 'yogin' occurs about a hundred times, and is traced to three roots

meaning 'to join', 'to control', 'to be absorbed in'. Arjuna's dejection is a *yoga*, an engrossing mood. It is the mental crisis, the high tension, which sharpens his awareness and makes him receptive to divine truths. In many places, it means *karma-yoga*, skill in work, the art of doing without craving for fruit. It is also the inhibition of mental impulses (*cittavṛttinirodha*). It is the practice of austerities, penances, and breath-control. It is also an attribute of the divine, the inscrutable power of the unmanifest Absolute passing into the manifest. But whatever the striver's way of approach or particular discipline, it is getting to God, and yoking the powers of soul, mind, heart, and will to God, the unitive life, the integrated personality. The supreme-One is called the Yogin, Yogesvara, the Lord of communion.

This much about the voyager, the pilgrim, and his outfit. And now to the paths, the means and aids to spiritual progress. The diverse conclusions of master minds on this point make the *Gītā* a problem-book. These differences find a congenial soil in the shifts in emphasis and the verses of mingled praise which slide off from one kind of discipline to another. Thus, about *karma* it is said: 'No one can live even for a moment without action.' 'Even the body cannot be maintained if he desists from work.' 'Do your allotted work, for action is superior to inaction.' 'By work alone men like Janaka became perfect. With an eye to social order also we should work.' The cult of work is enforced by the Master's own example. 'O Pārtha, I have no duty whatever to perform; nothing in the three worlds is by Me unattained, nothing still to be gained, and yet do I continue in work.' 'To give up action which is obligatory does not stand to reason.' 'To do so is said to be of the nature of *tamas*, inertia or darkness.' 'Sacrifice, gift, and austerities are purifiers of the sages also. These works should be done without attachment or craving for fruit—this is My best and considered opinion, O Pārtha.'

The emphasis on *jñāna* or knowledge seems to exceed that on work. 'Far inferior is action

to communion through knowledge, O Arjuna.' 'All action without exception has its consummation in knowledge, O Pārtha.' 'As a blazing fire turns all fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, even so the fire of knowledge consumes all works.' 'The Vedas have in view the condition produced by the three modes of nature. O Arjuna, transcend the bondage of the three qualities.' 'To the enlightened Brāhmaṇa, all the Vedas (enjoining work) are of use only as much as a pool when the flood covers everywhere.' 'The man of knowledge I hold to be My own self.' Knowledge is declared to grant the supreme insight, the unity of existence. By attaining knowledge, one forthwith gains the highest peace.

Like emphasis is laid on *yoga*. 'The *yogin* excels the practisers of austerities as well as the man of knowledge. He excels also the doer of action. Therefore be a *yogin*, O Arjuna.' 'No *yogin* knowing these paths of translation to higher spheres upon death is ever deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, be always rapt in meditation.' 'All the fruit of merit that is laid down for Vedic study, for sacrifices, austerities, and gifts is exceeded by the *yogin* on knowing these mysteries. He attains thereby the highest station, the primal Brahmanhood.'

But the scale seems to lean specially in favour of devotion as a mode of realization. And this is only to be expected in a practical treatise and one which is not discursive or argumentative. The purpose of the *Gītā* is to enrich the inner life, the spirit of communion. And so it says: 'They who with devotion worship Me dwell in Me, and I in them.' At the close of the cosmic vision—the world-form revealed—Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: 'By single-souled devotion only, I in My true nature may be thus known, seen, and entered into, O punisher of foes.' Twice is Arjuna enjoined: 'Have your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, do worship and obeisance to Me. Give up all rules of conduct and seek sole refuge in Me. I shall release you from all sins.'

As the compass-needle thus oscillates, one has the impression that the spiritual voyage the *Gītā*

commends is not along a single longitude, but many converging lines. Not a single breeze, but many different gales and instruments push one forward to the destined port. From these many-coloured threads, the Indian genius has more than once woven fabrics of a smooth texture and uniform pattern. A critical intellect, says Dr. Radhakrishnan, with care can work out a consistent system. And the fact that this has been done so often in Indian religious thought proves that the original has a certain plasticity or flexibility. The metaphysical background and the basic hypothesis of the different systems have been used with sharp logic to produce this monolithic effect. But even aside from them, there are links and ties which fasten together the whole and give it value as a work of human appeal and spiritual stimulus, as a beacon of the devout life. In the different moulds of spiritual life, there are certain conspicuous common features, whatever the special method of inner preparation. These are the recurrent chimes that make them akin. The brotherhood of the elect are 'all stamped with the image of the King'. 'What becomes of one who is *siddha* (perfect or self-realized)?' someone asked Sri Ramakrishna. The word '*siddha*' also means 'boiled'. The instant reply was, 'Soft, mellow'. Three verses in the tenth chapter show the grace and bliss shared by the devout when they meet and converse. 'It is from compassion for them that I, dwelling in their hearts, dispel the gloom of ignorance with the shining lamp of knowledge.' On this, Śaṅkara comments: 'On this lamp of wisdom, discrimination is the mark; contentment due to divine love is its oil. It is fanned by earnest meditation. Its wick is right intention purified by piety, continence, etc. Its wind-screening chamber is the unworldly heart, untainted by attachment and aversion. It shines with right knowledge born of incessant concentration and meditation.' It is clear that this shining, serene peak of spiritual existence rests on a composite mass which embraces true knowledge, right conduct, and a heart of purity and fervour.

A pervasive God-sense is the habitual temper

which the *Gītā* induces. This has been distinctive of the Indian ethos noted by strangers also from the earliest times. Apollonius of Tyana wrote at the opening of the Christian era: 'All men wish to attain to the constant awareness of God, but only the Indians achieve it.'

The pre-eminent manifestations—the *vibhūtis*—as detailed in the tenth chapter, the world-form or cosmic vision in the eleventh chapter, and the picture of the phenomenal world as a majestic peepul-tree and of the supreme Person (Puruṣottama) as the informing spirit thereof in the fifteenth chapter, all these make theism the dominant note of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

Four perfected types of spiritual life stand out in the text. These are (1) the *sthāprajña*, the man of steadfast wisdom, the intelligent will, (2) the *guṇātīta*, the man risen above the three qualities or modes of nature, (3) the *bhakta*, the devotee dear to the Lord, and (4) the *brahmabhūta*, one who has realized Brahman. They all exhibit and illustrate in themselves the finest blossoms, the complete fruition of the *Gītā* teaching. These are desire-free work, a mind raised above the dualities of sensation—the opposites of emotive reaction—and an ever-present attitude of equality towards all beings. 'Unagitated in mind by sufferings, lost to all craving for pleasure, free from attachment, fear, and anger—such a one is called a *muni* (the musing soul) of steady wisdom.' The man lifted above the three *guṇas* 'regards alike pain and pleasure and dwells in the self and looks with an equal eye on a clod, a pebble, and a piece of gold, the same in agreeable and disagreeable experiences; unmoved in praise and blame, in honour and dishonour; the same to friend and foe'. The *bhakta* in the *amṛtāṣṭaka*, at the close of the twelfth chapter, shows the same traits: 'The hater of no being, friendly and compassionate to all, even-minded in joy and sorrow, forgiving, and free from the sense of "me" and "mine".' 'The world vexes him not, he vexes none. Free from elation and wrath, fear and anxiety, such a one is dear to Me.'

The second chapter of the *Gītā* is said to contain the seed of all that follows, and the eighteenth chapter, to be a resume of all that has preceded. Here the self-realized sage is depicted as the apex and crown of spiritual attainment. 'Become Brahman, serene in mind, he neither grieves nor yearns. The same to all created beings, he attains the highest devotion to Me.' 'Though performing all kinds of action, having found refuge in Me, he reaches by My grace the eternal, imperishable abode.'

The *Gītā* gospel of harmony holds out the hope of salvation for all. It regards no soul as lost that has the heart to be saved. It is a protest against theological imperialism. 'As people seek Me in resignation, so do I accept them. O Pārtha, it is My path that men on all sides tread.' 'Whatsoever forms of Me men reverently wish to worship, therein do I give them their unshaken faith.' 'Even those devoted to other gods, who worship with faith, worship Me alone, though not according to the holy writ.' 'There are yet others who do not know directly by these means. They hear of it from others and worship. They, too, transcend death through devotion to what they have heard.'

The *Gītā* has been the strongest influence in shaping the Indian attitude of tolerance, both religious and secular. And Sister Nivedita's words clinch the matter: 'The supreme crime for the follower of any Indian sect shall be the criticism of any other, as if it were without the bounds of the eternal Faith.'

It has been said that the *Gītā* does not rise to the universal compassion of the Buddhist teachings. But the difference is hardly to its disadvantage. *Ahimsā* (non-violence) is in the *Gītā* an element of bodily *askesis* or austerity. Words that offend none, that are truthful, pleasing, and salutary are a mark of austerity in speech. Gentleness goes with mental austerity. Dear to the Lord, it repeats, is he who offends none and is by none offended, who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate to all. 'Freedom from malice, charity, non-vio-

lence, and kindness to all beings' make up the divine riches. Even those who have forsaken all and worship the formless Absolute cherish at heart the good of all beings. Elsewhere it says: 'With sins destroyed, doubts dispelled, senses controlled, and devoting themselves to the welfare of all creatures, the sages attain freedom in Brahman.'

To be religious, it has been wisely said, is to apprehend the reality of other souls. Nowhere is the *Gītā* more eloquent than in recommending the equality and oneness of all. 'Him do I deem the supreme *yogin*, O Arjuna, who looks on the pleasure and pain of all creatures as he regards them in himself. With heart joined by *yoga* and regarding all with an equal eye, he sees himself in all beings and all beings in himself.' The *sāttvika* knowledge (that is, of the serene kind) sees the one 'imperishable Entity in all creatures, undivided in the divided'. The boon of everlasting life is for such only. 'To him who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, I am never lost nor is he ever lost to Me.'

Alongside this equal regard for all is the curb on the ego which this 'Song of the Lord' aims at. The ego is no doubt the prime mover behind the drama of history, the lever of the single life, the mainspring of civilization. To its account also goes the charge-sheet for the woes and travail that make men groan. But man allows less than the credit that is due to the natural and historical forces that have evolved his body and mind. These work in every particle of his being, mostly without his knowing and in disregard of his inclinations. The lesson of the *Gītā* is to chasten and correct this excessive self-regard. 'The *yogin* knowing the truth thinks, "I do nothing at all"; while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, or tasting; walking, breathing, and sleeping; speaking, ejecting, and seizing; opening and closing the eyes, he is assured that only the senses are engaged in their objects.' 'The body, the doer, the different senses, the several functions of the vital urges, and, fifthly, the deities presiding over each—whatever action a man does with his body, speech, or mind—

these five are its causes. That being so, the man of obtuse mind who from an untrained understanding looks on the Self alone as the agent, he sees not at all.' And again: 'All action is done by the qualities of nature, but the man with a mind deluded by egotism thinks "I am the doer". 'The Lord sits in the heart of all beings and by His *māyā* (inscrutable power) causes them to revolve as though mounted on a machine.' Man can do what he wills, we should remember, but his will is not his own.

The *Gītā* is a constant reminder that a Power greater than ourselves 'shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will'. There is a sense just dawning on the minds of statesmen that forces beyond their reach are directing human destiny. 'I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me proceed memory, knowledge, and their absence as well.' 'I am the origin of all; from Me all things evolve. The wise know this and worship Me with a feeling heart.' 'I am all-seizing Death. I am the prosperity of those who are to prosper.' 'I Myself am endless Time, and I am the Dispenser facing all ways.' To the perverse genius of humanity, blinded to its weal, He becomes at times the inexorable destroyer. 'I am the mighty world-destroying Time now bent here on slaying these men.' 'Whenever righteousness languishes and unrighteousness flourishes, I incarnate Myself.' This is the ultimate faith in the redress of an overset moral balance. It is more than a pious hope, for it alone ensures the soundness of human ethics. If it is lost, it will mean the end of the assurance of the race's survival. For it proclaims that 'the essence of Being is to have certain properties. Unity, Truth, and Goodness are attri-

butes to be deduced from its definition.'

The *Gītā* does not in all cases reserve the highest good—release from bondage and self-realization—for a future beyond this life. Certain verses explicitly assure the supreme bliss as a present possession and not future fruition. 'He who is full of faith and zeal, and has subdued his senses, obtains knowledge, and having gained it, he soon attains the supreme peace.' 'Those whose minds are thus set on sameness have even here overcome birth. Brahman is immaculate and the same in all; therefore in Brahman they rest.' 'When he sees that the manifoldness of beings is centred in the One and that all evolution is from that One alone, he becomes one with Brahman.' 'The *yogin* who is happy within, who rejoices within himself, and is illumined within, attains freedom in Brahman and himself becomes one with It.' It is said, if heaven is not elsewhere and hereafter, it must be here and now or nowhere at all. The kingdom of God on earth has been more than the waking dream of the world's elect through the ages. Whether it becomes a collective achievement or not, there are souls to whom it is an immediate, actual possession. These are the choicest spirits, named *jīvan-muktas*, the emancipated in life. And Indian sages and saints till the other day have shown that the holy writ, unlike abstract philosophy, may be lived and turned into a reality. The proof of religion is the man of realization. In our sacred land, their race is not yet extinct or their succession cut off. And the *Gītā*, in its patterns of perfected life—pure, simple, erect, benign, austere, and sublime; harmonious, integrated, and unitive—provides the perennial spring of their inspiration.



THE SYNTHESIS OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN OUR EDUCATION

BY SRI C. D. DESHMUKH

The subject of my talk is 'The Synthesis of Science and Religion in Our Education';* as such, I am expected to deal with matters or aspects which are educational. Since education is nothing less than a preparation for life, I shall devote part of my observations to the synthesis of science and religion in man's life.

In these matters the first difficulty is semantic, that is to say, connected with the meaning of words. Science has been variously defined as a systematic and formulated body of knowledge (in which sense it could be used in conjunction with words like moral, political, natural, etc.), or it has been defined as the physical or natural sciences collectively, which admit of qualitative treatment, depend on deductions from self-defined truths as mathematics, logic, etc., or deal with material phenomenon based mainly on observations, experiments, and inductions as physics, chemistry, biology, etc. It is in this last sense that I shall mostly be using the word. As regards religion, there really is no satisfactory definition of the word. But religion is ordinarily understood to refer to one of the prevalent systems of faith and worship, in its specific sense, or, more generally, it means the body of thought and belief that arises out of man's recognition of some kind of superhuman controlling power, especially of a personal god entitled to obedience. In a philosophic sense, there is no single analysis of religious language and therefore no single definition of religion in terms of content. All one can do is philosophically to draw a distinction between different strands of religious discourse. Even such a concept as man's relation to godhead is not applicable in all cases, as, for instance, in the case of Buddhism, which exemplifies an agnostic doctrinal scheme. I believe that it is intended

that I should refer more to the philosophy of religion rather than to any specific religion.

The problem of the synthesis of science and religion is posed because of the feeling that, though there are elements in science and religion which are incompatible having regard to the nature of each, it should be possible to reconcile these incompatibilities and bring about a concord in one's mind, provided one values both science and religion.

It would be simple to describe both science and religion as the pursuit of truth, but that would be over-simplifying the problem, as in one case one would be thinking of truths that would in almost all cases be susceptible of demonstration and proof, whilst in the other case the 'truth' would have a large element of the mystic or intuitional in it and would therefore not be amenable to the same kind of criteria. To express the same thought broadly, the synthesis of science and religion would lie not so much in religion being capable of partaking somewhat of the nature of science as in science being in the ultimate analysis dependent on, or leading to, some sort of intuitional conclusions, which also form the basis of religion. In other words, I do not suppose it would be possible for any one who is a-religious even to attempt to synthesize science and religion. Also, since religion in one of its two senses is a body of doctrine or dogma which one accepts or rejects in the case of many of the revealed religions, any one who thinks in terms of such dogma or doctrine might have a greater difficulty in reconciling science and religion than one who believes in or belongs to a non-revealed religion such as Hinduism. It might be that the synthesis would therefore have to be different in each case, according as one is a believer in a revealed religion or is an active practitioner of some of the other faiths like Hinduism or

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Buddhism, or, lastly, is only interested in the philosophy of religion.

At this point, it is perhaps necessary that one devoted some attention to the history of modern science in order to understand its real meaning.

Science expresses a growing curiosity in the working of nature and, unlike religious thought, it not only contemplates, but can also predict or fabricate. Whereas religion has been a primary need of man and has existed in one form or another as long as man has been in existence on the earth, modern science is only a growth of the last three hundred and fifty years or so. In the early days, science was known as natural philosophy, and whilst it exhibited a great deal of empiricism, it suffered from the lack of an adequate theoretical framework. Galileo was perhaps the first who explained the real nature of science as observation and experiment of natural phenomenon under the guidance of theory for the sake of testing and elucidating further relationships. It was Galileo and later Descartes who recognized the importance of mathematics in solving the riddles of nature. The earliest science to be developed was mechanistic, based on the assumption of the operation of a few simple laws relating to mass, distance, force, etc. Indeed, so universal became the faith in a mechanistic outlook that in the eighteenth century, in Europe, there were philosophers who held that all errors, even in politics and in morals, were founded upon philosophic mistakes, which themselves were connected with physical errors. But these theories obviously suffered from limitations in fields like religion. Newton said that the laws of mechanism could not explain the high degree of orderliness in the universe and that 'this most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being'. In this connection, modern scientists have pointed out, however, that Newton was exalting the limitations of his own methods into proof of the existence of God. Incidentally, Mahatma

Gandhi also held a similar view as, for instance, in the following: 'When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in worship of the Creator. I try to see Him in His mercies in all these creations. But even the sunsets and sunrises would be mere hindrances if they did not help me to think of Him. Anything which is a hindrance to the flight of the soul is a delusion and a snare; even like the body, which often does actually hinder you in the path of salvation.'

Natural philosophers in Europe discovered early in the history of modern science that some kind of evolutionary outlook was necessary in order to enable science in the long run to explain such things as structure of the solar system and the adaptation of living beings to their environment. Whilst the mechanization of nature weakened man's belief in scientific mysticism, magic, alchemy, and astrology, the development of evolutionary philosophy, although deepening man's insight into the complexity of the structure of the universe, undermined many a religious dogma. Mechanical philosophy had served its purpose in leading, as scholastic philosophy did not, to a real understanding of the very many physical properties of the ordinary world.

Science was helped in this process by its capacity for intellectual creation out of a collection of carefully observed facts. Experimental science began to be regarded as complementary to theoretical science, so that, as most commonly a theory fitted some existing facts, a successful attempt in many cases came to be made to predict fresh facts. Experiment and observation were the means by which modern science grew up, because the man who used these tools adopted a view of nature which could be developed and corrected by the information which these tools yielded.

Nevertheless, what can be called, and legitimately regarded, as modern science did not begin till scientists paid greater attention to living things in the frame of physical nature, to the structure and habits of living organism,

leading to concepts of specific distinctness of relationships and natural systems of classification. Scientific problems of form and function began to suggest themselves, but this development of biology would not have been possible without the scientific interpretation of the relation between the living creature and its environment, which developed physics and chemistry made possible. While this advance of biology was scientifically satisfying, it emerged as a challenge to the truth of religious dogma. A view of the universe with the sun as the centre was less disturbing to religious sentiment than the theory of spontaneous generation or of creation as a continuing process rather than a sudden act of God. That is why Charles Kingsley welcomed Darwin's theory of evolution with these words: 'Men now find that they have got rid of an interfering God: they have to choose between the absolute empire of accident, and a living, immanent, ever-working God.' But further reflection in regard to the origin and development of life as a continuous, orderly, and coherent process may strengthen rather than weaken religious sentiment. The new interpretation of life may have destroyed the traditions and the outlook of old days, but it gave man a deeper insight into the nature of the universe, into life processes and their manifold developments. Therefore for mankind they were capable of giving a new set of values and setting new goals.

It is perhaps more correct to say that science even in its utmost reaches, or perhaps because of its utmost reaches, need not necessarily be irreligious, than that religion can never be unscientific. To the superficial view, science might stand out as an undiluted and unqualified pursuit of objective truth; but modern science itself, especially the development of physical theory, has shaken this belief by drawing attention to the limitations of the instruments, eyes, hands, and brains of the operators and of their minds which do the concurrent thinking. For the sake of convenience, modern physics falls, therefore, as has been well pointed out by Werner Heisenberg in his book *Physics and Philos-*

ophy: The Revolution in Modern Science, into four types of laws and concepts: (1) Newtonian type of physics applicable to bodies not too large, nor too small, nor moving too fast, nor in too complicated a way; (2) laws of heat transfer and heat motion with their special concepts dealing with motions too small and too complex for Newtonian treatment; (3) special theory of relativity dealing with motions too large and too fast for Newtonian treatment, in which the velocity of light is to be taken as infinite; (4) quantum theory which is entirely non-Newtonian: and Planck's Constant cannot in this theory be regarded as negligibly small, as it can be in large-scale transactions. In a philosophic sense also the question arises whether science is really objective or whether it is like art, where every man is entitled to his opinion and proof is not expected. Professor Bridgman, physicist and a Nobel Prize winner, has written a book of 333 pages to prove that scientific proof is a private affair and that there are as many sciences as scientists. The climate of opinion in scientific circles has been altered by the theory of relativity with its dethronement of absolute time and space, and by the quantum theory with its recognition that every observation alters the thing observed. Scientists are therefore today more predisposed to recognize the personal element in scientific work. The basic proposition of science is that nothing is true that is not capable of experimental verification. But experimental verification is essentially a personal process.

These considerations perhaps point the way to the synthesis of science and religion or at least to humility in dealing with matters religious. Like science, religion also is to be interpreted in a universal way, as something that concerns itself most profoundly with relations between man, the cosmos, and something which, in most of the world's religious systems, is called God. Religious doctrine and dogma like science has also on practical grounds to be regarded as consisting of four levels: (1) the literal, which in many religions professes to describe what actually happened; (2) the allegorical, which explains what lies behind the word, and is there-

fore worthy of belief; (3) morality, that is a guide to good behaviour; and (4) anagogic, indicating the sign posts to the future.

It requires little proof to show that modern science is necessary for modern life, since without science and technology the present activities of man could not be sustained on this earth at their present level, much less developed for the greater material welfare of individuals and societies and even for peaceful behaviour as between man and man and community and community. The same statement cannot perhaps be made in regard to religion because of the diversity of religious discourse. Nevertheless, no deep study of man and society can fail to arrive at the conclusion that the vast majority of mankind have felt spiritually or emotionally the need of some kind of religion. Historically also, whilst religion has in the past brought disruption to human society and persecution of the followers of one faith by those of another in the interest of saving the souls of the former, there is evidence that in modern societies this assertivity of feeling has diminished, and there is a welcome desire to study and, if possible, to understand the underlying philosophies of various creeds. On the other hand, whilst historically science has led to a measurable improvement of the material conditions of man, at the very moment when its latest manifestations have taken it nearer and nearer to the intuitional and philosophic fields which were regarded as pertaining peculiarly to religion, its discoveries and inventions hold the threat of destruction to all mankind. It is in this ultimate sphere that in the life of man, and in human societies, everywhere in the world a synthesis of science and religion has to be brought about.

Both science and religion have an individual as well as a social significance. But since education is a process carried out by society, its concern with the synthesis of science and religion or with the sublimation of scientific and religious thought must necessarily be for social ends, either through the development of the innate capacity of the individual or by influencing the

attitudes of the individual before they have hardened.

One of the most talked of aspects of modern science is its repercussion on international relationships. For nationalism is now already too well-established for science to be a significant danger in the hands of one set of men against another in the same nation for material gain or power. Religions still continue to be a potential cause of disruption of a sense of solidarity among societies of men. But the world is now largely divided into nations according to religion, and where this is not the case, as in India, the numerically dominant religion has a traditional spirit of tolerance, which precludes any possible danger of the harassment of religious minorities. There are nations which in a similar situation cannot be trusted to exhibit a similar degree of tolerance by virtue of a different type of religious creed and dogma, but they are, fortunately, no longer powerful enough to hold a threat to the tranquillity of the world. The old battles of warring faiths are now replaced by the new rivalries of potent science, with this difference that the new conflicts will involve the incidental destruction of uninvolved and uncommitted nations, whereas the former religious wars were more narrowly and specifically located.

Reflective minds everywhere in the world today are thinking in terms of universality, which are familiar to us in India through the culture we have inherited, but which even to us today have a deeper and less facile significance. The worth of human effort and the welfare of humanity have a far more comprehensive import as well as a far greater urgency than in the past centuries.

Sir James Gray, F.R.S., in his presidential address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science has urged that efforts be redoubled to rid the minds of men of fear and suspicion, if science is to give of its best. Science should depict man's position in the world of nature as a source not of fear or doubt, but of courage and inspiration. Since human behaviour is not amenable to the laws of physics

and chemistry, but is subject to the principles to be derived from the world of living organisms, the challenge is therefore to the biological sciences, in particular to those which dealt, at the borderline of sociology, with the behaviour of organisms and their relation to their environment. Cosmic, biological, and human evolution, said Sir James Gray, could be regarded as phases in a continuous natural process—and, from that point of view, astronomy, geology, biology, archaeology, and history formed a continuous spectrum of knowledge. Man's inventions, impressive as they are superficially, had not yet reached the standards of those produced during the natural course of biological evolution. But man might fairly claim to have accomplished in a few centuries things for which nature required many millions of years. Also, man now no longer faces the closed arena of a limited environment, and as soon as he realizes that his environment is world-wide, he could begin to direct the course of his own evolution without the discomforts of over-population. Failure on his side in vigilance and alert action will mean that the law of the jungle will prevail. Nature has favoured man with a brain which enables him to control his environment and to deal rationally with the subdivision of labour between individuals and with the distribution of natural resources between different groups of individuals. This, said Sir James Gray, would seem to lead to a world state with uniformity of social pattern and material interests, or at least to territorial limitations and economic agreements.

Science, said he in conclusion, could only plan its full part in furthering the welfare of mankind if it were used, at a very early stage of education, as a means of encouraging a dispassionate but optimistic attitude towards all aspects of human affairs. 'To move from natural traditions and aspirations to others based on international welfare may prove less painful if we are prepared to look on man and all his problems as a phase in the evolution of the universe and if we have the courage to believe and to teach that he can, by means of his in-

tellec, control and direct his own evolution and destiny.'

This is pragmatic counsel, which could be reinforced by ethics and by religion. Science, it is conceded, is very largely a matter of education first and cultivation afterwards. The question can pertinently be posed if ethics and religion are also primarily matters of formal education. In all countries, this aspect of the synthesis or at least simultaneity of learning in general and science in particular and religion has received attention, and in India no less than in other countries.

The University Education Commission have devoted a whole chapter, namely, Chapter VIII, in their Report of December 1948 to August 1949, to the subject of religious education. In tracing the history of the problem, they pointed out that in the pre-British period the teaching of religion was regarded as an essential part of education, since one of the major aims of education was the development of the whole man and since, in addition to the development of intellectual powers, man required for the regulation of his personal and social life a code of behaviour based on the fundamental principles of ethics and religion. The British, being foreign rulers, considered it judicious to accept a policy of religious neutrality, despite pressure exercised by Christian missions. The Education Commission of 1882 recommended that an attempt be made to prepare a moral textbook based on the fundamental principles of natural religion such as may be taught in all government and non-government colleges, and that the principal or one of the professors in each government and aided college deliver to each of the college classes in every session a series of lectures on the duties of a man and a citizen. This was the way that suggested itself to them between the State's declared secular character, on the one hand, and the provision of facilities in educational institutions for the inculcation of all forms of faith, on the other hand. This recommendation was, however, rejected by the Government of India in 1884, on the ground that the introduction of such a moral textbook

as was proposed would raise a variety of burning questions, as also on the ground that it would be too vague and colourless to be accepted or to remedy the defects of secular education. The Indian Universities Commission of 1902 recognized the inadequacy of a purely secular education, but was unable to suggest any definite measure for improvement; and with reference to a specific suggestion made, it decided that it was neither practicable nor expedient to make provision for a Faculty of Theology. The Calcutta University Commission of 1917 to 1919 gave a wide berth to this difficult question. The matter was then left in abeyance, apparently for nearly thirty years, when the Central Advisory Board of Education resolved that, while they recognized the fundamental importance of spiritual and moral instruction in the building up of character, the provision for such teaching should be the responsibility of the home and the community to which the pupil belongs.

Referring to this last resolution, Dr. Radhakrishnan's Commission observed that we cannot leave religious training to the home and the community any more than we could leave to them the pupils' scientific and literary training. They feared that if such guidance is left to the home and the community the chances are that communal bigotry, intolerance, and selfishness might increase.

When the University Education Commission considered this matter, they had the advantage of studying it in relation to the principles in regard to religious instruction in educational institutions about to be adopted in our Constitution, such as freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religions; also the principle of non-recovery of taxes by the State for the promotion of any particular religion. It followed that no religious instruction is to be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds, provided that this interdict is not to apply to an educational institution which is established and administered under an endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall

be imparted in such institution. Also, no person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution, or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution, or in any premises attached thereto, unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto (Article 28 of the Constitution).

It follows that if a religious community provides educational facilities, and is in a position to do without State assistance, the imparting of religious instruction is not prohibited. But it may as well be recognized that in these days there would be very few educational institutions of this character, especially in view of the restriction on numbers that is normally imposed by educational authorities and the mounting cost of any education that could claim to have the minimum of modern facilities and amenities. In the majority of educational institutions, therefore, the situation could be that religious instruction could not be provided at all.

Religious instruction is to be understood as distinct from research or study concerning religion. In other words, while religious dogmas cannot be taught in institutions maintained by the government, religion can be studied critically as part of a course in general culture. The preaching of dogma is to be distinguished from the study of the philosophy of religion. The intention therefore is not to ban all religious education, but to ban dogmatic or sectarian religious instruction in State schools. The view held by the University Education Commission was that if we teach sectarian creeds to our children in public schools, instead of developing in them the spirit of peace and brotherly love, we encourage the spirit of strife, as the children become conscious of their separate creeds and group loyalties. The Commission specifically rejected the view that secular conception of the State meant that nothing is sacred or worthy of reverence. They therefore rejected a purely

scientific materialism as an intended philosophy of the State, especially in view of the religious strain that 'has run throughout our history like a golden thread'.

The Commission argued that our Constitution itself was such as to spur the spirit of religion, providing as it does freedom of conscience, freedom of inquiry, and moral solidarity. Referring to what they called the Indian view of religion, the Commission held that religion is not to be identified with a creed to be believed, or an emotion to be felt, or a ceremony to be performed, but it means something that changes life, character, and disposition. Thus religion is a matter of realization, which cannot be reached through mere knowledge of the dogmas, but by the exercise of one's own will and reason to attain spiritual enlightenment. According to them, religious dogmas have a place only for giving comfort to the human spirit. They held therefore that the university was not the proper place for the study of dogmas, which would turn the student over to theologians of different denominations for instruction in the conflicting systems of salvation and thus undermine that fellowship of learning which defines a college or a university. They went to the length of holding that in a sense religion is the most secular of all pursuits. 'It starts where man is, with the facts and problems of his concrete life, and goes with him wherever he is and whatever he does. No real religion will submit to separation from life. All life must be infused with the life of spirit.'

The Commission went on to argue that respect for other religions is a sign of true humility of spirit. They urged therefore that competing religions abstain from putting forth exclusive claims to be the sole possessors of eternal truth and recognize that there is a common universe of discourse transcending the difference of tongues, the many dialects in which man has tried to speak of the Unseen. They went on therefore to advocate the inculcation of a sense of universal religion which would harmonize all faiths in one synthesis, and they asserted that

India was by virtue of her cultural history well fitted to play an important role in bringing about such a consummation.

The practical measures which the Commission recommended were based on this fundamental philosophy. In the first place, they regarded mere moral instruction as inadequate in the organization of the citizen's life, and they advocated therefore that it must be reinforced by inculcation of virtues which are independent of time or environment. They quoted in support the views expressed in this matter by Gandhiji in 1938 to the effect that, since the fundamental principles of ethics are common to all religions, they should be taught to the children and should be regarded as adequate religious instruction. They conceived the secularity of our State to be equivalent to the need to be deeply spiritual and not narrowly religious. As regards the actual mode of instruction, they deprecated the starting of moral and religious instruction merely as one of a number of subjects 'to be taught in measured hourly doses'. They therefore devised ways calculated to impart religious vitality, promote simplicity, and create an atmosphere of consecration that would permanently influence young lives, and recommended as follows:

(1) that all educational institutions start work with a few minutes for silent meditation.

(2) that in the first year of the Degree course, lives of the great religious leaders, like Gautama the Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Mohammed, Kabīr, Nānak, Gandhi, be taught.

(3) that in the second year, some selections of a universalist character from scriptures of the world be studied,

(4) that in the third year, the central problems of the philosophy of religion be considered.

Although over ten years have elapsed since the University Education Commission made their recommendations in regard to religious instruction as part of the higher education, very little has been found possible in respect of implementing these recommendations. Having at one stage of my own high school education

received religious instruction of a kind and believing that I have derived great benefit from it, I was *prima facie* biassed in favour of the inclusion of religious instruction in education generally, if not higher education. On a deeper study of all the contentious issues involved, I have, however, come to the conclusion that the recommendations of the University Education Commission will not really attain the object in view. The reasons which have influenced me are two: the first is the one which has already been indicated, namely, that tolerance of other religious dogmas and creeds is not as easy to the followers of dogmatic religions as it is to the followers of religions like Hinduism or, perhaps, Buddhism; and, second, that moral instruction, which is the essence of the aim of religious instruction, at least from the practical point of view, seems to lack the necessary appeal unless it is a part of religious instruction and is also imparted at an appropriate stage of life.

As regards the first proposition, it is well known that tolerance or even acceptance of other religious faiths is a particular feature of Hindu religion. Swami Vivekananda has expressed this in a very telling fashion. He has said: 'Let our watchword then be acceptance and not exclusion. Not only toleration, for so-called toleration is often blasphemy. Toleration means that I think that you are wrong and I am just allowing you to live. Is it not blasphemy to think that you and I are allowing others to live? I accept all religions that were in the past and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. . . . Not only shall I do all these (go to the mosque or the church or the Buddhistic temple), but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future. Is God's book finished? Or is it still a continuous revelation going on?' The difficulty is that there is no reciprocity in this matter on the part of the revealed religions even when their dogmas are interpreted in the most liberal fashion possible. The most that followers of these faiths have occasionally done on the academic or philo-

sophical plane is to attempt to study the philosophy of religions, as, for instance, in a recent book *Reasons and Faiths* written by Ninian Smart, Lecturer in Philosophy, Kings College, London. Here the author has made a philosophical analysis of religious concepts, for he does not attempt to establish the truth or falsity of any particular faith.

The next question is to consider whether even where such a broad-based philosophy of religions is allowed to be studied in a manner that does not violate any provision of our Constitution, the necessary concern for moral or ethical values will be created. It is here that a theoretical finding is not of great assistance from a practical point of view. Theoretically, it is possible to establish that moral propositions can be regarded as extrinsic to religious ones, as the author referred to above has indeed done in chapter VII of his book. He has pointed out that it will not be inappropriate to treat moral propositions as logically independent of religious ones, although by becoming incorporated in doctrinal schemes of religions they also acquire the status of being religious propositions. The practical point involved here is that they do not seem to make much of an impression on those for whose benefits they are uttered, except when they have thus the character of being a part of religious propositions and therefore an authority which is not entirely derived from logic. It is not strange that this should be so, because logic cannot be a factor which is equally well developed in all human beings, and the lower the intellectual or environmental level of an individual, the feebler will be his response to moral propositions. In other words, certain modes of social behaviour have to be accepted not only because they can be proved to be valid, but because they have to be regarded as valid on account of some extramundane authority. Following this trend of thought, I have come to the conclusion that if moral instruction has to have any effectiveness at all, it has to be a part of some specific religious dogma or creed, and the instruction has to be made imperative as part of the creed,

as, for instance, the Pañcaśīla for Buddhists or the Ten Commandments for Christians. If this is accepted, then, the other part of the dilemma comes into view, namely, that specific religious instruction on the basis of any particular dogma or creed cannot under our Constitution be imparted, at least in institutions maintained by the State, and can only be carried out on a voluntary basis in other institutions which receive aid from the State. If universality of religious instruction is to be aimed at, it is obvious that we have to look elsewhere for facilities for the imparting of such instruction.

Perhaps the way for a consideration of this question will be clear if we were to concede that all education, in its broadest sense, of a child or any person, need not be imparted only in a normal institution of education, such as a school or a college. It is possible to conceive of a society in which either this kind of education takes place in the home of the child, or is looked after in such institutions as are established and maintained by the religious heads of the religion which the child's or person's family practises. Indeed, the question of whether religious instruction should be imparted in schools and colleges would not have arisen, had religious organizations ministered to the religious needs

of the people. It is a weakening of their hold on modern society which has thrown up a problem of this kind. There can be no short cut to a rectification of this matter, and I am of the opinion that the time has arrived when the various religious bodies concerned should begin to organize regularly and effectively religious instruction for those who profess adherence to their particular faith.

In expressing this opinion, I am not losing sight of the argument used by the University Education Commission that such revival of religious organizations will make children conscious of group loyalties. Whatever might have been the facts of history in this regard, I believe that modern man has now arrived at a stage where, without either accepting or altering their faiths, he will be prepared to reconcile himself to others enjoying the same kind of freedom that he wishes to enjoy for himself in the profession and practice of any particular body of religious dogma or creed. If modern society is incapable of organizing religious instruction in the manner indicated here, then, by logical inference, it will follow that it will furnish a very poor environment for the successful transfer of these arrangements to normal institutions of education.

YOGA AND OCCIDENT

BY SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

Yoga is full of promise for the West. It offers religious and extra-religious methods of transformation, which are at the same time scientific. This is exactly what the West wants; a method 'extra-religious' which gives satisfaction to its scientific spirit of penetration and research. What *yoga* aims at is to make us realize in ourselves a personality without compartments like sentiment, mind, and intellect. It wants us to discover in ourselves a psychologi-

cal disposition which makes possible intuitions that transcend the mental and intellectual levels. Such intuitions can be born only in a personality where the gulf between faith and knowledge is closed. In India, speaking of the perfect type, it is said, man is his faith; to know is to become. The problem is to bridge the gulf between faith and knowledge, and this problem is more acute in the West than in the East. In Indian thought, knowledge is a state of interior-

ity in which the object is absorbed in the subject. It is the spiritual identity between subject and object. The modes of knowledge we use in empirical life, all issue from this moment of spiritual identity between subject and object. In the West, knowledge is knowledge of something; knowledge is objectivation; knowledge must be supported by proof in the external world. The West searches for conviction on the plane of sensorial experience.

Behind the Westerner's scientific questioning is his love for organization. It is natural; for unless one has complete control of the data, one cannot organize. But the unconscious powers and processes in man lose their spiritual character when organized. We must be fully relaxed, relaxed from all sense of organization to allow the powers to gain upon us and to transform us. When we speak of the faith of the Hindu, where knowing is believing, we refer to that complete relaxation of Being or openness of Being. In that openness, there is no questioning, nor duality, like body and mind, or matter and spirit. *Yoga* bases itself on the fact that such an openness of Being is our birthright, and can be achieved by every one of us. It also answers man's scientific questioning at every stage. The results of yogic transformation can be felt and checked at every stage on the physical and psychical planes. They are valid on both the planes.

The word '*yoga*' literally means union with the divine in us. We awaken the divine in us by several methods. Indian thought gives us four traditional ways to such an awakening:

1. The way of action or works, *karma-yoga*.
2. The way of knowledge, *jñāna-yoga*.
3. The way of devotion, *bhakti-yoga*.
4. The way of psychic discipline, *rāja-yoga*.

What is taught in the way of action is the perfecting of the means. When the means are perfect, the end is sure to be perfect. That is to say, when our interior is made pure, the success of our endeavours is assured. It is the

same process that is being taught in the other ways of knowledge and devotion. When our love is pure, then we do not want to direct it towards an object or person. It is interiorized, and it finds its satisfaction and goal in the plenitude of its interiority and not in its objectivation. All the *yogas* are directed to destroy the duality in the domain of objectivity or expression and thus to strengthen the certitude of equilibrium, plenitude, and independence, which are characteristic of the true Self. The result of such interiorization is the widening of our consciousness in everyday life.

The whole of the *yoga* exercise or *yoga* postures can be summarized in one sentence: the importance or even the sanctity of the vertebral column for attaining equilibrium, physical, mental, and spiritual. We say 'sanctity', because, according to *yoga*, it is in the vacuum running along the centre of the vertebral column called *sūṣumṇā* that we can have the transcendental experience or realization. All *yogas*, *jñāna* or *bhakti*, attach great importance to *sūṣumṇā* as the field of 'intemporelle experience', and so insist on the proper health and dynamism of the marrow of the spinal cord. The marrow of the spine is the source of all our energy. Rejuvenation of the vertebra means equilibrium, physical and mental. Holding it erect, stimulating it, giving it repose, all these are necessary to give health to the body and mind.

With its postures, gymnastics, and breathing exercises, *yoga* gives us a method of physiological hygiene. It also offers us methods of psychic hygiene not for achieving psychic phenomena or experiences or visions, but for liberating ourselves from our small egos, for creating a psychological disposition which makes possible intuitions that transcend the empirical plane of subject-object tension. To liberate ourselves from our egos, we have to liberate ourselves from fixed and crisped notions of ourselves and things.

Yoga takes hold of ordinary physical functions to widen our consciousness. The word '*prāṇa*' does not simply mean 'breath', but the uni-

versal dynamics of the cosmos. *Prāna* is the electrical energy that fills the world, and that fills our physical mechanism too. This is how *yoga* charges individual life with cosmic significance and links up matter and spirit, individual and cosmos in a marvellous way. This creates an awakening in us that we are not the petty selves we think ourselves to be.

Yōga thus addresses itself to the task of reconstructing our personality. The point on which the reconstruction hinges is the will. It is not as though the will can be reconstructed or recreated. It can be realized. It can be made to manifest its power and glory fully. Man is made up of three levels: senses, knowledge, and will. The will is nearest to the Self. The Self manifests itself as will. This will issues forth, or is embodied, in every action or thought. But it is crisped when it touches the action-level or thought-level. Will at the source is full and complete; in expression, as thought or action, it is crisped. The only way to restore totality to it is to see the totality of will behind every thought, to see Being behind every thought.

So, then, to restore totality to every thought and action is the task to which *yoga* addresses itself. In other words, *yoga* can be said to be the science and art of complete act. To put it in religious terms, it is discovering God in every act. To put it in philosophical terms, it is realizing that, when infinity is taken away from infinity (in the process of thought or action), infinity remains. When we act or think, we have the feeling that the integrality of our Being or infinity is broken. We have the feeling that duality is a necessary spring for action. This belief is because of the inherent incapacity of the mind to grasp our Being. The mind cuts Being into fragments. It accepts to fall in the domain of duality.

But thought does not necessarily push us into duality, does not break the integrality of our Being. I think and I have a thought. Suppose I am conscious of my thought and I feel that it is my thought that flows. I have pene-

trated and reinforced my thought with my Being, and claim it as *my thought*. Other than the fact that it is my thought, or my action, it has no value for me. So where is the duality? It is my interiority externalized which I call my thought, my action, or my world. I have penetrated my world with my values and realizations and integrated it to me. So in every thought is reflected my self, and I can say every thought is self-realization. Thus, the field of action and thought that rises before us every moment, instead of creating duality, is an opportunity to get established in ourselves, in our integrality. For we become conscious that it is our Being that becomes dynamic, in thought and action, by the act of free choice and freedom.

To get established in this integrality of Being, or to restore totality to every thought and action, *yoga* lays down, among other things, two principal disciplines: the discipline of reason, which it calls *buddhi*, by which one develops discrimination, and the discipline of will, which is the mainspring of personality. If we take personality as a horizontal growth or deepening, then, on the periphery is the sensorial domain; then comes the mind; deeper still is the reason, which is the discriminative faculty; and then comes the will, which is nearest to the Self. The mind is the domain of discursive thought and love.¹ The moment will is reflected in reason or *buddhi*, we act, we take a decision. The will is complete and full in the plane of the Self, but it is filtered down in mind-plane and action-plane.

Reason has two faces: one turned towards the outside world and the other turned towards the Self. Reason goes on searching for the real in the external world. The moment it encounters an opposition or a contradiction, it retreats or steps back within itself to look at it. In stepping back, it looks within and creates an interiority. In this interiority, it contacts the

¹ We are not referring to the love which is the nature of the Self, which is *ānanda*, felicity. We are here referring to love as feeling.

will, the decisive power of the Self. In short, the reason becomes more *spiritual* and less material by this interiority. It regains its autonomy and independence; in this autonomy, it gains the conviction that the external world is just a context for its choice, a ground for exercising its discriminative power. In fact, it is the master of the external world, which is an extension of its choice and freedom.

It is in this way that *yoga* educates reason to gain its autonomy and power of discrimination, in essence, to gain supremacy over the external world. The autonomy of reason is essential to gain the autonomy of the will. But the method is different. To gain the autonomy of reason, we apply the process of 'not this, this is not real, etc.' and turn within. To gain the autonomy of the will, we do it by affirmation: 'The will is total in every act. The Self is behind every thought and act.' There is none in this world without a certitude. That certitude is the 'I'. Even behind a negation the 'I' is present. There is no time when the 'I' in all its integrality is not present. This 'I' is the will in fullness.

What we ordinarily call feebleness of will is not something like a physical feebleness. It is the incapacity of the will to reflect or integrate in full the certitude we have. The certitude escapes us often, and the only way we feel this escape of certitude is by feeling it on the will-plane. I have no will to carry out such and such a thing. Why? Because the certitude has escaped me.

How can it be restored? By the conviction that the 'I', the pure Being, is always behind us, in every act and every moment. The way in which this 'I' manifests itself may be different. Sometimes it expresses as need for food, sometimes for affection, sometimes as certitude, as thirst for God. It is every time the 'I' in various forms.

We said that, when the 'I' expresses in its totality, it expresses itself as certitude, which is the will, but which is filtered down in the action-plane. In the West, we are accustomed to the word 'intuition', which signifies a sponta-

neous and total reaction in us when we are face to face with a situation. In a moment of intuition, we do not divide ourselves into heart and intellect, but we react as a whole person. And when we react as a whole personality, and because we have abolished notions like the external world and the internal world, like the subject and the object, the solution born in the moment of intuition is sure to be complete. From the Indian standpoint, we can say that the 'I' is total in the moment of intuition without being cramped or cribbed by the mind, which is always on the evaluation-plane. The *yogins* and saints act always on their intuition, because they act without dividing themselves or without allowing the integrality of their being to be broken up. In Indian thought, it is said that they act from the heart. One must be careful to understand the full significance that Indian thought gives to the heart as the seat of intuition. The *yoga* books indicate that when the *prāṇa* or life-force, which is all-pervasive, is made to lift up the mind to the heart region, and make it absorbed in the heart, then *intuition of the heart* is awakened. After all, it is the same *prāṇa* that functions one time as mind and another time as the heart, and it is our personal preference arising out of the ego that makes the *prāṇa* work either as mind or as heart. But, if the ego, and following that the will, is satisfied to project a reaction only through the heart, which has now become the whole source of our being, then the reaction is bound to be total and spontaneous. If one understands correctly, the goal of *prāṇāyāma* is the creation of the total reaction. The goal of the *yogas* explained above, as the destruction of duality, is also the same, because the duality is not outside but inside, between our heart and intellect or mind; and when that duality of functions is stopped, then the heart, which is the seat of our being, is awakened.

To educate us in the habit of the presence of the 'I' as the totality, the *yoga* uses the inquiry of the three states: waking, dream, and deep sleep. The fundamental position taken by the inquiry is that the 'I', as the totality, as the

witness of the three states, is an inalienable state of Being. Deep sleep, by its absence of contents, is a state of negation, because of the absence of the waking subject. But the negative experience is carried to us as an experience of pleasure, which presupposes the presence of a witness who, though doing the reporting in waking, is not the waking 'I'. The dream subject is different from the waking subject, as dream time and space are different from waking time and space. But yet dream experiences are carried to us in waking. This is not possible if the witness, unaffected by waking, is not there in dream. So, then, the analysis leads us to conclude that the witness, who without identifying himself with the three states intuitively, is the total 'I' which is always present behind every act and thought.

Let us try to get this total 'I' in a moment of thought. There is no experience outside the three states: waking, dream, and deep sleep. I can say in one moment: I am awake, I dreamt, and I slept. This is a knowledge in depth. When I make these three statements, I am at the centre of three concentric circles, which raise one above the other and create a depth of perception in one and the same moment. In that moment, there is neither space nor time, because I am enclosing an indeterminate or timeless experience like sleep into the determinate experience of waking. When I make these statements, I am no longer in the waking; but I am the witness of three varying types of experience, and the witness is always timeless. All that can be said about it is that it is the totality.

The witness of the three states is not a fixed concept or idea. It is extreme lucidity and dynamism. To bring in geometry and say that I, as witness, am the centre of three concentric circles is only to facilitate understanding. I will have to conceive myself as a centre without circumference. I am the centre everywhere with the circumference nowhere. That is what I am as witness. This brings us to the important teaching of Vedānta regarding the interval between two states. It is said that, if we

can grasp the interval between two thoughts or two states, we can realize our true self. The substance of the teaching is this: when we become aware of two thoughts, we become aware of our true self, as the interval. We, then, become the witness of the consciousness which consumes the two thoughts in an extreme lucidity. It is this lucidity that remains and not the thoughts. In the same way, if I become aware of the interval between waking and deep sleep, what results is a lucidity of thought, when time and space are obliterated and the intemporal experience of sleep is actually lived. The distinction between waking and sleep is abolished.

It is this witness, which is timeless, that is present in every moment of our empirical thought. We miss it, because we do not cultivate its interiority or feel its depth. When Vedānta says that behind every thought there is the Being, totally present, it is making a metaphysical statement; it is not empirically present, but metaphysically present. The Being is felt as present when one steps back into one's own centre. This stepping back is made difficult by the superimposition between the subject and the object, a superimposition which is the substance of our empirical life. Vedānta calls this superimposition 'illusion'. It will take long to explain in what special sense Vedānta uses the word 'illusion'. All that we wish to emphasize now is the three levels of consciousness, the phenomenal, the empirical, and the transcendental. The empirical life is our daily life; it is not phenomenal or hallucinatory, like dream. This is a very important difference. When Indian thought uses the word 'illusion' to designate the character of life, there is a tendency to take it as a hallucination, as that of dream. Definitely it is not to be taken like that. The empirical on the other hand is real, so far as it goes, but it lacks in it something to explain itself. It lacks a self-explanatory character; it points to something above it. The empirical is real at some time and unreal at other times. This very character of being neither real nor unreal points its finger to a

transcendental aspect, from where it derives its sanction and explanation. This means that we cannot live without the transcendental aspect. The value of being empiric, it gets from the light of the transcendent. The empirical life is a third dimension produced by the two planes of consciousness, empirical and transcendental, and it is this presence of a third dimension, which sometimes belongs to the empiric and sometimes to the transcendental, that produces an element of inexplicability or even absurdity. The real way to interpret the notion of illusion is to say that the empirical life is inexplicable by a standard, be it transcendental or empiric. That is to say, it lacks the possibility of a total explanation in itself.

This does not prevent us from making an inquiry, as is contained in the inquiry of the three states, which leads us to the grasping of the total 'I', or the total Being, behind every thought or act, the total 'I' being the witness.

To be aware of this witness is to reinforce our actions and thought by a new will, which is full and which is not cut up into fragments according to the needs and exigencies of our daily life. What we call a new personality is a full personality, the intensity of whose being is behind every act. His will is total, his mind is total, and his fervour is total. It does not mean that he is insensible to feeling like a rock. It only means that his reactions are full and spontaneous, that his love and simplicity are not burdened by predilections and motives. The *yogin* is such a personality. He vibrates with a

wholeness of purpose and totality of resolve and spontaneity of love, which are rare to find elsewhere. We become transformed in his presence, for his reactions, being spontaneous, are contagious, and carry in them the power of spiritual transformation. Hence, it is natural that *yoga* insists on the necessity of a qualified teacher, and does not encourage self-made *yogins*, nor does it encourage adventures in it.

In presenting *yoga* as above, we have presented the heart and goal not only of Hinduism, but of all religions. The substance and goal of *yoga* is *samādhi*. One has it when one realizes and *lives* the total Self behind each thought and act. If Hinduism stands, it is because of the *samādhi* of great saints and sages from the time of the Upaniṣads to our own times. If Christianity stands, it is due to the *samādhi* of Jesus and mystics like St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross. Christian discipline teaches us to immolate exterior possessions by the vow of poverty, to immolate body by chastity, and to complete the sacrifice by obedience and surrender of the most precious goods of intellect and will to God, so that we can be born anew. To quote the words of Angelus Silesius: 'My body is a shell, in which a chicken will be hatched from the spirit of eternity.' Christian discipline is paving the way to the same *samādhi* of the Hindu saints. *Samādhi* is not a state into which one enters and comes out. It is constant and unbroken; it is the normal state. There is no difference between Satori of Zen and the *samādhi* of Yoga-Vedānta. Let us awake into that normal state, which is ours by birthright.

The first steps to *Yoga* are control of speech, non-receiving of gifts, entertaining of no expectations, freedom from activity, and always living in a retired place.

Living in solitude serves to control the sense-organs, control of the senses helps to control the mind, through control of the mind egoism is destroyed; and this again gives the *Yogi* an unbroken realisation of the Bliss of Brahman. Therefore, the man of reflection should always strive to control the mind.

—*Vivekacūdāmaṇi*

ŚRĪ-BHĀSYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

CHAPTER II

SECTION IV

TOPIC 1

THE ORIGINATION OF THE ORGANS

In the last section, the origination of the insentient world as also of the sentient world was described. There it was clearly shown in what sense the elements are said to be created, as well as in what particular sense the souls are said to be created. Now in this section the creation of the organs is taken up for discussion.

तथा प्राणाः ॥२१४१॥

1. Likewise the organs (*prāṇas*).

Objection: This *sūtra* is to be connected with the immediately previous topic, viz. the eternity of the souls treated at the end of the last section. So, like the souls, the organs also are not created. Śruti texts declare that they exist even at the time of dissolution (*pralaya*). 'This was, indeed, non-existence at the beginning. They say: what was non-existence at the beginning? These *ṛṣis*. . . Who are those *ṛṣis*? The organs (*prāṇas*) are, indeed, the *ṛṣis*' (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI. 1. 1. 1.) Hence the texts dealing with the origination of the organs (*prāṇas*) should be interpreted like those dealing with the origination of the souls.

Answer: This *sūtra* is to be connected with the earlier topics in the last section, viz. the creation of the elements etc. Why? Because before creation everything was one. 'Being alone was there before this' (*Chā. U.*, VI 2.1); 'The Self alone was this at the beginning' (*Ai. U.*, I. 1.1). Moreover, there are texts which declare

the creation of the organs. 'From that Self are produced the vital force, mind, and all the organs' etc. (*Mu. U.*, II. 1. 3). On the other hand, we do not find texts denying the origination of the organs, as in the case of the souls. All these reasons show that the organs are originated like the elements ether etc. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* text quoted above, the word '*prāṇas*' refers to Brahman, as *prāṇa* is one of Its designations. *Vide Chā. U.*, I.11.5. The word '*ṛṣi*', which means all-knowing, is apt as applied to Brahman and not to the insentient organs.

गौण्यसम्भवात्प्राक्श्रुतेश्च ॥२१४२॥

2. (The plural in the text quoted is) secondary, on account of the impossibility, and since (Brahman alone) is declared by scriptures (to exist) before that.

An objection is raised that as the text quoted in the last *sūtra* uses a plural form, 'the *ṛṣis* are the *prāṇas*', how can it refer to Brahman? This *sūtra* answers it. The plural form is to be taken in a secondary sense, as there is no plurality then, for texts say that Brahman alone existed before creation, One without a second.

तत्पूर्वकत्वाद्वाचः ॥२१४३॥

3. On account of speech having for its antecedent that (the creation of the elements).

A further reason is given in this *sūtra* to show that the organs are created. The scriptures say: 'This universe was then unmanifested. It was then differentiated by names and forms' (*Br. U.*, I.4.7). Before creation, ether and other

elements did not exist, and consequently speech (name) and other organs had no function to perform, as their objects were not in existence. Therefore, as the organs had no function before creation, and as there are no proofs to imagine their existence, we are to take that the organs did not exist before creation. Hence the word 'prāṇas' in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* text quoted earlier does not refer to the organs, but to Brahman which alone existed before creation.

TOPIC 2

THE NUMBER OF ORGANS

सप्तगतेर्विशेषितत्वाच्च ॥२।४।४॥

4. (The organs are seven in number) on account of seven (organs) going (with the soul at the time of death) and on account of the specification (of these seven).

This *sūtra* gives the view of the opponent. The organs are seven, as the soul is said to go forth from the body at the time of death with only seven organs: 'From him come forth the seven organs (*prāṇas*), (*Mu U.*, II.1.8). Again, they are distinctly enumerated in the following text: 'When the five senses of knowledge come to rest together with the mind, and the intellect, too, does not function, that state they call the highest' (*Ka. U.*, II.3.10).

हस्तादयस्तु स्थितेऽतो नैवम् ॥२।४।५॥

5. But the hands etc. also (are organs); (since they assist the soul while) abiding (in the body). Therefore it is not so.

When the soul abides in the body, the hands etc. are equally its instruments like ears etc. So the organs are not merely seven in number. The scriptures also declare their number as eleven: 'The ten organs in man and the mind is the eleventh' (*Br. U.*, III.9.4); *vide Gītā*, XIII.5. Therefore it is not that hands etc. are not organs. Their number is therefore eleven—the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, and the mind. The text quoted in the previous *sūtra* mentions only seven,

because the organs of action come into existence with the body, are dissolved with the body, and do not accompany the soul. The mention of seven in the highest state of *yoga* is because they are prominent among the group.

TOPIC 3

THE ORGANS ARE MINUTE IN SIZE

अणवश्च ॥२।४।६॥

6. And (they are) minute.

The opponent holds that the organs are all infinite, for the scriptures say so: 'They are all alike, all are infinite' (*Br. U.*, I.5.13). This *sūtra* refutes it and says that they are all minute in size. They pass out of the body, and therefore they must be finite. 'When the vital force goes out of the body, all the organs accompany it' (*Br. U.*, IV.4.2). As they are not perceived when they pass out of the body, they must be minute in size.

श्रेष्ठश्च ॥२।४।७॥

7. And the best.

The word 'best' refers to the chief vital force, whose superiority is established in the colloquy of the *prāṇas* in *Br. U.*, VI.1. The opponent holds that the chief vital force is eternal and not created: 'By Its own law It alone was breathing without wind' (*Rg-Veda*, X.129.2). Here the words 'was breathing' evidently refer to the function of the vital breath, which shows that it must be existing even before creation, and is therefore not created. So the texts which say that the vital force is created have to be interpreted like the texts which declare the origination of the souls. This *sūtra* refutes this view and says that even the vital force is produced from Brahman, for otherwise it will contradict scriptural statements which declare the oneness of all before creation. The *Muṇḍaka* text, again, declares that the vital force is created like earth etc., and there are no texts, as in the case of the soul, which deny the creation of the vital force. The text 'It alone was breath-

ing without wind' does not refer to the vital force, but intimates the existence of Brahman alone before creation, which is indicated by the words 'without wind'.

The vital force, though practically disposed of in the last *sūtra*, is specially mentioned in this *sūtra* with a view to the question raised in the next *sūtra*.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

With this issue, *Prabuddha Bharata* enters its sixty-fifth year. During this long period of over six decades, it has been humbly carrying on the task that was entrusted to it by its great founder, Swami Vivekananda, contributing to the awakening of a new consciousness in our dear motherland and propagating the universal message of India to the world outside. When entering into the new year, we rededicate ourselves to the ideals set before *Prabuddha Bharata* by our revered leader, and wish all our readers a happy new year. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our contributors who have been extending their sympathy and co-operation in our work. . . .

From this issue, we shall be presenting every month a fresh series of articles entitled 'Spiritual Talks of Swami Shivananda', which have been translated from the Bengali book *Śrī Śrī Mahāpuruṣajīr Kathā*. Swami Shivananda was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, and the second president of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission; and these talks have been excerpted from the diary of a disciple of the Swami. In intimate circles and among devotees, Swami Shivananda is endearingly and reverentially referred to as 'Mahapurush Maharaj'. . . .

In India, the *Gītā* has been for ages past the perennial spring of inspiration to all spiritual

aspirants in providing various patterns of perfected life to suit diverse temperaments—the active, the meditative, the intellectual, and the devotional—and in developing characters which are 'pure, simple, erect, benign, austere, and sublime; harmonious, integrated, and unitive'. The article on the 'Gītā; the Gospel of Harmony' is a devout and instructive study of this sacred text by Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., formerly of Surendranath College, Calcutta. . . .

'The Synthesis of Science and Religion in Our Education' is the text of a lecture Sri C. D. Deshmukh, Chairman, University Grants Commission, delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, in September 1959. We are grateful to Sri C. D. Deshmukh for kindly permitting us to publish the lecture in *Prabuddha Bharata*. We also express our gratitude to Swami Ranganathananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, for securing this text for us for publication. . . .

Swami Nityabodhananda, of the Ramakrishna Order and formerly Editor of *The Vedanta Kesari*, is carrying on the Vedānta work in Europe. Staying in Geneva, Switzerland, he has organized a new Vedānta centre there. The article on 'Yoga and Occident', presented in this issue, is based on a lecture he gave before a Paris audience some time back.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN THE ABHIDHARMA. By H. V. GUENTHER. *Published by Buddha Vihara, Risaldar Park, Lucknow. 1957. Pages 404. Price not mentioned.*

This is a treatise confined to Buddhist philosophy and psychology as expounded in the *Abhidharma*. Three viewpoints are discussed, namely, those of Theravāda, Vaibhāṣika, and Vijñānavāda. In the first of the five chapters of the book, the author discusses the meaning and scope of *Abhidharma*. He makes it very clear that he is bypassing completely textual criticism, and is concentrating on the philosophical and the psychological contribution of the great Buddhist work. A first impression that the book under review is concerned only with theoretical considerations is dispelled as soon as the second chapter is studied. 'Buddhism has always been concerned with the immediately present and the immediately given, . . . actually there is nothing in the teaching of Buddhism which our immediate experience does not contain.' In fact, the author's exposition of attitudes is clearly practical.

From the 'Mind and Its States' explained in the second chapter, the author passes on to the practical aspects of meditation in the third chapter. The different stages of Buddhist meditation are clearly described, and their distinguishing characteristics are brought to light. 'Meditation is not only a certain practice, it is also a unique experience.' An important contribution of this chapter is the exposition of the integrated whole of all stages in the final realization of Truth.

In the fourth chapter, the author interprets the world we live in. Characteristically enough, perception is made the basis of this interpretation, and a new element that is introduced is the *Gestalten*. It is not the *Gestalten* of Gestalt psychologists, but *rūpa* of Buddhism that the author has in view.

Fittingly enough, the fifth and concluding chapter deals with the Path. Here, again, the three different approaches of Theravāda, Vaibhāṣika, and Vijñānavāda are discussed. The different levels are indicated. And a conception of progress which, to students of modern philosophy, may seem characteristically Bergsonian is presented by the author.

The book is an outstanding contribution to the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism. Treatises in this field are not numerous. And students of Buddhism have in the volume under review a source book of great value.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

VEDĀNTA-BĀLA-BODHINI. By SRI SACCIDANANDENDRA-SARASVATI SAMYAMIN. A commentary on the morning meditation hymn by Śrī Śaṅkara-bhagavatpādācārya. *Published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur, Mysore State. Pages 54. Price 75 nP.*

It is well-known that the core of Advaita lends itself to be stated in a stanza or a tome. The morning meditation of Bhagavatpāda illustrates the truth of the first part of this assertion. This marvellous piece concisely presents all the essentials of the philosophy of *ātmādvaita* with all the charm of masterly touch. Retaining in memory, reflection of the meaning, meditation on the truth meditated, and chanting when the mind is less calm—*smaraṇa*, *artha-manana*, *dhyāna*, and *kīrtana*—are the avowed purpose for which all great hymns are produced. In keeping with this practice, this sunrise meditation, too, stresses *smarāmi*, *bhajāmi*, and *namāmi* in order of their importance and origin of these acts in the three stanzas. To the twice-born, the dawn is the most prized period of the day, being the most fitted for divine communion. The first act of thought he is enjoined to do immediately after awaking from sleep is to recall to mind the highest Truth from which the universe around him and himself are derived. The remembrance of the Truth matures to one-pointed devotion for It, and acceptance of It as the only goal of life and object of reverence. These three aspects are implied in the three successive stanzas of this hymn, which expresses clearly the quintessence of pure Advaita and conveys at the same time the top level meaning of *Sāvitrī* which confers *Brāhmaṇahood*.

The title of the commentary 'Instruction for Beginner in Vedānta' is eminently fitting and fully justified by the content. The erudite author does not stop with paraphrasing the words or construing the passage or giving an epitome of the text. His profound mastery of the Śaṅkara philosophy and literature is rare and unique, so much so that in this lucid, logical, adequate, well-thought out exposition, written in flawless, idiomatic, enticing Sanskrit, full of classical flavour, he not only brings out the pure thoughts of Bhagavatpāda in its pristine lustre, but also reflects the undying glory of his *prasannagambhīra* diction style. The arguments in *ātmadraṣṭṛbhāvaparīkṣaṇa*, the presentation of *ajñāna* as *avicārasiddha*, the true significance of the *turiya* concept, and the clarification of *vidvad-dṛṣṭi* and *avidvad-dṛṣṭi*—through the imaginary conversation between the preceptor and the disciple—are clear, unencumbered, and convincing to the beginner, to whom the work is of immense value.

The numbering of the topics, and the paraphrase of important or technical words and phrases at the end, adds to the usefulness of the book. The name of the author is printed in Devanāgarī in one way and in English differently. Here is a publication of great value for lovers of Sanskrit and Vedānta for a price low enough for any individual buyer of it.

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

COUNTERPOINT: KENNETH BURKE AND ARISTOTLE'S THEORIES OF RHETORIC. By L. VIRGINIA HOLLAND. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16. 1959. Pages xv+128. Price \$3.75.*

Rhetoric has always been an essential part of the educational equipment of the student in Europe. The Greeks and later the Romans took it up with great interest and delight. Though politicians, statesmen, and lawyers distinguished themselves as orators, the early thinkers took it to be a form of literature; and some of the best thinkers of Europe discussed the nature, scope, and function of rhetoric in detail. Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric still continues to remain a classic in the field. In recent years, Kenneth Burke of the United States has been recognized as an authority on the subject. Burke's views are scattered in a number of his works and papers. Dr. Holland for the first time makes an attempt here to present systematically Burke's view about the nature of man, the nature of society, and the function of the critic in modern society. She also examines the views of Burke in comparison with those of Aristotle.

The book opens with a brief account of the basic assumptions of Burke. Man is a social and biologic animal communicating with his fellows with the aid of symbols. He is an acting animal moving purposively and ethically towards the achievement of the ultimate Good. All the social problems of man are basically problems of communication or language. The function of rhetoric, then, is to help the critic promote social cohesion and improve society; for rhetoric is the study or use of language symbols which persuade through the strategy of identification. This is also the Aristotelian view. But Burke considers the creative or critical writer as a social critic, and argues for an intensive study and application of the principles of rhetoric by the writer. Aristotle would confine the sphere of rhetoric only to the speaker. Even then Burke seems to have made explicit the potentials implicit in Aristotle's treatment of the means of persuasion. It is only in methodology that Burke appears to have widened Aristotelian view. Burke's ideas are not a counterpart of those of Aristotle, since he belongs to the classical tradition. Today, when we are caught up in the network of all kinds of *cliches*, a

study of rhetoric is valuable, more so when we have an authority like Burke, who has widened the scope of the subject. Dr. Holland's book repays careful reading.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

IN THE LAST ANALYSIS. By ADAM ELLIOT ARMSTRONG. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, 1956. Pages 115. Price \$3.00.*

The writer, honoured with a D.Sc. degree by Alma College, is a successful inventor of mechanical products, and directs the business empire of the Armstrong Machine Works at Three Rivers, Michigan. His philosophic mind pursues the cause and effect principle to the far ends of existence and embodies in the present volume a conception for modern times of the truth about the world and man's part in its drama. Out of the matrix of some past systems of thought in the heritage of the West, he, as a protester, shapes his own positive conclusions, scientific, practical, and yet not materialistic, a true-to-fact philosophy consonant with belief in God. The last analysis deduces the implications as to God, man, and destiny of the real pattern of the world in which 'All is Energy' and 'Order Everywhere'. This new and fresh testimony about reality of the pragmatic American spirit underwrites many of the accepted notions of scientism, and is pleasant reading throughout in its freedom from technical jargon.

PROF. BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA

REINCARNATION. By SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Pages 99. Price Rs. 2.*

SELF-KNOWLEDGE. By SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Pages 124. Price Rs. 4.*

Both published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta-6.

Swami Abhedananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, combined in himself a life of saintliness with a wide range of scholarship. After the passing away of his Master in 1886, he spent some time in the Baranagore monastery with his other brother disciples, engaged in serious study and meditation. Thereafter, he led a life of intense austerity and *tapasyā* in different places of pilgrimage, travelling barefooted as a wandering monk, before he was called by Swami Vivekananda to London in 1896 to help him in the work of spreading the message of Vedānta. In 1897, he took charge of the Vedanta Society of New York and carried on the work of preaching Vedānta most successfully till 1921, when he finally returned to

India. While in the West, he delivered lectures in different parts of America and also the Continent on various aspects of Vedānta and made acquaintance with the leading savants of the West—scientists, literary men, religious leaders, and philosophers. Everywhere people were impressed by the profundity of his scholarship and learning, as also his oratorical talents, and were attracted by his charming personality.

The first book under review is a collection of five lectures the Swami delivered in New York during 1898-99 on the subject of reincarnation. The first lecture is a reasoned exposition of the doctrine as held by the Vedānta. The Swami makes particular reference to the existence of a belief in reincarnation among many Greek, Roman, Hebrew, as also many Christian thinkers of the West. In the second and third lectures, the Swami shows how the biological theory of hereditary transmission and the Darwinian theory of biological evolution are incomplete and unsatisfactory in themselves and how they find their fulfilment in the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation. The fourth lecture is a comparative study of the Christian and Zoroastrian theories of resurrection and the Hindu idea of reincarnation from the standpoint of modern science. The Swami holds the latter to be more scientific. The last lecture is a discussion on the relative merits of the theories of transmigration as preached by Pythagoras, Plato, and their followers, and the Hindus and the Buddhists.

The second book *Self-knowledge*, discounts the purely materialistic and idealistic views of man and his nature as being one-sided and imperfect. It is only by realizing that eternal, infinite Being, called Brahman, or the Over-Soul, or the Unknowable, or the Ding-on-sich, which is the source of both matter and mind, the subject and the object, the ego and the non-ego, and of which these are but different modes, that man can find the ultimate truth, real happiness, and immortality. This is the teaching of the Upaniṣads, which point out to us the path to realize that Brahman. The Swami takes five Upaniṣads—*Isā*, *Kena*, Prataṛdana-Indra's story of *Kauṣītaki*, Indra-Virocana story of *Chāndogya*, and Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī story of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*—to illustrate the different aspects of this realization of Ātman-brahman, and gives illuminating explanations of them from the modern scientific standpoint.

S. K.

THUS SPAKE RAMA TIRTHA. COMPILED BY SWAMI RAJESWARANANDA. Published by Rama Tirtha Sevashram, Pidugurala P.O., Guntur District (Andhra Pradesh). Pages 175. Price 87 nP.

This little book is a collection of 108 select sayings of Swami Rama Tirtha from his vast writings, which are preserved in ten volumes under the title *In the Woods of God-realization*.

Even from his early life, Swami Rama Tirtha was marked out for a life that was to be quite out of the ordinary. In 1900, when he was a professor in a college at Lahore, he came under the powerful influence of Swami Vivekananda, who had gone there in the course of his North Indian tour, and gave his famous lecture on Vedānta. The very next year, we find Swami Rama Tirtha turning a monk and spending his days in intense spiritual *sādhana*s. Thereafter, we find him travelling in different countries of the world, preaching the soul-stirring message of the Vedānta in forceful language, which was characterized by clarity as well as brilliance.

Fully imbued with the spirit of Advaita Vedānta as the Swami was, these sayings presented in this brochure are saturated with the ideas of the divinity of the human soul and the universality of the spirit, which is one and infinite, ever pure and perfect. The Vedānta, in its practical aspect, has a message of hope and cheer for man in his day-to-day life. Swami Rama Tirtha's sayings bear the stamp of such a message.

S. A.

SRI SAMKARACHARYA AND HIS MISSION. BY S. SRIKANTAYA. Published by the Mythic Society, Cenotaph Road, Bangalore-2. 1956. Pages 97. Price Rs. 2.50.

A series of articles on Śrī Śaṅkara, by the author, which had originally appeared in *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, have been brought together in this book, which, as he says, is the result of a compelling suggestion made many years ago by the late V. Subrahmanya Iyer. The social background and the religious atmosphere of India which needed a personality like Śaṅkara and a philosophy such as his, the diverse systems of thought which were out to throttle the Vedic religion and philosophy, the new forces that had invaded India and were causing confusion in the religious as well as the social consciousness of the nation, the life and activities of Śrī Śaṅkara, and the cultural as well as spiritual conquest by Śaṅkara—these form some of the chief points discussed in the book.

Speaking of the unique contribution that Śaṅkara made to Indian life and thought, the author says: 'In an age of unrest and strife, social discord and spiritual bankruptcy, when the country was politically divided and socially corrupt, with a remarkable

breadth of vision and depth of understanding, standing aloft unparalleled in the history of religious thought, Śaṅkara proclaimed that the spirit was one and that alone was real and there was nothing else that was real' (p. 53). 'Śaṅkarācārya...not only revitalized the mind and life of India, but also erected the most advanced outpost in human thought by his philosophy' (p. 92).

Here is a valuable book to the students of Śāṅkara Vedānta, presented in clear and simple language.

SHITAMSHUCHAITANYA

GREAT THOUGHTS OF GREAT MEN OR IDEAS AND IDEALS. BY SAIN DAS. *Published by the Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, P.O. Sadhu Ashram, Hoshiarpur. 1958. Pages 310. Price Rs. 4.50.*

The late Lala Sain Das was one of the front rank educationists of the Punjab in his times. The volume under review is a collection of his reflections on spiritual realization, on life and death, on the art of living, on happiness, on education, and on social and material well-being. They are the result of the author's long and intensive study and are supported at places by appropriate quotations from the writings of well-known writers and thinkers. They give good food for thought, and are sure to leave a valuable impression on the reader's mind.

PROF. S. B. MOOKHERJI

BENGALI

BALARĀM MANDIRE SAPĀRŚADA ŚRĪ RĀMAKRSNA. BY SWAMI JIVANANDA. *Published by the Trustees of the Balaram Mandir, 57 Ramkanta Bose Street, Calcutta-3. Pages 76. Price 75 nP.*

The booklet under review briefly describes the house of the late Balaram Bose, a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. The house known as 'Balaram Mandir', and sanctified by the visits of the Saint of Dakshineswar and the Holy Mother, is one of the spiritual centres in Calcutta today. The booklet also tells of some of the *sannyāsin* disciples of the Master, who at one time or another visited the Mandir or lived therein.

PROF. S. B. MOOKHERJI

KATHIKĀ SAHA RĀMAKRSNA LĪLĀ GITĪ. BY SWAMI CANDIKANANDA. *Published by the Ramakrishna Mission, Shillong. Page 88. Price Re. 1.25*

The booklet describes in a simple language the life stories of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother. Meant for being sung to the accompaniment of musi-

cal instruments, the booklet is liberally interspersed with devotional songs. The author's attempt is a laudable one.

PROF. S. B. MOOKHERJI

BANER DĀK. BY SWAMI VISHWATMANANDA. *Published by Sri Arun Kumar Dey, 65/1/1 Manicktolla Street, Calcutta-6. Pages 224 Price Rs. 5.*

The volume under review is an admirable treatise on botany for beginners. The author's simple language and charming manner of presentation make the treatise pleasant-reading. A perusal of the book would be profitable not only to the adolescent readers for whom it is primarily meant, but to the grown-ups as well. It also describes how plants and leaves may be made to serve various diversionary and utilitarian purposes. The paper and printing of the book are quite good. The get-up is attractive.

PROF. S. B. MOOKHERJI

HINDI

JYAUTIS AUR ĀDHUNIK VICĀR-DHĀRĀ. TRANSLATED BY OM PRAKASH KAHOL. *Published by Roman Publications, 'Sri Rajes', Bangalore 3. Pages 175. Price Rs. 3.*

That Professor B. V. Raman has dedicated his life to give astrology its rightful place among the 'sciences' is well known. Any reader of his books or brilliant editorials in the *Astrological Magazine* is bound to be impressed with the majesty of the 'creative' energies in the midst of which man is born, is privileged to live, and ought to learn to think and feel aright. None can forget Professor Raman's significant repetition of the formula: The planets can impel, but not compel.

The book under review is a translation into chaste and forcible Hindi of Professor Raman's well-known book *Astrology and Modern Thought*. In his introductory remarks, the translator speaks about the vigour of the author's English style and the problem of bringing it out in chaste, literary Hindi—something not attempted by anyone before. Professor Kahol says that he has selected this particular book of Professor Raman not merely on the ground that its subject-matter deals with astrology, but also because he aspires to promote the cause of Hindi—as the all-India language that must be able to function as an effective medium for explaining scientific subjects also with ease.

We heartily recommend this book to all lovers of Hindi and of astrology.

S. N.

NEWS AND REPORTS

OPENING OF THE NEW TEMPLE IN SAN FRANCISCO

In October, the Vedanta Society of Northern California inaugurated its magnificent new temple at 2323 Vallejo Street, San Francisco, with a five-day programme of worship, prayers, music, readings from scriptures, and religious and philosophical talks. The ceremonies, which began on Wednesday, October 7, included the three-day festival of *Durgā-pūjā*, which was celebrated each day with an elaborate worship and the chanting of the *Caṇḍī*. Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday were marked by morning and evening worships, each lasting from three to four hours. The main ceremony, during which the temple was dedicated, took place on Friday, the second day of *Durgā-pūjā*, with religious festivities starting at ten in the morning and continuing until ten at night. The Friday programme included worship, *homa*, music, and dinner, at which about three hundred and fifty devotees were served. Twelve Swamis of the Order, nine of whom had come from other American Vedanta Centres, participated in almost all the celebrations, performing the worships, Vedic chants, singing, and lecturing; and hundreds of devotees, some fifty of whom had come from other parts of the United States, attended all the services.

On Sunday morning, October 11, the temple was formally opened to the public with a three-hour ceremony, during which each of the Swamis gave an illuminating talk on an aspect of Vedānta. The performance of choral music, which had been specially composed for the dedication ceremonies, was also a part of the programme.

The temple, at the present first stage of its completion, is a three-storied reinforced concrete building, situated on the northern slope of Pacific Heights—a residential district which is generally regarded as the best in the city. The building is considered to be especially earthquake proof—a particular advantage in the earthquake-prone San Francisco. The shrine, auditorium, and foyer occupy the second floor of the building; and offices, the third floor. The ground floor accommodates the library and service area. The temple's spacious flower garden, which supplies all the flowers necessary for worship, is beautifully laid out on a large, terraced slope adjoining the building.

The thirteen-foot high, mahogany altar, decorated with superb carvings and high-lighted with red colour and gold leaf, contains on its upper part the Sanskrit word *OM*. Below, in separate niches, are placed

bronze figures of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Swami Vivekananda, Buddha, and Christ. The auditorium can comfortably seat about three hundred people.

Sunday morning services and Wednesday evening lectures are now conducted in the new temple. Daily worship is also held there. The auditorium is kept open throughout the day until 10.30 at night, and many devotees come there to meditate.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION RAJAHMUNDRY

This branch of the Ramakrishna Mission was started in 1951. It has a shrine room for the worship of Sri Ramakrishna, and maintains a free library and reading room, a free homoeopathic dispensary, and a students' home mainly for the poor boys attending the college. There is also a branch centre in the town with a separate shrine and library and reading room. Lectures and classes are conducted daily at the town centre and on Sundays at the main centre.

Famine Relief work and Godavari Flood Relief work were carried on by the Mission during 1951-53 and 1953-58 respectively. A total amount of Rs. 12.12 lakhs, received through voluntary contributions, were spent for the relief work. Twenty double quarter houses were built for the use of 40 Harijan families affected by the Godavari floods, out of a generous contribution of Rs. 24,065 made by Sri C. M. Trivedi, the then Governor of Andhra Pradesh, from the funds at his disposal. The colony, named after the governor as 'Trivedi Nagar', was declared open by Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, in June 1958.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA MORABADI, RANCHI

REPORT FOR 1958

This philanthropic institution is carrying on various kinds of social service among the people of the locality and the surrounding Adivasi villages since 1930. During the year under review, its activities were as follows:

Medical: The Ashrama maintains a well-equipped charitable homoeopathic dispensary. The dispensary has also provision for occasional allopathic treatment of patients. In 1958, 8,378 patients were supplied with free medicines, and 170 needy patients with diet also.

Charitable: Powdered milk, donated by CARE, New Delhi, was distributed among 900 poor people of the locality and the adjoining areas once in a fortnight from 12.1.58 to 18.5.58 and from 13.7.58 to 14.12.58. Multipurpose food, contributed by the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore, was distributed among 100 poor people for some time.

Cultural and Educational: The Ashrama has got a library with 1,314 books in English, Hindi, Bengali, and Sanskrit, and a reading room with 11 newspapers and 50 monthly magazines in Hindi, English, and Bengali. Average monthly attendance: nearly 100. The Ashrama also arranges occasional public lectures by eminent men on various social and cultural subjects, musical recitals, and magic lantern and film shows. In 1958, 8 lectures, 27 musical recitals, and 10 magic lantern and film shows were arranged.

Religious: Daily *pūjā* and prayers at the Ashrama shrine, and the observance of the birthdays of saints and prophets of different religions.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CHINGLEPUT

REPORT FOR 1957 AND 1958

This educational institution was founded in 1936 and was affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission in 1940. Following are the details of its activities at present.

The Boys' High School: Started in 1941, the school has at present 400 students on the rolls and 17 teachers on the staff. The school prepares students for the S.S.L.C. public examination of Madras,

leading to the university. Religious and moral instructions form a regular part of the course of instruction in all classes. Two efficient A.C.C. groups and a scout troop are functioning under the school. The volunteers of the Shrama Dan Sena rendered valuable assistance in the construction works undertaken by the Mission during 1957-58 and in many other ways.

The Girls' High School: This school was started in 1950 with 123 girls, and has now on its rolls 256 girls. There are 10 teachers on the staff. Besides the curricular subjects, girls are taught home-craft, music, needle-work, and dress-making.

The Elementary School: Started in 1947 with 25 children, it has at present a strength of 451 pupils (257 boys and 194 girls) of age group 5 to 9. There are 14 teachers (5 men and 9 women) on the staff.

The Boys' Residential Home: This is a paying boarders' hostel attached to the Boys' school, and was opened in 1939. The boarders themselves discharge most of the duties of the home, such as looking after the kitchen garden, keeping the premises neat and clean, conducting the worship and prayer at the shrine, etc. Classes on the *Gītā* are held for the boys by a pundit of the school, and special attention is paid to develop in them respect and love for religious and spiritual ideals.

The Printing-Press: From 1955, all the printing work required for the institutions are done in this press owned by the Mission.

Library and Reading Room: There are 4,730 books in the libraries attached to the Boys' High School and the Girls' High School. The reading room receives 22 magazines and newspapers.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The 98th birthday of SWAMI VIVEKANANDA falls on Thursday, the 21st January 1960.

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