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



SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

January 14, 1930 (continued)

By stages the conversation drifted to the history of the organization. 'Look back a little,' he said, 'and you find that this organization and your works are not running according to anybody's caprice. These works took root in the service we rendered to the Master at Cossipore. The doctor (Mahendralal Sircar) encouraged us very much to do this service. Many of us were students then. Some of us gave up our studies for the sake of this service. We had to serve by turns. Our work in an organized way started from there. Swamiji had ever in mind the problem as to how truth could be realized. Then as he reached South India in the course of his travel, his heart was touched. He was greatly moved at the sight of the prevailing disparity between the Brāhmaṇas and the Śūdras, the Śūdras and the Pariahs, and by the innumerable kinds of human misery. And he had the fullest realization that he would have to serve the masses and do good to them. Then he went to America, where he had great success; and many were they who honoured him. At last, he wrote to Shashi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) at Alambazar,

"Now, look here Shashi, I can now well understand that it is all his work, and I also understand why he loved me so much and gave so much instruction". Formerly, I had not even dreamt that I would have to work, nor had I any inclination for that. When Swamiji's letter came, I thought, "True enough, we shall have to work". Then arose a desire to read. But we had no money whatsoever. Just then, a devotee came from Bombay, and he gave some money. With that I secured two volumes of *Webster's Dictionary* from Calcutta. Then came an almirah and a desk; and along with these, a little tendency to work as well. That being so, if anybody now asserts that you are doing all this out of your own whim, then he is mistaken. It was none else but Swamiji who gave shape to this organization. Those who criticize do not know the history of the organization. He shaped it in accordance with the Master's wishes. . . .

'Swamiji used to go to the shrine twice every day. But the period of meditation went on increasing greatly. Some two or three weeks before his passing away, we stood one day under the mango-tree (in the courtyard), when

Swamiji came down from the shrine and, with a prophetic vision before his very eyes, said, "Look here, this current that has started flowing will last for seven or eight hundred years". Then he talked of other things. Of these, we have seen a little, and you will see much more. Quite a number of good boys will come. Have faith in what we say; for have we not been witnessing all this from the very beginning? The Master is none other than the Mother of the Universe; it is he who is ordaining it all, and none of you is doing so. When you make a mistake, just look back a little and you will understand. Whatever difficulties you may be in will all be washed away. Some, having impure minds, may think that the organization is being run according to the whim of somebody. And yet even they will progress, if they hold on to the Mother—to the Master. For his mercy is unconditional. The Lord said in the *Gītā*: "O Kuntī's son, I have no duty to fulfil in any of the three worlds. There is nothing that has not been attained by Me and nothing that is yet to be obtained; and still do I persist in work. If I ever cease to be engaged in work with vigilance, men will imitate My ways in every respect, O Kuntī's son. If I cease from work, all these creatures will be uprooted, and I shall become the author of the intermixture of castes, thereby destroying all these creatures."

'As for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is none other than God Himself; there is nothing that he has not achieved and nothing that is still to be achieved. Yet he works, out of mercy for human beings. This is his grace that knows no limitation. When many people gather for a work, there is bound to be differences with regard to it; but these will be straightened out in due course. It is impossible to carry on, unless there is submission to someone's leadership. There is the book of rules for the Math (monastery) framed by Swamiji, which you should follow. And you should also listen to what we say. There is none so young among you as to require such orders as "Do this" or "Do that"; there is no need for all that. But if any occasion arises,

rest assured that I shall do the needful, though there will be hardly any occasion for me also to act like that. And you should remember that still there are a few in the Order who had directly been blessed by the Master. As for myself, I am perforce in your midst for ever; for I cannot even so much as move down from my room. By nature I dislike poking into everything; I do not like interfering, that is against my nature. I know, and this is my firm conviction, that the Master and the Holy Mother (Sri Sarada Devi) are there to look after everything; so I feel no need to dictate. But as you have faith in me, I sometimes say some things as they best appear to me.

'It goes without saying that we have to work; but if we have regular *japa* and meditation along with the work, we shall not fall into difficulties. Our lives are not meant for being spent at Hardwar, Rishikesh, and other places, begging for alms from door to door. Swamiji himself had been to Rishikesh to have a first-hand knowledge of such a life. It is good to lead such a life for some time, but not always. At Dakshineswar the Master made us beg for our food, so that we might free ourselves from conceits of high social life. For getting rid of the pride of caste and aristocracy, it is necessary to beg for food from door to door just for a few days.

'Do you not see what tremendous work Swamiji did by going to America? One cannot do good work unless one practises *japa* and meditation regularly. These must be adhered to.

'Good, and certainly not harm, will result from what the generality of the members of this organization decide after mature consideration. When some people gather to consider an issue and express their individual points of view freely, then a decision issues out naturally; and that will not lead to any harm anywhere. All that worries us is such personal consideration as, "This is harmful to me", "This is good for me", and so on.

'Meditation and spiritual practices are abso-

lutely necessary, my boys; these must be practised every day; and then they will correct everything. When you meditate, forget for the time being all about the work, the organization, the monastery, and everything else. Think that you alone are there and your God with you. Gradually, you will have to forget your "I" also. Can that really be called work which makes the mind impure? That is only evil work.

True service is done when one believes that the person one serves is none other than Nārāyaṇa. That idea does not become a living reality from the very start. In the beginning, one has to adopt that idea by relying on the instruction of one's *guru*, with the faith that such was also the message of the Master, the Holy Mother, and Swamiji. This is how I have understood it: the Master re-established religion, and Swamiji codified it; the Master was the aphorism, as it were, and Swamiji its commentary. Swamiji took the idea of service from the life of the Master. At the sight of the famine-stricken people at Deoghar (Bihar), the Master pressed Mathur Babu thus: "Give to each one of them sufficient oil to dress the hair, a piece of cloth to wear, and at least one full meal; else I stay back among these, caring very little for the pilgrimage. And why should you not give, you who are just a keeper of the Mother's treasure?" Some time after this, when a famine had been raging in their estate near about Ranaghat and Kushtia, the Master told Mathur, "Remit their rents". Mathur had to comply at last. Here also he told Mathur, "You are a mere treasurer of the Mother; you have got to give". What a sympathetic heart Swamiji had! It was sights like these that moved him to introduce service as a path of spiritual progress.

Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) would say, "One can work more than enough if one but works with a fraction of one's mind, leaving the greatest portion of it to God".¹ In the *Gītā*, the Lord says, "I am here holding this entire universe by a mere fraction of Myself". He

supports the world by a small part of His. One must pray to Him and meditate on Him intensely. Tulasīdās used to say, "With Rāma's name on the lips, work with the hands". The ideal of begging from door to door, prevailing at Rishikesh, is not for us. Even Hari Maharaj, who loved solitude so much, and had lived quite a long time in places near about Rishikesh, said one day: "We are thieves (stealing our own time), to be sure; for do we think of God the whole day? At most, we meditate for three to four hours, the rest of the time just glides away uselessly." If one has intense aspiration, one can have good meditation and other spiritual practices for six months or one year at a stretch. It is good to have one companion. Another point to note is that it is good to have a habit of study and spend some time in reading and writing. When *japa* and meditation do not seem to proceed properly, one can very well read the scriptures; the time is then well spent. Hari Maharaj had always some books with him, for instance, the *Gītā*, *Caṇḍī (Saptaśatī)*, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Upaniṣads, *Brahma-Sūtra*, etc. He read quite often. For people of his kind, reading is a sort of meditation. He meditated on the verses of the *Gītā* and the Upaniṣads. Study is a very good thing; it is a great help. At Kankhal, I noticed some monks loitering about for a couple of hours or more, just to kill time. As for ourselves, I find that we have developed a sense of duty, which stays with us in spite of very deep meditation or *samādhi*; for the Master incarnated for the good of the whole world, and we are his servants. How can that sense leave us? In fact, how long can one be in actual meditation? Most of the time is spent in preparation for it. In a couple of hours or more that one sits for meditation, one can have deep concentration for a minute or two; and by his grace that is enough for all that an ordinary man needs.

On this birthday of Hari Maharaj, I pray to the Master that you may be blessed, and have enlightenment and love for God; and may your hearts be filled with faith, and may you

¹The actual words are: "Two annas (out of sixteen annas in a rupee) for work and fourteen annas for God."

ever progress further and further. That is my only prayer. . . .

'Swamiji organized this Saṅgha (Order of monks) according to the wishes of the Master. At Alambazar, Swamiji said to Shashi Maharaj, "Shashi, we shall have to do something, so all of you get ready". The Master's sons and servants are still associated with this Saṅgha. Who else indeed could have organized his work but Swamiji working under the will of the Master? Swamiji told me, "This work will continue for seven or eight hundred years, and quite a number of good boys will come". Still we need meditation and other spiritual practices. It is only through the grace of the Master that I am still able to speak.'

Then he started singing, and at last asked a monk to sing for him. The monk sang:

Hail, Thou life of the universe and its protector,
 Hail, Thou refuge of the humble and giver of good,
 Hail, Thou destroyer of evil, Thou ruler of all,
 Hail, O Lord, Thou who art both father and mother of all,
 Hail, Thou on whom rest all the hearts,
 Hail, Thou who knowest the workings of every heart,
 Hail, Thou remover of the world's affliction and the saviour of the world!

This humble one at Thy door calls on Thee;
 Be Thou gracious, Thou supreme Self?

Then, as he paced about, he said, 'This, too, is his grace that I can walk even so little as this'. Going to the veranda overlooking the Gaṅgā, he chanted with folded hands a Sanskrit hymn to Gaṅgā, starting with :

*Devi sureśvari bhagavati Gaṅge,
 Tribhuvana-tāriṇi tarala-taraṅge. . .*

January 15, 1930

Mahapurush Maharaj said in the course of a conversation: 'Romain Rolland has written a life of the Master. They know how to write a biography. Just see how he runs through the lives of Rammohan Roy, Devendra Nath Tagore, and Keshab Chandra Sen, and carries you along with him to the lives of the Master and Swamiji. . . . It is a wonder how people become devoted to him. The Master said one day, "Various will be the colours of the people—yellow, white, and so on—who will become devotees". Ay, God knows no limitation of time, space, or personality; for He is grace itself. How fortunate we were that we prepared for him betel leaves, tobacco, etc. and served him in other ways, and got so much love from him!'

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN SOCIETY

Dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣaḥ ; dharmeṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ—Possession of *dharmā* (religious consciousness) distinguishes man from animal; without *dharmā*, he is on a par with the animal.

—MAHABHARATA

I

Religion aids man 'to live not wantonly, but warily—wary of a transcendental reality'. This is the essential and primary meaning of religion. The awareness of a transcendental reality, which may be termed God—infinite, eternal, and omnipotent—makes man conscious of his

finitude and fleeting nature. The dawning of this double awareness in the mind of man is the beginning of religion. Once that begins to shine in his heart, he starts adoring God and tries to understand Him by various means. Religious living, with all its aids and accessories,

is meant to deepen this understanding, enabling man to know God and his relationship with Him.

Religious spirit, which is universal, must be distinguished from the several systems of faith and worship that are prevalent in the world. While doctrines and dogmas, as well as the observance of formal rituals and ceremonies—which are to be found in almost all the religions of the world—go a long way in stabilizing the faith of the votaries of religion, they are not the be-all and end-all of religious pursuit. Since religious spirit is universal, the mind of a truly religious man, too, must be universal and non-exclusive. Genuine religious life frees man from all narrowness of vision, and his heart expands to embrace all and to exclude none. All the aids that one may resort to, all the external practices that one may undertake in the name of religion, may supplement one's religious life, but they can never supplant it. The goal of religion is the vision of God; it does not matter in what manner or in what form one visualizes Him. A devotee of God becomes very dear to Him. The characteristics of such a one are described in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* thus: He hates no single being; he is friendly and compassionate towards all. He is free from attachment and egoism. Pain and pleasure are equal to him, and he is ever content and balanced in mind. He is self-controlled, and his thought and reason are directed to God. The world is not afflicted by him, nor is he afflicted by the world. He is free from joy, envy, fear, and sorrow. He renounces all good and evil; he is the same to friend and foe, the same in honour and dishonour, the same in cold and heat. He is full of devotion to God (XII. 13-19).

Religion points to both the way and the goal. It unfolds the art of living aimed at a higher purpose by means of injunctions and inhibitions. It insists that the means is as important as the end. Only an ardent pursuit of the means would lead to the prescribed end. Indeed, the way is ever united with the goal, which is the journey's end. The way is all a preparation

for the attainment of the perfection of the soul in man. Hence it is that religion is looked upon as a way of life that is to be lived in the consciousness of God. At the end of it all, after a long and arduous struggle, the soul becomes transformed and remains in constant communion with God. This is religion as understood in its deeper or transocial aspect, where it is concerned with the development of man's innate spiritual faculties and religious tendencies and establishment of a relationship between man and his God.

II

Has religion, which is thus looked upon as a personal concern of man aimed at self-purification and perfection of the inner being, any part to play in the maintenance of social relationships and in the well-being of society as a whole? The answer to this question is emphatically in the affirmative. Religion in its wider, social aspect has an immense application and significance. For a truly religious living in this sense means, as the Latin word '*religiosus*' implies, a scrupulous, cautious, and conscientious living. Religion thus operates both vertically and horizontally—vertically, when it is concerned with man individually and directed towards the growth of his moral and spiritual being; horizontally, when it is concerned with man's life in relation to his fellowmen, urging him to act according to certain moral laws and social duties. The role of religion in society is as vital and indispensable as it is in man's individual life.

Religion on the social level, then, makes man moral and just, and directs him to discharge his social obligations to his fellowmen scrupulously and conscientiously. The religious spirit fills man with the sense of the good and the right. It makes his conduct benevolent and righteous. It restrains him from unbecoming behaviour and speech. His life becomes regulated in accordance with some lofty ideals meant to uplift and ennoble men. Whatever he does is done in a spirit of dedication and consecration. He is averse to everything that

is immoral and unjust, everything that goes counter to the accepted moral code, and engages himself in performing only those actions that are personally elevating and socially beneficial. Rather, his interest in the well-being of his fellowmen grows keener as his religious sensibilities grow finer. The good of the world and the well-being of others become the chief motives of his thought and action.

Our scriptures declare that a man bereft of *dharma*, religious consciousness, is like an animal. The notion of *dharma*, the possession of which is what distinguishes man from animal, is generated by religious endeavour. The well-known verse of the *Mahābhārata*, quoted above at the very outset, brings out this idea very pointedly. It says that in matters of food, sleep, and other physical needs man is on a par with the animals. It is the sense of *dharma*, righteous living with all its implications, that differentiates him from the animals. Without *dharma*, man is merely an animal.

The animal needs food and sleep, so does man. The animal loves and hates, and has fear, so has man. The animal multiplies its species, so does man. But while we speak of man possessing a sense of justice and morality, we do not do so in respect of animals. Animals have no notion of right and wrong or good and bad. They are instinctive, and act and react in stereotyped patterns of behaviour. The areas of their function, too, are very much limited. Their needs are few, and they are satisfied when those needs are fulfilled. They do not possess higher aspirations for a moral or spiritual life. We do not hear of a cow being moral and virtuous, or it being rewarded for a righteous act or punished for an immoral act! Values of justice, morality, virtue, goodness, truthfulness, selflessness, etc. become recognized and operative only at the human level. And it is these values that constitute the basis of a sound and stable society.

It is man that is endowed with the ability to think and act. He can reason with himself. This ability the animal lacks. Whereas the subhuman species react to situations and im-

pulses prompted by what is called instinct, without any conscious design, man is able to weigh the pros and cons of a situation and plan his action accordingly, looking to his own as well as others' welfare. The animals are victims of their own glandular secretions, and respond to their dictates without questioning. Man, fortunately, stands on a different footing, and that is because of his capacity to reflect, think, and act, as well as to distinguish good from bad in motives and right from wrong in actions. But, alas, how seldom does man bring this gift of nature to his aid! When a man fails to bring this power of discrimination and judgement to his aid, he acts and reacts just like an animal. It is the self-reflective nature of the mind that makes man human, lifting him far above the animal level. When this special gift in man is further refined and perfected by a religious spirit, he is lifted even beyond the human level and transported to the level of divine beings.

III

Religion prescribes the practice of certain virtues as the foundation of personal as well as social life. The possession of these virtues is considered to be the *sine qua non* of any progress, individual or social. It is the practice of these virtues by individuals that creates in them a sense of duty and obligation towards one another and gives rise to fellow-feeling, love, help, charity, and service in society. These virtues, in religious terminology, have been grouped under what are well known as *yama* and *niyama*. Their profoundly spiritual import apart, *yama* and *niyama* are indispensable in the social sphere as well, if there is to be a harmonious growth in society based on moral and just principles. A society that wishes to be progressive, moral, and just must have among its members a good percentage of men and women who are genuinely religious and who value moral and spiritual ideas and ideals. It is through them that good ideas spread in society and bring about a gradual transformation in it. It is the individual mem-

bers that make up a society. If they become good, moral, and just, then the society that they constitute becomes good, moral, and just, too.

Under the practice of *yama*, we have to cultivate the virtues of non-injury, truthfulness, non-covetousness, continence, and not receiving any gift from another. While explaining them, Swami Vivekananda says in his *Rāja-yoga*: 'This (*yama*) purifies the mind, the *citta*. Never producing pain by thought, word, and deed, in any living being, is what is called *ahimsā*, non-injury. There is no virtue higher than non-injury. There is no happiness higher than what a man obtains by this attitude of non-offensiveness to all creation. By truth we attain fruits of work. Through truth everything is attained. In truth everything is established. Relating facts as they are—this is truth. Not taking others' goods by stealth or by force is called *asteya*, non-covetousness. Chastity in thought, word, and deed, always and in all conditions, is what is called *brahmacharya*. Not receiving any present from anybody, even when one is suffering terribly, is what is called *aparigraha*. The idea is, when a man receives a gift from another, his heart becomes impure, he becomes low, he loses his independence, he becomes bound and attached.'

The other set of virtues grouped under *niyama* are: austerity, study, contentment, purity, and the worship of God. In explanation of these observances, Swami Vivekananda adds: 'Fasting, or in other ways controlling the body, is called physical *tapas*. Repeating the Vedas and other *mantras*, by which the *sattva* material in the body is purified, is called study, *svādhyāya*. . . . The sages have said that there are two sorts of purification, external and internal. The purification of the body by water, earth, or other materials is the external purification, as bathing etc. Purification of the mind by truth, and by all other virtues, is what is called internal purification. Both are necessary. . . . Worship of God is by praise, by thought, by devotion.'

From what has been said above, it is hardly necessary to point out what immense potentialities are hidden in these ideals for the good of society as well as for the spiritual well-being of the individual, provided they are practised seriously and sincerely. Ideals are there to be practised. One ounce of practice outweighs tons and tons of theories. As the *Gītā* says, even a little bit of true religious practice helps one to overcome great difficulties. The ideals of *yama* and *niyama*, as given in the *Yoga-Sūtra*, are no doubt meant for those who take to yogic practice exclusively as a path to the realization of God. To them, it is expressly stated, there can be no compromise, no lowering of the ideal. They should leave no stone unturned to be completely absorbed in those ideals.

But the ordinary man of the world, who is trying to be good and truthful, can also keep those shining ideals before him and strive to attain their benefits as far as it lies in his power. The blessings that accrue from such a virtuous life are many and varied. They not only purify the mind of the person concerned and elevate his soul spiritually, but also make him a force for the good of the society at large. Society stands benefited thereby. When more of such individuals appear on the scene, evils like violence, greed, corruption, hatred, etc. that sap the very vitality of the social body will gradually disappear, giving rise to mutual help, kindness, amity, and good social relationship among its members. Thus religion has a vital role to play in the construction and maintenance of a good society by becoming an active force in and through the lives of those that make up the society.

IV

In Indian society today, because of a rapid deterioration of the religious and moral values noticeable in the social sphere, there is a growing awareness among some responsible sections of our people that our society must reawaken itself to the beneficent gifts of a truly religious and moral life. Even the government is

seriously considering how best to tackle the problem on a national scale. They are all exercised about finding adequate remedies to meet the situation. If the trends that are showing up themselves in our society are not checked in time and carefully handled, the evil consequences flowing from them would be too dreadful to contemplate. That an awareness to check them has already arisen is a welcome sign, and efforts are being made to take certain measures which are meant to inculcate ethical and religious principles in the mind of the growing generation. Laudable though these efforts are, problems of this nature affecting the individuals so intimately cannot be satisfactorily solved, unless they are directly dealt with by the individuals themselves in an intimate way.

It is in respect of dealing with persons intimately that individual homes and religious institutions can contribute greatly to aid society. Religious and moral instructions in educational institutions, good in themselves as far as they go, do not go deep enough to effect any appreciable degree of transformation in the character of the students concerned. It cannot be gainsaid that such instructions in schools and colleges will have a sobering effect on the minds of those that receive them. But for the intensity of training by personal guidance and strict discipline, which are essential to bring about an inner transformation in the personality concerned, we have to turn our attention in the direction of individual homes themselves, as well as religious institutions which are the custodians of our national traditional ideas and ideals.

Each and every individual home should become a centre of genuine religious activity, imbued with faith and actuated by the ethical principles of life. Parents at home have a responsibility in this regard, which they cannot afford to shirk. They have a duty by their children, and in sending them out into society as useful members in it, the parents have a very significant part to play. The foundations of a man's character are laid at home. Those

who lay them are the parents. It is their duty and responsibility to discharge this function fully and properly. To do this, they themselves must be men and women fully alive to religious values and all that they imply. Children fashioned by such parents enter into society as a blessing to it.

The role of religious institutions in teaching men and women moral and religious ideals, who in turn may be expected to help in the growth of their children in accordance with those ideals, assumes importance in the context of the reconstruction of our society. Indeed, this was the role that was assigned to our religious institutions in the past. Owing to several factors and forces that were operative in our society during the past few decades, our religious institutions and leaders remained in the background and became somewhat inoperative. Now that the circumstances have changed, and their need is felt keenly, facilities should be created for religious institutions and leaders to come to the forefront and discharge their functions without any hindrance. In a State such as ours, which has declared itself to be secular in character so far as the governance of the country is concerned, the role of religious institutions in society assumes a still greater significance.

V

A society or State built merely on economic and political ideologies will not endure for long. It will lack social cohesiveness. That cohesive element, which brings together individuals and groups on the basis of mutual help and give and take, is provided by the blessings of a religious spirit which works both on the individual level as well as on the social level. It is religion that provides the true basis of a happy and progressive community, where one witnesses among its members good-neighbourliness, fellow-feeling, self-sacrifice, service to others, charity to the needy, etc. In the absence of such a religious spirit in society, one would only see misery, sorrow, competition,

greed, avarice, jealousy, etc. afflicting the hearts of men and women in it.

It is religion that refines man, purifies his intentions and motives, and brings about an inner transformation which makes him almost godly. It is the blessings of religion that make man truly human, nay more, they make him divine, for they enable him then to become conscious of the divine element that is lighting his heart. In the awareness of this divine presence, he begins to conduct himself in this world. Finally, it is religion that reforms and transforms the brute in man into the god in man.

Religion is indispensable for the evolution of humanity from the state of animality to the status of divinity. It is religion that brings out the best and the noblest in man. Religion

makes man a good man, good in all its implications. It is good men that make up a good society. So in any scheme of social reconstruction, the first step is the reconstruction of individual men and women. In the reconstruction of the individuals, religion plays the most important part. Hence religion forms the basis of a good society. So it is that, in India, *dharma*, in its widest and all-comprehensive aspect, including individual as well as social morality, justice, law, etc., is conceived as holding society together and maintaining it. In the absence of *dharma*, society will crumble to pieces, giving rise to all sorts of evils and malpractices. Where *dharma* prevails, there surely will come prosperity as a matter of course. Hence is the imperative need of *dharma* in society and of all that it brings in its train.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA: A LIFE OF MANIFOLD SPIRITUAL REALIZATION

BY DR. S. C. CHATTERJEE

One day, a Brahma devotee asked Sri Ramakrishna: 'Sir, why are there so many different views regarding the nature of God? Some people say that He has forms and qualities, some others say that He is formless and qualityless; then, among the former class of people, we find different ideas about the forms and qualities of God. Why is there so much confusion and perplexity about the nature of God?' In reply, Sri Ramakrishna said: 'A devotee describes God just as he sees or perceives Him. Different men speak of God differently, because they have different experiences of Him. In fact, there is no ground for confusion and quarrel here. If you can only realize Him somehow, He will help you understand everything. How can a man expect to know all about a country which he has never seen or

where he had never been?'

What Sri Ramakrishna once said with regard to the nature of God seems to be applicable to his own self. His wonderful divine life presents a rare combination and synthesis of various types of religious experiences and spiritual realizations. It is almost impossible for ordinary men to appreciate it fully or to describe all its sides and aspects adequately. So it is that today we sometimes find very different ideas and opinions about him current even among educated and enlightened men. Of course, all of them admit and proclaim that he effected a permanent reconciliation and unification of all faiths. But they do not seem to realize clearly what in Sri Ramakrishna's life was the real ground of this reconciliation. He was the living embodiment of almost all types of spirit-

ual realizations—a fact which put him in a position to appreciate and honour all the religions of the world. Losing sight of this fact, some men consider him to be only a great devotee (*bhakta*) of Mother Kālī; some call him a great *karma-yogin*; some, a profound *jñāna-yogin*; some regard him as an unequalled Advaitin, while others find in him just a Dvaitin or Viśiṣṭādvaitin. Again, some people who are more critical discern in him an inconsistent and illogical combination of devotion to Goddess Kālī and belief in Advaita Vedānta. As an extraordinary phenomenon, Sri Ramakrishna was so very perplexing.

What then are we to say about these different and conflicting descriptions of the life of Sri Ramakrishna? Taken as exclusive and complete, they are all false and fallacious. But if taken as a partial view of his life, touching only one of its many aspects, each is true, though none gives us the whole truth. In one of his parables, Buddha said: 'Some blind men formed their ideas of an elephant by touching its different parts. They came to quarrel among themselves, because each thought that his knowledge was the only true and complete knowledge. The quarrel was over as soon as each of them realized that his knowledge was only of *one* of the many parts of the animal.' The story of a chameleon, which Sri Ramakrishna often used to tell, is more apt and instructive: 'Once, a man told his friend that he had seen on a certain tree a beautiful animal of red colour. The latter said that he had also seen it, but its colour was not red, but green. A third man averred that it was of yellow colour. Some other persons remonstrated that it was not yellow, but blue; not blue, but chocolate; and so on. Then they went to the tree and saw a man sitting under it. On their asking, he told them that he lived under the tree and knew the animal well; all that they had asserted was true, it was sometimes red, sometimes green, sometimes yellow, etc., and sometimes it was seen to have no colour at all.' Similar is the case with the different partial estimates which different men form of Sri Ramakrishna's

manifold spiritual life. Each is true in a sense, but none brings out its full significance.

In Sri Ramakrishna's life of spiritual practices (*sādhana*), we find a combination and unification of innumerable spiritual experiences and realizations. This will become clear from a brief survey of his long spiritual career. He began it as a worshipper of Goddess Kālī in the temple garden at Dakshineswar near Calcutta. During the first four years of his spiritual practice, he had to depend on his own unaided efforts without any spiritual guide, but with full confidence in the Divine Mother as present in the image of Kālī. Through his intense love for the Mother, his burning desire for seeing Her, and his incessant service and sincere self-surrender to Her, he attained a supreme spiritual realization. He had a beatific vision of the Divine Mother as an unlimited and infinite ocean of the light of Consciousness. The same Mother he saw in the image of Kālī, which became for him a living and loving Goddess—no more a stone image, but a breathing and pulsating life, a true mother fondling, talking, and playing with him from time to time. Image-worship thus received a new meaning and a new life in the Hindu society and religious history.

Then followed Sri Ramakrishna's many spiritual endeavours, leading to various other realizations. Adopting the attitude of a faithful servant (*dāsya-bhāva*) as in Hanumān, he strove to attain a vision or direct experience of Śrī Rāmacandra, and his effort was crowned with success in no time. Adopting the attitude of a loving female friend (*sakhī-bhāva*), he had a vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In similar ways, he had visions of Śiva, Śrī Rādhā, and Śrī Caitanya, as well as other deities and incarnations of God. At a certain stage of his *sādhana*, he adopted and practised the religion of Islam and had a vision of Mohammed, the prophet of God. On seeing the Madonna with Jesus in her arms, he had a vision of Christ as an embodiment of love and light, and he remained absorbed in the contemplation of Christ for three days and nights.

Although there is no record of his adoption and practice of Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, he had great regard for these faiths and their founders, and recognized these religions also as true ways of attaining spiritual perfection in life.

The fame of the temple garden at Dakshineswar spread far and wide soon after its dedication. Many saints and sages, men and women of great spiritual realization visited the place. Under the guidance of one of them, Sri Ramakrishna launched on the practice of what is known as *haṭha-yoga* (i.e. *yoga* of bodily purification and breath suspension), and was about to be lost in the trance of unconscious absorption (*jaḍa-samādhi*) and was about to meet physical death. But that was not to be. His life was protected by the Divine Mother, destined as it was for a higher cause—a noble mission in the world at large. Then, under the guidance of one Yogeswari Bhairavi Brahmani, Sri Ramakrishna passed through all the forms of Tāntric *sādhana* mentioned in the Śākta Tantras with unexpected and unprecedented success. This had the desired effect of firmly establishing him in the final truth of the Tantras, namely, that the Divine Mother is the ultimate Reality manifest in the universe and that all things and beings are but Her forms and revelations. During this period, he had a number of visions of the various forms of the Divine Mother. Then followed his practice of the five kinds of *sādhana*—*dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, etc.—according to the Vaiṣṇava Tantras, under the direction of a perfected saint named Jatahari. These types of Vaiṣṇava *sādhana* he performed with punctilious care and full paraphernalia, and attained unique success in them all. In Vedānta *sādhana*, under the supervision of Totapuri, we have Sri Ramakrishna's last *sādhana* and final realization. To his utter dismay, Totapuri found that the disciple attained in a day what he had achieved in long forty years. In a short time, his mind was concentrated, and he plunged deep into the trance of superconscious absorption (*nirvikalpa-samādhi*), only to be awakened from it after three days

and nights through his preceptor's anxious, repeated efforts. The final outcome of all these spiritual practices was Sri Ramakrishna's realization that they all lead to the same goal, that the Divine Mother of Śākta Tantra and the Brahman of Advaita Vedānta are one and the same reality in different aspects or states, and that so many religions are so many paths to God.

Sri Ramakrishna's was a life of manifold spiritual realization. He was extraordinary and mysterious. He combined and unified in himself many apparently incompatible and contradictory spiritual experiences and philosophical ideas. He was at the same time and in the same sense a Śākta or devotee of Mother Kālī, a Vaiṣṇava or devotee of Viṣṇu, and a Śaiva or devotee of Śiva. He was as ardent a believer in Advaita as in Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita. He was as good a follower of the path of *bhakti*, as of *jñāna* and of *karma*. Regarding him, Swami Vivekananda said: 'It was given to me to live with a man who was as ardent a dualist, as ardent an Advaitist, as ardent a *bhakta*, as a *jñāni*.' But the question is, How is this possible and reasonable?

Some men with limited knowledge and narrow spiritual experience think that this is neither possible nor rational. They dogmatically declare that if the Śākta religion be true, the Śaiva or the Vaiṣṇava must be false, and *vice versa*. Similarly, if Advaita be true, Dvaita or Viśiṣṭādvaita must be false, and *vice versa*. So, too, with regard to the paths of *bhakti*, *jñāna*, and *karma*. The truth of any one of them implies the falsity of the other two. But Sri Ramakrishna's life gives the lie direct to all such dogmatic faiths and philosophies and seeks to resolve their conflict, and that not without reason. There is a profound philosophy behind it, and a rational justification can be given of it. Let us indicate how.

The *R̥g-Veda* declares: 'The One Reality is called by the wise in different ways: Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan.' This means that the different gods are only manifestations of one

underlying, universal Reality. It also implies that although Reality is one, it has various aspects, many forms and manifestations. As such, Reality is many-faced and many-sided. This is true not only of absolute Reality, but also of every object in the world. Any object of the world has innumerable positive and negative characters. It is also many-faced and many-sided. If this be so, then Truth must be manifold, and different faiths and philosophies will be but expressions of different aspects of Truth.

Man with his limited capacity has to approach Reality from one point of view or level of experience. He cannot apprehend Reality from all possible points of view or levels of experience at the same time. Hence a man's knowledge of Reality is relative to the particular standpoint or level of experience from which he approaches it. He receives just that revelation of Reality which his standpoint or experience-level, in other words, his way of approach, entitles him to have. If he approaches Reality through the senses and from the level of sense experience, there will be a manifestation of it as a world of many sensible objects existing in space and time, and possessing sensible qualities like taste, smell, touch, colour, and sound. Materialism and atheism arise out of a crude common-sense or scientific interpretation of sense experiences, e.g. Cārvāka and modern Western materialism. If he approaches Reality by way of the rational mind and from the intellectual level of consciousness, Reality will be manifested as one ultimate Mind or Spirit related to other minds or selves and many material objects, which are different from, but either dependent on, or independent of, it. It is possible that pluralistic and dualistic philosophies and religions, like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya-Yoga, and Dvaita Vedānta, are developments from this approach to Reality. Again, if he approaches Reality with the meditative mind and from the level of *samprajñāta* or *savikalpa-samādhi*, he would get a revelation of it as one absolute Subject or Self, which is different from, but inseparably related

to, and qualified by, a world of many finite selves and material objects. At the level of *samprajñāta-samādhi*, there is a direct experience of the self (Ātman) and consciousness (*caitanya*) as different from (*bhinna*), but inseparably related to (*avicchedya*), each other. To understand and interpret this kind of relation between self and consciousness, we have to apply the category of 'substance and quality' or 'substantive and adjective'. Hence Reality is here revealed to us as a subject qualified by certain predicates. It is perhaps from this level of experience that some Upaniṣadic texts and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita describe Reality or Brahman as *saguṇa* and *saviśeṣa*, qualified and determinate. But if one approaches Reality not through the mind, but through pure consciousness, i.e. from the level of *asamprajñāta* or *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the revelation of Reality would be different and distinct from that of any other level. At this level, there is a direct experience of the self (Ātman) and consciousness (*caitanya*) as non-different (*abhinna*), i.e. of self as being consciousness itself and of consciousness as being self itself. More correctly speaking, there is no distinction of self, consciousness, and experience-of-non-difference, but one standing experience, or subject-object-less pure consciousness. To interpret this unique experience philosophically, we have to apply the category of the 'non-dual', and say that Reality is simply non-dual consciousness, neither subject nor object or the unity of subject and object. This revelation of Reality from the level of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* is the basis of the Upaniṣadic texts and of Advaita philosophy, which declare that Reality or Brahman is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*, unqualified and indeterminate.

The different revelations of Reality we get from different levels of experience must be accepted as genuine and true so far as they go. Each revelation gives us the same Reality in one of its many aspects and characters. The same water is revealed as cold when perceived through the sense of touch, as tasteful or tasteless when perceived by the sense of taste, as

smelling or smell-less when perceived by the organ of smell, and as blue or colourless when seen by the eyes. So we cannot say that water has the quality of touch only and not of smell etc. and that it has a certain visual quality and not tactual and other qualities. All the qualities belong to it and manifest it in some way or other. Similarly, we should accept the different revelations of Reality through different types of spiritual experience as genuine and faithful,

and therefore as worthy and adorable. So there need be no quarrel and dispute among the followers of different faiths and philosophies of the world. Sri Ramakrishna, as we have seen, passed through and possessed all types of spiritual experiences. It was given to him, not to anyone ever before, to live a life of manifold spiritual realization and give the world a message of hope and harmony: 'So many religions are so many paths to God.'



ŚIVĀNANDALAHARĪ: THE WAVE OF DIVINE BLISS—2

BY SWAMI VIMALANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

19. The centre of Hindu religious consciousness is a progressive conception of the divine Reality, of which the wholly transcendent, a cosmic absolute—*nirguṇa-nirviśeṣa-niṣpra-pañca-brahman*—is the terminus. Immutability is His mark of perfection, and pure consciousness His nature. Parabrahman thus conceived is the bedrock on which the idealistic monism educed from the Vedas and expounded in the commentarial writings and original tracts of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya rests. Even in this purely devotional poem, unconscious or accidental disclosures of the absolute Reality—*dyotamānār-tharekhām*, glints of hidden meaning, as avowed by the author in 98c—are found in expressions like *māyāvin* 55c, *māyā-sṛṣṭa-jagattraya* 56c, *ānanda-sāndra* 34d, *cinmārga-mṛgya* 59c, *śruti-padairvedya* 55a, *bāhyāntara-vyāpin* 35b, and *ajani-amṛta* 83c. Only by accepting the absolute Brahman familiar to Vedāntic texts, indicative of monistic idealism, can we explain satisfactorily the phrases quoted above, which give the meaning of the magician conjuring up the world illusion, bliss undiluted, searched through the path of pure consciousness, known only through the solemn texts of the Veda, filling in and out, and above birth and destruction. The thrilling visualization of the One Alone,

after the dissolution of the universe (34), and of the supernal Sun, the sum of a million suns, routing the gloom of ignorance (58), fittingly denote the same Light of lights taught in the Upaniṣads. None can deny the seal set by the stock illustration of the Advaitin, incidentally introduced at 8 to illustrate the misapprehension (*bhrānti*) which leads men to accept matter and not Spirit as Śiva—rope-snake, nacre-silver, *fata morgana*, counterfeit gem, and milk substitute. None can miss again the self-announcing *ādyā avidyā* in 91a, the pivot of monistic epistemology.

20. It must, however, be conceded unhesitatingly that the special and patent purpose of our heavenly hymn is to invoke *saguṇa-savi-graha-saprapañca-saviśeṣa-brahman* as *paramēśvara* 73d, *bhagavat* 40d, *sāmba* 24c, *ādi kuṭumbin* 56b, *trilokī-guru* 30d, and *kaivalyanātha* 39c. In other words, we are standing, when we enter into the spirit of the psalm, before the Most High conceived not as the uncharacterizable abstract Reality, but as the parent of the universe—the Father-Mother Deity, richly endowed with divine attributes and qualities, and the source of all that is holy and auspicious (*astoka-tribhuvana-śiva* 1c). This dual concept of the Godhead, we are repeatedly reminded of by sub-

stantives like *umājāni* 86c, *umānātha* 9c, *umā-maheśa* 81a, *girijānātha* 93c, *gaurinātha* 59d, *āryāpati* 82a, *bhavānīpati* 28c, and *durgātipriya* 42d with a play on the word. There are religious sectaries who partially stress either the fatherhood of God or His motherhood keeping the one in the focus of religious consciousness and relegating the other to the penumbra or totally failing to recognize it. The *sāmbasadāsiva* concept is a corrective to the above prejudice. The opening quatrain visualizes the duplex image—*kalābhyām*, *śivābhyām*—as the fruit of a devotee's *tapas* or spiritual training. To the child, unless it is orphaned by one of the two, both the parents appear simultaneously as the source of its protective care and its cooperative cause. Vedic and Sanskrit grammar has provision for compounds (*ekāśeṣa*) indicating dual deities and even common beings, denoting the intimate unity of the two denoted names.

21. The duality presented in the *Śivānandalahari*, however, is not indicative of the *nityasahakāriṇi-śakti* or a coextensive power, as in some other religious systems, but a *parigraha-śakti* or assumed power that is not different from Śiva in the ultimate analysis. The unity of the Deity as Śiva is an established fact which the worshipper has received into his heart, and a bipartite conception is not a substitute, but a supplement in the form of the grace of the Deity, conceived for the enhancement and preservation of his love for the Supreme and divine protection in every way. The distinction is valid only in relation to the stage of maturity attained by the suppliant. Idealistic monism does not set up two rival systems based on *para-brahman* and *aparabrahman*, or *viśveśa* (40d) *śiva* and *paramasadāsiva* (90). As has been noted already, God immanent and omnific is not different from the Witness retired from the continuous tumult of world-formation—*virata-prapañca-racanā-kallola-kolāhalaḥ*—the essence and substance of release. The person still away from the easily accessible form of the Deity has no need for *nirviśeṣa-brahman*. His profit lies in turning to the parent and guardian of the

universe combined as the dual compound *śivābhyām*, whom he can see in temples like a man and confer with like a friend and serve intently; as *Agastyasamhitā* states: *paricaryāparāḥ kecid prāsādeṣu ca śerate; manuṣyam iva taṁ draṣṭum vyavahartum ca bandhuvat*. He seeks the Divine parent duality suggested by the peacock and peahen analogy (53, 54), this appearing in the garden of Vedānta and that instructing *praṇava*, this inspiring for the flaming dance of the other, at which the devotees shed tears of joy. Śivā or Umā is well-known by the convention established in the *Kena Upaniṣad* and suggested here in 53, 54, and 84. The author of the present hymn in his *Annapūrṇā-stotra* employs the adjectives *nigamārtha-gocara-karī* (instrumental in revealing the purport of the scripture) and *dharmaikaṇiṣṭhākarī* (who plants firmly the votary in righteousness), identifying Umā with the irresistible, unsought grace of the Deity apart from His universal benevolence referred to in 31, 32, and 35. Viewed as the mother of all phenomena (*parā-śakti*), as the source of wealth and goodness (*śrī*), or as the goddess of wisdom and unsought grace, Umā is one in being and form with the Deity. Being only the *parigraha-śakti* or *vāmārdhāṅga*, Umā is not an associate female principle conceived on the Sāṅkhya analogy. Śiva alone is addressed in most of the stanzas, because Śiva is *vidyā-nandamayātman* (55b), of the essence of *vidyā* and *ānanda*, the very being of Umā, and also because Umā is hinted as *bhaktijananī* (62d) and Śiva is prayed to for the grant of *bhakti* (4,20,87). Thus, in spite of the apparent father-mother form, invoked by the devotee for the confirmation of steadfast devotion and undistracted attention demanded by *bhakti*, the dual Divinity is presented again and again as one only: *prabhu* 14a, *īśvara* 90c, *svāmin* 24c, *mahādeveśa* 8d, *lokaguru* 29d, *samasta-jagatāṁ netṛ* 75d, *sakala-bhuvana-bandhu* 84c, and *pūjyāt pūjyatarāḥ* 82d—master, lord, king, supreme God, spiritual director who guides all the world to Truth, leader of the universe, friend of all creatures, and the most worthy of worship.

22. Any hymn we may take expresses directly or indirectly the nature of the three principles, the Deity, the soul, and the world, and their interrelation. An outline of the Deity as hinted in the *Śivānandalaharī* has been given concisely without reference to the gradations that exist in the devotee's view of the divine Personality. In a devotional poem like the present one, there is a wealth and gradation of visions and divine forms presented in a manner almost confusing to the uninitiated: some are conceived humanwise and some others by calling to mind metaphorically even the bee and the peacock. When we consider the poetic usage of the times in which the hymn was composed, this practice cannot be considered below the dignity of the theme, and the contrast implied in them only increases the splendour and beauty of the serene stanzas that appear by their side. It may be that sometimes we have to translate the purely symbolic and poetic representations into other concepts than what they openly stand for—and this the highest class of poetry always demands—but we always reach finally at the truth presented in supersensual revelation.

23. When we try to find an ascending order in the gradation of the images presented in our hymn, first we have to consider the concrete finite forms—*mūrtivibhava* 7c—easily grasped by the mind: Mahādeva who has three eyes (*trinayana* 3a), a crest of matted hair (*jaṭābhārodāra* 3b), and moving snakes for garland (*caladuragahāra* 3b); who is blue-throated (*nīlakandhara* 52d), who holds the stag in the hand (*mṛgadhara* 3b), and whose body is dazzling white (*mahāsītavapuḥ* 51b); who rides the bull (*vṛṣabhādhīrūḍha* 75d), who is the King of kings (*rājāvataṃsa* 39d), who is gracious in form (*prasannamūrti* 70b), and who is united with Umā (*umāśīṣṭavapuḥ* 25c), his Power—*śāśaktika* 21—and followed by a retinue (*sagaṇa* 25). When he moves on his vehicle, Brahmā and others sing his praise, ascetics cry victory, and his troops sport in play (25ab). When he sits on the seat in his jewelled golden palace in Kailāsa (24a), his feet are

hidden by the rows of gods hurrying to adore him with prostrations and touching his lotus-feet with their crowned heads (17cd). Such a description exceedingly fits in with the majesty of the supreme Providence who is vowed to the protection of the lowly (*dīnāvanaparaha* 16d), and who grants celestial status (*divyapadavī* 18a) to gods and every good to His creatures.

24. There is a more human picture in which the Divine is visualized as a mendicant, lust-destroying, skull-holding, and functioning as the protector of living beings—*bhikṣu* 20c, *āśāśāṭika* 74c, *smarahara* 21c, *kapālin* 20c, and *paśupati* 68c. The *Jābālopaniṣad*, 15 states that the souls are the *paśus* (cattle) and their lord is *paśupati*, who not only binds them with the bond of ignorance (*svājñānapāśa*) according to their past deeds, but also releases them when they acquire fitness for liberation. In another stanza (32), the partly human and divinely heroic deed of drinking the world-consuming poison is presented; in another, the Deity is fancied to be the peacock declaring the holy *praṇava* (53) with a shrill cry, and in another as a lion in the cave (44); in another, He is addressed as the primeval hunter (43); in another, He is invoked as the chief of thieves (*taskarapati* 22b); in another, He is fancied to be a big bee (51); and in yet another, the setting of His fiery dance (*ujjala-tāṇḍava* 54) is described.

25. The next series of portrayals show that the outlines of rich concrete forms are blurred and the attributes alone shine forth. The crude figures of the *khaṇḍaparaśu* 25d (who cuts the foes with his axe) and the *ādikirāta* 43b (primeval woodlander) recede far behind, giving place to the *mahāliṅga* of Mallikārjuna (50) emblematically representing *brahmāṇḍā-khaṇḍavighra* of Śiva hinted in 31b. Then emerge the unparalleled pictures of serenity and charm in 37 and 38 and the *munimanah-pratyakṣa-cinmūrtiḥ* 56b. The Deity Soma (i.e. *sa+umā—Sāmbaśiva*) is manifested by the divine sages after churning the sea of the Vedas with the rod of their own mind, keeping it in position fastened with the cord of *bhakti*. 'Behold, the enormous mountain of antecedent

merits ; by the side of it, you will see the ambrosial figure (*amṛtamūrtiḥ*) of Soma rising—the divine Being who is always enjoyed by the wisest and best of men. When He is reflected in the sea of the mind, the ocean of felicity swells ; sages then have sustenance and nourishment.’ The sublimity and poetic insight revealed in this stanza can easily rank with the best in any religious psalm.

26. The conception of the Deity as a personality without any concrete form, but exhibiting a wealth of divine attributes, next engages our consideration. They are meant to awaken in us a sense of divine Majesty and help us to gain a peep into the divine attributes ; and they are expressed in compressed phrases like *purahara* 96b, *mṛtyuñjaya* 41, *mahātman* 32d, and *dayākara* 35c, and compound words like *kṛpāna-rakṣāti-nīpuṇa* 13c, *sakala-śreyah-pradodyogin* 35a, *trijagataḥ samrakṣaṇodyogin* 55b, and *bhakteṣuprakāṭitaphala* 1b. In these phrases, the supreme Deity is represented as the fountain of grace and goodwill freely and spontaneously flowing towards any sentient being. The feeling of tenderness and pity expressed in human deeds and thoughts are but a semblance of divine beneficence ; for God alone is the mine of love, being *āptakāma* and *viśvottīrṇa* (supremely perfect), and the souls in bondage are always in want and ignorance. He who expects or demands anything to remove wants from anyone else cannot be a *dayākara*, fountain of mercy.

27. We finally come to the crowning manifestation as expressed by words indicating the intrinsic qualities of the supreme Divine, such as *saccidānandasindhu* 84c, *paramaśiva* 24c, *prabhu* 14a, *vibhu* 24c, *maheśa* 76a, *cidālamba* 3d, *mahāmahas* 93b, *agraganya* 100b, *deva* 42d, and *jagadadhika* 70d. When we make an intuitive study of these gradations of divine manifestations, we realize that all of them possess different degrees of power in effecting the growth and perfection of spiritual life. When a votary of the supreme Divine attains a high degree of perfection, he finds out that even what would appear as fantastic to alien

minds are but visualizations of the divine Reality, just as the distorted letters scrawled on sand by the infant’s fingers are realized to be the same as those written by it when it grows up into an accomplished calligraphist and when perhaps he may even look nostalgically to his own earlier performances. A supreme lover of God, ardently attached to unbroken contemplation of the Deity—*pādābja-smaraṇa-paramānanda-lahari vihārāsakta* 10cd—might with equal delight think of serving the Divine with food, flower, jewels, and clothing—*aśana-kusuma-bhūṣā-vastra-mukhyām saparyām* 85c—and even become a hymnographer addressing the Deity in diverse aspects (100).

28. The *bhakta* who accepts the attitude of a servant, an enjoyer, or worshipper (*svāmi-bhṛtya-bhokṭṛ-bhogya-pūjya-pūjaka-bhāva*) does not appreciate the *abcessio infiniti* method of the *jñānin*, who searches after the *aśeṣa-niṣedha-śeṣāvadhi*. He is satisfied with the form presented in his meditation, *dhyātṛ-bhāva-gṛhīta-rūpa*, but he knows that his Deity is perfect—*niratiśaya-maṅgala-guṇāspada*—and free from all blemish—*nirasta-samasta-doṣa-kalaṅka*—to the degree his moral consciousness is awakened. *Bhakti* being a form of love, a movement of the soul towards that which constitutes its highest value, necessarily demands as the goal of its quest and object of its affection and adoration the highest and the best (*parama* 29a) known to the mind. The true lover of God becomes a monotheist and believes that he is attached to the Most High. Just as a child cannot love anyone except his parents with the same intensity and complete confidence, so also the *ekānta-bhakta* considers other forms and aspects of God as but secondary or auxiliary to his own adorable One. As the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* states, he would declare *aṅgānyanyāḥ devatāḥ*—other gods are but limbs of the Supreme ; or a less mature devotee would conceive the whole pantheon as a large divine family. In the Roman Catholic theology, the highest kind of worship is called *latria*, the worship which is paid to God only ; next comes *hyperdulia*, the name given to the veneration given to Virgin

Mary as the highest and the most exalted of mere creatures; and thirdly, the inferior kind of veneration given to angels as servants of God and to saints as friends of God, which is designated as *dulia*. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* speaks of the highest adoring love for the Deity—*deve parā bhaktiḥ*—and similar devotion to *guru* (*yathā deve tathā gurau*); the word 'yathā' in the hemistich implies that while one is latrial, the other is but *dulial*. It is the latrial attitude that is expressed in our hymn in the apostrophe: O Master, what is the gain by exerting to serve transient gods?—*svāmin asthira-devatānusaraṇāyāsena kiṁ labhyate?* 33c. These are capable of granting only trifling benefits—*kṣudra-phaladāḥ* 4a; whereas my Lord (*prabhur me* 70c) is the giver of immeasurable good—*agaṇita-phala-dāyakaḥ*. Further, the hymnographer repeats in *oratio recta*: *tvam eko lokānām paramaphaladaḥ* 18a—Thou alone art the giver of the most excellent fruit. To the question, What is the most excellent fruit? the reply is given: Thy servant knows that Thou art the most supreme fruit—*tvām viduruttamottama-phalaṁ śambho bhavatsvakāḥ* 100d. This is but natural and quite proper, because to the Vedāntic monotheist, there is no gain superior to self-realization, *ātmalābhā na paraḥ* (*Āpastamba*); and so it is further stated: I remember every day Thou art the innermost and essential member of my being; nay, through the power of mature merit Thou art perceived as the innermost core of all—*paramāntaraṅga iti me citte smarāmyanvahaṁ* 35d; *punyaṇpākabalataḥ tvam śarvasarvāntaraḥ* 57c. The Deity being the innermost reality and worthy of being worshipped by all other gods and sages (*samasta-sumanaḥ-pūjya* 50c), in examining His primacy and majesty, it is said, Viriñca and other gods considered Him as supreme and all others were blown off like chaff (100 ab). This supreme latrial exaltation of Śambhu implied in the rhetorical question, Is there another greater than Him?—*ko vā tad anyo'dhikaḥ?*—is expressed variously in stanzas 4, 7, 18, and 82.

29. Two questions will press themselves for

answer after a consideration of the above explanation. First, why should the divine Ideal be presented in variegated forms and fantastic guises? And, second, why should a *bhakta's* fanatic zeal spur him to an underestimation of other gods, amounting to libel? Although a logical mind may not be satisfied, in reply to the above doubts a religious heart will exclaim: *bhaktiḥ kiṁ na karoty-aho!* (63)—Is there anything impossible for *bhakti*? The presentation of different divine guises has been explained on the analogy of the early attempts of the infant to learn the alphabet. No doubt it is said that, at the appearance of flaming poison, the entire camp of gods took to their heels and that they were as pithless as chaff. In these descriptions, it is not any narrow anxiety to belittle other gods that we should see, but an eagerness to present *mahā-deveśa* (8d) latrially. Such exaggerated praise is not a flaw when the subject of it is the supreme Being and when it is the result of absolute faith (*ananyabhakti*) leading to the suppression of all secondary images (*manolaya*) and knowledge of the highest Reality, *para-tattva-bodha* or *mokṣa*. The supremacy of Śambhu presented in this light is not henotheism or kathenotheism, coined to explain similar phenomena in earlier literature. Reciprocal embodiment of Viṣṇu and Śiva, called *itaretarakṣetratva* or *hariharādvaita*, as set forth in the *Śivahrdayopanīṣad*, is a tenet of Advaitic theology suggested in our hymn by phrases like *tvad-dehabhāgo-hariḥ* 82c and *hariṇā tattvena tadrūpiṇā* 86d. Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda composed many hymns in praise of many deities and affirmed severally in many of them *tvad anyam na jāne na jāne* (I know no other than Thee), which would be ridiculous if he did not believe that they are all different forms of a single God.

30. The devotee who passively surrenders himself to the Supreme as he evolves in his devotion scarcely occupies himself with the greatness, goodness, benevolence, majesty, and brilliance of the self-manifesting and self-communicating Providence, but clings to the lotus-

flower of the divine feet with all his heart and soul and strength. From the time of the *Rg-Veda*, the lotus-flower has played a prominent part in the religious history of India, and it has influenced the art and literature of even neighbouring countries. To the Hindu mind, the lotus-flower is the fairest in the floral world as a symbol of purity and divine birth. Gods are enthroned on the lotus-seat; they hold lotus in hand; the limbs of their body are compared to it; and their feet are metaphorically identified with it. The mind of the devotee is a lotus-flower-*manorājīva* 51c, *cetaḥ-sarasija* 9c, *hṛtpadma* 11c—because the mind, if it is properly trained, can remain unsullied even in unholy surroundings, just as the lotus-flower remains pure in impure water. The range of metaphoric, symbolic, allegoric, and suggestive application to which the glorious lotus-flower has been pressed by poets and artists is very extensive. To the religious mind, the lotus has become almost an ideogram standing for reverence, adoration, holiness, exaltation, and fascination. In devotional literature, 'lotus-feet', with all its synonyms, implies all divine qualities and attributes by convention. *Padāmbhojabhajana* 4d (practice of devotion to the lotus-feet) is not easily got even by gods, and that is what the *bhakta* ever longs for, because it removes all fear (60d) and confers unsurpassed felicity (*paramasaukhya* 6d). A heart sporting along the wave of supreme bliss born of the remembrance of the lotus-feet is set above all embodied conditions (10cd). Love for the *pādāravinda* of Parameśvara, it is stated in 73, is a fertile field to raise the medicinal herb that would cure the bondage of rebirth and all suffering incidental to it. The prayer welling up from the deep moral consciousness of the supplicant in 74 may be put thus: May the casket of my mind be rendered fragrant with the redolence of the Lord's lotus-feet, powerful in destroying the *durvāsānā* (paronomasially bad odour and evil tendencies)—craving, egoism, hatred, and attachment to finite self. The Lord's lotus-feet are like a cage according to 45d offering shining fruits, and the mind-bird is commanded to sport

in it instead of vainly wandering elsewhere. The psalmist is convinced that the source of all good in store is the Lord's feet (*bhavyāṅghriyugala* 26a), which is a basin in which the creeper of devotion grows receiving the waters of joy (49a) necessary for its growth. Further, it is fancied that the two feet are the two tender leaves developed from a new bud (47d) giving the highest fruit of illumination (*samvit-phala*). Two other rough metaphors connected with the Lord's feet are certainly inharmonious; but they serve the purpose of a new emphasis by contrast. The *bhakta* prays (96) to his Lord requesting Him to urge the ruttish elephant of the mind with the hook of firmness and fasten it to the post of the Lord's feet (*purahara-caraṇālāna*) with the chain of *bhakti*, using the mechanism of *cid* (knowledge). To compare the Lord's feet to a stable is intolerable. But the context implies no derogation, and the intention is lofty. 'O Paśupati, I have only one cow bought by my good deeds, and she gives me day after day the milk of supreme felicity. She is the cow of *bhakti* residing in the stable of Thy holy feet. Deign to protect her in every wise' (68). The aptness of the metaphor lies in the fact that a cow is unwilling to be pushed out of the familiar stable.

31. *Bhakti* or loving faith is the core of worship, which is essentially an attitude of the mind expressing in outward actions. A mind that yields freely and spontaneously to the fascination of the divine Ideal alone can hope for the higher experiences promised for a life consecrated to true religion. We find in the hymn under study a number of quatrains addressed to and counselling the mind. The significance of a devotee's outer life is derived from his inner life. What a man takes by contemplation, said Eckhart, that he pours out in love. Therefore what a person, practising divine life inwardly, at the source of his thoughts wishes is thousand times more important than what he does outwardly. Therefore Vasiṣṭha declared that the mind alone is the cause of bondage and release, joy and enlightenment. Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavat-pāda expresses wonder (9) why man is so stupid

as not to realize the truth that he can abide in bliss by making a gift of the lotus-flower of his mind to the Deity, ceasing to search for wild flowers to worship Him. Because he is seeking mutually incompatible things, unregenerate man cannot give himself completely and say, 'Let my mind be your property'—*bhavatu bhavad-arthaṁ mama manaḥ* 27d. The mind has therefore to pass through different stages in its progress towards religious maturity. The *Śivānandalaharī* employs two dozens of metaphors and similes in order to express the nature and characteristics of the mind in its favourable, negative, and neutral aspects.

32. The condition of an active and vigorous mind devoid of all discipline and training can hardly be expressed more tersely than by the metaphor of the monkey (20c), and of the ruttish elephant (96d) noted for its vehemence and uncontrollable caprice. Under this category must be included the metaphor of the forest of the mind (43c) harbouring varieties of wild beasts—conceit, delusion, vanity, greed, envy, and the rest—which God as the woodlander is requested to hunt down. The mind in its most favourable disposition is pictured through the metaphor of the self-absorbed bride separated from the groom (77b), and the most spiritually barren attitude of the mind is brought out in the deft and anxious thief simile (22c). It is the nature of the mind to conceal, distrust, misrepresent, dissimulate, and to crave for and cling to things not legitimately belonging to it. So the mind is convicted as the thief and the Self pleads not guilty (22). But this conviction of the mind is just to purify it through punishment. For what with its fickleness and evil propensities, it must be conceded that the mind alone is the fort (42d) from which man should fight the battle of life, installing there the Deity as the king. Not merely a fort, the mind is a respectable city where the King of kings dwells (39d), an idea sanctified in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The restless, anarchic mind receives into it the divine Ruler, and it becomes tamed like a dug-out canal (*dhīkulyā* 2b) and flows in the desired direc-

tion. A truly cultured mind can discriminate the true and the false like the fabled swan separating milk from water mixed for adulteration (*mānasarājahaṁsa* 46d, *manohaṁsāvataṁsa* 48c). Not being satisfied with the comparison of the mind to the citadel, the author further says that the mind is the home of God, whether it is the cave (*cetaḥkuhara* 44c) with only one opening or an excellent home (*hṛdayageha* 84d) richly furnished, or a clean tent (*cetaḥ-sphuṭa-pāṭakutī* 21c) daily pitched with renewed resolve by the holy road (*prati-divasa-sanmārga-ghaṭitām* 21b). The precious lotus-feet of the Lord are cherished in the casket of the mind (*cetaḥpeṭī*); nay, a more interior place must be found for them, the pot of the mind filled with serene water (*prasanne manaḥ kumbhe* 36b), where during worship the Lord is invoked.

33. The concentric limitation of the mind implied in the above metaphors should not incline us to think that the mind is a narrow corner. The vastness and dynamism of the mind is brought out fully in other metaphors and similes. The mind is compared to the immense sky (*cetaḥ puṣkara* 38c) on the horizon of which the divine Light arises; it is the vast field (*hṛtkedāra* 40c), in which the paddy of devotion is harvested, preventing the famine that threatens the devotee. We get one of the glorious and complete allegories in the realm of mystic poetry in a comparison of the mind to a garden (*hṛdārāma* 47): 'The spring of contemplation on Śambhu has set in in the garden of the heart; the sered leaves of sin have fallen; branches of *bhakti* have put out twigs dazzling with multitudes of sprouts of tender leaves and flowers in the shape of meritorious thoughts and deeds; noble traits make their appearance like flaming buds; holy utterances fill with excellent fragrance; the nectar of knowledge and bliss trickle from the fruit of illumination resulting in such a rich harvest.' Another implied simile germane to the above is that of the lake (*manastatāka* 76c) filled with the felicity rained from the moisture-laden cloud of *bhakti*, floating in the *puṣkara* (sky and lotus) of the feet of

Maheśa and bringing fruits to the herb of life which would otherwise languish and perish. St. Theresa's allegory of the garden in connection with four degrees of prayer supplies a parallel to the above figures. The mind is not merely a receptacle or a support, the high thatch for the climbing of *bhakti* (49), but a dynamic force which should be harnessed to God-centred meditation and action, when the tranquillity of deep contemplation is not possible. It must be made a bejewelled wearing apparel for the feet of the Deity (*cetomaṇipādukā-viharaṇa* 64d). This perhaps implies that the Lord makes the mind, His instrument of grace, shine with divine qualities. The mind should not be allowed to be passive, especially in the beginning of spiritual life; it must incessantly strive like a machine—the *dhīyantra* 40a, which picks up life-giving waters at the bottom of the ocean of divine deeds and discharges at the top for the production of the crop of devotion. The humorous offer of the saddle-horse of the devotee's mind to the Bull-rider (75), again, suggests the dynamic side of the mind. The active, instrumental function of the mind is further stressed by the simile of the churning rod (*manomanthāna* 37b). Finally, the comparison of the mind to *cuculus melanoleucus* (*manaś-cātaka* 52), supposed to subsist solely on rain, fittingly serves the purpose of reminding the aspirant after devotion that all his striving must tend to develop unswerving love and perpetual God-mindedness.

THE SCHEME OF RELIGIOUS LIFE EXPRESSED OR HINTED IN THE HYMN

34. The essential discipline to be followed by the *bhakta* is clearly perceptible in outline throughout the elevated beauty and artistry of this holy poem. Who is entitled to the path of *bhakti*? In the *Bhakti-sūtras*, Nārada (*sūtra* 72) and Śāṅḍilya (*sūtra* 78) lay down that *bhakti* is out of bounds to no human being, however low he might be by birth (*ā-nindya-yoni*). Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, who has given the palladium of *varṇāśrama* in his commentaries, here concurs with the two sages just mentioned, and he

affirms that that person is an unsurpassed *yogin* whose mind is always set on the feet of the Deity, be he a god or a bird, mammal or insect (10); householder, recluse, or renouncer (11); or be he a dweller in a cave, home, meadow, hill, fire, or water (12). Even a woodlander becomes a jewel among *bhaktaḥ* (63), he exclaims in delight. The next question is, What is the goal of a *bhakta*? In many places in the text, the Bhāṣyakāra has presented his logically impregnable, Upaniṣad-based definition of release or *mokṣa*; but he has presented also a refreshing, apparently less arduous, conception of it satisfying all: What possibly is release? Is it from this life? If that is so, to which place? And in that place and condition, what would be fit, again, for us to desire? (33d). However lofty one might soar, at no stage is *bhakti* dispensable. This, however, does not imply a denial of *kaivalya-saukhya* 59d, the bliss of liberation, for in 91 it is stated: 'I believe I am a fit vessel for *mukti*, because through Thy grace *vidyā* (liberating knowledge) has come to my mind and primordial ignorance (*ādyāvidyā*) has quitted long ago.' The holy preceptor here stresses *bhakti* as a *sine qua non* of *jñāna*. 'Grant me immediate felicity (23a)'—this is the poignant prayer of the hymn. Godhood attained by ordinary worship is not enough; for gods, too, have to be consumed by anguish born of their failure to realize the Supreme even after wearisome search. The instantaneous felicity (*sapadi-sukha*) is the attribute of *jīvanmukti*, which is described quite originally in 81. But it is more, because it is unsurpassed joy (*paramasaukhya* 6d, 83d) resulting from the most intimate love for the Deity—the acme of intimacy being the recognition of identity expressed or hinted in 28d, 35, 57, and 59d. Only such a one liberated in life can say truly: I have obtained my object (*svāmin kṛtārtho'smyaham* 28d); and where is fear for me (*mama sevakasya bhagavan viśveśa bhītiḥ kutaḥ?* 40d; *me kuto bhīḥ* 44d). Fearlessness can never be an attribute of a mind that cherishes a treasure in this world, and so it is stated in 70 that, whether alone or in company,

the *bhakta* has easy access to the transcendent (*jagadadhika*) divine Reality at heart. The true *bhakta* who is thus *nirākula* becomes *nirud-yama* also. He says: I am not enamoured of continuous striving (*aham udyoga-vidhāsu te'-prasaktaḥ* 90b); and if actions appear in me, certainly they are a means of Thy play expressing as such (*Śambho svasya kutūhalasya karaṇam macceṣṭitam niścitam* 66c). This attitude is not, of course, a rebellion against the law of action promulgated by God, for the servant of God cries out in 19cd: For whose profit is it that Thou doest not take off the wearisome exertion from me? Pray, tell. If it is Thy pleasure, certainly I submit. Thus the devotee is not averse to *āyāsa* and *udyoga*, provided it is done to satisfy God and also it is inspired by His sportive will. The true *bhakta* hopes everything from God and exerts as if all effort depended on himself. Stanzas 7, 28, and 41 describe his ardent persevering attitude in very vivid manner.

35. Some vaunting modern activists take pleasure in berating a *bhakta* as a do-nothing, perhaps with a view to set off the brilliance of their resounding achievements. But the *bhakta* is also a hero wielding the bow of devotion, *bhāvacāpa* with *smaraṇa-bāṇa* and *bhakti-guṇa* (71), as forestalled in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (II.2.3) long ago. On proper analysis, we can easily see that the sum of the much advertised welfare work is but a speck in the vastness of human needs, whether seen from the angle of moral worth or practical adequacy. In the eye of the soul that dwells constantly at the feet of the Deity, all frantic efforts at economic welfare reduce themselves to *nityam svodarapūra-nāya sakalān-uddiśya vittāśayā vyartham parya-ṭanam*—meaningless wandering under the pretext of gathering wealth for all, just to fill one's own belly (57ab); or lingering at the doors of the affluent either to steal or to rob (19, 22); or to bask in the favour of a king pleasing him with arts, panegyrics, mimics, and jests (5ab); or waging wordy battles (6c) as vendors of others' ideas (7d). In short, so long as a man is a slave of 'wealth-getting' (*arthāharāna-*

paratantra 22a), he is yet to understand the love of God (*nijabhajanadūra* 13a). It is not that every man should become an economic zero, but it is the rule that the *bhakta* should look upon God as the source of all things, spiritual and temporal; for, according to the *bhakta*, *bhakti* is *sarvābhīṣṭa-phalaprādā* 49d; if it is tended by pure activity (*satkarma-saṁvardhitā* 49d), what is hard for that mind which is abandoned to the worship of the Divine feet? (65d). So he asks: *Yaccetas-tava pādapadma-bhajanam tasyeha kim durlabham?* The worshipper of the Lord is never in distress. Certainly, God supplies nourishment to the body and goodness to the mind for such a person. The reverent supplicant who prays to the Deity for the firm prosperity of a king (*susthīrarāja-lakṣmī* 71d) and attractive power (*ruciraiśvarya* 41a), and entertains no fear from want (*dur-bhikṣa* 40d), certainly recognizes the needs of body and mind as gifts from God, so that his gratitude and humility in relation to his Deity become deeper thereby and the feeling of belonging to God (*tadīyatā*) is strengthened, making his devotion well founded.

36. The *sādhaka* who has passed through suffering, agony, and doubt and gained the realization of a *jīvanmukta* is perpetually contented (*nityatṛpta*), and his high spirit of devotion carries him to a spontaneous contemplative calm in which self-abnegation and sincere and utter detachment become the prevailing moods of his mind. *Niyatānusmṛti* (unbroken remembrance) becomes the *pradhānāṅga* (principal) and *ītaravicikitsā* (a holy indifference to the temporal) the accessory or *gauṇāṅga*. In this mechanism of his inner discipline, a defective accessory (*aṅgavikalāṅga*) cannot be of assistance to the principal (*pradhānopakāraka*). A brief enumeration of these accessory factors is necessary here to make this study generally complete. The practice of divine communion is a graduated scale rising from acts of devotion (*gauṇabhakti*) and mature devotion (*bhāva*) to supreme love and adoration (*ekāntabhāva*). At every stage, removal of hindrance (*pratibandhaka-durita-*

kṣaya) is necessary through acts of devotion. So, even when the highest stage is reached, acts of devotion continue as a side-dish or gap-filler (29,81). For the removal of disqualifying hindrances (*pāpotpāta-vimocana* 41a), the prescription is chanting powerful divine names and songs, meditation, salutation, circumambulating holy spots, worship, seeing divine objects, and listening to holy words (41b). The *bhakta* renews his resolve daily never to swerve from the true and right path (*pratidivasasanmārga-ghaṭita* 21b), and when he attains religious maturity, he asserts confidently (69ab): 'O Lord, inertia, animality, stain, and crookedness have no place in me.' In 92ab, we read: 'I have driven out ill-luck, bad ways, difficulties, evil speech, and conceit of individuality.' The *bhakta* has no enemy except his own sins (*kilbiṣa ripu* 71c) to battle against. Whether it is due to ignorance or perversion of will, sin is a fact given in experience; and the servant of God, who has a mind rendered sensitive by the exercise of purity and divine grace (*viśada-kṛpā* 16c, *karuṇā* 17a), feels the need of getting rid of it the more.

37. According to the *Śivānandalaharī*, all the ingredients of devotional discipline are summed up (42) as profundity (*gāmbhīrya*), fixity of purpose (*ghana-dhṛti*), cluster of rising virtues (*udyad-guṇa-stoma*), and reflective knowledge (*vidyā*). The accessories of devotion mentioned are: purity of body and mind (*nairmalyataḥ chādana* 62a, *nija-śarīrāgāra-śuddhi* 36c), chanting holy songs (*stotra-phaṇiti* or *saṅkīrtana* 7a, 28a, also 24, 25), listening to narrations about God (7ab), beholding divine representations with fascinated eyes (94d), humble prostration as illustrated in 1, 55, 56, performance of worship (*saparyā* 41b), repeating divine names (*īśvara-nāma-mantra* 72b), unbroken meditation (*parama-sadāśiva-bhāvanā* 67d, *bhāvanā-paryāṅka* 62c), and other devotional forms such as sanctifying the body by *rudrākṣa* and *bhasma* to keep up devotion uninjured 62c. *Bhāvanā* or fixing the heart and mind on the Deity is repeatedly referred to, because that is central to all the rest. To wor-

ship the *trilokīguru* (Director and Guide of the worlds) with suitable ingredients, even gods are insufficient (30). In a humorous vein, it is stated: I do not know how to worship you (57b); even possessing the 'know-how' of it, I do not get the means for it (85); granted I get them, I cannot locate you for worship (86); and if somehow I succeed in worshipping ceremonially, you may not be pleased with what I offer (89ab). And yet he worships in full form (*karomi tvat-pūjām* 23a). But all can offer the mind and say: *Bhavatu bhavadartham mama manaḥ* (27). When the supreme Lord is invoked in the heart, stanza 39 describes, one's *dharma* (duty) is fully discharged, sins are routed, craving, anger, and the rest drop off, and good time sets in. The reservoir of contemplation renders the impure heart serene by creating in it holy tendencies (*kaḷuṣahṛt-sadvāsanāvīṣkṛtam* 48b).

38. The general attitude of a person who is firmly established in believing love towards God, it may be said in conclusion, is that of detachment and unconcern with the world resulting from the attenuation of his ego. He is convinced that wretchedness and affliction (*dainya* 16b) and the forest of delusion (20a) man is subjected to cannot be wished away or terminated by mutually contradictory self-effort, because the writ of Brahmā is infallible (15, 16) and He is long-lived. Brahmā cannot be done away with on the charge of predestining man to suffering. Nor the vision of a millennium for all humanity appeals to the *bhakta*, for he knows that the world teems with endless troubles (19b). His interest in the world is that it gives an opportunity for *Śivabhakti-dhurya-janatā-sāṅgatyā-sambhāṣaṇa* (company and conversation of devotees possessing excellent piety 28b), and the first thing necessary for producing good company is to make oneself worthy of the company of the good and not reviling the bad. A person should cease to become a victim of *durāsā* (vain hopes and false desires 15b). This he should achieve by leaving the mind in the Lord's keeping, as stated in 9, 84, and allied contexts. As for the temporal burden (*bhava-*

bhāra 11d), if the mind is completely offered to Him, the Lord will bear it for him. For the Lord is the fountain of mercy, the bearer of safety and prosperity, *yogakṣema-durandhara*, and an expert in saving all, and particularly the low. The devotee of God never despises the world; he takes it as an occasion to meditate on living and non-living beings as the body of God (28c). This holy and sweet hymn from

the great philosopher and lover of God holds out to seekers of all succeeding generations a glimpse of the supreme Truth designated as Śiva in His acosmic transcendence and delectable meditative forms, outlines the methods of communion with Him, and presents divine hope through potent counsels couched in the language of high expressiveness, elevation, beauty, and artistry.

VEDĀNTA AS A SCIENTIFIC PHILOSOPHY—2

BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

(Continued from February issue)

3. THE SPIRIT OF MODERN SCIENCE

(i) *Introductory*

We have briefly described the philosophical creed of modern science underlying the scientific practice and marked by some self-conscious scientists and methodologists. We have also come across, in the course of this study, the prevailing scientific spirit. As we observed at the very outset, we shall reflect critically and constructively on the creed of science, following the scientific spirit, in order to develop a scientific philosophy. The spirit of science is characterized by (i) an urge for a wider or a more inclusive comprehension of the phenomena; (ii) an active search for bold and abstract theories in place of older mechanical models and causal hypotheses; (iii) its recasting of the natural language into an artificial or idealized one, more suited for scientific purposes; (iv) an admission of an element of contingency or historicity in nature, of fallibility in scientific endeavour, and of incompleteness of the scientific world-view; (v) an effort to sublimate individual points of view or relativity into an universal outlook on nature; and (vi) its deontological standpoint.

(ii) *The First Three Features of the Scientific Spirit*

The urge for greater comprehensiveness or scope of a theory is illustrated in physics by such theories as the kinetic theory of gases, electron theory of matter, relativity theory, wave theory, and the recent work on the unified field theory. The aim of science is to see if a theory devised to account for a certain range of data also applies to other ranges. This is known as the deployment or deductive fertility of a theory. As a theory gains in this quality, we can have a comprehension of a large area of observational field with greater logical simplicity or less number of gratuitous hypotheses. This urge for integration of wider areas of experience by fewer conceptual means led scientists in the past to think of a unitary science or a single all-comprehensive system of explanation in science in terms of some key-concepts. This has proved rather a visionary idea, and some recent scientists have replaced it by the idea of a unified science, which will interrelate the sciences through the use of a common physicalistic or 'thing' language. Every term of the different

sciences will have to be reduced to the physicalistic terms, or every science is to be reduced to the basic science, physics. The task is gigantic, and it is doubtful how far biology, psychology, and the social sciences can be reduced to physics. None the less, the move for such a unity of science illustrates the general spirit of science for effecting higher and higher synthesis of our experience.

This urge for greater synthesis of experience has resulted in the construction of very abstract theories which have no definite denotation, but are indirectly and partially interpreted and confirmed by a range of observational data. The idea that some scientists at one time entertained, namely, that an explanatory theory must be capable of direct observational verification, like the bacilli or Neptune, cannot be maintained in the face of our present scientific practice. The idea that these abstract hypotheses may be subsequently replaced by a set of observational terms, and therefore may be treated as a scaffolding to the scientific structure, is also not supported by the scientific practice of our day, which admits these abstract theories as unavoidably vague and indefinite in denotation, that is, in direct and explicit definition, and yet indispensable for scientific comprehension of experience.

This situation in scientific research has led to the reconstruction of the natural language. As the scientist operates with certain ordinary terms, like intelligence, social status, energy, field, etc., to correlate evermore effectively his increasingly wide and complex experience, he continually redefines these terms, endowing them with more import than they originally possessed. Thus there is a language-shift as the ordinary language is employed for scientific purposes, and it gains in theoretic import. The relation between the pre-scientific and the technical meanings of a term or statement becomes very tenuous, and sometimes the two are alienated. This produces much confusion in the mind of the layman. Thus the terms force, atom, electron, wave, space, time, and matter in physics have changed their meanings almost

beyond recognition. Not only that old concepts are given new scope and meanings, but new modes of speaking are introduced. The logical rules and the constants of thought, like space, time, substance, and causality, have changed in new physics. The principles of knowledge, and so the linguistic frameworks, change with the contents of knowledge. Our imaginative and linguistic habits, which are formed to cope with a certain environment, for instance the macroscopic one, will fail outside this area, and will have to be modified if we become aware, through better and finer modes of perception, of a more extended environment, such as the microscopic and the megaloscopic ones revealed by new physics. The present crisis in physics, consisting in the conflicts with the ideas of classical physics, is due to the failure of old modes of thought outside their legitimate field of application.

We can easily see how these three elements of the scientific spirit discussed above, namely, moves for greater synthesis, abstract theories, and reconstruction of the older concepts and language, have philosophical potentiality. The scientist of our day cannot rest content with what is known as scientific integration of our experience, but must proceed beyond this towards the open horizon of an ideal comprehension by means of bolder and more abstract theoretical devices. Our scientific philosophy is the result of such a relentless extension of the scientific method in the understanding of our experience.

(iii) *Elements of Contingency, Fallibility, and Incompleteness*

Modern science admits an element of contingency in nature, which is a bit loose-jointed and vague or indefinite in the extreme details. Physics admits the intrinsic impossibility of determining the quantitative features of any individual datum. Quantum mechanics finds it impossible to use a deterministic language in the description of the micro-world and maintains the necessity of describing aggregates and probabilities of events in this region. These descrip-

tions are like statements in a game of chance. Yet a rational theory, and so science, is made possible because of the actual prevalence of order over chaos. The laws of the inanimate macro-bodies are *practically* deterministic, because they describe large masses of micro-bodies and, so, their average or mean behaviours. Scientific knowledge, thus, does not mean a strict rational ordering of the ultimate details of nature, but only a rough and idealized representation of the gross or statistical behaviour of these occurrences. The scientific or theoretic world-picture is thus different from the historical one which is experiential and, therefore, full of breaks and uncertainties, containing an element of spontaneity, as in the micro-bodies of organic matter, and of choice and decision, as in those of the higher centres of the human brain. Thus the ideal of a thorough mechanistic science has proved mythical, and the physicist has to supplement his physical reality by aspects of actuality or historicity. The physics of the micro-world gives us only a large-scale account of this region, which is historical or full of contingent incidents. The macro-world is more or less a deterministic one, because large numbers of micro-bodies co-operate here, and their individual differences are averaged out. But a contingency can, in principle, invade this region also; a single contingent behaviour in the micro-world underlying it, such as a random movement of an electron or a neutron, can result in a sudden click in a Geiger counter or burst of an atom bomb. Human preferences and decisions, which are ultimately irreducible facts, find their expression through the micro-bodies of the brain, which, through multiplication of effects, may be imagined to bring about a change in the macro-world. Since new physics allows a certain latitude of indeterminacy to the micro-bodies, it can admit human free will, which can now be pictured to manifest itself through the body in the manner described above. In the same manner, new physics can allow spontaneous and co-ordinated growth of organic matter, which shows that

micro-bodies are ruled by some over-all plan, besides the deterministic physico-chemical laws which may be only serving this plan in its execution.

The theoretical world-picture of science is thus an idealized one, which helps us to expect certain average results from certain situations (as in weather forecasting) or from certain physical conditions deliberately brought about by our free efforts (as in experiments and engineering). We are always aware of the elements of randomness, spontaneity, and free will in the domains respectively of micro-physics, biology, and introspective psychology. These domains fall out of the theoretical picture and delimit its scope and validity. As we noted earlier, science cannot logically prove universal and strict causality; it merely shows that there are *some* regular coexistences and sequences of events. So that contingent and free purposive behaviours in the world are not forbidden by science, but rather made plausible by its developments in micro-physics.

Science also allows that it is ever open to error. This principle of fallibility or corrigibility is the consequence of the inductive method of science. Since a certain theory rests on a limited number of observations that indirectly verify it, the theory can never be a certainty. There is always the possibility of another theory being devised which can account for a wider area of observations in the field and, so, be more acceptable. This holds in the case of the physical geometries also which seem to be *a priori* true and incorrigible. Modern analysis and physical researches have shown that, in so far as the Euclidean geometry is a mere definitional system in pure mathematics, it is *a priori*, but only formally true; while, in so far as it claims to describe our physical world as an empirical theory in physical geometry, it is open to revision, and has been, in fact, replaced by a non-Euclidean geometry of the Riemannian form which does more justice to the empirical situation. Since the world of observable data is an open system, the scientist cannot be sure of his theories which take care of these data and

which, therefore, he offers not in the manner of a prophet as sure hits, but in that of a gambler as best bets. This element of uncertainty in scientific knowledge, instead of dampening the scientist, inspires him with the desire to improve his world-picture by continual revision. He is like one working at a sort of jigsaw puzzle, trying scheme after scheme to reach the most satisfactory one under the present set of observational data. No hard and fast rule can determine the course of his search and give him quick, inter-personally acceptable results. The rules of logical simplicity and comprehensiveness are there to help the scientist to choose amongst a number of rival theories in a field, but such rules are not very clear and unambiguous in their working, and an element of free choice always enters in this matter.

So that the scientist has to be tough-minded enough to admit this situation in his discipline; he has to work within the framework of an incomplete world-view. Knowledge for him is ever open to the infinite horizon, ever a reaching forward towards completion, but never an arrival at it. We shall see how significant this feature of scientific spirit is from our point of view. It leads science to philosophize, without a blind effort at absolute certitude and completeness in respect of the results. Such a blind predilection drives one to dogmatism and obscurantism and tends to produce in others a distaste for philosophy. Philosophy must be a free venture and a vision, and it must not be afraid of uncertainty of its results. The spirit of science helps this genuine philosophic spirit to develop. It teaches us that reality is not so much an antecedent and finished state of affairs to be discovered as a viewpoint or conceptual framework to be invented which may help one to place the so far observed data into the best possible order. Since the world of data is an open system and not a closed and finished affair, and since there is much scope for individual choice and decision in regard to judgement on the comparative worth of a certain viewpoint or conceptual framework, one cannot sensibly speak of certainty and incorrigibil-

ity of one's philosophical views. There is no end to one's continual efforts at improving one's philosophy in response to new data coming to light and fresh concepts or theoretical devices arising in the mind. And there can be no ultimate rational judgement on the rival philosophies, for much depends in this matter on one's taste and temperament rather than on any universally valid reason. Vedānta or any philosophy can be justified on rational grounds only up to a certain point, beyond which one's psychological and cultural factors enter to determine one's preference. Vedānta recognizes this human or existential element in philosophy, as it prescribes certain rules of conduct and psychological make-up of the mind for the fruitful study of Vedānta philosophy. We must note this important feature of any serious philosophy, and we have shown how modern science possesses this. So it is a fit prolegomenon to genuine philosophical enterprise.

(iv) *Search for Universality*

Science seeks objectivity not in the sense of immediate verifiability of its objects, but in the sense of their greater inter-personal validity or universality. This follows from the situation already noted that science seeks to construct abstract theories to comprehend our experience, and the gap between a theory and its indirectly verifying experiences is very big indeed. Now a theory gains in universality by virtue of its capacity to correlate and to be confirmed by a large number of experiential data distributed over many minds, while a single first-person experience has no such universality, though much feeling of immediacy and givenness is associated with it. Thus scientific method aims at sublimating, as far as possible, the individual points of view and developing a universal outlook. It stresses empirical import of theories and thus checks empty or idle theories that cannot be tested against observational data; but it is above any narrow empiricism and verificatory principle of meaning and truth of concepts, which demands a direct verification of a concept.

As we observed earlier in the essay, modern

science has liberalized the early empirical or positivistic notion of verification and has admitted a principle of confirmation or partial, indirect, and conditional verification. Thus, though the Relativity theory shows that one's reading of spatial and temporal distances and of mass differ with one's individual motion—since one cannot know any absolute motion, these readings are only relative to one another—still the theory has evolved a concept of public space-time, of which the different private space-times are but cross-sections. The general theory of Relativity offers us the concept of a curved space, whose structure depends on the distribution of matter in the universe and which allows us to interrelate and predict the different measurements of objects that may be made by different observers. So that the very abstract concept of space-time-matter advanced by Einstein is, in one sense, truer than the actual space, time, and matter given in common sense. It is truer by virtue of its greater capacity to order a large number of private spatio-temporal and gravitational experiences.

Science treats the physical objects like chairs and tables as more real than the sense-data because of the same principle of objectivity, namely, that the more inter-personally confirmable or acceptable concept is more objective than a less one, though the latter may be more immediately given in one's experience. In conceiving and accepting as more real the abstract concepts of science, the scientist rises above his individual point of view and realizes the power and scope of scientific knowledge that enables him to comprehend a mass of phenomena under some concepts. The aim of philosophy, too, is this transcendence of individual views to develop universal ones. However, as we noted before and shall explain in the sequel, philosophy, in our sense, also recognizes the element of individuality and freedom underlying any philosophical view. A philosopher of our ideal type recognizes both these moments in philosophic enterprise. He seeks to reach a universal point of view and yet respects his own

and other's individual freedom. Therefore gentle persuasion and teaching through one's personal example and love are more important means of philosophical communication than either arguments or psychological compulsion.

(v) *The Deontological Standpoint*

We have already observed this feature of science. Science does not have any metaphysical commitment. It speaks of objects being real or unreal, existing or non-existing in the sense of their present fruitfulness or adequacy, or their opposites, in organizing the perceptual data in any sector of enquiry, under the existing aims and attitudes working in the particular field. Some logicians seem to believe in the ontological ground of logical laws, and they assert that these laws reflect the invariant traits of reality or of all possible worlds. But, as modern analysts have shown, we cannot prove this assertion, for the simple reason that this reality must be first conceived and, so, logic incorporated into it, in order to see whether it proves or disproves the logical laws. Since we cannot do without the logical laws, we cannot possibly prove or disprove them. The needs of our communication make these laws appear necessary, and we tend to interpret this necessity as suggestive of some ontological structure of the world. We cannot get out of our present logical mode of thinking to think of any possible world that may either support or falsify it, and this circumstance in our cultural history is misinterpreted as the result of our being acted upon by the permanent features of reality. At least, modern science subscribes to this deontological view of logic; and we know, Vedānta also treats all logic and empirical science as but names and forms, having no ultimate reality. We shall see how Vedānta may be said to hold the same deontological attitude to Brahman, which is, after all, an explanatory principle to be judged by its capacity to account for our experiences. At least, the Vedānta philosophers must offer this highest principle as a scientific one to the general student of philosophy, who cannot be expected to have either a starting faith in

the Upaniṣads or a first-hand experience of Brahman.

As in regard to logical laws, so in regard to other conceptual entities of science; they have no ontological import, but only a methodological one. They represent what are more or less acceptable in scientific discourse by virtue of their greater adequacy as devices for integrating experience in their respective fields. This adequacy is no evidence for the ontological import of the concepts concerned, for the ontological question can be answered by 'Yes' or 'No' (either the entities exist or do not), while adequacy is a matter of degree.

4. THE FIRST STAGE OF SCIENTIFIC PHILOSOPHY

(i) *Introductory*

As we said at the outset, we shall reflect critically and constructively, following the spirit of science, on the creed of science, in order to develop a scientific philosophy. Now the element of the creed of science that seems most significant for us, in view of its philosophical potentiality, is that relating to knowledge. Science believes in some extra-mental entities corresponding to its sense-data, physical objects, and abstract theories, though it does not posit these entities as absolute realities. Science seeks to integrate our sense experiences in terms of these entities, which are considered to possess physical characters, though we do not precisely know the latter. Now a scientist might as well seek to integrate experience in terms of some other kinds of entities. These may be postulated to explain the process of perception. A scientific or causal explanation of perception naturally leads one to imagine some non-perceptible objects at the back of our sense-data. These are the differential conditions of our perception, such that we sense different qualities with the same psycho-somatic apparatus or organs because of a difference in them. We see one thing red and another blue because of some difference in the nature of the underlying stuff of the things in question.

So that we can now explain the features of the sensible world in terms of those of this non-sensible one underlying it. Thus a realistic theory of knowledge being the implicit creed of science, and a search for conceptual device to comprehend any process being the essence of scientific enquiry, a scientist cannot but arrive at an account of the sensible experiences as indicated above. This is the representational realism of the British philosopher Locke, and is admitted by many modern thinkers. The inference to the unexperienced cause of experienced effects is logically gratuitous, no doubt, but quite in keeping with the scientific spirit which adopts the hypothetico-deductive method, which does not demand direct verifiability of the hypothetical entities. This representational theory of perception can be imagined after any non-symbolical representative mechanism we are acquainted with, such as the television. The theory also explains the situation of perceptual error, which, according to it, is due to the abnormal state either of the physical environment (such as hot desert air causing mirage) or of psycho-somatic conditions (such as jaundice producing pale vision or fear of snakes producing illusion and hallucination of snakes). It, of course, also explains the overwhelming inter-personal agreement in our perceptions, which situation makes a common world and communication possible.

(ii) *Scope and Worth of This Philosophy*

But this philosophical theory does not go very far towards unification of our experience, for it practically duplicates the sensible world and, so, multiplies, instead of diminishing, entities. The imperceptible world with certain structural properties is isomorphous with the sensible world, which is the mental correlate of the former. We can conceive of this background world as a very much condensed system, having one-to-one relation with our sensible world that represents it on a vast scale, but this simplicity in size and mechanism cannot bring about any significant philosophical implication or logical economy. Besides, there are some other diffi-

culties in the view. First, the remote cause of a sense-datum is said to be where the latter is located, but its immediate cause is the movements in the brain cell. How can the mind transcend its immediate surroundings to leap to a remote terminal of a long chain of causation? Secondly, how can extra-mental objects cause sense experiences which are mental? The problem of mind and matter remains unexplained in this theory. Thirdly, the mind can form vivid sensible objects without any excitation from outside, as our imagination, dreams, and hallucinations prove. So that an extra-mental stuff does not seem to be the cause of perception.

Thus perception cannot be regarded as explainable in terms of some extra-mental physical reality, and even if it be allowed, the hypothesis does not serve us much to understand the perceptual world, its variety and unity. So this manner of thinking constitutes only the first stage of scientific philosophy, which, on further reflection, leads one to higher stages.

5. THE SECOND STAGE OF SCIENTIFIC PHILOSOPHY

(i) *General Features of This Philosophy*

Instead of postulating a physical entity behind the sensible world to explain its features, we may, more reasonably, postulate an over-mind, holding us under a hypnotic spell and making us perceive inter-subjectively and inter-sensually things in a regular manner. This regularity is such that the sensible objects follow some rule of correlation with our bodily positions and conditions of the sense-organs, nervous system and psychical states, and with other objects which are either actual or possible perceptions. This regular correlation leads us to think that our bodies and psychical states (e.g. attention and memory) have a causal part to play in perception, but we forget that the bodies and psychical states are themselves but perceived objects. As Berkeley showed us, the realistic faith that the objects exist outside the mind on their own account, whether we perceive them or

not, is produced in us, because we find them beyond the control of our personal deliberation and will. This givenness or compulsion of the objects is the work of the universal hypnotizer.

The hypnotic influence consists in making the subject see an object and believe it to be really there, which is but projected by him under the promptings of a superior mind. To strengthen the realistic faith in objects, the universal hypnotizer produces them in such a regular and universal manner that the real existence of the objects becomes a natural thought to explain the agreement and difference of percepts of different persons in terms of the similarity and difference of their bodily positions and conditions of sense-organs. The free but consistent will of some cosmic mind, then, explains the regularity in the sense-objects, the laws of nature and the laws of perspective, and also the agreement and disagreement amongst our individual percepts. This mind causes hallucinations, so to say, in the individual minds in a systematic manner, so that they may learn from experience the signs for certain correlated sensible appearances and act accordingly. This is what Berkeley saw, and he, not without reason, identified this over-mind with God.

At the second stage of our philosophy, we are happy to find a like nature, a mind, as the cause of all things and their governor. Brute nature frightens us. We can now feel homely and embrace life with trust and hope, and may even worship and pray. For, now, we find in nature and in our own bodies the stamp of an all-knowing creative intelligence that has given ample evidence of its concern for its creatures. This world-view is much relieving to a scientific philosopher, for science, uninformed by this philosophy, pictures a vast and indifferent world into which man has stumbled.

(ii) *Some Parallel Philosophical Views Offered by Modern Scientists*

Sir James Jeans argues for a theistic philosophy raised on science thus. Modern physics is now mathematical, and, mathematics being

pure *a priori* thought, a super-mathematical mind, God, must be at the back of the world as its creator. This argument is defective, for, first, nature has not been exhaustively found to be mathematical; biological processes are not reducible to mathematical formulas, but show some element of spontaneity and contingency, and this, we saw before, is allowed by new quantum physics. Secondly, mathematical formula applies to nature which is not itself a formula, and, so, the argument at best proves a mathematical designer of the world, not its creator. However, since one could not design something according to one's own will unless the material worked upon is pliable like one's own imagination, we can think of God as the creator of the world. So that Jeans is very near our second stage of scientific philosophy. The proof of God he gave from the second law of thermodynamics and the theory of production of cosmic rays from the annihilation of matter need not be described here, for it rests on some controversial results of science.

Eddington argues that sensible objects are produced by the mind out of the meagre messages from a non-sensible one by means of its own *a priori* ideas. The scientific objects are also similarly constructed, for they are posited to explain the sensible data. The world of sense and science is thus a mental construct, and it must have a substratum which cannot be but consciousness, which alone we know immediately and which is active in sensible and scientific world-building. This manner of arriving at some spiritual reality underlying the world by an analysis of our perception is much like that adopted by our second stage of scientific philosophy. Only, Eddington has not made it clear whether this spiritual reality is man's own individual consciousness or that of some super-human universal being. The mind that constructs out of the elements supplied to it must recognize some other reality, and, since it cannot conceive how a material object can act upon it, it is led to postulate an over-mind as this other reality. Since there is much agreement and interrelation in the experiences of

different minds, this over-mind must be a single spirit, causing these experiences. Eddington has not seen this side of the problem and has fallen into empirical idealism, which is contradictory to his initial position that the mind knows the world. In knowing the world, the mind may contribute much to the latter, but the world cannot be its creation. Kant saw this point, when he declared that the mind makes nature, but does not create it. He was aware of an extra-mental thing-in-itself as the source of the sensuous material of knowledge. Eddington missed this realistic aspect of knowledge, because he confused the physical world with the world of physics and the object symbolized with the symbol. Science must be concerned with some extra-mental reality described by scientific symbols rather than with these symbols. This reality beyond the symbols may very well be conceived as a super-mind on the analogy of our own mind, for we can think of a mental cause of perceptual data rather than of a material one, and we have the experience of a hypnotizer prompting persons to perceive and think things as he chooses.

Thus Eddington could also reach the conclusions of the second stage of our scientific philosophy, had he consistently developed his line of thinking.

Einstein reaches certain idealistic conclusions by reflecting on one situation in scientific knowledge. He believes that the concepts of science are free creations of the scientist's mind and yet they apply to an alien world. So that there must be some pre-established harmony between the mind and the world, which is thus not essentially alien to the mind. But Einstein did not develop his thought in this line and did not speculate on the possible explanation of this situation. Had he done so, he might have offered the hypothesis of a divine mind which causes the sensible appearances in our minds and also the ideas to bring them to order; some of the ideas appear to be freely welling up in the mind, while others appear to be suggested by nature.

(iii) *Scope and Worth of the Second Stage of Scientific Philosophy*

The cosmic mind of this phase of philosophy is a postulate to explain certain features of our experience. It is not asserted as a necessary or metaphysical entity. This is in keeping with the scientific spirit that guides our present philosophical enquiry. The postulate of a cosmic mind serves to explain the non-necessary and provisional character of all natural laws and the elements of contingency, spontaneity, and purposiveness admitted by modern science. The laws are legislated by the free cosmic mind, and so cannot be necessary but only regular, depending on the sweet will of their author. The elements of contingency, spontaneity, and purposiveness express the freedom and intelligence of the cosmic mind. Science or empirical knowledge is the record of the existing rules, according to which the spirit causes certain systematic perceptions in our collective mind, while there are many other perceptions caused in our and animal minds which do not concern us, because they are unsystematic and bio-socially not so very important. So that what is real for us is decided by its relative expediency in our bio-social affairs, and it is not a matter of so-called apprehending the Truth or Reality in any ultimate sense. Again, we find, at this stage of our philosophy, that the perceptual objects are but hallucinations in our minds caused by the cosmic spirit, and, so, there is no material substance and no absolute space-time. Thus, our scientific philosophy of the second stage supports and explains some of the tenets of modern science, viz. those relating to causality, substance, space-time, and an open and provisional world-view.

The precise nature of this cosmic mind is not known, but it cannot be endowed with any particular character, such as mathematical, artistic, or ethical, for the mind itself should be apart from the qualities it creates. The cosmic mind is to be conceived as possessing potentiality to manifest diverse characters in the world, those observed so far and those that may be observed later on. So that this cosmic

mind may be imagined as possessing inexhaustible potentialities, of which only some are seen actualized at the moment through the medium of our minds. This cosmic mind cannot itself be in space and time, which are its creations; only we, who live through or traverse them, find them to be extensive and successive respectively. The over-mind or God sees them in one aspect, as we imagine the path of the earth round the sun or the law of gravitation of bodies in a timeless sense.

This second stage of scientific philosophy, then, appears to support, co-ordinate, and explain in terms of the concept of a cosmic mind or God the otherwise loosely knit and superficial elements of the philosophical creed of science. The world is viewed as an expression of a supra-mental will in the medium of our mind, which must be treated as somehow akin and subordinate to this super-mind to be used by it. The modern researches in parapsychology make this hypothesis of a cosmic hypnotizer plausible. A whole group of minds is sometimes found to be telepathically united in a common image-making theme sharing a hallucinatory world. So that we can very easily picture God as a super-hypnotizer.

But the difficulties of this theistic sort of philosophy are patent, and become quite disturbing at a certain stage of critical reflection. God's mind may be regarded as self-existing or, in our deontological terminology, a first principle, but our individual minds have to be treated as dependent on, and derived from, it, for how else can God act upon us to produce the hallucinations? But if He is to act upon us in this manner, He must be somehow in our minds, for how can an external mind influence our minds? The hypnotizer's mind must be essentially at one with the minds of the hypnotized. Another difficulty is that this second philosophy does not advance our understanding of nature very far, for we have merely postulated a world of ideas in God's mind to explain our sensible world, and, so, have duplicated the latter world, instead of reducing it to some fewer principles. Of course, the postu-

late of God's mind, which produces and holds these ideas together, and His free will and creative joy may help us to understand how and why these ideas are collected and are at all there. But such understanding is not fully satisfying, for we are apt to ask, How can God be imagined to create the individual minds? The hypnotizer of our common experience does

not produce the individual minds. So the analogy seems to break down. Critical reflection will take us beyond this second philosophy to a third one, where another analogical hypothesis will prove a better device to connect and understand the various features of our experience.

(To be continued)

ŚRĪ-BHĀSYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

TOPIC 2

THE SOULS DESCENDING FROM HEAVEN HAVE A RESIDUAL KARMA, WHICH DETERMINES THEIR BIRTH.

कृतात्ययेऽनुशयवान्, दृष्टस्मृतिभ्याम्,
यथेतमनेवं च ॥३।१।८॥

8. On the exhaustion of (good) work, (the soul) with the residual *karma* (descends to this earth), as is known from Śruti and Smṛti, along the path (it) went by (from here) and differently too.

The question is raised whether the soul that went to heaven from here by the path of smoke etc., when it descends, returns with any residual *karma* or not. The opponent holds that there is no residual *karma*, for residual *karma* means *karma* left over after what has been enjoyed. Śruti says, 'Having dwelt there till their work is consumed, they return again the same way as they went by' etc. (*Chā. U.*, V.10.5). *Vide Br. U.*, IV.4.6 also. These texts say that all the *karma* is exhausted and there is nothing left. So the soul returns without any residual *karma*.

The *sūtra* refutes this and says that the soul returns with residual good and bad *karma*, for Śruti says, 'Among these, those who have good residual *karma* quickly reach a good womb,

that of a Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, or Vaiśya. But those who have bad residual *karma* reach an evil womb, that of a dog, or a hog, or a Caṇḍāla' (*Chā. U.*, V.10.7). What is exhausted in heaven is only that *karma* which gave the soul a birth as god in heaven. So the enjoyment in heaven exhausts the results of good work like sacrifices etc., but there is other *karma* in store, according to which a man is born again in good or bad environment. The Smṛti also says, 'With the remainder of their *karma*, they are born in a noteworthy place, caste, and family, with good appearance, longevity, knowledge, wealth, happiness, and intellect' (*Gautama Dharma-Sūtra* II.11.12,13). So the soul is born with residual *karma*. By what way does it descend? Following the same way that it went by, but with some difference. That it returns by the same way as it went is known from *Chā. U.*, V.10.5, which mentions ether in the path, and that there is some difference is known from the fact that the world of the fathers etc. are omitted (*vide Chā. U.*, V.10.3), but wind, mist, etc. are mentioned (*vide Chā. U.*, V.10.6).

चरणादिति चेत्, न, तदुपलक्षणार्थेति

कार्णाजिनिः ॥३।१।९॥

9. If it be said that on account of conduct (the assumption of residual *karma* is unneces-

sary), (we say) not so, (for the word 'conduct' is used) to denote indirectly (*karma*). Thus (thinks) Kārṣṇājini.

The text cited in the last *sūtra* (*Chā. U.*, V.10.7) says that persons of 'good conduct' get a good birth. 'Good conduct' and *karma* are two different things, and as Śruti says that 'good conduct' leads to good birth, the assumption of residual *karma* is unnecessary. The *sūtra* refutes this and says that the sage Kārṣṇājini thinks that 'good conduct' indicates good *karma*.

आनर्थक्यमिति चेत्, न, तदपेक्षत्वात् ॥३१११०॥

10. If it be said (that in that case good conduct would become) purposeless, (we say) not so, on account of (*karma*) being dependent on that (good conduct).

An objection is raised that if good conduct be interpreted as *karma*, that would make good conduct purposeless in our lives, as it has no results. The *sūtra* refutes this on the ground that only people of good conduct are entitled to perform sacrifices etc. 'Him who is devoid of good conduct the Vedas do not purify.' Thus *karma* is dependent on good conduct, and hence the latter has a purpose. So Kārṣṇājini thinks that it is *karma* and not mere good conduct that is the cause of the new birth.

सुकृतदुष्कृते एवेति तु बादरिः ॥३११११॥

11. But (conduct) is merely good and evil works; thus (the sage) Bādari (thinks).

In the text 'By good conduct . . . by bad conduct' (*Chā. U.*, V.10.7), by conduct is meant good and evil works, for the word 'conduct' is used in the general sense of action as, for instance, when we say, 'That man practises righteousness'. Thus men of good conduct means those whose actions are praiseworthy. So Bādari thinks that nothing else but good and evil works are denoted by the word 'conduct'. This opinion of Bādari is accepted by the Sūtrakāra, for the word 'but' in the *sūtra* refutes the view of Kārṣṇājini given in the previous *sūtra*. But Kārṣṇājini's view is partially accepted by the Sūtrakāra, in so far as he says that 'good conduct' entitles one to perform

sacrifices etc. The conclusion therefore is that the soul descends with residual *karma*.

TOPIC 3

THE FATE OF SOULS WHO ARE NOT ENTITLED BY THEIR ACTIONS TO GO TO THE LUNAR SPHERE AFTER DEATH

अनिष्टाधिकारिणामपि च श्रुतम् ॥३१११२॥

12. The Śruti declares (the going to the lunar sphere etc.) of those also who do not perform sacrifices etc.

The question of those who do not perform sacrifices etc. is taken up for discussion. The opponent's view is given in *sūtras* 12-16. He holds that all, even the evil-doers, that is, those who fail to perform what is enjoined and perform what is forbidden by the scriptures, also go to heaven. The scriptures say so: 'All who depart from here go to the moon' (*Kau. U.*, I.2). Then, is there no difference between those who perform sacrifices and the evil-doers? The next *sūtra* answers this point.

संयमने त्वनुभूयेतरेषामारोहाबरोहौ

तदतिदर्शनात् ॥३१११३॥

13. But of others (i.e. the evil-doers), after having enjoyed (the results of their evil works) in the abode of Yama, there is ascent and descent (from the lunar world); for such a course is declared (for the evil-doers) by the Śruti.

For the evil-doers also, there is ascent and descent from the lunar world, but with this difference, that is, they first go to the abode of Yama, where they suffer punishment for their evil works. 'The hereafter never rises before an ignorant person, . . . thus he falls again and again under my sway' (*Ka. U.*, I.2.6).

स्मरन्ति च ॥३१११४॥

14. The Smṛtis also declare thus.

That all these beings are under the sway of Yama is declared by Smṛti writers also.

अपि सप्त ॥३१११५॥

15. Moreover, there are seven hells.

Seven hells like Raurava etc. are mentioned

by Smṛtis, to which evil-doers go to expiate their sins through suffering.

तत्रापि तद्व्यापारादविरोधः ॥३१११६॥

16. And on account of his (Yama's) control even there (in those hells), there is no contradiction.

As the evil-doers are sent to the seven hells by the command of Yama, there is no contradiction. So the evil-doers, after undergoing punishment for their evil actions, ascend to the moon and again descend from there.

The view expressed in the foregoing *sūtras* is refuted by the next *sūtra*.

विद्याकर्मणोरिति तु प्रकृतित्वात् ॥३१११७॥

17. But (the two paths, viz. of the gods and of the fathers are the results) of knowledge and work (respectively), on account of their being the subject under discussion.

The evil-doers do not go to the lunar world, for the text declares the path of the gods and that of the fathers only for those who have knowledge and (good) works. Knowledge and work are the two topics under discussion, and the two paths are declared as the results of these two: 'Among them, those who know thus (the knowledge of the five fires) and those who are devoted to faith and austerity in the forest go to light' (*Chā. U.*, V.10.1); 'But those who living in villages practise sacrifices and works of public utility and gift go to the smoke' (*Chā. U.*, V.10.3). The evil-doers therefore cannot go by the path of the gods, as they have no knowledge; nor can they go to the lunar world by the path of the fathers, for they have not performed sacrifices etc.

But, then, the text 'in the fifth oblation, water is called man' shows that this fifth oblation is the cause of a new body, and as this presupposes going to the sphere of the moon, it must be admitted that, for the attainment of a new body, the evil-doers also have to go to the moon. This view is refuted in the next *sūtra*.

न तृतीये तथोपलब्धेः ॥३१११८॥

18. Not in the case of the third (place), for so it is seen (from the scriptures).

The term 'third place' refers to mere evil-doers. These evil-doers do not depend on a

fifth oblation for the origination of a body. This is known from the scriptures. To the question, 'Do you know why the world (of heaven) is not filled up?' the text says, 'On neither of these two ways are those small creatures continually returning. Of them, it may be said: Be born and die. This is the third place. Therefore that world (of heaven) never becomes full' (*Chā. U.*, V.10.8). It is because the evil-doers do not ascend or descend from the world of the moon that that world does not get filled up. It follows therefore that the third place or evil-doers do not depend upon the fifth oblation for the origination of a body. They are born irrespective of this oblation.

स्मर्यतेऽपि च लोके ॥३१११९॥

19. And, moreover, (cases without the fifth oblation) are recorded in the world.

Cases like Droṇa, who had no mother, and Draupadī and Dhṛṣṭadyumna, who had neither father nor mother, are recorded in the Smṛtis.

दर्शनाच्च ॥३११२०॥

20. Also on account of observation.

Śruti texts also declare that, in some cases, the bodies originate without the fifth oblation, i.e. mating: 'Of the aforesaid beings, there are only three origins—those born from eggs, those born from living beings, and those which germinate (or plant life)' (*Chā. U.*, VI.3.1). Those which germinate require no fifth oblation for their birth.

तृतीयशब्दावरोधस्संशोकजस्य ॥३११२१॥

21. The third term (i.e. plant life) includes that which springs from moisture.

The *Chāndogya* text enumerates the origination of only three kinds of life, i.e. viviparous, oviparous, and plant life, but does not refer to life springing from moisture (*svedaja*). The *sūtra* says that it makes no difference, as that which germinates from moisture is included in plant life, since both germinate, one from the earth and the other from moisture.

Hence it is a settled fact that the evil-doers do not go to heaven, but only those who perform sacrifices.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In 'Sri Ramakrishna: A Life of Manifold Spiritual Realization', Dr. S. C. Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D., formerly Head of the Department of Philosophy, Calcutta University, describes in brief the manifold *sādhana*s practised by Sri Ramakrishna, whose 'divine life presents a rare combination and synthesis of various types of religious experiences and spiritual realizations'. . . .

In the second part of his article on 'Śivānandalaharī: The Wave of Divine Bliss', presented in this issue, Swami Vimalananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, concludes his scholarly 'analysis, interpretation, and appreciation of the poetic form and spiritual content' of this well-known hymn of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. . .

Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury's article on 'Vedānta as a Scientific Philosophy', continued from the February issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, deals with the following points: (i) the chief characteristics of the scientific spirit; (ii) the first stage of scientific philosophy, where extra-mental entities are postulated to explain our sense experiences; and (iii) the second stage of scientific philosophy, where an over-mind is assumed as 'making us perceive inter-subjectively and inter-sensually things in a regular manner'. The scope and worth of the postulates of these two stages are critically examined by Dr. Chaudhury, and they are shown to be inadequate and not fully satisfying.

'THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IS MAN'

Man occupies a unique position in the universe. He stands midway between two orders of things, the animal and the divine, marking the close of the one and the beginning of the other. Being a product of the biological evolution like the animals, he naturally inherits some

of their fundamental characteristics, which justify his being classified as an animal. But he is also the end product, the culmination, of the biological evolution, and has, during the course of that evolution, developed other capacities, manifested only in a limited way among the animals, which entitle him to be regarded as the 'Nature's supreme masterpiece' and as 'man' himself. To think, to reason, to conceive of the morally good and right, to reflect on his past and future, are the prerogatives of man, which not only distinguish him from the animal, but also help him to evolve further, transcend his animal and human nature, and become divine.

This further evolution of man forms the subject of study by the religions and humanities. The sciences, on the other hand, particularly the science of biology, deal with the evolution that precedes his present stage. The study of the past is undoubtedly fascinating and useful; but it ceases to be purposive, if it obscures man's vision regarding his future or fails to act as a guide for the future. The sciences reveal to man what he has already achieved in the world of nature—the stage of development he has reached; but it is the religions and humanities that point out to him what he has still to attain and how he can attain it. The sciences are concerned with only one aspect of man's personality, viz. that which he bears in common with his animal ancestry, whereas the religions and humanities are concerned with man himself. So it is vital for the progress of humanity, even for the mere existence of man as a human being, that the study of the sciences should be supplemented by the study of the religions and humanities.

Of late, the call for a proper, harmonious blending of the sciences and the humanities has been coming from many quarters, and most significantly, from the scientists themselves. Three such calls were recently made by Sir James Gray, Sri P. Ray, and Professor

M. S. Thacker. Presiding over the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held in York on September 2, 1959, Sir James Gray said this in his address 'The Proper Study of Mankind is Man': 'In the public mind, science is largely associated with the study of physical systems and practical problems. Within this range, scientists are not concerned with moral principles, nor are they directly responsible for the social repercussions of their discoveries. But it is impossible to be a scientist without being a human being and recognize that life depends much more on moral principles than on scientific knowledge. So far as science is mainly concerned with our material environment, it tends to isolate itself from the main factors which determine human behaviour. So far as the humanities are mainly concerned with man's reactions to past environments, we cannot be quite sure how far their judgements are relevant to modern life. Such limitations will not be overcome by keeping our own particular type of knowledge in a water-tight compartment, but by trying to visualize it as part of a wider picture; the sciences and humanities should seek common ground.'

In a similar vein, Sri P. Ray, in his presidential address to the annual general meeting of the Indian News Association, held in Calcutta on September 30, 1959, observes: 'Science and technology, no doubt, improve the environment and body of the civilization, but they leave its soul untouched. It is the improvement of man himself or an appreciation of higher values of life that makes for a real advancement of human civilization. This is what passes by the name of culture. While the exclusive pursuit of science and technology tends to develop a feverish craving for power, wealth, comforts, and enjoyment, leading ultimately to competitions, conflicts, and clashes, as the past and current events of the world demonstrate, culture, in its truest sense, serves as a brake thereto and engenders a spirit of sacrifice. Sacrifice, therefore, seems to be a necessary condition of lasting progress in human society. . . . Planning for

the improvement of man (is) in no way of less consequence than planning for the multiplication of material goods.' (Both excerpts quoted from *Science and Culture*, November 1959).

Professor M. S. Thacker, Director-General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Department, Government of India, also emphasized the same point in his convocation address to the Andhra University on December 5, 1959: 'The question arises, whether science is an end in itself. In so far as it is disinterested pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, it is. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all these things shall be added unto you." Not all are so abundantly endowed as to make the pursuit of science an end in itself; there are also other things, besides natural knowledge, which claim attention. There are many human beings on this earth, and in our relations with them and in order to make our lives meaningful and satisfying, the understanding of moral, ethical, and aesthetic values becomes necessary. There is need to study the value judgements of philosophies and religions, and ideas and ideals that have swayed multitudes. The ability to appreciate in perspective the achievements of the human race is as important as the understanding of science and conceptual thinking, and the direction and content of education must be related to the attainment of both' (quoted from *The Hindu*, December 6, 1959).

Sir James Gray, in the course of his address, raises one important question. 'There is', he says, 'not the slightest doubt that the discoveries of physics *have* frightened mankind and that there are far too many intelligent people looking askance at science and wondering where it is leading. In presenting science to the public, our primary objective should be to depict man's position in the world of nature as a source—not of fear or doubt, but of courage and inspiration. . . . We have to recognize, however, that the factors which control human behaviour are not at present ame-

nable to the laws of physics and chemistry; we are forced to apply the less precise, but not necessarily less important, principles to be derived from the world of living organisms. The challenge is therefore to the biological sciences, especially those which deal, at the borderline of sociology, with the behaviour of organisms and their relationship to their environment. Can they yield broad principles which are applicable to man, or must scientists be content to see the law of the jungle take its course, except in so far as it can be restrained by political effort?" Further on, he makes some observations on how the knowledge gained by the study of biology can aid man in preventing the law of the jungle from overpowering him. One of them is particularly interesting: 'How far ants can communicate with each other is doubtful, but it is tolerably certain that members of the same community recognize each other by a characteristic smell, and as the brain of an ant is about the size of the head of a pin, it is perhaps not surprising that ants should attack or kill an individual from another colony with a smell slightly different to their own. *It is much less easy to understand why a man, with a brain of an entirely different order of complexity, should, at times, react almost equally violently to individuals with skin pigments slightly different to his own*'

(the last italics ours). He refers to two instances of 'territorial expansion and global warfare' that took place between two species of ants on the islands of Madeira and Bermuda, early in the nineteenth century: An Eastern species, reaching there after overrunning North Africa and South Europe, exterminated the smaller native races, only to be exterminated later on by another species, which arrived on the islands from Argentina, after similarly overrunning the United States. Then he remarks: 'In the world of ants, there is no place for small peaceful communities unless they can isolate themselves effectively from larger and more powerful neighbours, nor does there seem any lasting peace between large aggressive communities. This is the law of the jungle. Solomon's advice has, I suspect, been misinterpreted. It should read: "Consider the ants, and, if you use your intelligence, you will see how *not* to deal with international problems." ... *Men really ought to be able to do something better than ants*' (closing italics ours).

It is, indeed, heartening to see this growing awareness among scientists of the dangers of an exclusive pursuit of science. Their eagerness to find ways and means for the betterment of man himself, morally and spiritually, augurs well for the future of humanity and for the growth of science itself.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ŚUDRAS IN ANCIENT INDIA. BY RAM SHARAN SHARMA. Published by Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawaharnagar, Delhi-6 1958. Pages 318. Price Rs. 15.

This book substantially represents the author's thesis approved for the degree of Ph. D. at the University of London, and is constructed in seven chapters tracing the social history of the Śūdras and drawing attention to their origin, position, disabilities,

state control, and transformation for a thousand years.

Speaking of the ancient Indian distinction between the once-born and the twice-born, Sri Aurobindo says, 'He (the once-born) does Nature's inferior work; he assures the basis for the higher activities; but not to him easily are opened the glories of her second birth'.

The author's thesis in some respects confirms this modern impression, and in other respects corrects it.

He points out that the Sūdras were not necessarily the conquered peoples of non-Aryan descent, but in all probability were the descendants of those Aryans who had no *saṁskāras*, either by virtue of the professions which they followed, or by reason of their admixture with the non-Aryan peoples and the comparative loss of racial purity. He points out that they formed in the main the labouring classes, that they were the mainstay of the agricultural population, that they practised such professions as required a certain amount of technical skill, and that by virtue of their economic independence they held an honoured place in society, even though it may be a secondary one, in so far as their well-being depended upon their contribution to the well-being of society as a whole. He also points out the liberal side of the Indian tradition which, though it did not permit the members of the fourth caste to perform the Vedic sacrifices, yet associated them with public acts of worship, and opened to them such consolations of religion which the study of the Itihāsas and the Purāṇas could afford, so that they, too, might lead a life of righteousness and gain the reward of the good life. We have here an objective study of the ancient social institutions from the Vedic times to about A.D. 500.

The author lays before us the living past based mainly on literary documents examined with scientific care. The earnest student of social institutions would find here a wealth of material for further investigation and study, skilfully collected and presented with judgement. All those whose function it is to give concrete expression to the *yuga-dharma* would do well to have a clear understanding as to what they mean by social justice. An objective, accurate, learned work like the present one has its importance in helping to work slowly towards the above objective in so far as the human material is capable of receiving the plastic impression of the Spirit. It is only by a true knowledge of the past that we may attain the cultural conquest of life in the present. The book has an index of non-English words and a valuable general index.

PROFESSOR V. A. THIAGARAJAN

RELIGION IN PLATO AND CICERO. By JOHN E. REXINE. Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16. 1959. Pages 72. Price \$2.75.

In the midst of the bewildering maze of scholastic works on the philosophy of Plato, it is a welcome relief to come across a monograph devoted to the place of religion in Plato. Mr. John E. Rexine examines the various references to religion found in

Plato's *Laws* and compares these with the views found in Cicero's *Laws* and *De Re Publica*. There is no discussion or exposition here of Plato's religious beliefs and philosophy; and this is regrettable. Instead the author takes Plato and Cicero to be legislators; and then he shows the ways through which these thinkers want to regulate religious practices. The immortality of the soul and the reality of Divinity are accepted by both these thinkers. But the legislation based on these tenets comes to assume a socio-ethical and legal form in the hands of Mr. Rexine.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

GANDHIJI'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT (1942-44). 1957. Pages 288. Price Rs. 2.

MAHATMA GANDHI: CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT (1944-47). 1959. Pages 375. Price Rs. 6.

Both published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

The first book, prepared by Pyarelal under Gandhiji's instructions after their release from the detention camp at Poona in May 1944, contains Gandhiji's correspondence with the then Government of Bombay and Government of India during his 21 months of detention. The second book, also prepared by Pyarelal, takes up the thread from where it was left in the first, namely, from Gandhiji's release in May 1944, to the advent of Independence on August 15, 1947. A few letters exchanged after that date with some of the British functionaries, who had played an important role in the drama of the transfer of power, are also included in the second volume, which is mainly concerned with Gandhiji's correspondence with the representatives of the British Government alone. The detailed introductions to the book by Pyarelal give us a picture of the background of the whole correspondence and of their substance. The letters make very interesting reading in the retrospect, and they are of great historical value to the coming generations. Also, as Mahatmaji points out in his foreword to the first book, they have a deeper significance. He says: 'The publication is not designed for the hasty reader. . . . I want the readers I have in view to take me at my word. I have written as I felt at the moment as a seeker of long standing of Truth and Non-violence. . . . If India has the coin with Truth on one face and Non-violence on the other, the coin has its own inestimable value which will speak for itself.'

S. K.

THE VEDĀNTA PHILOSOPHY. By SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta 6. 1959. Pages 53. Price Rs. 3.*

In 1901, Swami Abhedananda gave a lecture on the Vedānta philosophy before the Philosophical Union of the University of California, U.S.A. This lecture is important for more than one reason. It has now been published in a book form for the first time.

There is an erroneous view current about the Vedāntic conception of the world among the people of both India and the West. A study of this valuable book completely removes such an idea. In fact, the salient features of the Vedānta philosophy have been dealt with in a lucid and charming manner.

The Vedānta has never denied the empirical reality and practical value of the phenomenal world. For the ordinary men of the world, who have not been able to attain true knowledge, the world is real and meaningful, and all worldly arrangements are concrete, positive, and significant. The world is necessary for the moral preparation of man, and its value from the practical and ethical standpoints has been fully recognized in the Vedānta philosophy. What is regarded as illusion in the Vedānta philosophy is the attribution of substantiality, permanence, independence, and consciousness to the phenomenal

world. Ultimate reality and eternal value belong only to Brahman, the sole substantive basis of the world. Since we are all the children of one immortal Bliss, we are never strangers to one another. We should love our neighbours as ourselves. If the spiritual oneness of the Source becomes the foundation of ethics, then much of the conflict and tension that we notice in the world will cease.

The author has laid stress on the point that the Vedānta philosophy has never taught that man is a sinner. This is another notable aspect of the Vedānta philosophy. The Vedānta declares divinity in each one of us; but due to actions done under the spell of egoism and selfishness, we become ignorant of our true divine nature. The spell of ignorance can be broken through our own individual efforts. We are the makers of our own life and destiny. If we lead the right kind of life, we can certainly make our future better. It is the responsibility of each one of us to work for the full manifestation of this latent divinity in our life and character.

The presentation of these highly spiritually significant teachings of the Vedānta bears the stamp of the profundity of the Swami's scholarship and learning. There is no doubt that the students of the Vedānta philosophy will greatly profit by a perusal of this important book.

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1958

The Indoor Hospital: Consists of 50 beds, divided into 6 small wards according to the nature of diseases. Details of treatment: Total number of cases admitted: 1,704; number of cases cured and discharged: 1,557; discharged after treatment: 97; died: 31; remained at the hospital at the end of the year: 42. Medical cases: 1,508; surgical: 196 (major: 51; minor: 145).

Outdoor Dispensary: (i) General: Total number of

cases treated: 95,339 (new cases: 27,823; old: 67,516).

(ii) *Surgical:* Total number of cases treated: 342.

(iii) *Dental:* Total number of cases treated: 550.

(iv) *E. N. T.:* Total number of cases treated: 2,756.

The Pathological or Clinical Department: 2,933 samples of urine, stool, sputum, blood, etc. were investigated.

X-ray Unit: The radiological department, with a powerful X-ray plant of 200 M.A., was started in January 1958.

Electrotherapy Department: It is equipped with

ultra-violet, infra-red, diathermy, and sonostat apparatuses. Total number of patients treated: 766.

Operation Theatre: There are two modern operation theatres, one to deal with the septic cases, and the other to deal with the aseptic cases.

Milk Distribution: Milk powder, contributed by the Indian Red Cross Society, was distributed among the poor, ill-fed, and under-nourished children and expectant mothers, as also the patients in the hospital. Average number of daily recipients, excluding the patients: 250.

Temporary Relief: Some sweaters and other warm clothings were distributed among a number of poor children of the locality.

Sādhu Sevā: Apart from the treatment and nursing in the hospital, occasional help in the form of food and shelter was given to the *sādhus*. A special fund is maintained for this purpose.

Religious and Cultural Activities: The birthdays of important religious saints and seers were celebrated. There is a library, with 4,441 books; and the reading room receives 17 journals and 6 newspapers.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

REPORT FOR 1958

At present, the Sanatorium has 180 beds in all, including 14 in the cottages and 18 in the cabins. 90 beds are reserved by different organizations; 32 beds are maintained free of all charges for poor patients; the rest are part-free and paying beds. There are facilities for advanced thoracic surgery. There are four X-ray machines, and the operation theatre and one of the recovery rooms are air-conditioned. Radio sets, library, recreation hall with permanent stage and auditorium, plays staged by the ex-patients, convalescents, and members of the staff, film shows, indoor games, newspapers and magazines, annual sports, magic shows, and musical soirees are among the other amenities provided for the patients.

The patients publish a manuscript magazine of their own.

Number of patients treated during the year: 332 (newly admitted: 176; repeated cases: 156). Details of treatment: discharged with disease arrested: 105; quiescent: 12; improved: 15; stationary: 6; worse: 3; as non-tuberculosis: 13; died: 6.

Surgical Operations: Pneumonectomy: 2; lobectomy: 3; decortication: 2; thoracotomy: 2; thoracoplasty: 20.

X-ray Department: Skiagrams: 1,809; screening: 611; tomograms: 559; bronchograms: 41.

Clinical Laboratory: Total number of specimens (blood, sputum, faeces, and urine) examined: 13,500.

Outdoor Department: 817 patients, a good number of whom were tuberculous, were given medical advice and assistance.

Sixty-six patients were maintained free of all charges, and 31 patients at concession rates, during the year.

After-care Colony and Rehabilitation Centre: Total number of ex-patients: 13. Three of them were given training in tailoring, and one in the X-ray department. Another was sent for training in poultry keeping. 4 ex-patients are employed in the Sanatorium as office assistants, and one is working as a homoeopathic doctor.

Other Activities: 14,306 patients of the locality and surrounding villages were treated in the free homoeopathic dispensary. 9,715 lb. of milk powder and 108 lb. of syrup, contributed by the people of the United States of America through St. Barhabas Hospital, Ranchi, were distributed among the poor and the needy.

Some of the Needs of the Sanatorium:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Endowment for free beds | Rs. 30,000 per bed |
| 2. Endowment for ordinary beds | Rs. 6,000 per bed |
| 3. After-care and Rehabilitation Centre | Rs. 1,00,000 |

