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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Belur Math, March 22, 1929

Mahapurushji was seated on a carpet on the floor for his lunch, which he had almost finished, when he saw through the blinds a cobbler mending the shoes of the monks in the courtyard. After finishing his meal, he said to an attendant: 'Ah! we all had our fill, while this poor man works here without food at this noon. Just go down and let him have plenty of fruits and sweets that have been offered to the Master.' After finishing that task, the attendant found Mahapurushji standing at the window with a half-rupee coin in hand and looking down at the cobbler. The cobbler started eating as soon as he got the *prasāda*, noticing which Mahapurushji remarked: 'So you see, the man was hungry; and that is why he started eating as soon as he got the *prasāda*. Now see how I make a fun.' With this, he threw down the coin to the cobbler. Finding the coin fall down from above all on a sudden, the cobbler lifted up his face to meet the eyes of Mahapurushji. He understood the whole thing at once, saluted him with folded hands, and went on expressing in words his gratefulness and joy. A

little later, when Mahapurushji heard a monk higgling with the cobbler about some payment, he felt hurt and said: 'Ah! he is a poor man; why this higgling with him?' ...

Mahapurushji used to eat very sparingly at night—sometimes, it used to be nothing more than a little milk or a couple of dry grapes or prunes in a little milk. This night, too, he was drinking his milk, when Swami— came and stood before him after saluting him. After discussing several things, they began talking about the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, when Mahapurushji said: 'It delights me very much to find you all gathered here. The Master gives a shaking to this organization now and then to awaken the dormant power of collective effort and to show that his work cannot be carried on by anyone individually; it must be performed by the monks of this Order in unison, and then only it will be well done. The more storms and stresses there will be, the more will the organizational sense be roused. All real achievements have to pass through great tribulations. The more obstacles there will be, the greater will be the love and

faith in all hearts for the Master, and the more sincere will be the reliance on him. This organization came into being for the propagation of his message in this age, and it is he who is working through every individual belonging to it. This work of ushering in a new order of things will continue to progress for centuries; nobody will be able to arrest its course. These are the words of Swamiji himself, who was a *ṛṣi* seeing through the past, present, and future.'

Swami—: 'What Swamiji said and what you also repeat can never be without any meaning. But, Maharaj, the environmental set-up sometimes renders it difficult to keep one's faith intact; one often loses one's enthusiasm for work; some indescribable fear and disbelief seem to take possession of the mind.'

Mahapurushji: 'That is but natural. You will be beset with fear, dislike, etc. many a time, and at the proper time, they will all clear away. That is the nature of work. Can you tell me of any work that is wholly free from hindrance? And the obstruction becomes great in proportion as the work is great. The power of the soul is awakened as a result of that clash. That power is nothing but the Mother Herself. All the works are Hers, and so also are we. One must stick to truth and perform all duties with the idea intact; for this is the work needed for fulfilling the Master's message for this age. That is why he has dragged us here along with himself. Else, could we not have kept ourselves fully occupied with spiritual practices etc. in solitude? In fact, that was what we were doing; but at the Master's behest, Swamiji introduced these activities and pressed us all into it as well. Just see how Swamiji himself worked untiringly till the end of his life; this intensity of work told upon his health and destroyed his body. Could even Swamiji himself do all his works without obstruction? Consider, for instance, the circumstances leading to his departure for the West. For doing God's work, he had to fight against innumerable difficulties. Often enough, the thought comes to me that I should no longer remain contented with the qualified aspect of God, but should at once rush to His

unqualified aspect, to get merged wholly in *samādhi*. Yet, would the Master allow me to do so? Still, I know that he is everything—he is the qualified and he is also the unqualified. "A quarter of His is this whole creation, and His other three immortal quarters are in the bright region." We can do nothing unless he wills it. We have to continue where and in whatever circumstances he is pleased to keep us. Nevertheless, he is revealing to me everything out of his grace; he has opened for me the gate to that Immortality—"That, failing to reach which speech turns back along with the mind".'

Belur Math, March 23, 1929

For the last few days, Mahapurushji had been suffering from a bad cold. Today, he felt a little better. He is never worried about his physical health—he is always happy even in the midst of the worst ailment. Physical pain or dangers cannot disturb the equilibrium of his well-poised mind. An old monk had arrived at the Math from a branch centre in the morning. He came upstairs and, after prostrating himself before Mahapurushji, asked: 'How is your health, Maharaj?'

Mahapurushji: 'You inquire about this transient body? How can the body be well in this old age?'

The monk: 'Yes, Maharaj, that is what one can easily notice. In fact, your health has deteriorated so much that it pains me to look at your body.'

Mahapurushji: 'This body will not last long. The passing away of Swami Saradananda has paralysed my right side, as it were, and the mind seems vacant. I, too, was ready to depart. I fell seriously ill soon after Swami Saradananda's departure, and the mind became completely detached from work. I prayed to the Master to be relieved of this life, but he did not heed. He forced me back; and so here I am. He knows best why he did not allow me to go. Everything happens according to his will. I must continue here as long as it pleases him.'

The monk: 'That is quite reassuring, Maharaj, that everything will proceed according to the Master's will. We pray to the Master earnestly that he may spare you for us for a long time to come. For your departure will mean an ebb in the spiritual current of the organization. You need not do anything personally; your presence alone is enough for us. By your mere wish, everything will go on well, just as it is going on even now. You will only give us spiritual strength, inspiration, and blessing. The actual work will be carried on by us. How can I express, Maharaj, the strength we feel from the mere thought that you are there behind us, no matter where we are?'

Mahapurushji: 'I feel from the bottom of my heart how you love me and honour me. Love, affection, and respect constitute the life-force of this organization. The spiritual power and unity of the organization will remain intact so long as this love for each other will remain untarnished, for this relationship of love centres round the Master. It has grown and expanded with him as the focal point. It cannot be wiped away with the death of the body. Nor will the power of the leaders of this organization that is actively at work be ever exhausted. See, for instance, how Swamiji, Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda), Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda), Hari Maharaj (Swami Turiyananda), and Sharat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) left their bodies one by one. But is our love or respect for them any the less on that account? Or, has their spiritual power been lost to any extent, or can it ever do so? That is unthinkable. They are still there, and their power is working still through different persons. They are still inspiring us and guiding us along the proper course. They are in their spiritual bodies now, and they are doing greater work in that supersensuous form. They can be seen even now. Just as they were advising us about different matters when they were in their gross bodies, similarly, they advise us even now whenever the need arises. While in divine communion, the mind reaches a high plane, where it comes into intimate contact

with these great souls; and one can, if need be, get from them indications as to the way to be followed. Even after our physical forms vanish, they will merge in the Master, so that, when one will think of the Master, one will be thinking of us as well, as a matter of course. We are his devotees, his servants; we have no existence apart from him. Our personality has lost itself in him. The Master is none other than the eternal Brahman.'

The monk: 'But, Maharaj, we are on this gross plane; and we want you here just as you are. Besides, our minds cannot reach so high. We cannot see the Master. You are his companion; you belong to his inner circle. You are before us as his representative. We are trying to understand the Master through you. If we can but lay our prayers at your feet, we feel that we have spoken to the Master himself.'

Mahapurushji: 'As to that, the relationship that we have with you will not end with the body. I bless you heartily that you may progress ever more; may your hearts be filled with devotion, love, purity, etc. May many good things be done to the world by you. The Master will direct you properly, and he will fill you with strength. The Master, Swamiji, and others came to this earth for the good of the world. They became embodied just for the sake of establishing peace in this world by letting in a flood of spiritual light. Swamiji set this organization in motion for fulfilling that need of the age. The whole world will have to accept the ideal preached by Swamiji. There is no other way for establishing peace throughout the world.'

Belur Math, May 4, 1929

Some devotees were present in Mahapurushji's room, with whom he talked joyfully. Just then a girl, who had received the *mantra* from Mahapurushji, came with her mother from Calcutta to pay her respects to him. She was only thirteen or fourteen years of age, and was reading in a school. They both made their obeisance to him, asked for his blessing, and en-

quired about his health. Then the mother said with all humility: 'Please bless my daughter that she may have devotion to, and faith in, our Master. It is my wish that I shall not give her away in marriage. She will spend her days praying to the Master, and live happily. I confess, father, this world is full of sorrow; I am myself a sufferer. I have the bitterest disillusionment about the happiness that the world promises. So, I would not knowingly throw my daughter into this fire that the world is. Do please bless her a little.'

Mahapurushji: 'I bless her fully, I bless her whole-heartedly.' Then he looked at the daughter affectionately, and said: 'Call on the Master with your whole being, and be pure. The Master is the father, mother, husband, friend, and everything. "O Lord of lords, you are the father, you are the mother, you are the friend, and you are the constant companion; you are my learning, you are my wealth, and you are everything to me." You are a student now. Read your books carefully, and along with that repeat mentally the *mantra* of the Master that you have received. You may study or you may do whatever you like, my child, but know it for certain that the ultimate goal of life is to see God. Have your eyes always turned towards Him. This world is after all ephemeral; it lasts just for a few days. The only eternal reality is God. Live a very pure life. God reveals Himself to those hearts that are sincere and pure. Purity is the only basis of a virtuous life. You must have read the life of our Holy Mother. She is the ideal for the womanhood of this age all over the world. Her life is wonderful. She accepted a human body and lived like any ordinary housewife, though, in reality, she was none other than the Mother of the universe, the primal divine Energy. She was one of those who are enumerated in the scriptures as the ten

Mahāvidyās—Kālī, Tārā, and others. She came down to this earth as the counterpart of the Master to complete his spiritual mission in this age. How can ordinary mortals understand her? Even we could not understand her in the beginning. She hid her divinity so completely that it was not possible to recognize her real nature. The Master alone knew who she really was; and Swamiji knew a little. Before proceeding to the West, Swamiji revealed his plan only to the Holy Mother; and with her blessing, he crossed the ocean. The Holy Mother, too, blessed him from the bottom of her heart, and said: "My son, come back as a victorious hero; may the Goddess of Learning sit on your tongue." That is exactly what happened. With the Holy Mother's blessing, Swamiji conquered the world. He often declared that the Holy Mother is even greater than the Master. So deep was his reverence for her! The Master also declared: "Should she who lives in the concert-tower (meaning the Holy Mother) become angry with anyone at any time, it would not be possible even for me to save him." The Holy Mother accepted a human body in order to awaken womanhood all over the world. See how soon after her advent an awakening has come among women in all the countries. They are now determined to build up an all-round and perfect life for themselves and to progress in all directions. Yet, this is not the end of it; this is just the beginning. The Vedic age produced wonderful women, like Gārgī, Maitreyī, Sītā, Sāvitrī, and others; this age will see the birth of even nobler characters among women. A very striking awakening has come among women in all the fields of life—in spirituality, politics, science, art, literature, and so on; it is going to be more striking in future. This is all divine play. Ordinary mortals cannot grasp all this.'



THE DUALISM OF THE NON-DUALISTS

The caption itself sounds incongruous, for the acceptance of the world and its creator, which is possible only on a basis of dualism, cannot be reconciled with the belief in non-dualism. Apparently, this is so; but when we turn to the actualities of life, a different picture presents itself. Thus Śaṅkarācārya, who is considered for all practical purposes to be the father of the philosophy of non-dualism, though, in fact, he was preceded by a galaxy of monistic teachers, has to his credit, or at least tradition ascribes to him, quite a considerable number of dualistic hymns and songs addressed to the gods and goddesses of Hinduism. These hymns and songs are not only of a very high order from the point of view of poesy, but also deep in devotional sentiment and spiritual fervour. They are also in intimate touch with the world. The very sound of some of his verses is charming; his supplications to the deities are full of pathos. His confessions and regrets are true to life, and evoke echoes of sympathy and similar feelings in every heart. His soul-stirring call for the worship of Govinda by eschewing the vanities of the world makes the slumbering soul conscious of the snares that surround it. And his philosophical verses draw a true picture of the vagaries of the mind and of the hollowness of the transmigratory existence, thereby rousing the spirit of renunciation coupled with a true hankering for realizing God. Such depth of feeling, penetrating vision, beauty of expression, moving appeal, and rousing call to fresh endeavour could not have issued out of a heart that was not in living contact with the outside world, that did not consider the creator, the world, and its inhabitants to be something other than illusion that any crass theory of Māyā would reduce Śaṅkara's beliefs to. The truth is that, in spite of his adherence to non-duality, Śaṅkara accepted the world as realistically as any realist. At least, that is what strikes an unbiased student of his literary works. In fact, every line of his writings bespeaks a realistic

and intimate relationship with the Deity as well as His creation and creatures.

In the other spheres of life also, he did accept the phenomenal world as realistically as any realist, no matter what his own philosophy might have been. Unless this position is accepted, one cannot explain his travelling over the whole of India for the purpose of worshipping God in various holy places, inflicting crushing defeats on his adversaries, and establishing the supremacy of the Hindu philosophy of life. If this were not so, what else was the meaning of his writing books for future generations? What else could have been the cause of his organizing a new order of monks and founding four central monasteries at the four *dhāmas* (great places of pilgrimage sacred to the Hindu religion) in the four corners of India, if it were not for the deliberate purpose of strengthening the religious unity of the land of his birth and saving all lost souls? In spite of his philosophy of Māyā, he was intensely human and humane. He acted vigorously on the Indian arena for saving the people of his age, and he planned manfully for the regeneration of the Hindu faith and for ensuring a brighter future for India. He was no pessimist or hater of the world. He loved it with all its failures and promises. The world to him, as to any other leader, was a mixture of good and bad—bad for the present, but full of promise for the future. He was in touch with duality; and though an uncompromising non-dualist, he never blushed when writing: 'Even when duality stands effaced, it is I that am Thine, O Lord, and not Thou mine. For the wave is of the sea, and never is the sea of the wave.' Thus, even after illumination, he maintained this feeling of dualism, as it is known to us.

II

Śaṅkarācārya was not alone in this paradox. Readers of the commentary of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī on the *Gītā* are aware of the devo-

tional note that runs all through it. Making a confession of faith elsewhere, he wrote: 'Though we are on the high road to the empire of non-dualism, and regard even Indra's wealth as mere trash, still we have been made per force the maidservants of Him who is the abductor of the cowherd lasses.' There are extreme non-dualists, of course, who would twit him with soft-hearted devotional leanings, which, according to them, weaned him away from pure monism. In this connection, it should be pointed out that it is nothing but bigotry to dismiss the author of the *Advaitasiddhi* so cheaply, for it was he who saved the philosophy of monism at a very critical stage in its career, when it was being ferociously assailed by the dualists with the choicest weapons forged by the neo-logicians.

Śrīdhara's devotional leanings, non-dualist though he was, are too well known to be elaborated here. And readers of monistic literature would have noticed how almost all the writers commence their works with some sort of prayer to some deity. Besides, they were all men of intense action in their respective fields. The Purāṇas take for granted this dualistic relationship of the non-dualists with the Deity. The *Bhāgavata* asserts that even the greatest of realized souls cannot help becoming devotees of God: 'Hari is possessed of such excellence that even the sages, though delighting in the Self alone and free from all bondages, yet entertain for the all-pervasive One a devotion that is untarnished by desires.' In the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Śaṅkara says: 'There are great souls with self-realization and calm disposition who are engaged in doing good to others, like the vernal season.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* that, to set an example to others to do good to the world, he ever remains engaged in work, although he has no desire for anything, nor is there anything that is still to be achieved by him. The Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas are full of records of eminent non-dualists, like Ajātaśatru, Janaka, and others, who were all busy men of action. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's exhortation to Arjuna for action stems out of this very same

non-dualistic philosophy, as shown by Śaṅkarācārya. Such instances are by no means rare; and the Yogavāsiṣṭha school of non-dualistic philosophy is based on this very fact.

In recent times, we have had the instances of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Both were all-renouncing *sannyāsins*. All records go to show that the former had *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the highest state of non-dualistic realization, day in and day out. The latter, too, tasted this bliss more than once. And the scriptures assert that the illumination resulting from such a state can never be effaced. Yet, in practical life, they were as solicitous for human welfare, in their own way, as any philanthropist. When Hazra of the Dakshineswar Kālī temple criticized Sri Ramakrishna for worrying too much about the good of others and not remaining immersed in *samādhi*, he could not find a ready answer and felt hesitant. But when, walking along the Gaṅgā, his eyes turned suddenly towards Calcutta, he became full of compassion for the suffering humanity, and his resolution returned. He made up his mind then and there to ignore Hazra's advice and to spend his life for the good of others, no matter what it cost him personally. When Swami Vivekananda (then Narendranath) prayed to him for *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, Sri Ramakrishna reproved him by saying that he had never thought that Narendranath would be so selfish in his outlook; rather, Sri Ramakrishna had expected that Narendranath would grow up like a huge banyan tree offering shade and shelter to others.

The lives of these two modern spiritual giants gave concrete shape to the practical Vedānta they believed in and preached. They were men of devotion, ever in contact with the Deity; and in practical life, they were dynamos of strength ever imparting new impetus to the world around, ever solicitous for its welfare. This was so, because Sri Ramakrishna saw Mother Kālī everywhere, and wept bitterly like a child when he missed Her anywhere, in any situation, or in any person, so that the Mother in Her mercy had to appear

to him even in places of ill fame and in persons of questionable character. Swami Vivekananda also saw the whole universe as the body of God Himself. The practical Vedānta that he taught was but a form of worship of this cosmic Person. It was 'All is Brahman (*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*)' in actuality, and not merely in theory.

III

At least so far as we common people are concerned, philosophy or no philosophy, reason or no reason, that is how men of illumination act in the world. They were ever in the shining presence of God as well as in loving contact with His creation. And yet, this devotional temperament of the non-dualists is not quite so irrational. Sri Ramakrishna gave his answer to this riddle through a penetrating question couched in his usual homely words: 'Does God exist only when one shuts one's eyes and ceases to exist when one opens them?' Vedānta defines God as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss; and God is there wherever one has a feeling of existence, or knows something, or has a touch of happiness. God is Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. He expresses Himself in a thousand ways, through a thousand persons, things, and situations as the *Puruṣa-sūkta* has it: 'The infinite Being has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He pervades the universe through and through, and yet remains a little beyond it.'

'Everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears. He covers everything. All other gods are sleeping. What vain gods shall we go after, and yet cannot worship the god that we see all around us, the Virāt? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods. . . . The first of all worship is the worship of the Virāt—of all those around us', said Swami Vivekananda. The latter portion of this utterance sounds very much like what the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* asserts: 'To this day, whoever in like manner knows It as "I am Brahman" becomes all this (universe). Even the gods cannot

prevail against him, for he becomes their Self. While he who worships another god thinking "He is one, and I am another" does not know. He is like an animal to the gods' (I.4.10). The non-dualists can and do worship everything everywhere, for to them each and everyone is an expression of the Infinite. Apart from this background of the Infinite, the gods in their individuality have no meaning to them, nor has anything else. They worship all, individually and collectively, either by realizing them as the manifestations of the same Brahman, as already pointed out, or as mere means to the realization of this unitary outlook. In either case, they are devotional in their approach, and the depth of their feeling and the beauties of its expression can compare very well with those of the people of purely dualistic leanings. Similar also is their relationship with God's creation.

IV

The philosophy behind this attitude has been summed up by Swami Vivekananda in the following words: 'Vedānta does not, in reality, denounce the world. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings of the Vedānta. But at the same time, dry suicidal advice is not intended; it really means deification of the world—giving up the world as we think of it, as it appears to us, and to know what it really is.' From another standpoint, a poet puts the following verse in the mouth of Hanumān, known to be a prince among devotees and referred to as 'the foremost among the enlightened ones' by Tulasīdāsa: 'My firm conviction (O Rāma) is that I am your servant so long as I have the consciousness of the body; I am a part of yourself when I consider myself as an individual soul; and I am one with you when I know myself as the Self.' The same individual can remain on all these three planes successively, just as much as he does during sleep, dream, and waking states, though in the case of an enlightened man the outlook becomes reorientated and remains non-dualistic under all circumstances, as pointed out by Swami Vivekananda. Śaṅkarācārya also

argues that the higher consciousness has after all to grow on some lower basis; it cannot be founded on nothingness. A certain state of body and mind is the prerequisite for the highest spiritual manifestation; and, as such, those bodies and minds persist owing to their past momentum even after knowledge dawns. This is *jīvanmukti*—freedom even while living—and this makes possible all the empirical dealings even after full enlightenment.

This dualistic relationship can be considered from two points of view: the attitude that the non-dualistic aspirant assumes by following his more successful predecessors in the field, and the relationship that finds objective expression in the life of the man of non-dualistic realization. Subjectively, these two are entirely different, though objectively they seem to be the same. We have referred to both of them briefly. We

cannot be expected to elaborate them further in this small article. One thing, however, that we would like to emphasize is that in either field the non-dualist's approach has these advantages: it is more direct and emotionally fuller in its human touch; it is more profound in its philosophical basis and more logical in its presentation; and it is more rational in its outlook and more practical in its expression. It is the most satisfying form of worship; at the same time, it conforms to all the requirements of the modern age, both theoretically and practically. Above all, this philosophy has no quarrel with others, as pointed out by Gauḍapāda: 'I bow down to that *yoga* that is well known as free from relationship, joyful to all beings, beneficial, free from dispute, non-contradictory, and presented in the scriptures' (*Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, IV.2).

IS VEDĀNTA DOGMATIC ?

BY DR. ROMA CHAUDHURI

In Vedānta, Brahman is said to be entirely *śāstra-yoni*, knowable through the scriptures alone. As such, the charge of dogmatism may easily be brought against it. For the matter of that, the charge of dogmatism may be brought against all the systems of Indian philosophy, more or less. But a little reflection will show that this charge of dogmatism or blind, uncritical faith in the scriptures is wholly unjustifiable.

The Vedas, i.e. the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* or the Upaniṣads, form the ground of Vedānta. For that reason, it is wrong to characterize the Vedānta philosophy as dogmatic. For what is found in a germinal form in the Upaniṣads is developed in the form of a big tree in the Vedānta systems. Thus, in the Upaniṣads, we find soul-stirring and inspired *mantras*, which indicate the heights of philosophical perfection and contain

within themselves sublime thoughts, representing the highest kind of philosophical insight. Still, in such inspired passages, we cannot expect detailed and logical proofs or philosophical discussions in support of the theories stated. Hence, in the Upaniṣads, there are mere statements of facts, and we do not have proofs of the same on logical and philosophical grounds. It was left to the Vedānta schools of philosophy to supply the proofs on grounds of reason and build up a logically consistent system on the basis of the *mantras* of the Upaniṣads.

Thus the Vedānta system of thought is really based on solid grounds of reason. Of course, in the systems of Vedānta philosophy, there are profuse quotations from the Vedas and the Upaniṣads; and in some, also from the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, and other celebrated works. Instances are also not lacking where, in support

of a particular contention, scriptural texts have been quoted. Still, in all the systems of Vedānta, there are numerous independent arguments, by means of which the Upaniṣadic doctrines have been fully expounded and supported, and rival doctrines disposed of. Indeed, all these are of a high order, and definitely prove the great intellectual and critical abilities of the Vedānta thinkers.

ŚRAVAṆA-MANANA-NIDIDHYĀSANA

It may be thought here that, as all these reasonings and argumentations are within the scope of the scriptures only, they cannot by any means prove the capacity for independent thinking and critical reflection of the Vedānta philosophers. But the reply to it is that the acceptance of scriptural authority constitutes only the first stage in the philosophical method of India. This first stage is called *śravaṇa* or 'hearing'. As the word implies, this is the stage of authority, the stage of learning from others, the stage of accepting uncritically for the time being what we learn from the scriptures or from our *gurus*. If this were the end, then, surely, the charge of dogmatism could have been brought easily. But this is not the end, but only the beginning. The second stage is called *manana* or 'thinking'. As the word implies, it is the stage of independent reasoning, the stage of reflecting over what has been learnt at the first stage on grounds of authority alone, and of accepting or rejecting the truths accepted before uncritically. Then comes the third or final stage, called *nididhyāsana* or 'meditation'. As the word implies, this is the stage of direct realization, the stage of constant reflection on Truth, first accepted on trust from others at the stage of *śravaṇa* and then on grounds of one's own reasons at the stage of *manana*. Through this kind of reflection or meditation, there is a direct insight into or perception of Truth, for attaining which there is such a constant striving on the part of the seeker after Truth.

This philosophical method shows that no Indian philosopher can ever remain dogmatic

in his search for Truth. That is, he can never stop at the stage of *śravaṇa* or authority. For this indirect and second-hand knowledge is never counted as real and final knowledge in Indian philosophy. All knowledge, worth the name, must be perceptual, immediate, and direct. So until and unless the preliminary knowledge derived from authority is finally elevated to *darśana* or direct seeing, it is useless, and cannot bring about salvation. That is why the term for philosophy in India is *darśana*—a supremely appropriate term which definitely shows that philosophical knowledge must be direct, immediate, and perceptual. Any other kind of knowledge cannot be called philosophical knowledge. Hence, neither knowledge through authority nor knowledge through inference can be called philosophical knowledge. Of course, philosophy involves all these—we start with authority, and then proceed to inference, but we have to end finally in direct perception, intuition, insight, in other words, in *darśana* or seeing. Hence, in India, a philosopher or a wise man is called *draṣṭṛ* (seer), one who directly and immediately sees Truth as clearly as, or even more clearly than, we see ordinary objects.

PŪRVAPAKṢA-KHAṆḌANA-SIDDHĀNTA

There is another kind of philosophical method besides this *tri-sādhana* or threefold spiritual means—*śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*—mentioned above. This is the method of *pūrvapakṣa*, *khaṇḍana*, and *uttarapakṣa* or *siddhānta*. According to this method, before proving his own theory, a philosopher will have to state impartially the theories of his opponents. This constitutes *pūrvapakṣa* or *prima facie* or opponent's view. Then he has to criticize and prove these theories to be false on logical and philosophical grounds. This is called *khaṇḍana* or 'cutting'. Finally, he has to prove his own theory on logical and philosophical grounds. This is called *uttarapakṣa* or *siddhānta* or the philosopher's own view. This compulsory method also inevitably prevents an Indian philosopher from being dogmatic, or ob-

stinately sticking to his own view without even caring to know about other possible views. A philosopher who starts at the very beginning to prove his own theory will not be listened to. For how can one start to build a house until the existing one is demolished? So, first, the other existing theories have to be taken notice of (*pūrvapakṣa*) and demolished (*khaṇḍana*); and then only can the edifice of a new theory be raised (*uttarapakṣa* or *siddhānta*).

Thus, dogmatism may mean two things: first, blind faith in authority or an uncritical acceptance of Truth; secondly, blind faith in one's own self or an uncritical sticking to one's own opinion. The first philosophical method of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana* protects against the first kind of dogmatism; the second philosophical method of *pūrvapakṣa*, *khaṇḍana*, and *uttarapakṣa* or *siddhānta* protects against the second kind.

TARKA AND UPALABDHI: REASONING AND REALIZATION

In fact, in Indian philosophy, the term 'thinking' has a unique and wonderful meaning, not found elsewhere. The equivalent term for thinking is *tarka*, literally. But in India, *tarka* is only ordinary, empirical, phenomenal thinking, concerned with worldly things and events. It is by no means extraordinary, philosophical, noumenal thinking. The Indian term for this latter kind of thinking is *jñāna*, in the beginning; *upalabdhi* or *anubhūti*, in the end. *Jñāna* or knowledge belongs to a higher plane than *tarka* or reasoning; *upalabdhi* or realization is higher than *jñāna* or knowledge, in the same sense as union is higher than division, and comprehension is higher than union. Reasoning, as pointed out above, divides, being analytic in nature. Knowledge unites, being synthetic in nature; and realization comprehends, being universal in nature.

Analysis, synthesis, and comprehension—this is the natural order of thought. But the thing, the object we strive to know, is one and one only, from the very beginning to the end. The *vastu*, *dravya*, *tattva*, or *satya*, call it by any

name, is one and one only. It does not and cannot change; it is there from all eternity in its entirety, whether known or not, or in whatever way known. That is why our ways of knowing may be analytic or discursive, may proceed step by step, part by part, but the final knowledge must invariably be of the whole. And the whole can be reflected in the whole alone; and, so, the final knowledge of the *vastu*, *dravya*, *tattva*, or *satya* must, of necessity, be a whole knowledge, a total realization. That is why reasoning is said to be inadequate for philosophical comprehension, and not for anything else.

Reasoning is one thing; vision quite another. Are they opposed? In one sense, they are; in another, not. They are opposed in the sense that 'two' is opposed to 'one'; division is opposed to union. They are not opposed in the sense that 'two' is transcended in 'one'; division is transcended in union. It is in this latter sense alone that reasoning has been taken in Indian philosophy. As in other spheres, so here, too, the lower is not exactly negated, but really consummated in the higher. In this sense, reasoning, too, has its just and honourable place in the scheme of things in India.

UTILITY OF QUOTATIONS

A very common feature of the Indian philosophical works is profuse quotations from the scriptures and other celebrated treatises. Here, a question may naturally be asked as to whether such quotations serve any useful purpose, or not. In fact, the prejudice against such quotations in modern times is as strong as the love for the same in ancient times. However, such quotations did serve a very useful purpose in those days.

First, the weight of authority is not something to be derided upon lightly. Especially in philosophical works dealing with very profound problems of life, the additional confirmation by superior minds is undoubtedly welcome. This habit of quoting from well-known authorities has been ordinarily interpreted as a tendency towards dogmatism, or blind faith, or un-

critical acceptance of authority. But, really speaking, it indicates the characteristic humility of the Indian thinkers, and nothing more. It is really against the Indian tradition to claim to be the founder of a sect or a school of thought, or to have propounded a new theory. So, every new thinker seeks support in ancient authorities, and takes special pains to quote from as many sources as possible in support of his own theories. This does not, as pointed out above, imply any lack of original thinking on the part of the Indian thinkers, or their inability to stand on their own without the help of others. For, then, how can the fact that the very same texts have been quoted joyously by different schools be explained? This definitely proves that original thinking precedes quoting from authority and not that theories are propounded according to quotations.

Secondly, such well-known quotations do, indeed, serve to represent facts in a clear, sweet, yet forceful manner. Nothing can be compared with the inspired utterances of those mighty authorities of old. Facts are facts; they do not change with age or place. So, when the same facts are revealed anew to later thinkers, naturally, the same beautiful expressions cannot also recur. For this reason, too, quotations should not be looked down upon as something to be avoided like poison.

The over-diffident tendency to lean wholly on others is, indeed, regrettable. But equally regrettable is the over-confident tendency to ignore totally the contributions of others. The Indian custom of quoting from others, in support of one's own theories, is really an antidote to both these extreme kinds of tendencies; as such, it is a very beneficial and salutary practice.

REASONING AND REVELATION

Thus, it is altogether wrong to suppose that, simply because the Indian systems start with the Vedic authority, they are all dogmatic through and through, and there is no place for reasoning in Indian philosophy. But the Indian philosophical method, as we have seen, is one whole of authority, reason, and perception

or intuition. In Western philosophy, reason and revelation are ordinarily taken to be opposed to each other. In Indian philosophy, however, they are taken to be complementary to each other, *śravaṇa* leading to *manana* and *manana* leading to *nididhyāsana*—authority or revelation leading to reasoning and reasoning leading to realization. Indicating the organic relation of these three, namely, authority, reasoning, and realization, Śaṅkara has beautifully said: 'Mere dry reasoning is of no use here. But reasoning which is in conformity with scripture alone has to be resorted to as an auxiliary to realization' (*Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya*, II.1.6). Śaivācārya Śrīkaṇṭha also asserts in the very same strain: 'Brahman cannot be known through inference. Yet, inference that conforms to scripture may very well be a proof with regard to Brahman' (*Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya*, I.1.4).

THE VALUE OF INFERENCE

Now, a very legitimate question may be asked. Here, only that kind of inference has been accepted as a proof which conforms to the scriptures, which practically means that inference is not an independent source of knowledge, but is concerned only with elucidating and confirming what has been already stated. In that case, what is the value of such a satellite *pramāṇa*?

The reply to this question is as follows. Simply because inference here has been said to be conforming to the scriptures, it cannot be said that there is no scope for its being an independent source of knowledge. As a matter of fact, when there are so many different interpretations of the very same Vedas, how can it ever be said that there is no scope for independent thinking here? Under the Vedānta system alone, there are as many as ten schools; and each and every one of these claims to have been based on the Veda-Upaniṣads directly. Thus, each founder of a sect or a school first interprets the Veda-Upaniṣads by means of his own thinking, reasoning, logical argumentations, and philosophical reflections, and then forms a new sect or founds a new school on that basis.

In this way, inference, conforming to the

scriptures or *manana* after *śravaṇa*, has two main functions: (1) immediately after *śravaṇa*, to determine the meaning of the Vedas in accordance with the logical and philosophical canons of one's own school; (2) to prove the same and to disprove rival views, in detail, on strict logical and philosophical grounds.

THE NECESSITY OF AUTHORITY IN INFERENCE

Thus, the scripture simply forms the starting point of inference, and nothing more. We know that, according to logical rules, inference is the process of passing from the premise to the conclusion. Here, the Vedas constitute only the premise of this kind of *śrutyanugṛhīta-tarka* or inference conforming to the scriptures. According to the Indian tradition, the Vedas are *apauruṣeya*, i.e. not composed by any ordinary, ignorant, or little-knowing human being; but the Vedas are divine words. That is, the Vedas are the immortal instructions coming from the mouths of extraordinary persons or sages or seers, who are but the messengers of God on earth. Ordinary, ignorant, and little-knowing persons like us can have an inkling into the transcendental, fundamental, and profound philosophical truths through the scriptures only. For we lack intelligence and power to grasp such deep matters without any help from others; we cannot understand them through our own independent efforts.

In fact, in ordinary spheres also, we find that in the beginning we have to depend for a long time on our parents, teachers, elders, and other persons for learning many things. Naturally, therefore, in the very difficult sphere of philosophy and spirituality, such a kind of preliminary help is necessary for us a thousand times more. That is why, as we have seen, *śravaṇa* or *śraddhā*, i.e. reverence for scriptures and *gurus* (spiritual preceptors), is regarded as the very first step in the path of philosophical knowledge or spiritual striving. This is the real import of the *śāstra-yonitva* of Brahman and the Indian *guru-vāda*. Ignorant persons, puffed up with pride for their so-called abilities, think that they

can easily know Brahman through the ordinary sources of knowledge, like perception and inference. It is for teaching such persons that the Vedānta system describes Brahman to be *śāstra-yoni* or knowable through the scriptures. The warnings by the Upaniṣads also have this purpose in view: 'From whom speech with mind turns back, not getting'; 'He who thinks that he does not know Brahman really knows Him; but he who thinks that he knows Brahman really does not know Him.'

As a matter of fact, as there are degrees and gradations everywhere, so also there are degrees and gradations in the sphere of knowledge. Hence, there must be differences as regards the sources of knowledge as well. That is, what is a proof in the case of ordinary knowledge is not naturally so in the case of philosophic knowledge. Thus, ordinary perception regarding worldly objects is a proof in the case of ordinary knowledge, but not in the case of philosophic knowledge. The perception of Truth, of Brahman, of Ātman (Self) is not a sense perception; it is entirely of a different kind.

In the same manner, ordinary inference, from premises arrived at previously by ordinary individuals regarding ordinary objects, is a proof in the case of ordinary knowledge, but not in the case of philosophic knowledge. Here, inference must start with the scriptures as the premise, and not with ordinary premises. Similarly, ordinary authority of worldly books and teachers regarding worldly objects and events is a proof in the case of ordinary knowledge, but not in the case of philosophic knowledge. Here, the authority is scriptural authority. That is why we have special names for all these, viz. *śravaṇa* for authority, *manana* for inference, *nididhyāsana* for perception.

In this way, it is clear that, though apparently Śruti or the scripture is the be-all and end-all of Indian philosophy, yet, really speaking, reasoning and perception, too, are considered absolutely necessary.

So it would be manifestly wrong to hold that reasoning has no place in Indian philosophy. Just as an ordinary inference is not possible

without a premise to start with, and the conclusion of the inference has to conform to that premise or follow from it, so in the case of philosophical inference, too, the conclusion has to conform to the scripture, the premise (*śrutya-nugr̥hīta-tarka*). In the case of an ordinary inference, the premise is obtained through observation, experiment, and the inductive method of causal connection and uniformity of nature. And it has to be taken for granted by the reasoner on the basis of the results of scientific investigation by celebrated scientists. In the same manner, in the case of philosophical inference, the scriptures are to be taken for granted on the basis of the results of direct realization by celebrated seers and saints. In the case of ordinary reasoning, the scientific results or formulas may be interpreted differently by different scientists, though not by ordinary persons, and conclusions drawn therefrom. In the same manner, in the case of philosophical inference, too, the same scriptural texts may be interpreted differently by inspired seers and saints, though not by ordinary persons, and conclusions drawn therefrom. So, what difference is there between the nature of ordinary inference and that of philosophical inference? If the former is not taken to be dogmatic, why should the latter be considered so?

In fact, it is undeniable that inference, the very prop of critical method as against dogmatism, itself contains an unavoidable element of dogmatism in the blind acceptance of the premises on the basis of the work done by others. So, where the premises are blindly accepted, dogmatism inevitably results, whether in ordinary inference or in philosophical in-

ference, as the conclusions are drawn from the premises and there is not much scope for really independent thinking here. But where the premises are first interpreted in the light of the reasoner's own independent thought and then the conclusions drawn, there is no dogmatism, whether in ordinary inference or in philosophical inference.

In the case of philosophical inference in India, as we have already mentioned, great saints and scholars interpret the scriptural premises in the light of their own independent thinking first and then found different schools on that basis. These schools, again, have sub-schools, and so on. This peculiarity of the Indian philosophical method is a proof against dogmatism.

Another definite proof that there is no dogmatism in Indian philosophy is its fundamental aversion to the doctrine of the last prophet, which is accepted by not a few religious systems as their central dogma. According to this doctrine, a particular prophet or founder of a sect is the last one to interpret the message of God on earth; and after him, there cannot be any new interpretation of the scriptures, no new sects, no new thinking. But according to the Indian view, as Truth is infinite, so the ways of interpreting and representing it are also infinite. Hence, each and every one is at perfect liberty to interpret the scriptures according to his own judgement and comprehension, and found a new sect. 'Let no one be so foolish as to claim that his is the only or the last interpretation of the scriptures'—this is the eternal warning as well as the eternal message of hope of Indian philosophy.

There is no fight and no antagonism between the Vedānta and any other system in the world. One principle it lays down—and that, the Vedānta claims, is to be found in every religion in the world—that man is divine. . . . The Vedānta has no quarrel with those who do not understand this divinity of man. Consciously or unconsciously, every man is trying to unfold that divinity. . . . Now, this idea, claims the Vedānta, is to be found in all religions, whether in India or outside of it. . . . The Vedānta claims that there has not been one religious inspiration, one manifestation of the divine man, however great, but it has been the expression of that infinite oneness in human nature.

ŚRĪ KRṢṢA AND HIS DIVINE GOSPEL

BY SWAMI BHAKTANANDA

Emerson observes: 'There is properly no history; only biography.' This is very true of India, whose long history unfolds the glorious biographies of its great men. Amongst these great men, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands out as a towering personality. Very few have influenced the life and thought-current of our country as Kṛṣṇa has done. For thousands of years, his life and teachings have been a perennial source of inspiration to philosophers and saints, rulers and statesmen, poets and artists. He was the noblest embodiment of the eternal religion of India, which is based on universal principles, and the best commentator on the Vedānta. Men and women in all ages and belonging to various groups found a favourite ideal in his many-sided and divine personality. His message of duty and strength is of universal appeal and eternal value. So profound has been his impact on every aspect of India's heritage that he is regarded as the foremost of divine incarnations. As the *Bhāgavata* says: 'While the other incarnations are only partial manifestations of the supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa is the Lord Himself' (I.3.28).

India has always believed that the supreme Lord incarnates Himself on this earth whenever necessary. The *Bhāgavata* says that the birth of the Lord is for punishing the wicked and for fostering the good. In the *Caṇḍī* or *Durgā-saptasatī*, the Divine Mother promises: 'Whenever evil men proceed to excesses, I will come down and destroy them.' When the Lord thus descends to establish *dharma*, He comes with superhuman ability, though appearing in a human form. He is a spiritual dynamo; he is an epoch-maker. This establishment of *dharma* consists in bringing about a correct balance among the various groups which make up human society and in seeing that these groups function efficiently and discharge their respective duties justly and properly. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the greatest of divine incarnations, was fully con-

scious of his mission right from his birth. He has himself declared in the *Gītā*: 'Whenever virtue wanes, and vice increases, I am born in every age to protect the virtuous and to destroy the wicked' (IV. 7-8). He carried out this work of the *avatāra* by destroying such evil persons as Pūtānā, Kāliya, and Kaṁsa, and by bringing infinite delight to such devotees as Kuntī, Akrūra, and Vidura.

The story of Kṛṣṇa's life is described in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bhāgavata*, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, and other Purāṇas. Though there is difference of opinion among scholars about the actual date of his birth, he was born, according to tradition, about 5,000 years ago in the royal family of Mathurā. He spent his childhood amidst the sylvan surroundings on the banks of the Yamunā, in Gokula and Vṛndāvana. Even as a child, he destroyed several evil persons who came to kill him under the direction of his uncle Kaṁsa. The picture of young Kṛṣṇa tending the cattle in the shaded groves near the Yamunā, playing on his flute, teasing the simple maidens of Vraja, and engaging himself in fun and frolic along with his rustic comrades—this is a picture of an ideal child loved dearly by one and all. As a boy, he killed his wicked uncle Kaṁsa and restored the throne to Kaṁsa's father. Along with his brother Balarāma, he had formal education under Sāndīpani, from whom he learnt all the sixty-four *vidyās* (branches of knowledge). It was here that he developed intimate friendship with a poor Brāhmaṇa boy named Sudāma, which remained lifelong. Later, when Kṛṣṇa was at Dvārakā, Sudāma, stricken with acute poverty, sought an interview with Kṛṣṇa. The well-known incident, which depicts the love and affection with which Kṛṣṇa met his poor friend and the tenderness with which he served him, is a very moving story portraying Kṛṣṇa as an ideal friend.

Circumstances compelled him to shift from

Mathurā to Dvārakā, on the West coast, along with his people. Thereafter, he lived as an adviser of kings, but never occupied the throne himself. His subsequent life was intimately connected with that of the Pāṇḍavas of Hastināpura, whose constant friend, philosopher, and guide he was. In times of trials and tribulations, they rushed to him for solace and guidance, and they were never disappointed in the trust they had placed in him. It was Kṛṣṇa whom they sent to negotiate with Duryodhana to get their share of the kingdom. When all negotiations failed, when Duryodhana refused to give them even the smallest village, and when the two parties—the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas—resorted to war, he was neutral. Though he would not fight, he was chosen by the Pāṇḍavas as their ally, as against all his army which went to the Kauravas. The Pāṇḍavas were confident that Kṛṣṇa's mere presence on their side would surely bring victory to them, as they believed in the words of their teacher Droṇa: 'Where *dharma* is, there is Kṛṣṇa; where Kṛṣṇa is, there is victory.' Without taking active part in the war, he was instrumental in destroying the evil forces of the day. To complete his divine mission, he finally brought about the mutual destruction of all his relatives, the Yādavas, who were drunk with the arrogance of power and pelf.

A study of Kṛṣṇa's life reveals him as an ideal child, an ideal student, an ideal friend, and an ideal counsellor. From the very beginning of his life to the last day, he utilized all his energies to fulfil his mission of destroying the evil forces of his day and of giving solace, inspiration, and delight to innumerable devotees and god-loving persons. He gave to mankind, through the medium of his friend Arjuna, in the form of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, a comprehensive philosophy of life and action, which to this day is exerting its influence on all thoughtful persons both in the East and in the West.

II

While all the aspects of Kṛṣṇa's life are appealing and inspiring, it is Kṛṣṇa as Pārtha-

sārathi, the charioteer of Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukṣetra, who is to be worshipped, and his immortal message, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* which he gave in that role, that has to be followed, if we want to raise ourselves and attain to our full stature as human beings. If we do this, we can make Kṛṣṇa our 'charioteer' in the 'battles' of our personal lives; and victory will be certainly ours.

The *Gītā* has a message to everyone, to the soldier on the battle-field, to the worker in the factory, to the teacher in his school, and to the spiritual aspirant in his search after truth. In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa preaches what he himself practised throughout his life—detached and selfless action, dispassionate judgement, and constant endeavour to realize the higher values of life. It is for this reason that Swami Vivekananda said: 'Kṛṣṇa can never be understood until you have studied the *Gītā*, for he was the embodiment of his own teaching.'

Even a cursory study of the *Gītā* clearly brings out that Kṛṣṇa does not engage himself in philosophical discussions. He takes several conclusions reached by earlier thinkers for granted. Based on these, he develops a practical doctrine which can be followed by even those 'who wander in the region of the many and variable', and which, if followed, gives to man intellectual clarity and mental tranquillity. The purpose as well as the central theme of the *Gītā* becomes clear if we understand the circumstances under which it was delivered and the results that followed. When the Pāṇḍavas had failed to get from the Kauravas even the smallest piece of land as against their rightful share of half the kingdom, when all efforts at peaceful mediation proved futile, and when their very existence was at stake, they resorted to war as the last measure. At the critical moment when the opposing armies were ready to commence the war, when the conch-shells were blown and the first arrow was about to be shot, Arjuna, the hero of the Pāṇḍavas, one of the greatest warriors of the times, refused to fight, moved by compassion. Seeing Arjuna—who had that very morning encouraged his brother Yudhiṣṭhira, saying that

victory for him was certain—in this despondent state, Kṛṣṇa diagnosed Arjuna's mental condition as proceeding from fear and weakness, masquerading as compassion and deluding him as to the proper course of action. The very first thing Kṛṣṇa says is: 'Yield not to this unmanliness, O Pārtha; it does not become thee. Cast off this petty faint-heartedness and arise, O oppressor of the foes' (*Gītā*, II.3).

Arjuna was a born warrior; it was his duty to fight for the right. At a critical juncture, he forgot his proper duty and thought it better to live by begging than to kill his teachers (*ibid.*, II.5). Kṛṣṇa tells him that everyone has his duties in life determined according to his natural fitness and qualification; that one's own duty (*dharma*) is better, though imperfect, than another's duty well performed (*ibid.*, III.35); that bondage and sin arise from the mental attitude with which any work is performed and not from the nature of the work itself; that when duty is performed without attachment to results, without desire, but in a spirit of dedication, with perfect control over body and mind, its consequences, good or bad, do not bind a man (*ibid.*, IV.19-21). On the other hand, work done like this becomes equivalent to worship, and man attains perfection by worshipping the supreme Lord through the performance of his own duty (*ibid.*, XVIII.46). This is the central message of the *Gītā*—to do one's duty incessantly and without attachment to results. Kṛṣṇa says: 'You have the right to work only and not to the fruits thereof; let not the fruits of action be your motive; neither let there be in you any attachment to inaction' (*ibid.*, II.47). As a result of Kṛṣṇa's teaching, Arjuna's delusion was destroyed; his doubts were gone; and he was ready to fight (*ibid.*, XVIII.73). Whenever we are confused as to the right course of action to be taken by us, when doubts assail our minds, and when our judgements are clouded, a study of the *Gītā* will remove the doubts and give clarity to the intellect, as the teaching of the *Gītā* did in the case of Arjuna. That is why Śaṅkara says in his introduction to the *Gītā-bhāṣya* that 'a knowledge of its teaching

leads to the realization of all human aspirations'—both *abhyudaya* (worldly prosperity) and *niḥśreyasa* (spiritual illumination).

When Kṛṣṇa gave to mankind the ideals of duty for duty's sake, love for love's sake, and work for work's sake, a new landmark in the history of religious thought was created. In the words of Swami Vivekananda: 'The religion of fear and temptations was gone for ever, and in the place of fear of hell and temptation of enjoyment of heaven came the ideal of work for work's sake.'

In order to impress on Arjuna the necessity of detached work and its spiritual potentialities, Kṛṣṇa deals with the various currents of thought and the different types of spiritual practices that were prevalent at that time. He reconciles these different elements—the Vedic cult of sacrifice, the Upaniṣadic teaching of the transcendent Brahman, the theism and piety of the *bhakti* school, the Sāṅkhya dualism, and the *yoga* meditation—and shows that they all converge at the same point. Echoing the sentiments expressed in the Ṛg-Vedic statement, 'Truth is one; sages call it by different names', several methods of spiritual practices are described and shown to be having the same end in view, namely, spiritual enlightenment and knowledge of Reality. All the *yogas*, *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, and *rāja-yoga*, are dealt with, and all religious methods are harmonized. Kṛṣṇa declares: 'In whatever way men worship me, so do I accept them; men in all ways tread my path' (*ibid.*, IV.11). The same thing was said by Sri Ramakrishna, the great teacher of religious harmony in recent times—as a result of his own direct spiritual experiences—that all religions are but various paths to reach the same ultimate Reality. The *Gītā* thus contains one of the earliest expressions of universal harmony in the field of religious thought. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan: 'It (*Gītā*) represents not any sect of Hinduism, but Hinduism as a whole; not merely Hinduism, but religion as such, in its universality, without limit of time or space, embracing within its synthesis the whole gamut of human spirit' (*The Bhagavadgītā*, p. 12).

And Aldous Huxley says: 'The *Gītā* is one of the clearest and the most comprehensive summaries of Perennial Philosophy ever to have been made. Hence its enduring value, not only for Indians, but for all mankind' (Introduction to the *Bhagavadgītā* by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood). It is precisely because of this universal character of its teaching, harmonizing all spiritual paths and recognizing all spiritual endeavours, that it has continued to exert for centuries such a powerful influence on the great minds of the world. That is why it has found an esteemed place among the scriptures of the world.

While dealing with all these various subjects, Kṛṣṇa often gives new meanings to old philosophical terms and thus initiates fresh spiritual traditions. He defines *yoga* as dexterity in work (*Gītā*, II.50). The way he deals with the conception of *tapas* (austerity) is unique. Normally, *tapas* means some kind of external austerity, like fasting etc. But Kṛṣṇa divides *tapas* into three types: austerity of the body, of speech, and of the mind. He defines bodily austerity as worship of the gods, of the twice-born, of teachers, and of the wise; purity, straightforwardness, continence, and non-injury. Speech which causes no offence, which is truthful, pleasant, and beneficial, and the regular study of the scriptures—these are regarded as the austerity of speech. And finally, he describes serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, and honesty of motive as the austerity of the mind (*ibid.*, XVII.14-16). There could hardly be a more comprehensive definition of *tapas*, and in this definition is given a complete course of spiritual discipline, ensuring an all-round development of the aspirant.

Another important teaching that occurs frequently in the *Gītā* refers to the equanimity of mind. Whether he discusses *jñāna* or *bhakti*, *karma* or *yoga*, Kṛṣṇa repeatedly refers to that state of mind which is undisturbed by the pairs of opposites—heat and cold, pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, and the like. One who follows the path of *jñāna* must maintain constant even-mindedness towards all desirable and

undesirable happenings (*ibid.*, XIII.9). A devotee should be the same in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain; to him, blame and praise are equal (*ibid.*, XII.18-19). If action (one's daily work) is to become a spiritual practice, a *karmayogin* should treat alike pain and pleasure, gain and loss (*ibid.*, II.38). If action is done in this spirit, *karma* can no longer bind him. Kṛṣṇa gives the status of *yoga* to this even-mindedness, when he says, 'Evenness of mind is called *yoga*' (*ibid.*, II.48). Whatever be the spiritual path chosen, whichever be the mode of *sādhana* undertaken, this mental poise is an indispensable prerequisite for all spiritual progress. When a man reaches perfection, he becomes a *sthita-prajña*, a man of steady wisdom. He becomes established in evenness of mind completely. He is no longer shaken by adversity, nor does he hanker after happiness. He is neither pleased at receiving good nor vexed at evil. He is free from attraction and aversion (*ibid.*, II.56-57).

The life of Kṛṣṇa and his immortal 'Song Celestial' have attracted the attention of men and women for several centuries. Great teachers of ancient India, like Vyāsa, Śaṅkara, and other *ācāryas*, as well as those of modern India, like Swami Vivekananda, Lokamanya Tilak, Sri Aurobindo, and Mahatma Gandhi have drawn inspiration from the intellectual vigour, emotional appeal, and spiritual depth of Kṛṣṇa's great teachings. Mahatma Gandhi says: 'When disappointment stares me in the face, and all alone I see not one ray of light, I go back to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. I find a verse here and a verse there, and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies—and my life has been full of external tragedies—and if they have left no visible, no indelible scar on me, I owe it all to the teachings of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*' (*Young India*, 1925, pp. 1078-79).

If India wants to raise herself in the estimation of the world, if she aspires to become glorious and prosperous once again, and if her spiritual and material foundations are to be made stronger, then there is no other way for her except to follow this divine gospel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

THE SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTER OF EAST AND WEST

BY DR. JACQUES ALBERT CUTTAT

INTRODUCTION

For a diplomat, to speak in public about spirituality is unorthodox, at least according to a modern prejudice. A deplorable prejudice! Spirituality, that is, a discipline leading to a growing awareness of ultimate values by the whole human being, draws man into his ultimate depth. Politics transform the world from without; spirituality transforms man from within. International contacts are the playground of diplomacy. Why should they not take place at the level of spiritual depth? Mircea Eliade, a Greek-Orthodox Christian and leading Orientalist, writes in this connection: 'Sooner or later, our dialogue with "others"—the representatives of traditional, Asiatic, and "primitive" cultures—must begin to take place not in today's empirical and utilitarian language, ... but in a cultural language capable of expressing human realities and spiritual values.'¹

Now, in concrete historical fact, spirituality is always associated with one of the various religions of the world. One could define it as the essence of a religion in so far as it is not only accepted, but lived and experienced. Thus, before we approach spirituality in general, we have first to distinguish between at least two groups of spiritualities, those shaped by the so-called Western religions and those shaped by the Eastern religions.

From the point of view of the number of their respective adepts, they form also two hemispheres, two halves of mankind. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism prevail in Asia; and among them, Hinduism and Buddhism are leading numerically, in extension and in spiritual quality. Approximately, fifty per cent of the world's popula-

tion belong to these five main Eastern religions or spiritualities. Their main common feature is to conceive the Divine, the Absolute, as being ultimately impersonal or 'supra-personal'. Let me call them the Eastern or Asiatic spiritual hemisphere. The other half of mankind belongs to the three religions which are predominantly (not exclusively) Western: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; they have a common root, the Bible, and share the biblical concept of God as the Absolute in Person, as ultimately personal and even inter-personal. Let me call them the biblical or monotheistic hemisphere. The exemplary expressions of the Eastern spiritualities are the *wise* and the *yogin*, those of the biblical spiritualities the *prophet* and the *saint*.

One might object to the division of mankind in religious hemispheres that it does not apply to modern humanity, because, in fact, secularization makes the majority of mankind increasingly agnostic and indifferent to religion and to the corresponding spiritualities. My reply to this is not only that all cultures and civilizations, as profane and secular as they may claim to be, are still rooted in their religious past—every culture is originally religious and spiritual—but also that there is no modern atheist or agnostic who is not still, in fact, psychically shaped and spiritually stamped by his religious tradition, as much as he may call it superstitious or antiquated. Religious imprint on cultures and souls survives religious conviction and practice, privately, socially, and politically. 'Wise' and 'yogin', 'prophet' and 'saint' are still in some way or other, consciously or not, the respective archetypes of East and West.² I remember an agnostic Jewish friend of mine, an eminent physician, who said that for him ethical imperatives were but arbitrary human inventions from which he was fully emancipated,

¹ *Encounter at Ascona*, in *Spiritual Disciplines*, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks, London, Routledge, 1960, p. XXI.

² At least, as much as the more apparent archetypes 'genius' and 'hero' of each continent or country.

and who, shortly after this profession of unbelief, spoke of a medical colleague as of a revolting charlatan, devoid of moral sense in his profession. Awakening to his spiritual depth in front of a concrete and serious situation, his unconscious ethical—in this case biblical—conscience spontaneously reappeared at the amoral, unbiblical surface of his consciousness. Similarly, an agnostic Indian who believes in non-violence adheres, in fact, to an essentially religious category, for *ahimsā* is a specifically Hindu and Buddhist value.³ Christian spiritual imperatives—the first to be universal after those of Buddhism—are the unacknowledged inspiration of the ardent sense for social solidarity of Western atheists. '*Religio*', etymologically, means what 'draws men together' as well as what 'ties up' or 'unites' their personal centre by 'referring them back' to their common divine transcendental source; *dharma* means 'directing spiritual principle' and 'eternal inner law' relating all *jīvātman*s (individual souls) from within to their *Ātman* (spiritual Self), this *Ātman* being Brahman, the 'non-dual' timeless origin and goal of the Hindu way of life. Thus, our concern should be the dimension in which the wise becomes able to speak to the prophet, the *yogin* to the saint, and *vice versa*. With a view to catching the nature of their spiritual space relating East and West, let us now turn to the central point of the title of this address, to the word 'encounter'.

I. THE INTERRELIGIOUS SPACE OF THE ENCOUNTER

1. 'As many summits rising from a common basis'

By spiritual encounter of East and West, I mean a dialogue between the biblical and the

Asiatic spiritual hemispheres. A dialogue implies two irreducibly different subjects who share something fundamental. The greater the difference and even the contrast between the two partners, the deeper and higher is the only level on which they can really meet, the more genuinely uniting too. Such a spiritual contrast distinguishes the two hemispheres, as we shall explain later on, and also unites them, provided that the differences are not explained away, not abolished or fused, but more clearly perceived, confronted in order to enrich each other, to speak to each other, to meet. Their inner relation is, *mutatis mutandis*, analogous to the relation of love between man and woman: in a sexless third dimension, love would be less, not more uniting. In fact, confusion of sexes separates; so does confusion of cultures, religions, and spiritualities. The higher the value, the more does uniformity separate, and distinction unite.

As to the common ground or common spiritual basis of biblical and Asiatic religions, I would call it the *consciousness of the sacred*, and the sacred, as R. Otto has convincingly shown, is a *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*; it is the invisible presence of a higher Reality, which paradoxically attracts and repels, lifts up and throws back, fascinates and terrifies at the same time. Whenever two representatives of our two spiritual hemispheres, e.g. a Hindu and a Christian, a Buddhist and a Muslim, etc., meet in this state of soul, both inwardly open to their respective mode of awareness of the sacred; then—and then only—there exists between them what I would call an interreligious space, the indispensable condition of a spiritual encounter of East and West. This space is a basis, not a summit. There is no such thing as a supra-religious approach to the various religions and spiritualities, except if one reduces religion to mere social manners and customs, an attitude which amounts to a denial of religion and therefore misses its very object. Some agnostic scholars claim that a non-religious approach to the study of comparative culture and

³ An interesting study could be made of the possible inner relation between political non-alignment and another eminently Indian summit of spirituality, *advaita* or 'non-duality'; of the Divine in itself, says *advaita*, man can neither affirm nor deny anything; therefore, the unqualifiable divine Oneness can only be realized by refusing to opt for any of the complementary aspects of any pair of opposites, including—ultimately—good and evil

to claiming that only those who are sceptic or ignorant about medicine have the necessary competence and objectivity to participate in an international medical congress. In other terms, the interreligious space has to be a spiritual and therefore in some way a religious space, not a religious and spiritual vacuum.

2. *The requisite of a world-wide spiritual dialogue*

Now, a real dialogue supposes the readiness to listen to the other as other; and to listen means to make silence in oneself in order to let the other speak to us; on the inter-spiritual plane, such listening mental silence means not less than what Husserl, the father of phenomenology and restorer of modern philosophy, calls the phenomenological *epokhê*, the 'suspension of judgement', the difficult art of 'placing into brackets' all one's prejudices, vague evidences, traditional assumptions, including one's religious convictions, to forget and suspend them with a view to 'let the object speak', as Husserl says, i.e. to let it disclose its real essence (its *eidōs*). This object, in our interreligious dialogue, is the specific essence of the Eastern spiritualities approached by the Westerner, and the specific essence of the biblical spiritualities approached by an Oriental. This 'suspension of judgement' or 'placing in brackets' by no means implies the abandonment of one's convictions, but only that one abstains, for a certain time, from performing the act of faith in them, with the intention to reopen the parenthesis once the other has spoken, and then to give one's full answer to a fully understood partner, i.e. to confront both hemispheres. Two extremes have to be avoided if an interreligious dialogue has to make the spiritual essence of East and West visible to each other: the religious *exclusivism* (or fanaticism), which refuses to listen, to acknowledge other spiritual values, and the religious *syncretism*, which listens superficially and fails to grasp the uniqueness of the other as other. The West inclines to exclusivism, the East to syncretism. The view that salvation is only possible within the visible

Church—a view expressly rejected by the Catholic Church—has been sustained by missionaries and eminent Christian theologians, even today. Such blindness for the spiritual riches of the East, for its mystical depth and intuition of the transparence of the cosmos to higher realities—such blindness always implies a blindness for some basic aspects of Christianity itself, namely, for those aspects which it shares with all religions, e.g. the awareness of the sacred, the value of contemplation; it supposes a value-blindness for the fact that man as such is an image of God. Thus, the well-known examples of violent conversions illustrate, not Christianity, but a very unchristian aspect of Western history.

The East is tempted by the opposite extreme, syncretism; it consists in wrongly equating biblical values with Eastern religious categories, e.g. in mistaking monotheistic creation (*ex nihilo*) with the Asiatic concepts of emanation or manifestation, or in calling Christ an *avatāra* or a great *yogin*, or in identifying hastily Christian love with Buddhist *maitrī* or Hindu *bhakti*, overlooking their specific and irreducible differences. The result of such premature jumping to identity is that many Eastern scholars and sages, instead of studying Judaism, Christianity, and even Islam from within and taking them phenomenologically as they are in themselves, reduce them to those aspects which are similar to the Eastern approach, isolate those aspects from their context, and thus force monotheism into a sort of Eastern Procrustean bed. In the Gospel, for instance, they read only some sayings of Jesus like: 'My Father and I are one', ignoring all those where Christ stresses his being irreducibly distinct from the Father, a distinction thanks to which they are not fused, nor merely identical, but each *within* the other, in a union which is an inter-personal communion, not a coincidence. Many Hindu or Buddhist scholars seem to know only Meister Eckhart and other more or less 'monistic' mystics; they consider them as the truest expressions of the Christian message without taking the trouble to enquire why the Church warned

against their identification of man and God. Such universalism is undoubtedly more tolerant, and less 'violent', than Western exclusivism, but equally blind to the specific inner visage of Christianity and the other biblical spiritualities. It shares with its opposite extreme the fact that it reduces the dialogue to an apparently all-embracing monologue. The integration or 'homologation' of different spiritual perspectives seems to me valid only within the realm of *one* hemisphere; it is correct, for instance, to equate the Vedic ritual sacrifice and *yoga* by interpreting *yoga* as an inner sacrifice; Buddhism may be correctly identified with a *yoga* transformed into a world-religion. The reason why the reduction of Eastern structural analogies to a common identity becomes invalid when extended to the biblical categories lies in the fact that the two hemispheres form two religious families, which differ not only in degree, but in nature, so much so that the difference between these hemispheres is a spiritual *contrast*. To get a first glimpse of this still unexplored contrast, let us try to look, 'phenomenologically', at the most typical expression of each spiritual hemisphere, the saint and the *yogin*. Considered in the above-mentioned and radically unbiased way, the *yogin* and the saint are two *antinomical* 'phenomena'—phenomena not in the current sense of an outward and transitory appearance, but in its etymological (and phenomenological) sense of the manifestation (*phainomenon*) of the permanent essence (*eidōs*) of an object when we perceive it from within, and 'antinomical' in the following sense: between a *yogin* and a saint, the difference is in a way much greater than that between an ordinary Hindu and an ordinary Christian, greater and yet much lesser, because, whereas the spiritually mediocre Indian and Westerner share their lukewarmness (and the whole scale of human passions) and yet differ in such a way that they mutually exclude and possibly exterminate each other, as in religious wars, the extreme distinction between a *yogin* and a saint, their respective uniqueness, is not of an exclusive and incompatible character, but of a

complementary nature. The *yogin* is utterly absorbed and extinguished in an impersonal Divinity; the saint is utterly confronted with the Absolute in Person. The *yogin* is a pure Self without any Thou; the saint is open to the divine Thou from the very depth of his self. The *yogin* is liberated from the ego and the world; the saint is only liberated from evil. The *yogin* lives in 'non-duality' (*advaita*), without a second, beyond relation; the saint lives face to face with God, in inter-personal communion, in extreme reciprocity. The antithesis 'sage—prophet' is of a similar structure. Eastern and Western cultures have been decisively stamped by these antinomies. They are rooted in two contrasting metaphysical and anthropological backgrounds.

II. THE METAPHYSICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONTRAST

A phenomenological approach to this background will not shade off the contrast, but sharpen it, bring it into full relief, and thus intensify the 'dialogical tension'. The above-mentioned 'awareness of the sacred' is the common spiritual ground of East and West, the basis for the dialogue, yet a basis is not a summit. The respective summits will only appear gradually in the course of the dialogue. The eight main religions of the world should first be compared, phenomenologically, to as many different peaks rising from this common basis, long before we are entitled to speak of them, metaphysically, as of as many ways leading to the same summit; such may be the final result, never the initial assumption of a serious and valid confrontation. The phenomenological approach discloses the reason why some religions and cultures differ from each other in *degree* only, others in *nature*. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shintoism, in spite of their specific features, differ ultimately from each other in degree only; yet each of the five Eastern religions differs in nature from Judaism as well as from Christianity and from their common offshoot—Islam. The members of each group or religious family

share an outlook on world, man, and God, which is not only different from that which the other group has in common, but symmetrically *divergent*.

1. *Emanation—creation, enstasis—ekstasis:
two divergent spiritual dimensions*

The divergence is conspicuous in the respective outlook at the origin and development of the universe, and, consequently, in their respective outlook at the disciplines leading to God. Practically, all Asiatic cosmogonies consider the evolution of the objective cosmos not as a progress or an ascension, but, on the contrary, as a *descent*. Whether it is conceived as production, emanation, or manifestation, the world-process, as such, is a perpetual departure from its divine origin towards worldly periphery; becoming is a centrifugal movement from Reality to unreality; pre-cosmic plenitude unfolds itself towards periodic dissolution (*pralaya*). Therefore, the Taoist 'wheel of things', the Buddhist 'round of existence', the Hindu 'days and nights of Brahmā' are all not only centrifugal, but ultimately *māyā*, i.e. a dreamlike manifestation of the unmanifested, yet omnipresent, uniquely Real. Correspondingly, all Eastern ways leading to the Divine—the Eastern spiritualities, strictly speaking—consist in an inner counteraction which neutralizes this centrifugal evolution by a symmetrically inverse *involution*. *Yoga*, Buddhist *jhāna*, Zen and Taoist meditation are all a movement backward, an inner return to the pre-cosmic, pre-temporal Reality. This implies a radical detachment from the world as such, not only from evil, as from peripheral illusion including the empirical ego. The first and last word of Eastern spirituality is *concentration* in the etymological sense of a 'concentric retreat' towards the divine centre abiding in oneself; no, coinciding with one's Self; Asiatic spiritualities aim at total *interiorization*. This spiritual orientation impresses to some extent all Eastern inner relations to values, particularly to finite values

In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, both these movements have an exactly opposite

orientation. Their common holy scripture, the Bible, describes the world-evolution not as centrifugal, but as theo-centric, centripetal, not as descending from God, but as ascending towards God according to the scheme (or divine plan) prefigured by the 'six days of the Genesis'; during these six world-periods, universal existence emerges first from non-being ('nothing') to inanimate (mineral) existence, then progresses to vegetal and animal life, and finally culminates in man as in an epitome of the cosmos as well as a free image of God, so that through man the whole cosmos can and should culminate in God. Thus, biblical becoming, even of the outer world, is not essentially a production, an emanation, a manifestation in the Eastern sense; not a production out of some pre-existing matter, but a total invention—including matter—out of nothing; not an emanation, a flowing out of an impersonal Divinity towards illusion, but a progress, a growth proceeding, not down from God, but *up* from nothing to God, rising through impersonal life towards an increasingly personal Reality; nor even a manifestation, a necessary unfolding of the 'possibilities' of a unique Reality, but the result of a free act of the absolute Person; in one word, a real *creation*. Creation places an intrinsically real world and free creatures *in front* of an ultimately personal Creator. Therefore, Judaic, Christian, and Islamic salvation or sanctification—i.e. monotheistic way of union with God—is, accordingly, not an inner ascending recession *from* world and ego, but an ascending inner progression *with* world and ego, a spiritual movement forward towards a divine Thou, not a spiritual retreat into a pure Self; a fulfilment of creation by achieving its growth inaugurated by God, not a neutralization of the world-process. The basic inner gesture here is recollection *before* God, *confrontation*, not pure concentration within; full *response* to all values whether infinite or finite, not an interiorization of the finite.

The Eastern spiritual gesture of radical interiorization is at once physically symbolized—and inwardly induced—by the main *yoga*

postures, by the suspension of breath, by the withdrawal of the senses from their objects (*pratyāhāra*); it is unsurpassably expressed by the statues of Lord Buddha; so do similarly the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic liturgy and prayers outwardly transcribe as well as impress on the soul the monotheistic, complementary 'protreptic' (forward-leading) inner orientation. Both are *mudrās* (sacred gestures) suggesting self-transcendence, there a self-transcending assimilation of cosmic rhythms by re-absorbing them into one's pre-cosmic Self; here a self-transcendence leading from within towards the supra-cosmic interiority of God or of one's neighbour loved as God's image; both convey the experience of a paradoxical omnipresence, there the paradox of an omnipresent 'blissful solitude' (*kaivalya*); here the paradox of faith and hope in an omnipresent, providential, yet increasingly unpredictable 'divinizing love'.

The ultimate goal of all Asiatic sacred gestures, symbols, myths, ascetic scriptures, and disciplines is summed up in Śaṅkarācārya's famous sentence: 'The liberated sage contemplates everything (including God as Person) as remaining within himself.' The ultimate trend of monotheistic social achievements, art, poetry, liturgy, mysticism, and holiness is summarized, as it were, in Christ's injunction: 'He who loses his soul (i.e. himself) unto Me, will find it.' The essence of Asiatic spiritualities is *en-stasis*, that of the biblical hemisphere is *ek-stasis*. Now, *en-stasis*, a word coined to translate *samādhi*, means literally 'abiding within', to wit, within one's non-dual, thou-less, trans-personal Self. *Ek-stasis*, literally 'abiding outside', means, in its classical sense, to have transferred one's innermost abode into the depth of the Absolute in Person, into God as an ultimate, unsurpassable Thou. The I-Thou relation is experienced in *enstasis* as a limiting duality surmounted by the knowledge of boundless Non-duality, in *ekstasis* as a deep polarity endlessly deepened and transfigured by infinite Love. *Enstasis* is transcendent pure interiority, impersonal self-transcendence, supreme identity; *ekstasis* is transcendent reciprocal interiority,

inter-personal self-transcendence, supreme communion.

2. *Supreme identity—supreme communion:
an antinomical polarity.*

I consider these two spiritual dimensions of mankind as ultimate and as the only two ultimately authentic; any attempt to reduce them to a third common denominator is vain spiritual obscurantism. If, on the contrary, I endeavoured to press the contrast, it is because, at the very moment in which the two extremes—pure and reciprocal interiority, identity and communion, Eastern Self and biblical Thou—reach the climax of their divergence, one discovers that they call for each other. Obviously, reciprocal interiority, far from excluding pure interiority, implies it; obviously, supreme identity can and should remain open to supreme communion, *enstasis* to *ekstasis*. Their deepest inner relation is not that of an alternative, but that of a transcendent spiritual tension, somehow comparable to the complementary tension relating the two poles of a magnetic field. The apparent contradiction culminates in an *antinomy*, i.e. in a paradox meant to remain insoluble as an intellectual problem—and to be solved only when approached as supra-rational mystery, an approach which transforms and unifies mind and heart by keeping them indefinitely open to the Infinite. Such a supreme interreligious tension can only develop its latent spiritual energies when it is not suppressed or ignored, as exclusivists think, nor reduced, as syncretists and exclusivists think alike.

If that is so, two questions arise, perhaps the two crucial questions of the spiritual encounter of East and West, namely:

1. Is our meeting with Eastern spiritualities, religions, and civilizations not a providential challenge for the extrovert of modern West to place at a deeper level of his consciousness the starting point of his relation to God, to the universe, and to man? And as both hemispheres have a common sacred ground, does that challenge not at the same time remind the

West of a forgotten or neglected dimension of its own tradition?

2. Is not, conversely, this growing spiritual and cultural interpenetration of the two hemispheres a providential challenge for Asia to revive in its turn undeveloped traditional energies, and thus to discover new or disregarded spiritual horizons, particularly those referring to

inter-personal communion at the highest level, a level where the *yogin*, in spite of the universal dimensions of his consciousness, remains ultimately solitary?

A tentative answer to these two questions requires a glimpse at the history of the encounter, first of the West with spiritual Asia, then of the East with the biblical West.



TAGORE'S RELIGION

BY SRI H. DAS GUPTA

Swami Vivekananda says: 'He is the great Poet, the ancient Poet; the whole universe is His poem, coming in verses and rhythms, written in infinite bliss.' In fact, God Himself is a Poet. It is from this Poet-God that all great poets draw their inspiration; it is this God whom they share in common with the religious men. The fountain-head of inspiration for both is the same. While the religious person drinks the nectar at the fountain, and stands in solemn silence, the blissful joy beaming forth in his face, the poet sees the grandeur of the eternal beauty and bursts forth in rapturous delight of rhythmical melody. The one realizes and enjoys himself; the other realizes and reveals to allure others to enjoy.

It is this realization of his divine self that makes a poet mystic. Like all great poets, Tagore is also a mystic. Tagore's mysticism, however, is shrouded in ineffable beauty. On this background of poetic gorgeousness, Tagore stands forth as the high priest of all religions—not the dogmatic religion of the fanatic or the doctrinaire, but the religion of the poet, the religion of truth and love. Says Tagore: 'The facts that cause despondence are mere mist, and when, through the mist, beauty breaks out in momentary gleams, we realize that

peace is true and not conflict, love is true and not hatred, and truth is the one, and not the disjointed multitude.'

'Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee!' 'He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust.' Again: 'Send me the love which is cool and pure like your rain that blesses the thirsty earth and fills the homely earthen jars.' 'Send me the love that would soak down into the centre of being, and from there would spread like the unseen sap through the branching tree of life, giving birth to fruits and flowers.' 'But I am thankful that my lot lies with the humble who suffer and bear the burden of power, and hide their faces and stifle their sobs in the dark.' 'No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delight of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.'

Tagore's early life was spent in an atmosphere of religion and art. In religion, his inspiration was derived from the Vedas and the Upaniṣads; but with him, the Upaniṣadic monism was diversified by the Vaiṣṇava dualism, which maintains the separateness of the divine and the human in order to show the process by which

they realize each other. The influence of these two trends of thought is manifest in Tagore's religious poetry throughout.

The teachings of the Upaniṣads, as has been pointed out by C. F. Andrews, were, 'above all, the source of his original thinking'; and surely, the sages of the Upaniṣads realized love. But the love-cult to which Tagore assuredly belongs was really started by Buddha. According to Tagore himself, the Upaniṣads and Buddhism generated two currents: one impersonal, preaching self-abnegation through discipline; and the other personal, preaching cultivation of sympathy for all creatures and devotion to infinite love. Tagore believes in this latter cult of love, which is a positive ideal, which in its greatness can accept suffering and transmute it into the profound peace of self-renunciation through the utmost sacrifice of love. This moral code of Buddhism leading to self-renunciation is commonly believed as extinction or *nirvāṇa*. But according to Tagore, 'the central element of love and beneficence is personality rousing the soul. Total annihilation is therefore inconceivable. To say that a philosophy of suicide can keep kindled in human hearts for centuries such fervour of self-sacrifice is to go against all the laws of sane philosophy'. 'Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our Master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever.'

Tagore has also been highly influenced by the neo-Vedāntic teachings. He believes in self-control and self-discipline, and this is as it should be. A poet should be well-disciplined, for true poetry comes to poets as revelation in meditation; and we cannot think of meditation apart from discipline. The Upaniṣads declare that God can be known by the practice of truth, self-discipline, and perfect knowledge. Self-discipline requires practice of truth, and it is through this self-discipline that a poet becomes a seer, and realizes the Absolute, like a *yogin*, in meditation. Herein lies the secret of Tagore's God vision, the infinite joy of which vibrates through most of his poems, and sends a thrill of joy in the heart of the reader—'that joy, which

is at the heart of creation, and continually expresses itself in fresh forms of beauty'.

The Upaniṣads lay great stress on *tapas*. *Tapas* literally means bodily mortification and asceticism. Tagore, however, believes in the non-essentiality of asceticism, and places more faith on thought and meditation. He begins his 'Voyage of Realization' saying: 'The sky is flushed with the dawn, and my path lies beautiful. . . . I start on my journey with empty hands and expectant heart. . . . Mine is not the red-brown dress of the traveller, and though there are dangers on the way, I have no fear in mind. The evening star will come out when my voyage is done, and the plaintive notes of the twilight melodies be struck up from the King's gateway.'

Here, Tagore has clearly identified himself with the Brahma idea of the non-essentiality of asceticism. For, as a special feature of the religion of the Brahma Samaj, it is claimed that 'It is not merely a religion of closet to be believed in and cherished by the individual in private, but it is a faith which permeates and moulds his entire being, transforming his home, his surroundings, his social relations'. And Tagore says: 'For man, the best opportunity for such realization is man's society.'

It is also to this neo-romantic movement in religion of the Brahma Samaj that Tagore owes much of his success. Hegel said that the romantic type is final, and that art, as a historic movement, culminates, after the romantic type, in religion and philosophy. This is amply proved by Tagore's literature, which is poetry, philosophy, and religion combined; and Tagore found the ground ready for the acceptance of his neo-romantic conceptions after the social awakening caused by the Brahma Samaj movement.

Lastly, Tagore has been greatly influenced in his writings by the sweet and sublime Vaiṣṇava literature of Bengal. It is said that the material of the Purāṇas lends itself with peculiar ease to neo-romantic treatment, and Tagore found this rich material in that treasure-house of in-

finite love and beauty, the love idylls of the Vaiṣṇava poets.

A poet, at his best, cannot help becoming dualistic in faith and philosophy; but in his highest emotional mood, he coalesces with the universe and the Supreme. This coalescence is the Vaiṣṇava 'yugal-milan', in which the creator covers the creature; the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti become one. The whole of existence is only the outcome of the interaction of the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti, or Consciousness and Nature. This is symbolized in the Vaiṣṇava literature in the infinite *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and it is from this lore that Tagore drew the inspiration of his love-cult in religion.

But how does this love-cult of Tagore compare with a metaphysical religion? A great poet is always a lover; and the love-cult which finds expression in infinite joy is essentially dualistic. Is Tagore then dualistic?

Unity imports duality, or rather multiplicity; unity in diversity—this is dualistic. This has been the essential characteristic of all great Indian poets. They could never afford to dismiss the universe as illusory. Like the Buddhists, they all realized that all this is an illusion, but said that in illusion is the real. Their conception of God, therefore, is what is called immanental conception—God as the indwelling presence in everything. They believe that 'those who know God, who is perceived by the heart, the soul, the mind, become immortal'. They know that a more intimate knowledge of God is attained when they know Him as the soul of our souls. They know also that 'the wise who see Him as dwelling in our soul, theirs is the abiding peace and not of anyone else'. They realize that 'he who sees all things in the self and the self in all things does not keep himself aloof for that reason'. Thus they come to be devotees; they come to be lovers. Theirs is a process of synthesis, which is said to form the basis of a movement which has for its aim the realization of universal humanity. 'It fills me', says Tagore, 'with great joy and high hope for the future humanity when I realize that there was a time in the remote

past when our poet-prophets stood under the lavish sun of an Indian sky and greeted the world with glad recognition of kindred. It was not an anthropomorphic hallucination. . . . The ancient seers felt in the serene depth of their mind that the same energy, which vibrates and passes into the endless forms of the world, manifests itself in our being as consciousness, and there is no break in unity.' Tagore, a true poet of India, had also realized this, for he says: 'The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.' Again: 'Thou hast made me known to friends whom I knew not. Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own. Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of the stranger.'

'To know it is to kill, and thus knowing, we kill ourselves and understand the cosmic life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks in tumultuous waves and flowers.' Here we have the image of a universal humanity, humanity embracing animals and plants, nay, all that is terrestrial and celestial. Biology has begun to prove that there is no sudden break between nature in general and human nature. Bud and blossom cannot be divided into two different categories. Every individual note is necessary to complete the symphony. This is Tagore's ideal.

The realization of universal humanity depends on faith. Tagore has said that constant practice of logic had weakened our natural instinct of faith. However, there cannot be any denial of the fact that faith begets love and love removes fear and suspicion, and that spiritual brotherhood is achieved as a forerunner of universal humanity. 'We want today', says Swami Vivekananda, 'that bright sun of intellectuality joined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful infinite heart of love and mercy. The union will give us the highest philosophy. Science and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends.' This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will

be for all times and for all peoples. This religion sanctioned by poetry, philosophy, and science will embrace in its fold not only human beings, but also plants and animals. And Tagore was an embodiment of this religion of universal humanity.

Unity in diversity is the central theme of Indian culture. Its motto is not disruption; it believes in the philosophy of 'live and let live'; and India cannot prove false to her traditions. It is thus that Tagore, true to our traditions, has worked out his sublime religion of cosmic unity and universal humanity. 'Religion', for Swami Vivekananda, says Romain Rolland, 'is synonymous with universalism of the spirit.' Such has also been the experience of Tagore's lifelong *sādhanā*; and he professes this universalism as his religion. This 'poet's religion', as he himself has said, 'has no doctrine or injunction; and unlike dogmatic religion, it does not answer all doubts; it is fluid like the atmosphere. It never undertakes to lead anybody anywhere to any solid conclusions; yet it reveals endless spheres of light, because it has no walls round itself'.

The immensity of a poet's presage is great; it is greater when the poet is a mystic; and Tagore was a mystic. He realized his self and depicted it in unsurpassable grandeur and beauty. He has painted it in the variegated colour of the rainbow; he has shaded it with

twilight sunbeam; he has washed it in mellow moonlight; he has given it a harp and tuned it with the morning air; he has adorned it with laurels and studded it with dew-drops; he has enthroned it on the lotus; he has enshrined it in an alabaster temple; and he has kindled the muse's flame at its golden altar. On the expanding beach the temple stands, under the canopy of the azure sky, wrapped in fog; the ripples carry forth its reflection over the vast expanse of water covering the globe. There the poet stands amazed, looking at his own image; there he stands as the high priest of all religions, singing in sweet and solemn melody:

One cosmic brotherhood,
 One universal good,
 One source, one sway,
 One law beholding us,
 One purpose moulding us,
 One life enfolding us,
 In love always.
 Anger, resentment, hate,
 Long made us desolate;
 Their reign is done.
 Race, colour, creed, and caste
 Fade in the dreamy past.
 Man wakes to learn at last,
 All life is One.

This is Tagore's religion.

THE PLACE OF BHAKTI IN MYSTICISM

BY SRI G. V. TULPULÉ

In his article on 'Bhakti and Mysticism' published in the October 1960 issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, Sri Braj Bihari Nigam writes: 'Though Ranade, in his enthusiasm, considers every system to be mysticism of one type or the other, still *bhakti-yoga* cannot be considered so, chiefly because of the following reasons.' He has advanced eight reasons to

support his contention. These we shall examine later. It is not quite clear from the article if Sri Nigam has fully grasped the end or goal of mysticism and the means advocated by it to achieve this end. Unless these two points are properly understood, it would not be possible to interpret correctly the statements of Ranade quoted by Sri Nigam in his article.

According to Dr. Ranade, realization of God is the goal of a mystic and the true ideal of humanity. 'Mysticism implies a silent enjoyment of God, . . . the highest attitude, of which a man is capable, viz. a restful loving contemplation of God.'¹ All his works are written to instil this ideal, this value, in the minds of his readers; and so, it is unnecessary to give any more quotations on this point.

What is the means or *sādhanā* for achieving this ideal? He has devoted whole chapters in his works to give the details of this *sādhanā*; but it will be sufficient for our purpose if we study his thoughts on 'Mystical Method of Meditation' in *The Bhagavadgītā as a Philosophy of God-realization*. But before coming to it, we have to remember that, according to Dr. Ranade, the intellect, feeling, or will—the three faculties of man which are generally known to all—are not able to have the experience of God. God cannot be reached by the help of any of them. There is one more faculty, intuition, which alone can take us into the realm of the ultimate Reality, of God. This faculty all possess, but few use. It is the business of an aspirant to develop this faculty by means of spiritual *sādhanā*.

The mystical method of meditation means the method of meditation by which one can realize God, can have direct, immediate apprehension of God, not mere intellectual understanding of Him. It consists of meditation by means of the name of God or *nāma-smaraṇa*. But this name has to be received from a *guru* who has realized his identity with God. Such a name alone has the power to develop the intuition of the aspirant. 'It is viable name, *sabīja* name, or may also be called laden or significant name. It must have the highest potentiality of spiritual energy. . . . It is only the name which an aspirant may receive from his spiritual teacher, who has reached the heights of spiritual experience, which is of any avail, which fructifies.'²

After this preliminary discussion, we proceed

to the method of meditation, as outlined in *The Bhagavadgītā as a Philosophy of God-realization*. Dr. Ranade first deals with the physiological elements in it—*āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dṛṣṭi* or fixing of the eyes—and points out that these are merely aids to concentration, and cannot by themselves lead to spiritual realization.³

Then he proceeds to the psycho-ethical element, which is rather important. This element consists of (1) sacrifice of the objects of senses in the senses, of the senses in the breath, of the breath in the mind, and of the mind in the *Ātman*; (2) conquest of *kāma* or lust, the chief enemy; and (3) concentration. Then follows the devotional element. Even though we may seem to have conquered the senses and the mind, the desire for sensual enjoyment remains, which must be destroyed; and this cannot be done without the previous vision of God.

The psycho-ethical elements are merely negative ones. 'What is the use of merely looking at the tip of the nose, or even controlling breath or trying to purge our mind of all sensual and sexual ideas? Unless we feel an earnest devotion to God, i.e. *bhāva* or *bhakti*, nothing would be of any avail whatsoever.'⁴ 'For successful devotional meditation, . . . we should be inspired with one-pointed devotion towards God. We must practise meditation without sacrificing a single moment. This must be done continuously day to day, month to month, year to year—to the very end of our life.'⁵ 'We must not, however, fail to note that *bhāva* or *bhakti*, an unexplained and inexplicable love of God, is the fundamental requirement. . . . Unless there is the element of surrender in our devotion, and unless we resign ourselves completely to the power and will of God, no great achievement in spiritual life is possible. It is only through one-pointed devotion to God that one may be able to know Him, see Him, and enter Him.'⁶ And yet, 'the last element necessary for the success of our spiritual meditation is the

³ See *The Bhagavadgītā as a Philosophy of God-realization*, pp. 249-51.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 254-55.

¹ *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, p. 1.

² *Pathway to God in Hindi Literature*, pp. 347-48.

grace of God. It is not simply by performing our devotional acts that we may be able to achieve our highest goal. God must be moved, and it is only when He is moved that He will move the world by His grace. . . . God crowns the aspirants' efforts with the gifts of His blessings.'

After reading all this, will not everyone be convinced that Ranade's *sādhanā*, which consists of one-pointed devotion, is supreme *bhakti-yoga*, with God-realization as its consummation? If this is not *bhakti*, we fail to understand what else it is.

What is the exact significance of classifying mysticism into different types, as Ranade has done? To understand it, we have to see what he says about the relation between the different faculties of man, namely, intellect, feeling, and will, from which arise the three paths of *jñāna*, *karma*, and *bhakti*, and also their relation to intuition, the faculty of God-realization. 'Intuition,' says Ranade, 'far from contradicting intellect, feeling, or will, does penetrate and lie at the back of them all. Intuition will not deny to mysticism a title to philosophy if intellect requires it. As it connotes a determinative effort towards the acquisition of Reality, it requires a definite, prolonged, and continuous exercise of the will. As feeling brings the subject and the object into more intimate contact than any other psychological process, it also becomes a vital part of the process of realization. Thus, it seems that intelligence, feeling, and will are all necessary in the case of the mystical endeavour.'⁷ But there are temperamental differences, and though all these faculties are necessary for mystical life, one of them predominates, and the others are less predominant, according to temperaments. The different types of mysticism arise on account of these temperamental differences. Otherwise, mysticism is one and uniform in essentials. Regarding *bhakti* particularly, or a life of emotions, Ranade is explicit that it is almost a *sine qua non* of mystical experience: 'No mystical experience is possible unless we have a plenitude of finer

emotions, all turned to the experience of God. A mystical life, far from being unemotional, is supremely emotional; only the emotions ought to be exercised and kept under the control of the intellect.'⁸

The incentives to spiritual life, as expounded by Ranade, have also a bearing on his classification of mystics. These are philosophical, moral, and physiological incentives; some are prompted to spiritual life, because they want to know the nature of the Self, of the world, and of God, and to solve the question as to the purpose and consummation of human life. This is the philosophical incentive, and these seekers are philosophic mystics. Some turn to God to be free from a life of sin; this is the moral incentive. But many are drawn to God for being freed from the miseries of life. Here, mysticism or spiritual life is 'brought to the market-place'. These different incentives also spring from the three faculties of man—intellect, will, and feeling. Whatever be the nature of the initial incentive in the process of spiritual *sādhanā*, all these faculties have to play their part and help in the development of intuition. We shall state, in Ranade's own words, how these faculties, on the one hand, and metaphysics, morality, and mysticism, on the other, are inseparable from each other. 'If we take into account the integrity of man's consciousness as a whole, it would seem absolutely impossible, in the interest of the highest development of which man's consciousness is capable, to sunder the intellectual from the moral, and the moral from the mystical elements. Intelligence without the moral backbone might only degenerate into the cleverest forms of chicanery; and a mystic without morality, if such a one were possible, might only be a hideous creature, who is a blot on the spiritual evolution of man. And, again, just as morality, to be ratiocinative, must be finely linked to the intellect, similarly, for its consummation, it must end in the mystical attitude, which alone is the goal and end of human life. In short, metaphysics, morality, and mysticism are as inseparable from

⁷ *Pathway to God in Hindi Literature*, p. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

each other, in the interest of the highest spiritual life of man, as intellect, will, and emotion are inseparable for his highest psychological development.⁹ It is hardly necessary to repeat that the mystic attitude includes in it one-pointed, supreme love for God or *bhakti*. Here is a true synthesis of *jñāna*, *karma*, and *bhakti*.

Ranade describes how the Upaniṣadic seers progressed from metaphysics to mysticism through ethics: 'What is Real; what is the Ātman; what intellectual construction could be made about it? An attempt to solve this problem would lead the Upaniṣadic philosopher into the very heart of metaphysics, and when a certain intellectual solution was arrived at, the next problem would be how practically to attain to that knowledge, what should be the norm of conduct, following which one may hope to "appropriate the Godhead". As the culmination of this practical endeavour would come the mystical attitude, which would complete the moral endeavour, which without it would be like the "Hamlet with Hamlet out".'¹⁰ To seek unity in diversity, to reconcile different points of view by tracing the essential factor of unity in them, is the foundation of Ranade's philosophy. According to him, the function of philosophy is not to destroy and cut asunder, but to construct, reconcile, and give each its proper place. About the different schools of Vedānta—monism, quasi-monism, and dualism—he says: 'The reconciliation of the different schools comes only through mystical experience. It is only in mystical experience that each school and each doctrine will have its own appointed place and level.'¹¹ Thus, there are no varieties in mysticism, as far as its goal or end (God-realization) is concerned, and also in the essentials of the *sādhana* to achieve that end. The classification of mystics is based on less essential factors, arising out of the diversity of temperaments of individuals. Ranade has not forced any system into the service of mysticism,

dogmatically. The integrity of man's consciousness is the firm foundation of this unity in diversity.

After this rather lengthy general discussion on Ranade's philosophy of mysticism, it would be desirable to consider the specific arguments of Sri Nigam, which maintain that *bhakti* is quite different from mysticism.

(1) 'Everyone is a mystic of one type or the other according to Ranade, because everyone believed in "seeing God face to face" by means of one faculty or the other', says Sri Nigam with regard to the ancient *ācāryas*, saints, and seers of India. Ranade does not believe that God can be seen face to face by any faculty other than intuition. As pointed out above, God can be seen only by the faculty of intuition, which is developed chiefly through one-pointed devotion, with help from the intellect and exercise of the will. Śaṅkara was a philosophic mystic, with predominance of intellect and logic. He did not achieve realization through the intellect alone. He was a great *bhakta* also, as his devotional hymns fully testify. To Ranade, all those who have the ineffable and intuitive experience of God are mystics. That is the criterion for a mystic. Those who do not satisfy this criterion are not mystics, whatever path they might follow.

(2) If Baron Hugel and Plotinus hold the view that mystic experience can be attained without *bhakti*, they are responsible for their opinion. According to Ranade, no mystic experience is possible without *bhakti*.

(3) Sri Nigam admits: '*Bhakti*, no doubt, gives ineffable experience of God, but it is more vivid.' This is a very interesting point. But he does not give extracts, containing separate descriptions of experiences of a *bhakta* and a mystic, to enable the reader to compare them in point of vividness. Ranade makes no such difference. To him, all ineffable and intuitive experience is mystic. So, all that we can do here is to quote a few descriptions of experiences of saints from Ranade's books and leave the reader to judge for himself if they lack the quality of vividness. Let us begin with the

⁹ *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishadic Philosophy*, pp. 287-88.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

Upaniṣads: 'The golden-coloured being who can be seen in the sun, with golden moustaches, golden hair, and who shines like gold up to his very toes.' 'The mystic sees his own form in a flood of supreme light, arising from within himself, which, indeed, constitutes the realization of the immortal and fearless Ātman.'¹² Jñāneśvara says: 'Even the sun's light is inferior to the Ātman. In God, indeed, there is neither day nor night. Beyond all duality, Jñāneśvara has seen the Eye, and nothing stands in comparison to it.' 'I have been satiated by the enjoyment of Divine experience, and I have been nodding from time after time. I have lost all desires; I am careless of my body. "I and thou" has disappeared from me. I became merged in God, and the bliss was witnessed by all.'¹³ 'Jñāneśvara sees the mirror of form without form. The seer vanishes. Everywhere God is present. There is neither any rising nor any setting of God. God alone is, and He enjoys His own happiness in His intuitive experience.'¹⁴

Here are the experiences of Kabīr: '*Amiras* incessantly oozes in the brain, and there are musical sounds without musical instruments. Lotus blossoms without a lake, and swans play sportively on it. There is moonlight without the moon, and swans can be seen everywhere. The tenth door has been opened, and I meditate on the invisible Puruṣa there.' Now, look at the sublime, auspicious effects of these experiences: 'Terrific death is afraid to come near us; . . . lust, anger, arrogance, and avarice must cease. Also, all desires, all actions, all illusions, all sins, and all diseases must disappear. When such a state is reached, true immortality is attained.'¹⁵ Śivaliṅgavva, a great Kannada woman-saint of modern times, tells us: 'I saw an assembly of saints; I was able to fully visualise Lord Śiva. Vaikuṅṭha itself appeared to have descended upon earth for him. The assembly was all lit up with stars, moving in an

all-pervading crimson dust. The great Śeṣa appeared in designs of various colours—blue, green, yellow, red, each of them being the unique form of God with a beauty that baffles description. How easy it is to find access to God! What is wanted is only a sincere uprising of devotion in the heart; when the door of the heart is opened and God is visualized, there bursts forth the supremely reverberating sound, in which I am drowned.'¹⁶ Again, these experiences are not momentary, like flashes of lightning. There is continuity or permanence in them. They pervade all the four states of consciousness. They are present at all times and in all directions. There is daily growth in them. They will never desert us.¹⁷ As said above, let the reader judge for himself if these experiences are not supremely vivid and real; whether bliss, immortality, destruction of all sins and misery can ever be achieved except as a result of the supernal, luminous, permanent, and vivid experience of the ultimate Reality. This experience is so real and compelling that the physical world appears to be unreal on attaining it; the world vanishes. 'The spiritual sun makes the phenomenal world disappear.'¹⁸ 'The vision of the (Divine) Eye before the eye implies the destruction of the sight of the world.'¹⁹

So far about the vividness of experience. Next, Sri Nigam points out that *bhakti* is of various types and admits the possibility of a greater number of people in its fold. As shown above, *bhakti* is the most fundamental factor in *sādhanā*, and so all the varieties of *bhakti* can be included in mysticism as well. Again, the variety in *bhakti* is only apparent. Beginners on the path may use the different types, according to their temperaments, to develop their attachment to God. In the end, however, they must culminate in one-pointed, all-consuming love for God. *Vātsalya*, *sakhya*, *sevā*, cannot each separately lead to the goal. The highest *bhakti* transcends all these. Even ordinary

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46.

¹³ *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, pp. 172-74.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-75.

¹⁵ *Pathway to God in Hindi Literature*, p. 226.

¹⁶ *Pathway to God in Kannada Literature*, p. 258.

¹⁷ See *The Bhagavadgītā as a Philosophy of God-realization*, pp. 232-33.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁹ *Pathway to God in Kannada Literature*, p. 283.

bhaktas exhibit elements of more types than one, *sakhya* and *sevā*, or *vātsalya* and *sevā*. If we consider the ninefold division of *bhakti*, almost every *bhakta* practises all these, more or less. The types are not watertight. So, mysticism is not of the so-called fixed mould. It makes room for all types of *bhaktas*. Coming to Miss Underhill's opinion on mysticism, Sri Nigam is constrained to admit that the description may, to a great extent, be applicable to *bhakti-yoga*. But a remark of Miss Underhill creates some doubt in his mind, whether she would take *bhakti* to be mystic. She says: 'Indian mysticism founds its external system almost wholly on (1) asceticism, the domination of senses, and (2) the deliberate practice of self-hypnotization.' These remarks are utterly incorrect, and deserve no notice. Granting for argument's sake that they are correct, why should they affect Miss Underhill's own conception of mysticism in general and create a doubt whether she would include *bhakti* in it? The above remarks would place Indian mysticism on a lower level, only if they were true. After all this discussion, it is hardly necessary to give a reply to the eight reasons advanced by Sri Nigam showing that *bhakti* is not mysticism. But as he attaches so much importance to them, they will be briefly examined seriatim.

(1) 'Bhakti is an emotionally predominated—enlightened—spiritual activity.' So is mysticism, as one-pointed love for God and blissful and loving contemplation of God in every breath are the essence of its *sādhanā*.

(2) 'No *sāyujya-mukti* is admitted in *bhakti*. It is based on the philosophy of dualism.' This is a very narrow, sectarian view of *bhakti*. Great devotees have declared unequivocally that, through *bhakti*, they attained *sāyujya-mukti*. They found no difficulty in reconciling theism, pantheism, *bhakti*, and Advaita. Ranade says: 'Rāmānuja and Madhva could not understand how theism and pantheism could be reconciled in mysticism. It is just this reconciling tendency of mysticism which has been lost sight of by the dogmatic theories about theism

and pantheism.'²⁰ In the face of the experience of a very large number of eminent saints that they reached *sāyujya-mukti* through *bhakti*, it cannot be limited to the philosophy of dualism only.

(3) This applies to mysticism also, with the difference that *ultimately* the individual self is unreal. For reasons given in (2) above, there is no incompatibility between *bhakti* and the theory of the ultimate unreality of the *jīva*, or, in other words, between *bhakti* and Advaita.

(4) 'Bhakti offers several paths to suit the varying temperaments of the devotees.' This point has been fully discussed while dealing with the different types of *bhakti*.

(5) It is difficult to understand as to what Sri Nigam wants to prove by this argument. There is a vast literature on mysticism, too, where saints have described their spiritual experiences and their effects, and it must be remembered that these form the foundation of all true philosophy.

(6) This applies to mysticism also, with the difference that intuition must lie at the back of the intellect, will, and feeling.

(7) 'Bhakti admits the worship of a personal God, so that it offers an easy way of concentration.' Personal and impersonal God is a very large question. Only those who have realized God are entitled to say whether He is *saguṇa*, or *nirguṇa*, or both. It is, however, important to remember that 'as he progresses, a saint acquires new experiences and, in consonance with these experiences, formulates his doctrine of God.' Nāmadeva, Tukārāma, and Purandara-dāsa, all started with devotion to a personal God. But, ultimately, they established pantheistic unification of the personal and the impersonal God, on account of their mystical experiences. 'The impersonal shines forth as the personal.' There is no contradiction between mysticism and *saguṇa* worship. 'Mysticism does not connote the denial of *bhakti*, but the fulfilment of it.' Ultimately, a devotee must rise to

²⁰ *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, p. 15.

the experience of the all-pervading, immanent, and transcendent Godhead.

(8) 'Morality is the corner-stone of *bhakti*.' Is it suggested by this that mysticism is amoral? 'True life of mysticism teaches a full-fledged morality in the individual and a life of general good to the world.'²¹ 'Unless a man has stopped from doing wrong, unless he has entirely composed himself, it may not be possible for him to reach the Self.'²² Morality is the very

²¹ *Pathway to God in Hindi Literature*, p. 5.

²² *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishadic Philosophy*, p. 328.

foundation of mysticism, and no realization of God is possible without it.

It will thus be seen that intense *bhakti* is an essential element in mystic *sādhanā*. *Bhakti* is included in it, and no aspect of *bhakti* is objected to by mysticism, provided the aspirant ultimately transcends them and realizes the unitive experience. Every mystic is a *bhakta*, and every *bhakta*, who aims at the ineffable and intuitive experience of God (*anubhava*), is a mystic. Without that aim, the words '*bhakti*' and '*bhakta*' hardly deserve these great and sanctified titles. As it has been rightly said: 'Devotion without *anubhava* will be blind.'



HAZRAT ABDUL QADIR JILANI

BY DR. M. HAFIZ SYED

Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani was the son of Hazrat Abu Saleh, who had an excellent reputation as a literary man of no mean order and as an orator. He traced his descent to Hazrat Imam Hasan. His mother's ancestor was Imam Jafar Saleh. Thus, on both the sides, his parents were very well connected with spiritual people. Abdul Qadir was born on the eleventh of Rabiul-Sani, the fourth Arabic month, in the year 470 Hijri in Jilan, Iran. From his early age, he showed signs of moral and spiritual greatness. At the time of his birth, the room in which he was born was filled with light and sweet scent.

It is admitted on all hands by contemporary historians that Abdul Qadir was a born saint. One proof of his inborn piety was his utmost regard for religious observances. As a child of five months old, he refused to suck his mother's milk during the month of Ramazan (fasting). This extraordinary incident is borne testimony to by a number of historical chroniclers, and should not be taken as a legend or a myth.

HIS EDUCATION

At the age of six, his own mother taught him the holy *Quran* and some theological books dealing with daily religious observances. After this preliminary education at home, he was admitted into a local seminary, where he completed the first part of his education. Abdul Qadir relates a curious personal experience of his boyhood. He says that, while he was playing with his fellow-students, he heard an invisible voice, which accosted him in these words: 'Abdul Qadir, I have not sent you to spend your time in play and pastime. You have to come to me.' This extraordinary incident frightened him, and he ran up to his mother, who consoled him and embraced him as a promising young man on whom God's grace had descended.

In the year 488 Hijri, when he came of age at eighteen, he was advised to proceed to Baghdad to complete his education. His mother gave her permission and escorted him as far as the first caravan station. The parting message

she gave him was: 'Abdul Qadir, come what may, under no circumstance you should tell a lie.' He took a vow to obey his mother's admonition and went along with the caravan. After a few stoppages, they were attacked by bandits. The head of these robbers was one Ahmad Alafi, a brave young man, under whose order the travellers' kits were searched. When Abdul Qadir's turn came to enquire of his belongings, he unhesitatingly and fearlessly confessed that his mother, at the parting time, had stitched forty gold coins inside his garment. The bandits were greatly amazed at his confession, which impressed them so deeply that they decided to return all that they had taken from the caravan, and, thenceforth, they resolved to cease from the evil ways and to lead a normal life of ordinary citizens. This was the first moral triumph of Abdul Qadir's spiritual life, which blossomed during the course of his momentous life.

When the caravan brought him to Baghdad, he got himself admitted into Madarsai Nizamia, which had a unique distinction of being the greatest seminary of its time during the heyday of Islam. In a few years' time, he completed his education, and was looked upon as one of the greatest exponents of Islamic theology and exegesis.

SPIRITUAL REALIZATION

Having attained the highest degree of scholarship in various branches of learning in vogue in those days, he turned his attention wholeheartedly towards spiritual realization. He was duly initiated by his spiritual teacher Abu Said Fakhravi, and under his guidance, he proceeded on the path of renunciation, asceticism, and intense devotion to God. He underwent the strictest discipline and occupied himself with single-minded devotion to the pursuit of the higher purpose in life.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

His natural disposition was towards moral and spiritual pursuits. By nature, he was very courteous, sweet, and considerate to everybody.

He was endowed with a loving heart, and treated high and low, rich and poor alike. He never looked upon anyone as an inferior being. Every one was impressed by his humility, sincerity, and uprightness. He was ever solicitous about poor people's welfare, and never spared himself in serving them. He always responded to the call of needy people, whom he helped generously. He often visited disabled and sickly persons.

He was quite contented with all that he had, and deliberately avoided cultivating the acquaintance of rich people; and he never accepted any gifts offered by wealthy people. On a number of occasions, some rich and propertied people offered to reserve for him good portions of their money and income, but he invariably declined to accept them. His means of livelihood was trade. During winter season, he bought and sold warm clothing and made good profit. Throughout the whole night, at stated times, he was deeply and uninterruptedly devoted to the worship of God, and never granted an interview to anybody, including the Caliph of Baghdad. Although he was capable of showing miracles, yet he, generally speaking, refrained from it, and advised his people to apply themselves to the acquisition of pure spirituality, rather than what is popularly called *siddhi*.

HIS TEACHINGS

He invariably emphasized the need of self-surrender to the will of God. He was of opinion that complete resignation to the will of God was just like a ball which moved to and fro by the stroke of a bat, or like a dead body in the hands of one who bathes it before it is buried. This virtue of self-surrender grants to man God's highest grace, and he feels that he has no will of his own separate from God's. This is the only and the best way to the realization of God, as enjoined by him.

Once, Hazrat Tahir Bin Said enquired of Saint Abdul Qadir as to what was the right method of attaining union with God. The reply given by him was at once significant and deep. He is reported to have remarked that an as-

pirant should free his mind of all earthly objects and their desires, and should fill his heart and mind with God and His attributes. He should discharge the duties that fall to his lot conscientiously and devote all his time to divine contemplation. He further advised that an aspirant should efface from his heart even the least desire that comes into it. His one dominating desire should be to do the will of God, whom he should love whole-heartedly.

He advised his followers in these words: The world is a perishable inn, where people come and go. There is no stability in any of its work. Your life, your comfort, your wealth and possession are all perishable and transitory. Those who occupy themselves with the passing sense pleasures, in preference to the attainment of divine wisdom, are never happy and contented. Devoted people should never seek any assistance from wealthy people.

Once, as chronicled by Obaid Ibn-Asim on 31st Shawwal 554 A.H., it is said that, when he presented himself to the Sheikh, he found him occupied with the reading of the *Quran*. When he finished it, he put a question to the Sheikh about his views on resignation and surrender. The reply given to him was in these words: It is your duty to bear in mind three things, the first of which is to the effect that gain and loss come from God Himself. Whatever He has predestined in the form of livelihood, or gain and prosperity, or loss and hardship, all those are bound to come to you. Further, he said that God was the supreme Lord of all the world. He is great, glorious, and pure. He is the creator of the whole world. It is He who is sustaining the whole world. Whatever exists both in the East and the West owes its existence to Him. He orders whatever He wants, and there is none who can repudiate Him. Therefore, O my son, whatever question you have to ask, you put it to Allah, and whenever you seek any help, do it from Him. No one can do anything without God's will and order. If the whole world goes against you, no one can ever harm you contrary to the divine will.

Remember, O my son, the Creator has control over thee. He keeps you in any way He likes. It is incumbent upon you to do the bidding of your Lord. God is more gracious and helpful than your own parents. It is your duty to prostrate yourself before God, and never fail to tread the path pointed out by Him.

The spiritual teacher should have five qualities in him: (1) One who does not possess any one of them may be treated as *dajjal* (that is, he is not genuine). (2) The *pir* (teacher) should have full knowledge of the Shariat of Islam, and should have enough knowledge of divine wisdom. (3) He must treat his visitors nicely and with a broad smile, and should ever be ready to entertain travellers. (4) He should treat poor and indigent people with utmost consideration and humility. (5) He should have enough spiritual advancement to be able to teach and guide his disciples, and his character should be free from jealousy, hypocrisy, greed, self-complacency, indifference, and love of luxury.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir said: 'I do not consider anything better than feeding the poor and general public and treating high and low alike. If I ever become the lord of the whole world, I would give away all my property in charity to the needy and deserving people. I do not keep any money with me. I receive money of different values from morning till evening, and not a trace of it remains in my house. Everything is distributed to the poor.'

One who merges his consciousness in the Divine, and frees his heart and mind from things other than God, may be considered a true fakir. Such a person earns the goodwill of God.

One who seeks assistance from a being other than God has failed to understand the true nature, glory, and grace of God. A devout Muslim's first duty is to seek the right way of livelihood, and not pass his time in idleness. No one can set his will against God's will, because He is all-powerful, and controls the outer as well as the inner world.

HIS DEATH

It was on the 4th of Rabiul-Sani 561 A.H. that he became indisposed. He was down with very high fever for one week, and attained union with God on the 11th of the same month. Just an hour before his passing

away, he advised his son Abdul Wahab not to fear anyone except God, and to keep firm control over the senses. He who surrenders himself completely to God, to him, everything in this world becomes easy of attainment.



NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The charge of dogmatism brought against the philosophical systems of India, especially against Vedānta, has been ably countered in her thoughtful article 'Is Vedānta Dogmatic?' by Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil., Principal, Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta. ...

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Jayantī was observed on the 1st of this month. In connection with this sacred occasion, we are happy to include in the present issue an article on 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His Divine Gospel' by Swami Bhaktananda, of the Rama-krishna Order. ...

'The Spiritual Encounter of East and West' is the text of a lecture delivered by Dr. Jacques Albert Cuttat, Swiss Ambassador in India, at the Max Müller Bhavan, New Delhi, in April last. We are deeply thankful to Dr. Cuttat for kindly sending this script for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata*, which will be presented to our readers in three instalments. The complete text of the address has already been printed in the weekly publication *Thought*. ...

'Tagore's Religion' is by Sri H. Das Gupta, of Humanities Department, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, West Bengal. ...

The October 1960 issue of *Prabuddha Bharata* published an article by Sri Braj Bihari Nigam entitled 'Bhakti and Mysticism', in which the writer maintained that 'Though Ranade, in his enthusiasm, considers every system to be mysticism of one type or the other, still *bhakti-yoga* cannot be considered so'. The article on 'The Place of Bhakti in Mysticism' by Sri G. V. Tulpule, M.A., formerly Deputy Postmaster-General of Bombay, included in this issue, refutes Sri Nigam's contention, with profuse quotations from Ranade's works, shows that intense *bhakti* is an essential element in mysticism, and concludes that 'every mystic is a *bhakta*, and every *bhakta*, who aims at the ineffable and intuitive experience of God (*anubhava*), is a mystic'. ...

A brief account of the life and teachings of 'Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani' is given in the article by Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., the well-known scholar of Allahabad.



REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT AND THOUGHT. BY V. P. S. RAGHUVANSHI. *Published by Lakshmi Narayan Agarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra. 1959. Pages 335+22. Price Rs.10.*

No other event in the recent history of India could rouse so much of interest and curiosity as the partition of our country in the year 1947, which led to the creation of two independent states. It is an exceedingly difficult task, indeed, to endeavour to examine the numerous historical events which could be held responsible for the vivisection of the country, especially when one perceives a mystifying tangle of diverse political, economic, and sociological offshoots intertwined into an awful mess and not lending themselves to a neat and straight causal analysis. Dr. Raghuvanshi has done an admirably good job in culling out and marshalling a mass of data spread over a hundred years—ever since our 'first war of independence' in the year 1857—and presenting the events in a chronological order, tracing the sequence of events leading to the creation of Pakistan.

Nationalism is an elusive concept. What it covers and what it does not is extremely hard to define. There are people who believe even today that India is a multi-national state. There are others who profess that the boundaries of the state and those of the nation must necessarily coincide; as such, India is as much a single nation as a single state. Prior to the partition of the country, there raged a good deal of controversy regarding India being a single nation or two nations brought together under a single state by force by the alien rulers. Dr. Raghuvanshi deals with the history of the principal political party—the Congress—and its development in relation to the policy of the British. Nationalism of those days was primarily negative. To be anti-British was supposed to be a mark of nationalism—this was the concept at least with the common people. The story narrated by the author regarding the currents and cross-currents of thought which shaped the policy of the Congress from time to time is quite enchanting. It is clear that big personalities have played a decisive role in bringing about a swing of public opinion from liberalism to extremism, and from constitutional, peaceful agitation to organized violence against the British. He brings the story to a close after dealing with the role of I. N. A., the Labour Party in Britain, and eventually the creation of Pakistan. In addition, there is a good discussion about Gandhism and the Gandhian era.

At the present juncture in the history of India, when fissiparous tendencies seem to be running wild,

one could do no better than have a close look at the revised edition of Dr. Raghuvanshi's book, with a view to diagnosing the problems of Indian nationalism, which could no longer afford to be merely negative as in the past. 'Once bitten twice shy' is the proverb. We as a nation have been bitten a thousand times in our history, and yet goodness knows where our shyness is to be seen! Men like Dr. Raghuvanshi must remind us, again and again, as to what lessons we ought to draw from the history of our nationalist movement.

H. G. KULKARNI

THE DIVINE AWAKENER. BY SWAMI RAJESWARANANDA. *Published by Sevasramam (Regd.), Eesanya Road, Tiruvannamalai, South India. 1960. Pages xvi+474. Price Rs. 5.50 nP.*

The book under review is now in its third edition, which is ample proof of its popularity. The author, who is an erudite scholar, edits two journals, and the present book consists of his editorials written on matters spiritual in one of these journals (*The Call Divine*, dedicated to Sri Ramana Maharshi). As the Introduction says: 'This book is a ramble in the realms of universal ethics, perennial philosophy, and fundamental religion.'

The author has the rare gift of presenting abstruse subjects in a convincing and graceful manner to the modern mind. His hints on a glimpse of the path to 'Life Divine' are really interesting: 'The innermost Self, the substratum for the outer conditions of life, has to express Itself by turning all carbon into diamond. Just try to deal with your thoughts and actions as an analytic and synthetic chemist deals with metals and acids. Thereby you notice that there are both the dissolving and cementing agents lying latent in them. Evade, ignore, and transcend them, or just try to meet the negative with the positive, lust with love, anger with compassion, vanity with judgement, greed with desirelessness, attachment with renunciation, delusion with intuition, and darkness with light.' His assessment of 'Education' is no less arresting: 'Education is no scraps of information or inert ideas merely received into the mind without any utility. . . . Self-education or self-knowledge is . . . the king of all educations and the only education worth its name. . . . Self-education enables you to realize the wisdom of the supreme Self within everyone.'

The moral tone of the book ringing throughout with sincerity leaves a lasting impress on the reader's mind.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

FROM LOG CABIN TO WHITE HOUSE.
CONDENSED BY R. K. DALAL (from the well-known book by W. M. Thayer). *Published by the Author, 'Pallav', Garden Colony, Andheri, Bombay. Pages 84. Freely distributed.*

This brilliant summary of the fascinating life story of an American President is a welcome addition to healthy juvenile literature. James, the hero—a self-made man through and through—stands for all that is best in human life. From a poor farm boy, he rose to be the President of the U.S.A. by sheer honesty, integrity, and perseverance. To quote our author: 'A great soul was James Garfield—a beacon light for generations to come—upholding the eternal virtues of life, by practising these virtues diligently, faithfully, and prayerfully in his life, keeping God as his witness.' He was an 'uncompromising foe of slavery'. A member of the Republican Party, James Abram Garfield became the twentieth President for a few months only, and died a martyr's death in September 1881.

The child's pliant mind should be impressed with the ideals of noble lives, which may nourish and make it strong enough to face the vicissitudes of adult life. Just as a sapling needs protection against the ravages of cattle etc., so also children need careful tending till they come of age to withstand the onslaught of reactionary forces with the aid of a strong and well-directed will. But we do the contrary. We expose them to the wiles of pseudo-modernism, and the result is anything but encouraging. It is yet time that, instead of only thrillers, horrid crime stories, and morbid films, we provide them with something really nourishing and instructive.

Modern leaders also have something to learn from the hero of our book, who 'never failed to practise himself what he preached'. Once, when pressed for accepting an office, James said: 'I shall not lift my finger for the office. I have never sought an office yet, except that of janitor at Hiram Institute. If the people want me, they will elect me, when the legislature assembled.' Ultimately, he had to yield, but he remarked: 'Though it may perhaps seem a little egotistical to say it, I yet desire still more the approbation of one person, and his name is Garfield. He is the only man that I am compelled to sleep with, and eat with and live with and die with, and if I could not have his approbation, I should have a bad companionship.' Do not all these go to remind us of the dedicated life of Gandhiji?

There are only a few printing mistakes in the book—Garfield has all along been mis-spelt as Garefield. This brochure is a sparkling example of Sri Dalal's flair for this sort of literary work. We expect from him some more books in the line in

future, which will help in moulding the youngsters' character on right lines.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE AND RELATIONS. BY M. K. GANDHI. COMPILED AND EDITED BY V. B. KHER. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Vol. I: Pages cxiii+202. Price Rs. 3.50 nP. Vol. II: Pages xii+379. Price Rs. 4. Vol. III: Pages xii+269. Price Rs. 3.*

To Gandhiji, the motive behind every work is religious—the realization of Truth and God that are essentially one. Even a social and political system, in order to be ideal, must have religious urges serving as its basis. To him, therefore, Swaraj means self-control by each individual. A society where the individuals do not possess this quality is not 'really free'. When the individuals can control themselves, there is no need for external interference, so that there is a state of enlightened anarchy, and each individual is 'really free'. Dictatorship is not a suitable means for the attainment of this ideal; for it does not pave the way for the withering away of the state; rather, it has a tendency to perpetuate violence and struggle for power. Mahatmaji, therefore, champions decentralized democracy with 'Panchayat Raj' as its corner-stone. On a similar ground, he decries the Western pattern of industrialization. In the West, industrialization has caused concentration of economic power, economic inequality, and the conflict between capital and labour. Such a system is bound to hinder the unfoldment of human personality. Therefore, the use of machinery should be reduced to an essential minimum, and attention should be given to the development of each village as a self-contained unit 'manufacturing mainly for use'. 'Provided this character of the industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villages using even modern machines and tools that they can afford to use. Only, they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others' (Vol. I, p. lx). Gandhiji has also much to speak about bread labour, labour dispute, and similar other problems. His views on all these subjects and their interrelations have been admirably brought together in these three volumes. The book will be of immense help to every serious student of Gandhism.

RAJEN CHAKRAVARTI THAKUR

FRENCH

LE CHEMIN DE LA PERFECTION SELON LE YOGA-VEDĀNTA. BY SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA. *Published by La Colombe Editions Du Vieux Colom-*

bier, 5 Rue Rousselet 5, Paris. 1960. Pages 131. Price 7.50 nf.

The title of the book means *The Path of Perfection according to the Yoga-Vedānta*. In its twelve chapters, the book presents a lucid exposition of the Vedānta philosophy both for laymen and for scholars. The author is equally well versed in oriental and occidental philosophies. His remark that perfection 'consists in growing integration' is maintained in the writing of the book itself, in which chapters and ideas are neatly integrated, and follow in logical sequence.

The author maintains that *yoga* is not only a 'path towards perfection', but the 'path to perfection', which is not outside us, but 'which is ourselves', and which we can attain by piercing through the veil of ignorance. 'Harmony and dynamic tolerance' and not 'discord and struggle' have been the chief characteristics of Indian thought, and the author offers his book to the public in the same spirit.

Beginning with 'The Yoga of Non-effort', he passes on to 'The Six Centres of Consciousness', where *yoga* psychology is discussed along with modern psychologists, like William James, McDougall, and others. In the chapter on 'Sense and Value of Mantra', the value of the *mantra* which the *guru* 'communicates to the disciple' is discussed. The three aspects of time—past, present, and future—are condensed in the *mantra* 'Om'. 'The Problem of Suffering' integrates Bergson's 'conscience of suffering' with the Vedic theory. Suffering is overcome by the *jñānin*, and great souls like Jesus Christ willingly endured immense suffering for the sake of mankind. And it was not for nothing that Kuntī's celebrated prayer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa was, 'Lord, grant me suffering and endurance'. The chapter on 'The Philosophy of Totality' deals with 'the three states of waking, dream, and sleep profound'. The *Pañcadaśī* points out how the senses, though different in themselves, are united in consciousness. Multiplicity is then an 'illusion, and totality the only reality'. The integration of personality is best achieved by *yoga*. The chapter on 'Psychological Stages of Jñāna-yoga' is at places slightly difficult for laymen to follow. 'The Path of Devotion' is an able thesis for the unity of faith and reason. 'The Notion of Incarnation', 'The Notion of Karma', 'The Doctrine of Service according to the Gītā', and 'Yoga and the West' are very useful chapters, particularly the last one.

We whole-heartedly recommend this compact, lucid, and thought-provoking book to all those who know the French language, and feel that it should be translated into English for the convenience of a wider reading public, with an index added to it.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

SANSKRIT

VIVEKĀNANDAM. BY SANNIDHANAM SURYANARAYANA SASTRI. Available with the author, 44 Zeera Compound, Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh. 1960. Pages 142. Price Rs. 3.

The present work is a Sanskrit *kāvya* on the life and work of Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary we are shortly to celebrate. The original composition was in Telugu verse by the same author. Deeply devoted to the life and mission of the Swami, the author brings a passionate fervour and a remarkable tone of sincerity into his lines. In thirty-six sections, having a total of 707 *ślokas*, the author has done full justice to his theme. The style is smooth, graceful, and poetic. He succeeds remarkably in sustaining the 'readers' attention; and in his hands, Sanskrit has really become a living language.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

KANNADA

CHĀNDOGYOPANIṢAT. TRANSLATED BY SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vani Vilas Mohalla, Mysore. 1961. Pages 479. Price Rs. 6.

With the publication of this Upaniṣad, the author has completed his translation work of the ten major Upaniṣads into Kannada, which were being published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore, during the past few years. Maintaining the high standard in printing of the earlier Upaniṣads, the present book, too, follows the same scheme as in others, namely, containing the original text with word-for-word meaning, running translation, and explanatory notes based on Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's commentary.

The author and the publishers have done a great service to the Kannada literature by offering this extremely lucid and neatly got-up translation of one of the most important Upaniṣads. The author has used in his translation Kannada words of common usage as well as simple Sanskrit words, with the result that the exposition has become intelligible even to lay people.

The masterly introduction of the learned author, giving a very instructive and informative summary of the main currents of thought of this Upaniṣad, has greatly enhanced the worth and utility of the book.

We would, however, wish to point out that the ending of the book is rather abrupt, and that the Upaniṣadic *śāntipāṭha* should have been repeated at the end, in keeping with the tradition.

S. B.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA PRATISHTHAN, CALCUTTA-26

REPORT FROM APRIL 1959 TO MARCH 1960

This institution is a full-fledged general hospital, consisting of a 150-bed maternity hospital and 60 surgical, medical, and paediatric beds for men, women, and children. It has got a fairly well-equipped laboratory, a 500 m.a. X-ray plant, a surgical unit with modern instruments and appliances, and an all-electric laundry plant. During the year under review, 70 of the 210 beds were free for deserving patients, and more than 47% of the indoor patients were treated free of charges. The outdoor clinics were free for all.

In the training school for senior and auxiliary nurse-midwives, 91 trainees were on the rolls in March 1960. Fifteen auxiliary nurse-midwives passed the final examination during the year. This school provides for the training of deserving women of respectable families in nursing and midwifery in a suitable atmosphere.

A statistical report of the various departments is given below:

1. *Medical*: Indoor patients treated: 306; Outdoor: New cases: 2,120; Old cases: 2,047; Total: 4,473.

2. *Surgical*: Indoor patients treated: 291; Outdoor: New cases: 2,051; Old cases: 3,141; Total: 5,483.

3. *Maternity*: Indoor patients treated: 4,553; Outdoor: New cases: 6,067; Old cases: 9,532; Total: 20,152.

4. *Gynaecological*: Indoor: 413; Outdoor: New cases: 3,431; Old cases: 6,380; Total: 10,224.

5. *Paediatric*: Indoor patients treated: 155; Outdoor: New cases: 1,838; Old cases: 2,097; Total: 4,090.

A five-storeyed R.C. structure is under construction for housing the general section. The building, when completed, will accommodate 150 beds.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, VARANASI

REPORT FOR 1959

Indoor General Hospital: Beds: men: 75; women: 47. Total number of admissions: 3,401. Of these, 2,903 cases were cured; 90 relieved; 198 were discharged otherwise; 86 died; and 124 remained at the end of the year. Number of surgical cases: 726.

Outpatients' Department: New cases: 62,902; Repeated cases: 2,01,972; Average daily attendance: 735.

Pathological Laboratory: Tests carried out: Blood: 2,303; Urine: 2,257; Stool: 2,767; Sputum: 53; Widal test: 87; Kahn test: 468; V.D.R.L.: 16; Aldehyde and antimony tests: 181; Blood sugar: 54; Others: 28.

X-ray and Electro-therapy: Cases examined: chest: 732; bone: 415; barium meal: 24; fluoroscopy: 102; urinary bladder: 5; cholecystography and pilography: 14.

Other activities: In the refuge for poor invalids, 9 men and 22 women were maintained. Monthly pecuniary help was given to poor and invalid ladies to the extent of Rs. 2,285.60 nP. Besides these, other activities included pecuniary help to some school-going children, a milk canteen, and occasional help to stranded travellers etc.

Finance: Income and expenditure under the general fund were Rs. 1,40,570.99 nP. and Rs. 1,53,414.25 nP., leaving a deficit of Rs. 12,843.26 nP.

Immediate needs: (i) Rs. 1,50,000 for reconstruction of the male wards; (ii) Rs. 1,00,000 for additional land to construct doctors' and workers' quarters; (iii) Rs. 44,000 for one 200 M.A. diagnostic X-ray unit; (iv) Rs. 10,000 for laboratory equipment; (v) Rs. 86,000 to make up the accumulated deficit for the last few years.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FROM JANUARY 1960 TO MARCH 1961

Total number of patients treated: 1,98,613.

Details of treatment are as follows:

Eye department: Number of patients treated: New: 4,731; Old: 14,771; Total: 19,502. Number of extra-ocular operations done: 55; Number of refractions done: 96.

E.N.T. department: Number of patients treated: New: 5,726; Old: 10,542; Total: 16,268. Number of tonsillectomies done: 115.

Dental section: Extractions: 5,619; Caries: 3,246; Pyorrhoea: 2,370; Total: 11,235.

X-ray department: 25% of the cases are X-rayed or screened free of charges. Number of patients X-rayed: 456; Number of patients screened: 177.

Laboratory: Number of specimens examined: 1,988.

Milk distribution: Medicated milk was distributed to 10,097 sickly children and powdered milk to 1,35,850 under-nourished women and children.

Present need: An endowment procuring a monthly income of Rs. 2,000 for the maintenance of the dispensary.