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JULY 1961

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

JULY 1961

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVI

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

## SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

*Ootacamund, 1926 (Continued)*

As the news of Mahapurushji's stay at Ootacamund spread, many devotees from all over Madras State gathered there to have his blessings and to be in his holy company. They all returned to their homes with their expectations fulfilled and with a fresh inspiration for higher endeavour. Many devotees came from Malabar (Kerala) as well, and they were all initiated by Mahapurushji. One of them prayed for Mahapurushji's blessings on the eve of his departure, and said: 'I had not the good fortune of seeing the Master. You are my master; you are my highest refuge.' At this, Mahapurushji affectionately said: 'You should not speak like that. He alone is the supreme refuge of all; he is the Lord. You must have read in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna how he would say that the wave belongs to the sea and not the sea to the wave. I am a mere slave of his, having taken refuge at his feet. In the *Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He is "the goal, the supporter, the lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge, the friend, the origin, the dissolution, the substratum, the storehouse, and the seed immutable" of all.

'God is everything; He is the basis of everything. It is only by virtue of merit earned in many previous lives that you have come under the protective care of Sri Ramakrishna, the incarnation of this age. And an insignificant servant of his has dedicated you at his blessed feet. Your life is fulfilled, and it gets a fresh lease by this dedication at the feet of God. Śaṅkarācārya has said: "Three things, viz. a human birth, a longing for liberation, and the blessings of a great soul, are rare indeed, and can be had by the grace of God alone." They are, indeed, difficult to obtain, and can be had by divine dispensation alone. By your good luck, you have got all the three treasures; now it behoves you to get merged in the ocean of God's love; and you will become immortal. In the Vaiṣṇava scriptures, they have a beautiful saying: "One has the grace of all the three—the *guru*, Kṛṣṇa, and Vaiṣṇava; and yet, in the absence of the mercy of one alone (one's own self), one goes to rack and ruin." One may have the grace of God, the mercy of a *guru*, and the benign help of a great devotee who has known Viṣṇu, and yet, everything comes to nought in the absence of the favour of one, that

is, one's own sincere effort, and the poor creature cannot get liberation. In your life also, you are lucky to have all these factors. Now, with the help of what you have received, be absorbed in your spiritual practices, attain immortality, and become immortal yourself. You will then be free for ever from this endless circle of birth and death.'

The devotee: 'Kindly bless me, so that I may lose myself in my spiritual practices, and be never more entangled in the net of this worldly life.'

Mahapurushji: 'I tell you all this only because you have my blessings. I bless you from the bottom of my heart that you may devote yourself heart and soul to the thought of our Master. Really speaking, my son, blessing is the only thing we have. How can I express the joy we feel when we come across somebody who wants to reach God or even makes the slightest effort in that direction? Those who want to become free from the bondage of this world and make sincere effort towards that end are very dear to us. The Master came to liberate the bound souls from their bondage. We, too, are his servants, clinging for ever to his feet. The only task in our life is to draw people towards God, to help them to proceed towards Him. That is why the Master brought us with him, and still keeps us here. Until our last breath, we shall be teaching that alone—tell people how they can attain God. This world is ephemeral; it lasts for a few days only. What a pity it is to be here! And still, how strange it is that people become so engrossed with this momentary existence! They become so mad after the fleeting happiness of this world that they entirely forget the real aim of life. Such is the play of *māyā* that deludes the whole world. Mind you, my son, you are still a young man; your mind has not been stamped with worldliness as yet. I tell you the essence of it all—the one thing that we feel in the inmost recesses of our heart. Nothing can be achieved without renunciation. That is why the Upaniṣad declares: "*Tyāgenaike amṛtatvam-ānaśuḥ* (It was through renunciation that some

rare souls attained immortality).'" It is through renunciation alone that one can become immortal. *Yoga* and *bhoga*—spiritual struggle and sense-enjoyment—cannot go together. One cannot get any taste of the bliss of Brahman unless one gives up the happiness of this world. The Master drew a true picture of the world in a few simple words: The world consists of lust and lucre (or "woman and gold", as was his own homely phrase). It will not do to have mere external renunciation; one must eradicate from one's very mind any desire for "woman and gold". Tulasīdāsa also says: "Rāma cannot be where *kāma* (passion, lust) is." One must give up all worldly enjoyment if one would realize God.'

*Bombay, January 30, 1927*

The sixty-fifth birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was observed in the local Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama. The main features of the celebration were worship, reading from scriptures, devotional music, and feeding of the devotees and Daridra-Nārāyaṇas. The joy of the occasion was increased a hundredfold by the presence of Mahapurushji. After the evening services, the *sannyāsins* and *brahmacārins* gathered in his room and expressed their desire to hear from him about Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda). He related briefly about his first contact with Swamiji, how they had spent their days together at the Cossipore garden-house in the service of the Master, about the establishment of the monastery at Baranagore, and other such events. Then, a monk asked him: 'Maharaj, were you and Swamiji together during the days of itineracy?'

Mahapurushji: 'Yes, sometimes I was with him; and sometimes we met by chance during those days. Once, I set out with Brahmachari Haran of Varanasi for visiting the places of pilgrimage in the Western Himalayas. When we were at Hathras on our way to Vrindaban, we heard that Swamiji was there at the house of a railway officer. Swamiji was then suffering from fever. So, we went to see him. He was greatly delighted at this unexpected meet-

ing. I cannot give you any idea of the way he cut jokes with us, related many incidents merrily and full of humour, and expressed great joy at everything, in spite of his high temperature. The fever left him after three days, but it made him very weak. He asked us to finish our pilgrimage to Vrindaban. It was planned that, after this, we would go with Swamiji to Rishikesh, for we expected that he would be all right by that time.

Haran and myself went to Vrindaban, where we spent a few days happily. Is Vrindaban just an ordinary place of pilgrimage? It is the place where the Lord Himself disported. The spiritual atmosphere of the place is unique. From Vrindaban, we went to Shyamakunda and Radhakunda. Once, Haran left his baggage on the road and went a little distance for easing himself, when it was stolen. All the money that we both had was supposed to be in my possession; but Haran had kept a ten-rupee note separately in that bundle. The loss caused him great pain. He became very miserable. When we met Swamiji later, he was greatly amused at the incident and made lot of fun about it. After visiting all the important places in Vrindaban, when we returned to Hathras, we found that Swamiji was again in bed with fever, and his temperature was very high. The continuous illness had made him extremely weak and emaciated. So, we decided not to stay there any longer, but to take him down to Calcutta. He also agreed. Accordingly, I sent a full report to Calcutta and the Baranagore monastery. But the people of Hathras would not so easily agree to send away Swamiji; many of the railway officers and men of position in the town had become very devoted to him. Such was his nature that, wherever he went, he created an intimate circle of friends around him. Anyone talking with him, even casually, became charmed—such was his personality. I had to plead with them quite a long time. At last, when they agreed, I borrowed some money from a high official and started with Swamiji for the Math. Haran did not like it at all. Why should I not have gone

to Hardwar with him—that was his grievance. He went on telling me: “You have become a monk; why should you have so much *māyā* (personal attachment)? Is it absolutely necessary that you should accompany Swamiji? It is not good for a holy man to be so much under the sway of *māyā*.” And so on and so forth. I then told him: “Well, brother, you know it for certain that we have renounced the world. It is also true that a monk should not have attachment for any person. Still, we have some attachment for our brother-disciples, and it is going to remain. We have learnt this from the Master himself. It is he who has kept this personal relationship among our brother-disciples. As for Swamiji, he is our crest-jewel. We do not care a fig even to lay down our lives for his sake. We shall feel thankful if we can but serve him even with our heart’s blood. How can you ever understand what Swamiji is?” That silenced Haran. With the help of the friends at Hathras, I arranged for Haran’s departure for Rishikesh. They themselves purchased a ticket for him to Rishikesh and saw him off at the station.

‘So, I started for Calcutta with Swamiji. But Niranjanananda, as soon as the news of Swamiji’s illness reached the Math, had started for Hathras. Perhaps, our trains crossed at Allahabad without our knowing the whereabouts of each other. When we reached the Math, we consulted Dr. Bepin Ghose, and it was under his treatment that Swamiji came round.

‘Then, after moving about here and there for some time, Swamiji went to Rishikesh for spiritual practices with some of our brother-disciples. There the days and nights were spent in intense meditation, *japa*, and discussion on Vedānta. Swamiji would say that he had never had such happy days in his life. It was the rainy season then; other monks seldom stayed there; and the only place to be depended on was the *chatra* (a place where food is distributed freely to the monks). In those days, Rishikesh was an ideal place for spiritual practices. Now, the place has turned into a township. After some days had been spent thus in spiritual

practices and Vedāntic discussions amidst great joy, Swamiji was laid up with fever. Hari Maharaj (Swami Turiyananda), Sharat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda), and some other brother-disciples were with Swamiji. The fever began to increase. But there was no physician near about the place—neither an allopathist nor a *kavirāj*. So, all of them became very anxious for him. One day, it so happened that, when the temperature began to drop after a steep rise, Swamiji's body became cold like ice; the pulse almost stopped; and only the head was somewhat warm. He could not talk, and there was no hope of life. All were at their wit's end, and they began to pray to the Master in great distress: "Master, do please save us from this calamity; do please bring Naren round. Or, if you choose to take Naren away, then take us, too, along with him." All were in agony, and yet they were helpless. One of the brother-disciples had gone down to the Gaṅgā, where an old monk was bathing. He belonged to those parts and lived there always. He asked that brother-disciple: "Why do you look so sad?" In answer, he described Swamiji's condition in full. Then that monk came to Swamiji, examined him thoroughly, and said: "You need not worry. I will give you a medicine which you should grind with a little *pipul* powder and honey and apply it to his tongue. You will soon find him reviving." Saying this, he returned to his hut and gave some medicine that looked like ash. The other ingredients were also procured, and after pasting these properly as directed by the old monk, the medicine was applied to Swamiji's tongue. Strangely enough, as soon as it was administer-

ed, Swamiji's body began to warm up, and he felt much better. When Swamiji heard the whole incident from others, he complained: "Why did you take the trouble of administering that medicine? I was in a state of great joy."

'When Swamiji recovered a little, it was decided that it was not proper to stay on at Rishikesh during the rains, when malaria was so rampant. So, it was settled that they should shift elsewhere. But Swamiji was still so weak that it became a problem how to remove him from there. At that time, the ruling prince of Tehri-Garhwal came down there on some business. Sri Raghunath Shastri, brother of Sri Haraprasad Shastri, the well-known historian, was then the private secretary of the ruler of Tehri. When he was told of this predicament, he arranged for a bullock cart from Rishikesh to Hardwar. After spending some days at Hardwar, Swamiji came down to Meerut, where also his brother-disciples gathered round him. Meerut is a very healthy place. Swamiji regained his health after staying there for two or three months. There he said one day: "I have gained an experience this time. Henceforth, I shall not live with my brother-disciples; I shall live alone. How much worried you were all at my illness. You had all gone there for spiritual practices. But, in fact, my illness kept you all busy. Next time, if any of you falls ill, I will have to serve you all the more. Love for brother-disciples is also a kind of bondage; I have to cut asunder that as well." He actually did what he said. From then on, he moved about the whole of India without any companion—nobody knew his whereabouts till he left for America.'



It is the nature of the virtuous to protect other living beings by sacrificing their own lives. Śrī Hari, the Soul of the universe, is pleased with a person who shows mercy to created beings. . . . Great, noble souls are moved by the miseries of the world and work for their removal. For this constitutes the highest form of worship.

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY

India is traditionally a home of diverse races. Each of these races has its own language, its culture, its religious beliefs, its social laws, its traditions, and its taboos. Every hundred miles in India, one may see a new racial group living its own life, entrenched in its traditions, its peculiar religious and social behaviour. No country presents such an array of racial varieties. When these races came into India and where they came from, no one can tell. Nor can one say with any certainty who were the original people of India. The story of how these races found their way into India or what historical forces compelled them to come into India remains a mystery. So also it remains a mystery whether these races met with any opposition from the original people or from those who had migrated before them. Another question, which also remains unsolved, is whether these races have changed much since they settled in India. Has there been any interference with their way of life? Has there been any political or social pressure on them, so that they have been forced to change? These as well as similar other questions baffle the historians. Perhaps, they will always do so.

It is possible that many of these races came as marauders. The wealth of India tempted them, and they came to loot. They raided cities, seized whatever they could lay their hands on, and went away with the booty. They continued such raids for some time, but soon they came to love the country; and finally the love was so strong that they decided to adopt the country as their own. So they settled down in it occupying parts of it, and there they remain till today. Over the centuries that they have passed since then, they have changed much; and the change has been so great that it is now difficult to distinguish them from the rest of the population, except through some minor physical characteristics and certain habits and ways which they retain from of old.

Other races came perhaps for food and shel-

ter, or perhaps for political reasons. They, too, settled down in certain parts of the country, and have gradually been absorbed in the main body of the Indian population. Thus, throughout the centuries, human races have poured into India, sometimes coming in a trickle, sometimes in a tide, but ultimately they have lost their identity in the Indian masses. Some of these races were highly advanced; some were very backward. Some have made substantial contributions to the sum total of India's civilization and culture; others perhaps have made little or no contribution at all. Some of them were shrewd and capable, and ruled vast territories; others, numerically weak and not so well-organized, had no important role to play in the political life of the country. Some of them had great adaptability, and in the new conditions in which they found themselves in India, they prospered and did very well; others could not adjust themselves to the changed situation, struggled for survival, and, if not already extinct in the process, are perhaps still struggling.

## II

This, in brief, is the story of how it happens that in India there are so many races, and these races have their distinct languages, cultures, beliefs, and traditions. What is remarkable is not this variety, but the fact that this variety has not been a cause for major clashes among the races. It is, indeed, a phenomenon without a parallel in history that so many different races have come and lived in a country without getting involved in struggles for mutual extermination. Even if they did have some clashes, these must have been very minor, for otherwise it is difficult to explain the fact that there are still many microscopically small communities scattered all over the country, who retain their distinctive racial characteristics intact. There are some of them who are so fantastic in their food habits, dress, language, and social customs



that one would suppose that they are objects taken out of the shelves of a museum. And yet, they are there continuing their independent existence, although it is possible that, due to the fact of their not being able to adapt themselves to the changed conditions of life, they are languishing and are on the verge of extinction. It must be borne in mind that there has not been any central authority in the country which has made possible the safe and continued existence of these small communities. The only possible explanation is therefore that the country as a whole must have been so irrevocably committed to an attitude of tolerance that all vagaries of race and culture which one now finds in India have received from her sympathy, maybe even encouragement. There must have been something typical in the thinking of India that she has always abhorred any idea of suppression. It was possible for her majority communities to completely change the pattern of the life of minority communities, but that they never attempted this is obviously due to some psychological inhibition that they felt against any such action.

### III

This wonderful spirit of 'live and let live' has marked the course of India's history right from the beginning. It is because of this spirit that she has enjoyed internal peace to a degree that few other countries can boast of. Where internal dissensions should have been the order of the day, there has reigned mutual respect and understanding.

Freedom to all, freedom in every field of activity—this has been India's attitude throughout history. Religion, as is well known, is the chief passion of India. Even in religious matters, this freedom has not been curbed. Individuals or groups of individuals have preached and practised religion as they liked. This may have been directly opposed to what the majority believed and practised. Even then, there has been no interference, no attempt to suppress. There have often been long and bitter disputes over religious issues, but these

have been waged at intellectual levels and have produced only complicated arguments. It is surprising that there has been no violence, no bloodshed—there is at least no evidence that there has been. This shows that in India it has long been recognized that the minorities have every right to differ from the majority. It has never been considered right and fair that the majority should impose their will upon others. India has never believed in regimentation. This policy of allowing freedom to all may have contributed to the lack of cohesion which we see in Indian society, but it has also made possible the growth of individuals of the highest order and development of much independent thinking and search for truth. Indirectly, this has also helped to break the rigidity of linguistic, religious, or social barriers. Although society was divided into multiple cells based on race, religion, or language, this never led to any attitude of self-sufficiency. There was much 'give and take', and a wonderful spirit of respect for others prevailed. It was felt that, in the scheme of things, each had its place and each was dependent upon others. Nothing was considered altogether useless, for, however insignificant, it had something to contribute to the total welfare of the community.

### IV

It is not by accident that this attitude of tolerance developed in India. India has long been wedded to the philosophy which says that potentially all men are one and the same, and the difference that marks individuals, groups of individuals, or societies is the difference in degrees of their development. Given opportunities, they will all reach the same state of perfection one day. The backwardness that may be noticed among them now is not fundamental but incidental; it will in due course disappear—it is only a question of time and opportunity. This recognition of the fact of the essential unity of men has induced in Indians an attitude of respect, humility, and sympathy towards others. They do not agree that it is necessary that the steps that any two

individuals or nations should take for their development must be the same. They rather think that the development will be easiest and best if each individual is allowed to follow the course best suited to his genius. The whole social organization in India has been based on this premise. This is how it has been possible for her to avoid unnecessary conflicts in the social sphere, and also to exclude frustration and disappointment from the life of the individual. No one is considered permanently lost; no one is considered absolutely bad. What appears bad in certain circumstances may appear perfectly good in other circumstances. Similarly, what is bad for one is not necessarily bad for another. Although potentially all individuals are the same, it is recognized that they have to have their own standards of good and bad, right and wrong, depending upon degrees of their development. This has led to all sorts of strange customs, strange social behaviour, among the Indians. Even where sources of inspiration for religious beliefs are the same, it may be found that those beliefs have had many local variations according to the needs of the people who subscribe to them. This is why there is the perplexing phenomenon that no two Hindus are exactly the same, though they are both good Hindus and owe allegiance to the same body of religious principles. For instance, a South Indian Hindu and a North Indian Hindu are poles apart in every respect; and yet, they may be good Hindus, both of them, loyal to the same ideals, same principles. This difference is considered perfectly natural—indeed, even necessary, for their mental make-up is different, and their requirements also are different.

This freedom to differ has not been confined to individuals only, but has extended to castes, communities, and races also. They, too, like individuals, have had the freedom to believe or act as they liked. The only curb that was placed on them was in matters relating to the rights of other sections of people. When caste became rigid, some may have found their freedom restricted in the social sphere; but in other

spheres, their freedom remained intact. Economically, culturally, spiritually, or intellectually, they were free to develop as they liked, and there is evidence that they developed considerably in these spheres, in spite of caste. Caste was originally intended to help quicken an individual's growth and development; but through the passage of time, it created a permanent hierarchy, and that tended to defeat its purpose. But it, too, was based on the principle that potentially all individuals are equal, and that society should be so organized as to give every individual an opportunity to develop his talent, so that, within the shortest time, he can attain perfection like other individuals.

How and when the philosophy that all are potentially equal originated, no one knows. As far as one can see, it was known in India even in the earliest times. A strange fact is that it has been accepted and practised widely. The influence of this philosophy has been so great that it may be said that it has coloured the whole course of India's thinking; otherwise, it is difficult to explain the variety that marks India's physical and cultural life, or the coexistence of apparently opposite social practices. This philosophy has had many blessings for India, too. By allowing scope for the growth and development of individual units, it has saved India from disintegration. It has also made possible the building up of a common pool of knowledge and traditions amongst the races. The barriers of race, religion, or language have not prevented free transmission of ideas and their sharing by all. On the one hand, this has helped to fight parochialism; on the other, it has helped towards the growth of a sense of unity, a sense of having a common heritage. It is, indeed, remarkable the way the units composing India have held together.

Politically, India was perhaps never one; but ideologically, she has always been one. A common philosophy, a common system of ideas and values—it is these intangible ties that have always kept the different units together. This is why, although there was no central authority,

a wonderful sense of unity prevailed among the units, and their relations with one another were always marked with friendship and brotherly feelings. The population of India has always been divided into diverse groups on the basis of religion, language, or race, but this has never affected their unity. And it is a paradox of history that, in spite of this diversity, they have lived and worked together through the ages in the friendliest spirit possible.

## V

But whatever may have been the case in the past, this friendliness is very much lacking in India today. It is now a blatant fact that the spirit of intolerance stalks throughout the country. Jealousy, hatred, and suspicion have taken the place of friendship, respect, and understanding. Variety is not now tolerated, and the right to differ is denied. Language, religion, and race are becoming real barriers, and they are dividing men into water-tight compartments. The sense of unity, of having a common purpose, a common philosophy, is gradually losing its hold on the people. In its place, separatism, or a sense of self-sufficiency is ruling. The spirit of 'give and take' is no longer to be seen; there is no more of the spirit of sharing a common treasure, either. There is, however, a central authority which tries to keep the units together, but the joints have become loose, and they may fall apart any moment. There is a political unity, but there is no ideological or

emotional unity, the kind of unity which alone endures.

The picture is really grim, but it will be a mistake not to take due note of the symptoms and act promptly. India's unity is at stake—the unity which, in spite of her diversity, she has always maintained in the past. It may be possible to enforce some kind of unity through political adjustments, but this cannot last long, for this will give way as soon as the political reasons for unity are gone. At any rate, this kind of unity cannot be emotionally satisfying. Neither can unity be maintained by force alone. India has to rediscover some common ground, some common objectives, some common philosophy that would make it worth while for the units to stay together. At the same time, the right of self-determination should be conceded, so that no one feels frustrated. Diversity is to be welcomed, even encouraged, for otherwise there is no growth, no progress for the individuals. But while this is done, the emotional ties also should be strengthened, so that the sense of unity is never lost. Unity, to be real and effective, must be based on mutual respect and understanding, on a spirit of partnership, of a free 'give and take', so that there may be a common pool of knowledge and culture, values and traditions for the country as a whole. India has always believed in 'unity in diversity'. It is this that has saved her from disintegration. If she is to survive, she must continue to believe in 'unity in diversity' and act up to it.

## MĀYĀ AND AVIDYĀ IN THE POST-ŚAṄKARA VEDĀNTA—1

BY PROFESSOR SURENDRANATH BHATTACHARYA

Citsukha gives the following definition of *ajñāna*: *Anādibhāvarūpatve sati jñānanivartyatvam.* *Ajñāna* is a beginningless something—that is not ephemeral like the hare's horn—fit to be sublated by right knowledge. To preclude Ātman, the term '*jñānanivartyatva*' (fit to be sublated by right knowledge) is used. Ātman being pure, it can never be destroyed by knowl-

edge. To preclude previous knowledge (*pūrvajñāna*) by later knowledge (*uttarajñāna*), the term '*anādi*' (without a beginning) is used. To preclude *prāgabhāva* (prior absence) of knowledge, the term '*bhāvarūpa*' is used. The following objections may be raised against the above definition.

The definition is too narrow; for the *avidyā*

concealing the object of an ordinary perception (say, a shell which is *sādi*, an effect), before such perception (viz. this is a shell) actually takes place, must necessarily be *sādi* (with a beginning), inasmuch as its existence synchronizes with the product (the shell). Again, *avidyā* being held to be the *upādāna* (material cause) of everything, it must be said to be the *upādāna* of *tucchasattā* (ephemeral objects, like the hare's horn or the son of a barren woman) as well. But that would lead to the absurd admission that even an unreal ephemeral object (*abhāva*) has for its *upādāna* a real (*bhāvarūpa*) *ajñāna*. On the other hand, if *avidyā* be not said to be the *upādāna* of ephemeral objects, it can never be sublated by *jñāna*. Thus, after *brahmajñāna*, the ephemeral object will exist, which goes against the Advaita doctrine.

These objections are met thus. Even the *avidyā* that projects the illusory silver is not grounded in the shell, but in the beginningless *caitanya* (*cit*), and is therefore itself beginningless, the product shell being only a limiting condition of that *avidyā*; hence the *ajñāna* of the shell need not be *sādi*. Again, by the term '*bhāva*' in the definition of *avidyā*, the Advaitins simply mean *abhāvavilakṣaṇatva*, something other than mere ephemeral objects, like the hare's horn etc. They never hold *ajñāna* to be real, like Brahman. The distinction between ephemeral existence (*tucchasattā*) and illusory existence (*prātibhāsikasattā*) is that in the former case the object (hare's horn) is never perceived as existing. It remains in imagination, whereas in the latter case, the object silver in a shell, or serpent in a rope, is perceived as existing. This existence in the illusory object is called *bhāva*, which is never present in ephemeral objects, like the hare's horn etc. So the word '*bhāva*' in the definition means *abhāvavilakṣaṇatva*, i.e. distinct from ephemeral existence, like the hare's horn. When we hear the word '*śaśaṅga*' (hare's horn), the two words 'hare' and 'horn' rouse in our memory two distinct objects, hare and horn, and they, being contrary, cannot be conceived

together. By means of our imagination or will, we connect them and get an imaginary idea of the object, viz. hare's horn. As all things are produced from *avidyā*, this is also a product of *avidyā*, and it must be sublated by knowledge. But this *avidyā*, according to the opponent, is real, and so the product (hare's horn) of *avidyā*, which is real, must be real. But this ephemeral object is taken as unreal, and has no existence, as has been said before. So, how can this ephemeral object be produced by *avidyā*? And if it is not produced by *avidyā*, then it cannot be sublated by knowledge. The Advaitins reply that *avidyā* is not real, as Brahman is real, and has got an existence distinct from imaginary objects like the hare's horn etc.

It is the material cause of even imaginary objects, like the hare's horn etc., because mind is the product of *avidyā*, and the product of mind (hare's horn, an imaginary object) must be the product of *avidyā*. So it can be sublated by knowledge. Neither is it proper to say that the *upādāna* must be of the same stuff as the effect. Perfect identity or complete difference can never be detected between the *upādāna* and its effect.<sup>1</sup>

Another objection is raised that the characteristic of *jñānanivartiyatva* (fitness of being sublated by right knowledge) does not hold good in such illusions as 'The crystal is red', for, even when the redness in the crystal is detected to be a mere reflection of a China rose, the illusory perception persists. The same may be said with regard to the world-perception of a *jīvanmukta* (an enlightened man). The objection is refuted thus: That you have shut yourself up in a closed room is not a proof that the sun does not dispel darkness. Knowledge does certainly destroy *ajñāna*, but in the case of the illusion 'The crystal is red', the condition (*upādhi*) of the China rose, and in the case of the *jīvanmukta*'s world-perception, his *prārabdha* (the work that caused his present birth) stand as obstructions (*pratibandhaka*). Neither should it be said that, be-

<sup>1</sup> See *Brahma-Sūtra*, 11.1.6.

cause of the *pratibandhakas*, the crystal and Brahman should be treated as unknown, although actually known; for knowledge has undoubtedly destroyed the *āvaraṇa-śakti* of *ajñāna* by its inherent power, though the *vikṣepa-śakti* continues; nobody feels that the truth about the object still remains unknown.

- Another probable objection against the above definition is that the relation between *avidyā* and *caitanya* is beginningless, positive, and destructible by knowledge. Hence the definition of *avidyā* would be too wide, as it includes the said relation as well. But this objection may be met by saying that, although the relation is beginningless and positive, yet it is not *directly* destructible by knowledge. Knowledge first destroys *avidyā*, and as a result the relation, too, vanishes, because the relation of *avidyā* and Brahman presupposes the existence of the two, and when *avidyā* is destroyed by knowledge, its relation to Brahman necessarily disappears.

A simpler definition of *avidyā* is suggested, viz. that which is the material cause of illusion is ignorance.<sup>2</sup>

This definition of *avidyā* can be applicable to Brahman as well, because some of the Advaitic schools accept either Brahman alone or Brahman with *māyā* as an auxiliary condition, as the material cause of the world. To avoid this difficulty of wideness, if it is said in the above definition of *avidyā* that the material cause of illusion must be transformable or insentient, then it cannot be applied to Brahman, the material cause of this world as has been said by some Advaitins previously, because Brahman is not transformable or insentient.

The objection that, just as earth (the material cause) is perceived in the pot, *ajñāna* (if it were the *upādāna*) should also be perceived along with the illusory object (in which case the illusion would be no illusion at all, for *ajñāna*, the cause of illusion, is already detected) is answered by a counter argument, namely, *Prakṛti* (*upādāna*, according to Sāṅkhya) and the *paramāṇu* (*upādāna*, ac-

ording to Vaiśeṣika) are not necessarily perceived along with their products, the objects of the world.

Vidyāraṇya's definition of *avidyā* is simpler still. The error that the world is a reality and is related to the Paramātman is *avidyā*.<sup>3</sup>

*Avidyā* is beginningless, for it is the cause of the eternal series of this creation, beginning with egoism, and also because it depends entirely, for its existence, on nothing else but *cit*, and, as such, must be supposed to be coeval with *cit*.

*Avidyā* is *mithyā* (false). The falsity of *avidyā* is proved by its being an object of perception, being insentient, and having a dependent existence, etc. Its falsity is also proved by its being the *upādāna* of *mithyājñāna* (error). Again, the fact that *avidyā* is the *upādāna* of *mithyājñāna* is proved by its difference from non-existence (*abhāva*). *Abhāva* can never be the *upādāna* of anything. Therefore *avidyā* is *bhāva*. Further, the presence of *ajñāna* is directly felt by all. If it were mere non-existence, it would never have been perceived like that. *Abhāva* is apprehended by *anupalabdhi pramāṇa* and not by *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*.

Now, before I proceed further with the examination of the Advaitic conception of *avidyā*, it is necessary to discuss the following points.

1. Is *avidyā* a plurality or a unity?
2. In what sense is the term '*upādāna*' used in Advaita Vedānta?
3. How does *avidyā* help creation?

#### 1. *Is avidyā a plurality or a unity?*

The Advaitins consider *avidyā* to be a unity. The original *ajñāna* (*mūlājñāna*) that projects the world is unity-in-itself and indivisible. Ignorance about particular objects is only a mode or function of the original *ajñāna*. One might ask: If *avidyā* were a unity, how would the distinction of bondage and salvation be possible? For *mokṣa* is said to be attained by the destruction of *ajñāna*. The attainment of

<sup>2</sup> See *Advaitasiddhi* (Nirnayasagar Edition), p.585.

<sup>3</sup> *Pañcadaśī*, VI.10.

*mokṣa* by an individual soul would mean the total annihilation of *mūlājñāna*. And *ajñāna* being *one*, the entire universe would cease to exist then. In other words, the attainment of *mokṣa* by a single soul would release all others automatically without any effort on their part.

It can be answered thus: Although the root ignorance (*mūlājñāna*) is a unitary principle, the individual ignorance is nothing but a mode or function of the former, as has been already stated. The individual soul, when ignorant of Brahman, is in bondage; and he becomes free when this bondage (due to his ignorance) disappears after enlightenment. Hence the objection that the knowledge of Brahman by an individual will liberate all without their effort does not arise.

Again, one may object saying that, if *ajñāna* is one, how is it that the world-perception continues even when the *ajñāna* about the shell, which is nothing but ignorance, is removed by the knowledge of the shell? To this, the Vivaraṇa school replies: By the knowledge of the shell, the individual ignorance about the shell, which caused the silver-illusion, is only withdrawn into the original *ajñāna*, just as an earthen pot is resolved back to earth by being broken with a hammer. Hence, as the original ignorance remains, the world will persist. Or, it may be said that the *upādāna* (constituent) *ajñāna* that produces the illusory silver is only a mode of the *mūlājñāna*.

*Avidyā* need not be a plurality. The Śruti does not, and, in fact, cannot, declare *avidyā* and its product as real, for, then, its very end (viz. attainment of absolute Bliss) would be frustrated. Neither can *avidyā* be proved by evidence, such as perception, inference, etc., for, then, all controversy would be at an end. Hence *avidyā* is only *assumed* to account for the emergence of the otherwise inexplicable world—a mass of contradictory elements—out of the absolute, indifferent Being, ever satisfied in Its permanent Bliss. And it is but reasonable to assume it as a unity capable of producing a variety of objects. At least, the law of parsimony would demand it. This assumption of

*avidyā* is according to the authority of the Śruti. As the root ignorance remains, even after the destruction of the individual ignorance, the world stands undisturbed.

In the Śruti statements like '*Indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa iyate*' etc., the word '*māyā*' is to be understood in the sense of its effects or its various powers or qualities. So, when diversity can fully and satisfactorily be explained by holding *avidyā* to be a unity, it is useless and unwarranted to attribute plurality to it.

## 2. In what sense is the term '*upādāna*' used in Advaita Vedānta?

All the schools of the Vedānta<sup>4</sup> take Brahman to be the cause of the world, both efficient (*nimitta*) and material (*upādāna*). But they differ as to the exact sense in which the term '*upādāna*' has to be understood. It can be understood in two different senses of *pariṇāma* (transformation) and *vivarta* (appearance). The Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika take the effect in the sense of *ārambha* (origination). It should, however, be remembered that these schools regard Brahman as the efficient cause and the *paramāṇus* (atoms) as the material cause of the world. The effect, which did not exist before, comes into existence after the conglomeration of all the possible conditions, material, efficient, etc. The Sāṅkhya and the Yoga and the Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins uphold the theory of *pariṇāma*, and the Advaita Vedāntins uphold the theory of *vivarta*. These two terms are defined as follows.

*Pariṇāma* means transformation—the cause is transformed into the effect, which is real like the cause, e.g. milk is transformed into curd; *pradhāna* is transformed into the visible world. The Sāṅkhya says that the effect, before its manifestation, remains within the cause. This definition, however, is not according to the Śaṅkara school, which believes in different kinds of reality. Other schools are not prepared to accept different kinds of reality, and hold that even the so-called illusory silver has the same

<sup>4</sup> Except the Madhvas, who are out and out dualists, and a school of the Pāśupatas.

reality as Brahman. In keeping with this view, *pariṇāma* may be defined as a change of state, the cause and the effect having the same essential characteristic of *jadatva* (insentientcy, as distinct from consciousness). Or, *pariṇāma* is that change of the cause in which the effect is essentially non-different from (but not identical with) the cause.

*Vivarta* is superimposition on the permanent reality, Brahman, which has got *pāramārthikasattā*, i.e. the reality which is never changed or destroyed. This superimposition seems to have different grades, according to the attitudes of individual aspirants. For the best aspirant, the effect, the *vivarta*, has only *prātibhāsikasattā*, i.e. the reality of the effect depends upon perception; the effect has no reality of its own. For the lower aspirant, it has got reality besides perception. Accepting kinds of reality, *vivarta* may be defined as the appearance of a higher reality as a lower one, e.g. when the transcendental (*pāramārthika*) Reality (Brahman) appears as the empirical (*vyāvahārika*) reality (the world); or, when an empirical reality (say, a rope) appears as an apparent or seeming (*prātibhāsika*) reality (a snake). Again, *vivarta* may be defined as the appearance of *cit* (consciousness) as *jada* (matter). Or, *vivarta* is that state of the effect (e.g. silver in shell etc.) which is neither different from nor identical with the cause (shell), and as such, inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*).

That there is no substantial difference between *kārya* (effect) and *kāraṇa* (cause) is thus sought to be proved by the Sāṅkhya. An earthen pitcher (*kārya*) is never seen without earth (*kāraṇa*). Earth and pitcher are perceived as coexisting. Coexistence of really different objects in the same locus is inconceivable. But as the cause and the effect, viz. earth and pitcher, though apparently distinct, are coexisting, so there cannot be any substantial difference (like the cow and the horse) between them. Further, the existence of the effect even before its actual manifestation must be admitted, for the act of manifestation presupposes a pre-existent something. The idea of causation

presupposes a definite relation of cause and effect. Unless this is admitted, anything may come out of anything else—even a hare's horn, which is an impossibility, can also be regarded as an effect. So the definite relation of cause and effect must be admitted; and if it is accepted, this relation is not possible unless the things, cause and effect, exist beforehand in some form. Thus, it is seen that the effect is latent in the cause before its actual manifestation.

On the other hand, the Nyāya argues that the effect must be admitted to be different from the cause. To advocate identity of cause and effect is to deny the very notion of causality. The simple fact that different purposes are served by the cause and by the effect proves their difference. If they were identical, production would be meaningless.

Thus it is seen that the arguments on both sides are equally unassailable. The safest conclusion, therefore, would be that it cannot be definitely ascertained whether the effect is different from, or identical with, the cause.

The Advaita Vedānta does not accept or reject either the *satkāryavāda* (of the Sāṅkhya) or the *ārambhavāda* (of the Nyāya). It holds that all that can be said with any amount of certainty is that the effect has no existence independent of the cause (*tadananya*), and that which has no existence by itself cannot be said to have any reality in the true sense of the term. So the effect neither is, nor is not; for, if it were absolutely non-existent before its production, as the Naiyāyikas say, no activity would be induced. Again, if the effect is identical, i.e. not distinct from the cause, then nobody will use his activity to produce. So the position comes to this that the effect is neither identical with, nor different from, the cause, i.e. inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*). This is the fundamental position of the theory of illusory appearance.

But it will be universally admitted that, although it is not certain if the effect exists before its production, and although it cannot exist independently of the cause, the cause exists before and after the production of the effect, and

can exist independently of the effect. Thus the cause is real (at least, more real than the effect).<sup>5</sup>

It is further necessary to note that all the schools of Vedānta, except that of Śaṅkara, are for the theory of transformation, in one sense or the other. *Māyā*, with them, is Brahman's power, by virtue of which He evolves the world out of Himself. And this power is a reality, though it has no independent existence of its own. These thinkers make no distinction between pure Brahman (*viśuddha-cit*) and the Lord, the Creator. So, with them, the question as to whether pure Brahman or Brahman as qualified by *māyā* undergoes transformation does not arise.<sup>6</sup> But to the Advaitins, who make a distinction between pure Brahman, the Lord, and the individual, this question is of vital importance. Of course, these uncompromising monists are not prepared to grant ultimate reality to any except pure Brahman, and the entire universe is regarded by them as a mere figment of *māyā* or *avidyā*. This *māyā* is postulated (like the point in geometry) as a logical necessity to explain the empirical world. In reality, this *māyā* has no existence in so far as pure Brahman is concerned (the question of diversity and creation is inadmissible). Hence pure Brahman can have nothing to do with either *vivarta* or *pariṇāma*. Yet a difficulty arises in the reading of the *Brahma-Sūtra*. The book is apparently meant to teach pure Brahman, the knowledge of which alone is the *summum bonum* of life. And in dealing with the character of Brahman, the book speaks of it as the source (cause) of the world. Any reader of the book will find it sufficiently clear that, whenever Vyāsa speaks of Brahman, he almost invariably connects It, in some way or other, with this empirical world.<sup>7</sup> It has therefore to

<sup>5</sup> This test of reality, viz. independent existence, reminds us of the Mādhyamika doctrine, which denies reality to things on the ground that nothing can be understood without being related to something else.

<sup>6</sup> Compare in this connection the theories of the Śaiva thinkers and the Śākta view of creation.

<sup>7</sup> See *Brahma-Sūtra*, I.1.2, 11, 20; II.2.1; etc. This is adduced as a most cogent argument by critics, both ancient and modern, against Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Brahma-Sūtra*.

be determined whether the *Brahma-Sūtra* takes pure Brahman or Brahman as qualified by *māyā* as the *upādāna*.

Sarvajñātma Muni in his *Samkṣepaśārīraka* seems to interpret the *sūtra* 'Janmādyasya yataḥ' as giving the *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* (indirect definition) of Brahman, because *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* (direct definition) is impossible. As pure Brahman is transcendental and incomprehensible, and if anything has to be said about It, it must be said indirectly. So, although Vyāsa had the non-relational Brahman in view, yet he could not but speak of It in terms of relations. Hence we might say that Vyāsa took pure Brahman as the *upādāna*.

The Vivaraṇa school, however, takes Brahman as It is understood in Its supposed connection with *māyā* as the *upādāna*. Neither *śuddha-caitanya* nor *māyā* alone can be the *upādāna*. The *Brahma-Sūtra* speaks directly of the *māyāśabalabrahma* (Brahman as qualified by *māyā*) only as a preliminary step, the ultimate motive being to direct the reader's attention to pure Brahman, according to the *śākhācandra-nyāya* (to refer to the moon as on the branch of a tree).

In this connection, the views of Gauḍapāda are worth remembering. He says that the illustrations of earth, iron, spark, etc. in the Upaniṣad in connection with the question of creation are merely to begin the discourse, and they are never meant to establish a real difference between the Creator and the created.<sup>8</sup> Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-Sūtra* evidently speaks of *māyāśabalabrahma* as the source of the world, but every time warns his readers against taking this Brahman as the ultimate reality.

The above are the views of those who make no distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā*. But there are some Advaitins who distinguish between *māyā* and *avidyā*. According to them, *māyā* is the *upādhi* of Īśvara, and *avidyā* that of *jīva*. They hold that, in so far as the material external world is concerned, *māyā* is the *upādāna*, and, in so far as the mental world

<sup>8</sup> *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, III.15.



(*prātibhāsika* objects) is concerned, *avidyā* is the immediate *upādāna*. A few, however, would not like to drag in *māyā* in the creation of the mental world. Some others take *māyā* to be the *upādāna* of the entire empirical world, including thoughts, but at the same time hold that *avidyā* is the *upādāna* of illusory objects and dream creations.

The extremists (*dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vādins*, according to whose doctrines objects have no other existence besides their knowledge), however, take the *jīva* to be the sole *upādāna*. According to them, everything—*Īśvara*, *māyā*, *jīva*, *jagat*—is an imaginary creation.

### 3. How does *avidyā* help creation?

In the previous section, we have said that, in order to explain the plurality of this universe as well as the apparently contradictory passages of the Śruti, the absolute monists have accepted the *māyā* theory. Now the question may arise whether *māyā* is the sole cause of this universe, or it is only an auxiliary condition and Brahman is the main cause of this creation, or *māyā* and Brahman both together create this world. So it is necessary to ascertain the position of *māyā* in relation to creation according to the different monistic thinkers.

It has already been said that almost all the schools of Vedānta take Brahman to be the *upādāna*. But from such texts as '*Māyām tu prakṛtim vidyāt*' etc., it is clear that *māyā* is taken as the *upādāna*. Again, insentiency—the essence of *māyā*—is found ingrained in all the material objects. This also shows that *māyā* is the *upādāna* of all these objects. On the other hand, there are specific Śruti texts which unambiguously declare Brahman as the *upādāna*. Various attempts have been made to reconcile these apparently divergent statements.

1. Some thinkers maintain that, on the authority of the Śruti, both Brahman and *māyā* are to be taken as the *upādāna*. It should also be noted that, just as insentiency (*jāḍya*) of *māyā* is found in the material objects, existence—the essence of Brahman—is also present in them. The following definitions of *upādāna*

may be accepted as faultless and applicable to both.<sup>9</sup> In the case of Brahman being the *vivarta upādāna* and *māyā* the *pariṇāmi upādāna*, these two definitions hold good. Brahman, being the substratum of the superimposition of this world, alone produces the effect—the world—which has no independent existence of its own. And *māyā*, being the material cause, is the receptacle of the effect—the world; this effect—the world—has no distinct existence from the material cause, as it is found in the case of earth and pitcher. That an effect can have no existence independent of its cause has been thoroughly proved by Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, II.1.14, and has been duly supported by his followers.

2. Sarvajñātma Muni in his *Samkṣepaśārīraka* holds that Brahman alone is the *upādāna*, and *māyā* is only an invariable concomitant. The unchangeable Brahman cannot, by Itself, be said to be the cause (either efficient or material) of anything. It is to be understood as the *upādāna* through *māyā*. Although *māyā*, being an indispensable concomitant, is found to pervade all objects, it should not be called the *upādāna*. Mere earth cannot turn into a pot. It must acquire some special properties before it is turned into a pot. And although these special properties inhere in the pot, the term '*upādāna*' is primarily applicable not to these properties, but to the earth. So Brahman, being the *vivarta upādāna*, remains in the effect in the form of *sat* (existence); and *māyā*, an invariable concomitant—not a *pariṇāmi upādāna* (transformable cause, like the earth for a pot)—inheres in the effect in the form of insentiency, just as the smoothness of the earth, being its concomitant cause, is found in the pot.

3. According to Vācaspati Mīśra, the locus of *māyā* is *jīva*, and Brahman is its object. So, he cannot approve of the above view, which apparently takes *māyā* as abiding in the *upā-*

<sup>9</sup> i. *Upādāna*, being the receptacle of the effect, produces the effect.

ii. *Upādāna* is that which produces the effect which has not a different existence of its own besides it (the material cause). See *Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha* (Chowkhamba Series), p.72.

*dāna brahma* (i.e. Brahman as the locus of *māyā*). He says that the insentiency noticed in the world is not derived from its cause, but is its own. (Every effect must have a special feature of its own, by virtue of which it differs from the cause.) Hence, Brahman, as the object of *māyā* abiding in *jīva*, is the *upādāna* appearing as the world. So, *māyā* is only an aid; it is neither the *upādāna* nor a concomitant of the *upādāna*.

4. Prakāśānanda in his *Siddhāntamuktāvalī* maintains that the inscrutable power, namely, *māyā*, alone is the *upādāna*. Brahman is said to be the *upādāna* only by a transference of epithet, forming as It does the ground (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of *māyā*. But one might object saying that, when *avidyā* is said to be the source of all existing things, causality is implicitly admitted as real. Moreover, *avidyā* cannot be the sole cause, for it is impossible for a unity (as *avidyā* is held to be) to produce variety in the effects. Neither is it possible for the insentient *avidyā* to produce anything without the guidance of an intelligent substratum. And it must be admitted that, in order to produce a variety, the unitary *avidyā* must be aided by such other conditions as *adr̥ṣṭa* (merit and demerit), *pratibandha-kābhāva* (absence of any hindrance), etc. If so, is it not easier to hold that these aids are quite sufficient for the production of the world? Why should we, then, assume *avidyā* as the cause? To such objections, Prakāśānanda<sup>10</sup> replies: Causality itself is inexplicable. The effect cannot be said to be either existent or non-existent prior to its production. If it is said to be non-existent (as the Naiyāyikas say), then even a hare's horn ought to be produced; and anything ought to come out from anything else (even a handful of sand would produce oil or curd).<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, if the effect is said to be previously existent, then the causal functioning would be unnecessary. If it is said that production is only a manifestation of the previously existent, then we might level the

same charges against this manifestation itself, and ask whether the manifestation previously existed or not. So, we are forced to conclude that the effect is inexplicable either as existent or as non-existent. And we must take *avidyā*—the inexplicable—to be the cause of the inexplicable world of effects.

Now, a brief account of the inexplicability of *avidyā*, as adduced in the *Prakaṣārthavivarāṇa*, is given below, after refuting the various objections against it.

*Avidyā* cannot be said to have any real existence independent of Brahman, for all else, except Brahman, is declared to be unreal by the Śruti. Neither can *avidyā* be said to be identical with Brahman, for *caitanya* and *jaḍa* can never be identical. Nor can *avidyā* be said to be both different (*bhinna*) and non-different (*abhinna*) from Brahman, for such a conception involves contradiction.

Again, *avidyā* is not a compound (*sāvayava*), for a compound must have a beginning. Consequently, the Lord, who is a reflection (*pratibimba*) in *avidyā*, would also become *sādi* (non-eternal), and an infinite series of *avidyās* has to be postulated to account for its production. Neither can *avidyā* be said to be a simple (*niravayava*), because it has got three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—and also because a simple cannot be the *upādāna* or material cause of the world.

Thus, in every way, *avidyā* is inexplicable. It may be defined, however, as eternal, inexplicable, the material cause of matter, and having its being in the being of pure *cit*.

To explain this inexplicable nature of everything, we must accept *avidyā*. It is not a reality in itself, but a hypothetical conception for explaining the diversity of the universe. It is our everyday experience that a superimposition presupposes the reality of something. *Avidyā*, being unreal and the cause of superimposition, must have some reality on which it can manifest its manifold nature. This reality is Brahman, which is ever intelligent and ever free. That Being, in association with *avidyā*, appears as a god, a man, a tree, a hill,

<sup>10</sup> See also Gaudapāda's *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, IV.11-15, 21-23, 25, 39-40.

<sup>11</sup> See Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* on *Brahma-Sūtra*, 11.1. 14-20.

and so on. The idea of bondage and salvation also is nothing but an outcome of ignorance. So the imaginary distinction of the world in

no way interferes with Reality, and a true philosophy can safely allow the diversity of the world to have its own way.

## THE ĀLVĀRS AND THEIR RELIGION OF LOVE—3

BY SWAMI SMARANANANDA

### TONḌARADIPPOḌI ĀLVĀR

In early life, Tonḍaradippoḍi was known as Vipranārāyaṇa. Born to a Brāhmaṇa couple at Tirumandangudi, he learnt the Vedas and other Śāstras thoroughly. With an inborn aversion to things worldly, Vipranārāyaṇa decided to remain a *brahmacārin* throughout life, and with this firm resolve, he proceeded to Sri-rangam, dear to the heart of all devotees. There he established a flower garden, with a view to supplying flowers and *tulasī* (basil) for the worship of Śrī Raṅganātha. His bare necessities of life came through begging.

But these peaceful days were soon disturbed by an incident in the Ālvār's life. In fact, every spiritual aspirant has to face tests and temptations during his march towards the goal divine. A courtesan, named Devadevī happened to pass through the Ālvār's garden, accompanied by her elder sister. Charmed by its beauty and setting on the bank of the Kāverī, she thought of spending a few days happily with its owner, singing and playing amidst trees and flower plants. Vipranārāyaṇa was then watering the plants, his mind deeply absorbed within. She tried to attract his notice through her seductive movements, but the single-minded Ālvār did not even glance at her. Her sister tried to convince her about the futility of attempting to tempt such a saintly man, but in vain. This only incited the egotism in her; and proud of her beauty, she vowed that, if she failed to bring the Ālvār under her sway, she would become her sister's slave for six months. With this firm resolve, Devadevī dressed herself in simple robes

like that of a nun and, appearing before Vipranārāyaṇa, bowed with feigned reverence. She presented herself as repentant for her sinful life and wished to rectify herself through service to the Lord. Her only request was to be allowed to stay in that garden and spend her time in service and prayer. The Ālvār, untrained in the ways of the world and guileless, never suspected her of evil intentions. He allowed her to stay in his *āśrama*. She, too, looking the very picture of modesty, used to spend her time under the shade of a tree. A few months passed in this way.

On a rainy day, Devadevī was drenched to the skin, and she was shivering in the cold outside. The Ālvār came out of his hut and saw her pitiable condition. Moved by it, he permitted her to stand within his hut. The courtesan's long sought opportunity presented itself now. The Ālvār offered her a dry piece of cloth, so that she might change her wet dress. While handing it over to her, his hands came in contact with hers. That was the worst moment of his life. His heart, which never knew the charms of a woman, was set agog with burning passion for her. Absorbed in her beauty, he forgot his usual routine. And that was Devadevī's hour of triumph. The very next day, she discarded her ascetic's garb for her own glamorous apparel. Poor Vipranārāyaṇa was fully enamoured of her now. But what need had she for the penniless Ālvār? To his chagrin, she left him, caught up in the magic spell of female charm, and went to her home. Infatuated, he followed her. But he was ordered out

of her home by her mother, and was told that he could gain admission only if he brought enough gold. Where would he go for gold? Completely absorbed in her thought and fatigued, Vipranārāyaṇa fell asleep on the corridor outside. It was evening.

Difficult to predict is the play of the Lord. No spiritual effort, however little it may be, goes in vain, though, through one's evil *saṃskāras*, one succumbs to temptations. In the guise of a servant boy, the Lord brought a golden vessel to Devadevī's house. Introducing Himself as Vipranārāyaṇa's man, He offered the vessel to the courtesan on behalf of the Ālvār. Then the Ālvār was admitted in.

Next morning, there was a sensation in the town. The golden vessel belonging to the temple was stolen. The king's police started the investigation and, finding it in Devadevī's house, arrested her and her mother. They, in their turn, told that they got it from Vipranārāyaṇa. He, too, was imprisoned.

Now, He who tests His devotee came again to his rescue. The king was informed in his dream that the Lord Himself took away the golden vessel for the sake of His devotee. On waking up, the king released the Ālvār.

The whole episode was like an evil dream for the Ālvār. He repented for it deeply. He became conscious of the dangers that lurk even in the path of a devotee of the Lord. He decided that the rest of his life would be wholly devoted to the service of His devotees. For has not the Lord said, 'Those who are devoted to My devotees are dearest to Me amongst my *bhaktas*'? Like Kulaśekhara, for Vipranārāyaṇa, too, the water mixed with the dust of the devotees' feet became more sacred than even the water of the Gaṅgā. All this earned him the name 'Toṇḍaraḍippōḍi Ālvār', meaning 'he who finds pleasure in the dust of the devotees' feet'.

Devadevī, hearing about the Ālvār's transformation, became a changed woman. The rest of her life was spent in the devoted service of Śrī Raṅganātha.

Toṇḍaraḍippōḍi has to his credit two works;

*Tirumālai*, of 45 stanzas, and *Tiruppalliyēlucchi*, containing ten. His verses are all dedicated to Śrī Raṅganātha, the presiding deity of Srirangam. Some verses describe how Śrī Raṅganātha came to dwell in the island on the Kāverī, and some others describe His beauty. Elsewhere, he says that, even if a man were to live for a hundred years, all his time is whiled away in sleep, hunger, disease, old age, and other innumerable sufferings. Therefore, he does not want to be born again, but would prefer to remain for all time in the presence of Śrī Raṅganātha, singing His glories. He exclaims: 'I have imprisoned my senses; and with His name on my lips, I walk over the heads of Yama's messengers. What fear have I of them, when I am free from sinful deeds?' He calls upon every one to utter the name of Govinda, even for once. 'If you cannot utter His name, why not at least mention the name of His dwelling place—Srirangam?' he demands. 'For is it not the place where Nature unfolds her beauty; where black bees wander, peacocks dance, and cuckoos sing; and above all which contains the abode of Śrī Raṅganātha?' He warns that it is a mere dream to hope that one can enjoy the pleasures of the world for ever. He who thinks of deriving pleasure through the company of women is only inviting bondage. For, after roaming about the whole day in search of livelihood, when the tired body is laid asleep, where can the mind dwell? Only in the body, he asserts. After all this lavishing of attention and care, there is no time to think of the Lord; and alas, that very dear body becomes the food for vultures and jackals!

For himself, the Ālvār desires nothing but his Lord. Śrī Raṅganātha, who is the same as Śrī Rāma or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who is in *yoganīdrā* at Srirangam, is the father, mother, and all. The Ālvār exclaims:

I have no land nor native ground,

Nor have I relatives any.

For ever have I taken refuge

At the feet of Raṅganātha,

Who adorns the glorious city of Araṅgam,

What has made him completely surrender at His feet? To fulfil his desires, the Āḷvār says. And his desires are only to worship Him with flowers, to sing His glory, and to awaken a deep love in his heart for the Lord and His devotees.

In his *Tiruppalliyelucci*, the Āḷvār calls upon Śrī Raṅganātha to wake up from His *yoganidrā* and grant him the knowledge of Truth. These ten stanzas describe Nature in all her beauty at the time of the sunrise. His final prayer before the Lord is not for eternal salvation, nor even to serve Him; it is for the unique privilege of serving His devotees for ever. Rightly did he get the name of *Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi*.

#### TIRUPPĀṆ ĀḷVĀR

As a child, Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār was found in a paddy field by a person belonging to a low caste. He brought him up with all affection. According to the custom of his caste, Tiruppāṇ became proficient in playing on the *yāl* (a stringed instrument).

Ever since childhood, he was free from all worldly attachments. All the time, he was absorbed in singing the name of Śrī Raṅganātha to the accompaniment of his instrument. But his low birth was an impediment to his entering the temple of Srirangam. Nor did he even attempt it, lest it should offend the Brāhmaṇas. He used to bathe in the Kāverī, at a distance from the temple, and with his whole heart immersed in devotion, he would sing His names standing there all the while. One day, Lokasāraṅga, one of the temple priests of Śrī Raṅganātha, came to the river as usual to fetch water for worship. Finding a man of low caste, he ordered him to move away from there. But Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār was deeply absorbed in his devotional songs, and did not hear Lokasāraṅga. The other Brāhmaṇas watching this thought him to be impertinent, and were infuriated. Determined to drive him away, they began pelting stones at him. One of these hit the Āḷvār and injured him. Coming out of his reverie, the Āḷvār understood the situation and left the place quickly apologizing for obstructing

the way of an attendant of Śrī Raṅganātha.

But Lokasāraṅga was perturbed greatly.<sup>2</sup> He had seen the Āḷvār being injured. Being a man of insight, he felt that, though belonging to a low caste, the Āḷvār must be a *yogin*. For did he not find him untouched by anger even though insulted? These thoughts distracted his mind even from his daily duties in the temple. At night, Śrī Raṅganātha appeared before him in a dream, with a blood-stained forehead. The priest was shocked and surprised. Deeply distressed, he remembered the incident of that morning. The Lord and His devotee are one and the same. Indeed, the injury to the Āḷvār meant injury to Him. What was the atonement for such a heinous sin? The Lord commanded Lokasāraṅga to carry Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār on his own shoulders and bring him to the temple. Then alone the wrong done to the Āḷvār could be retrieved.

Lokasāraṅga lost no time. Hurriedly, he ran to the bank of the river and waited there until the Āḷvār arrived. When he came, the priest fell prostrate at his feet, begged his pardon, and requested him to grant him the privilege of carrying him to Śrī Raṅganātha's temple. But Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār was greatly frightened. Inviting a hundred curses upon himself, he ran to a distance, and prayed: 'Revered sir, I am a man belonging to a low caste. Pray, do not defile thy person by touching this vile body and make thyself unfit for Śrī Raṅganātha's service. This lowly creature is unfit to step into the temple of the Lord.' But now the Brāhmaṇa was not to be deceived. He replied that the Āḷvār need not step into the temple, as he would be carried on his own shoulders. Saying

<sup>2</sup> Another version of this incident says that, when Lokasāraṅga proceeded towards the temple carrying the water meant for worship, he found its doors closed. Surprised beyond measure—for that was not the hour for closing the doors—all the priests tried in various ways to open them, but in vain. The time for the worship was fast passing by. Filled with intense remorse, Lokasāraṅga prayed to know the cause. A voice from within answered that they had hurt the Lord with a stone; so the doors would no more open. Repeated prayers thereafter brought forth from the Deity the suggestion mentioned in our narrative.

thus, he straightway lifted the Ālvār bodily, placed him over his shoulders, and walked off to the Lord's presence. The Ālvār's mind, in the meantime, had deeply entered into communion with his beloved Śrī Raṅganātha. He was wholly unconscious of his surroundings. When placed in the presence of the Lord, Tiruppāṇ Ālvār had one deep look of longing at the form he had long been yearning to behold. His eyes rained tears of love and joy. Filled with ecstasy, he uttered ten moving verses, all describing the beauty of His person. Then he became silent. And that was the last moment of the Ālvār's mundane life. His soul merged in the Divine. The cage of flesh and bones could not hold that lofty spirit any more.

The verses sang by the Ālvār at the last moment of his earthly life alone remain as his legacy to posterity. The earlier lines of these stanzas refer to the anecdotes concerning the ten incarnations of Śrī Viṣṇu. In one, the Ālvār is touched to the core of his heart by the memory of Śrī Rāma's compassion on even his arch enemy Rāvaṇa. For did He not allow the latter to return to his palace on the first day of the battle, asking him to return refreshed the next day? Those feet of the Lord sent the autocratic but philanthropic Mahābali whirling down to the nether world. Still, that was only with the intention of granting him salvation. Describing the different parts of the Lord's person, the Ālvār feels the words at his disposal too inadequate to describe their beauty. His chest, His neck, His mouth, His eyes, His whole person—the charm of all these enraptures the Ālvār. He perceives the Lord as the embodiment of beauty. After having the vision of each incarnation of the Lord, last of all, he sees the child Kṛṣṇa, the dear One of Gokula, with his mouth filled with stolen butter. The Ālvār cries in rapture: 'Beauty embodied, Thou hast revealed Thyself as the child Kṛṣṇa and captured my heart. These eyes, which have had the good fortune of looking at Thy marvellous form, will not glance at any other thing.' And saying thus, the Ālvār attains oneness with the Deity.

Tiruppāṇ Ālvār's ten verses occupy a high place in the literature of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism. The greatly famed Vedānta Deśika wrote a commentary only on these ten amongst all the four-thousand verses of the *Nālāyira Prabandham*. He considers that these bring out the true meaning of the Sanātana Dharma, the ancient religion of India.

#### TIRUMAṅGAI ĀLVĀR

Tirumaṅgai<sup>3</sup> was the last of the Ālvārs. Born to a *kalla* couple, he was named 'Nīlan', owing to his blue complexion. He learnt the profession of his caste, the science of warfare, and became an accomplished warrior. Having entered the army of the Coḷa king, he soon earned many encomiums for his valour and rose to the rank of a commander-in-chief. The king, pleased by the many victories he obtained for him, made him the sovereign of the Tirumaṅgai region under the suzerainty of the Coḷas. Now the door was open to him for filling his cup of worldly pleasures to the brim. His days were steeped in enjoyments, and he was always surrounded by young damsels, entertaining him with singing and dancing.

Once, he came across a beautiful young lady, named Kumudavallī. She was the daughter of a physician, who was a devoted Vaiṣṇava too. Tirumaṅgai was completely captivated by her beauty. When he witnessed her dance in the local temple, he was mad with love for her. He asked her father for her hand, but she intervened to tell that she would not even think of marrying a person who did not have the sacred marks of a Vaiṣṇava. Tirumaṅgai hurriedly approached a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* and got himself initiated as a Vaiṣṇava, and was branded with the special marks. But that was not enough to make Kumudavallī relent. She was a true devotee of the Lord. She demanded that the king should feed a thousand and eight Vaiṣṇavas daily for a year. Only then could the marriage take place. Tirumaṅgai devoted himself heart and soul to fulfil this demand.

<sup>3</sup> Another version of Tirumaṅgai Ālvār's life differs much from the one described here.

His old ways of licentiousness were replaced by daily devotions. Strange, indeed, that the love of a woman can transform a sinner into a saint, or a saint into a moral wreck! At last, Tirumaṅgai married Kumudavalli.

From now on, the feeding of a thousand Vaiṣṇavas became a daily routine with the king. All his wealth was spent away. But Tirumaṅgai continued his charities even by borrowing. And when he failed to pay his usual tribute to the Coḷa king, the latter got infuriated and ordered his army against Tirumaṅgai's kingdom; but before Tirumaṅgai's valour and martial talents, the army had to flee. The Coḷa king now employed a stratagem. He met Tirumaṅgai in the garb of a Vaiṣṇava and cunningly arrested him. In the prison, Tirumaṅgai lamented that the service of the Vaiṣṇavas was stopped. Moved by his devotion, the Lord appeared in his dream and advised him to proceed to Kanchipuram, the birthplace of Poigai Āḷvār. He was promised that there he would find the necessary amount to obtain his release and for the continuation of his charities. Tirumaṅgai got the Coḷa king's permission to proceed to Kanchi, where he unearthed a buried treasure and paid off his debts.

Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār's daily service to the devotees was started afresh. But how long would this wealth last? He had no other way except to take to highway robbery. In this, he was aided by his four friends, each of whom possessed a special occult power.

A spirited devotee of the Lord takes to any method to fulfil his purpose. Perhaps to bless Tirumaṅgai, the Lord Himself led him on to the path of dacoity. Once Śrī Viṣṇu, with His spouse Lakṣmī, appeared on the highway where Tirumaṅgai operated. The divine couple were in the guise of a bride and a bridegroom, fully adorned with rich ornaments. Tirumaṅgai with his men was very quick to ambush the party. He took off all the ornaments from the person of the bridegroom. A golden ring on His toe could not be removed. Tirumaṅgai bit off His toe! When the holy robbers collected their loot and lifted the bundle to take it away, lo! it

could not be moved. Tirumaṅgai took his victim to be a magician and threatened his life. But now the time had arrived for his transformation. The Lord uttered the divine *mantra* of eight letters—*Om Namo Nārāyaṇāya*—in his ears and revealed His divine form to the Āḷvār.

Knowledge dawned on Tirumaṅgai's mind. The holy *mantra* and the tasting of the feet of the Lord acted like a light in darkness. He sang describing his earlier loathsome life and the divine felicity that had descended on him now: 'Through the blessed Spirit have I gained the consciousness of the great word, and I have sought and found the blessed name of Nārāyaṇa.'

The Āḷvār now started on a pilgrimage to various holy places where the images of Viṣṇu are worshipped. He proceeded up to Badarikāśrama in the Himalayas. On his way back, he passed through Chidambaram and Sirkali in the South. Many devotees followed him singing his praise. At this time, Tirujñāna-sambandar, one of the great Śaiva saints of the South, was camping there. His followers objected to the singing of these songs praising Viṣṇu-worship. But the Āḷvār met Sambandar and told: 'Take refuge in Him who begged King Mahābali for three footsteps of land and measured all the worlds by the first two and, by his third, sent the turbulent king hurtling down into the earth.' Only a great soul recognizes his peer. Sambandar immediately conceded the greatness of the Āḷvār and told that he deserved all this praise and much more. He then presented to the Āḷvār his own *vel*, a trident which he used to carry with him.

Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār then reached Srirangam, dear to all the worshippers of Viṣṇu, and sang in praise of Śrī Raṅganātha. But he sorrowed at the plight of the temple and undertook the task of reconstruction, with a high compound all round. Still he demurred that, whereas he should have built walls of gold for the temple, he had to be contented with a stone wall. Then a divine voice assured him that, like his heart of gold, his works, too, will shine like gold. Indeed, before the Āḷvār's eyes, the whole

temple shone like gold for a moment! It is said that the Srirangam temple that we see today is the result of Tirumaṅgai Ālvār's efforts. He visited some more Viṣṇu shrines before attaining beatitude. Thus the Ālvār's eventful life was a grand finale to the renaissance of Viṣṇu-*bhakti* that began with Poigai Ālvār, three centuries earlier.

The Ālvār has to his credit a number of works: (1) *Peria Tirumoli*, (2) *Tirukkurun-tāṇḍakam*, (3) *Tiruneduntāṇḍakam*, (4) *Śiria Tirumadal*, (5) *Peria Tirumadal*, and (6) *Tiruvelukūṭrirukkai*. Of these, the first contains 1,084 verses, mostly dedicated to the various Viṣṇu deities in the South. The second and third are praises of the Lord, while the fourth and fifth sing of *madhura-bhāva*, bridal mysticism. His verses total 1,360, thus contributing the largest share to the four thousand verses of the Ālvārs.

The last of these works is entirely devoted to singing the greatness of the holy place Tirukkudandai (Kumbakonam of the present day). The Ālvār had a particular liking to this place. In every verse, he speaks of the glory of Ārāvamudan—He who is of the nature of unfailing nectar—the presiding deity of the place.

The Ālvār's songs addressing the Lord as the beloved One are a sweet efflorescence of divine love, which have a permanent place in literature. The Ālvār befriends birds and animals to act as his messengers to the Beloved. When the cuckoo fails to arrive quickly bringing news of Him, he addresses the crow thus: 'Why dost thou waste thy energy in cawing here? Go, please, and caw for the quick arrival of the sweet One.'

Tirumaṅgai Ālvār places service to the devotees of the Lord a step higher than mere devotion to Him. 'Those who are devoted to Him have made their way into my heart', says he. His determination never to part with their company is thorough. Toṇḍaraḍippodi Ālvār was then a ripe old man, still devoted to his task of tending a garden for the use of the Srirangam temple. When the wall of the tem-

ple was being built, it became necessary to construct it through the garden so dear to Toṇḍaraḍippodi. It would have been wholly destroyed but for Tirumaṅgai's intervention. He ordered the workmen to construct the wall leaving the garden intact. Thus, Tirumaṅgai Ālvār demonstrated his great devotion and reverence to his predecessor; in his works, too, one of the verses of the latter is included verbatim.

Being the last of the Ālvārs, Tirumaṅgai had before him the great example of the other Ālvārs. He had great reverence for them and their works. Periyālvār attracted his special attention because of his affectionate love for the Lord. As a tribute to him, Tirumaṅgai ended one of his works with a verse on Tiruk-kottiyur, where Periyālvār first had the taste of *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, after being blessed with the vision of Saumyanārāyaṇa, the presiding deity of the place.

Tirumaṅgai Ālvār felt great repentance for his past misdeeds. 'But all the sins of such heinous deeds have left me only by uttering the name of my dear Lord', the Ālvār exclaims. He calls upon everyone to repeat His name:

He who destroyed the evil demons,  
Aided by monkeys and bears,  
That Lord, who is my honey and milk,  
His name did I utter.

Thou, too, repeat 'Namo Nārāyaṇāya'.

The idea of *sāyujya*, attainment of oneness with the Divine, finds expression in one of his verses: 'To him who worships Thee always, Thou grantest oneness with Thee. Let us devote ourselves to Thy worship, with Thy thought for ever in our minds.' For him, those who never think of the Lord are never to be thought of.

The Ālvār does not advocate taking to various austerities so as to attain Him. He says:

Torturing thy body and imprisoning life,  
And throwing all the five senses in agony,  
Why dost thou dry up in fiery austerities?  
Reach Citrakūṭa where flora and fauna  
Smile in abundance. And there  
Devote thyself to His worship.



The Lord is the friend of the distressed. The Ālvār illustrates the point by citing the instance of Śrī Rāma. Did he not look upon Guha, the poor boatman, as his own brother and ask Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, too, to consider him as brother and friend? The Lord is ever ready to come to the aid of His devotee, which is proved by the incident of Gajendra, the elephant, being saved from the jaws of the crocodile.

Tirumaṅgai Ālvār's verses are a rich store-

house of poetic majesty and pleasing cadence. They drown the devotee in an ocean of divine love and joy.

The foregoing account of the Ālvār's lives shows that they were all inspired poets, their inspiration having sprung from tasting the bliss of devotion and divine realization. It can be said that, in later days, Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism derived its emotional content from their lives and songs.



## THE TREND OF MODERN SCIENCE

BY SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Newton explained the movements of material bodies in terms of certain fundamental laws which have come to be known as Newton's Laws of Motion. Encouraged by the success which attended the endeavour, Newton soon began to apply them far beyond the sphere of terrestrial bodies. By means of these laws, he claimed that the ebb and flow of tides as well as the rotation of heavenly bodies could be made intelligible. The Law of Universal Causation was a natural corollary of the fundamental laws which governed the movements of material bodies. These laws were so rigid and so precise that it was quite possible to predict the position of a moving body at a particular time, if only we knew the direction and velocity of its motion. The present was determined by the past, and in turn, it determined the future. The last state of the universe will simply be the inevitable outcome of its first state. Laplace continued the work of Newton and said that, if only we knew the force with which one particle acted on another, and if we knew further the position and velocity of every particle in the universe, we could predict the position of every one of them at a given time. Other thinkers of a later age were greatly

influenced by the picture of such a neat, precise, and finished universe. Lord Kelvin said that he could understand nothing of which a mechanical model could not be made. Lancelot Hogben, addressing the British Association of Science some years ago, said: 'The modern mechanist does not say that love and heroism do not exist, but he says: "Show me the behaviour to which you apply the adjective 'thoughtful', 'loving', or 'heroic', and we will one day endeavour to arrive at predictable conclusions with reference to them.'" If all nature obeyed the law of causation, why should the behaviour of human beings be an exception to it? Living cells are formed of the same chemical atoms which go to compose material bodies, and consequently, the conduct of human beings should be subject to the same laws which govern the material bodies.

Such a purely deterministic view makes man entirely a creature of antecedent circumstances and leaves him no freedom to act according to the best of his lights. In the absence of freedom, he cannot be held responsible for his action. Consequently, praise and blame as well as rewards and punishments will lose all meaning. It is also open to question whether the operations

of the human mind can be predicted with any degree of certainty. How exactly a man will react to a given situation is more than any scientist can foresee. There are depths within the human mind which the scientific plummet has not sounded. How the mind of a great genius works is simply incalculable. But we need not go so far to disprove the adequacy of the mechanical conception of the universe. Early in the last century, scientists discovered that certain facts connected with gravitation and radiation could not be satisfactorily explained in terms of Newton's laws of motion. Rays of light falling on the surface of water were sometimes admitted and sometimes repelled. This is what scientists call refraction and reflection. If light consisted of corpuscles, as Newton supposed, the resistance offered by the surface of water must have treated all of them alike. Either all of them should have been admitted or all of them repelled. Newton propounded the theory of alternate fits of transmission and reflection to get over this discrepancy. But it failed to carry conviction. Similarly, Newton's mechanical laws failed to account for an important fact connected with radium particles. With the passage of time, radium disintegrates into lead and helium. If a hundred particles of radium are kept in a room, no scientist is able to say how many of them will disintegrate and how many survive at the end of a year. One or two particles may perish, but it is only a probability. Nor is it possible to say which of them will disappear. The behaviour of radium particles is on a par with the behaviour of human beings when a contagious disease is raging. The public health authorities can only say that a certain percentage of the population is likely to be affected, but they cannot go further and say how many exactly will fall victims to the disease, nor who those individuals are going to be. All this gives a rude shock to the law of strict causation and opens the way for the principle of uncertainty or indeterminacy.

This principle was worked out in all its implications and put forward by Max Planck as the Quantum Theory. It marked the end of

the mechanical age in science. According to the Quantum Theory, movement is discontinuous. It takes place in jumps and jerks. No one can say, therefore, where a particle of matter will be located at a given time, though its velocity and the direction of its movement are known. It seems to have something like free will. For the same reason, it is mere presumption to say that a certain cause will be followed by a certain definite effect and no other. Cause X need not always produce effect Y. It may give rise either to Y, or Z, or something else. We can only speak in terms of probabilities, in favour of one or other of them.

Then came the Theory of Relativity put forward by Albert Einstein. This theory has been stated and restated as many as four times. The first formulation, known as the Special Theory of Relativity, was put forward in 1905. It reduced time to terms of space. As the result of the welding, both time and space disappeared as such and emerged as a new entity, known as 'continuum'. This was an imaginary conception. It only meant the disappearance of time and space. They were reduced to mere illusions. It was no longer possible to speak of matter existing in space, or events taking place in time. The direct consequence of this discovery was the dissolution of matter into some form of energy. Then came, in 1916, Einstein's second formulation of his theory, known as the General Theory of Relativity. It brought time, space, matter, energy, gravitation, and inertia into one comprehensive intellectual concept. Electro-magnetism still remained outside. In 1950, Einstein restated his theory for the third time to include this phenomenon also. The revised theory is known as the Unified Field Theory. It gave an extended interpretation to the laws of gravitation to include electro-magnetism which held together the atoms. There were at that time two equations, one to explain the mathematics of gravitation known as Symmetrical Equation, and another to explain the mathematics of electro-magnetism known

as non-Symmetrical Equation. Most of the scientists were in favour of holding the two equations apart, quantum mechanics for atom, and relativity for electro-magnetism. But Einstein tried to get deeper. It appeared to him that atoms were not separate things, but points where gravitation was specially intense. He therefore did not believe in keeping the two equations apart. He gave further thought to the question and evolved one comprehensive equation applicable to both gravitation and electro-magnetism. This new equation is stated in Appendix II to his book *The Meaning of Relativity*, published by the Princeton University in 1953. This is the fourth revision of the theory of relativity. These two discoveries, the Quantum Theory and the Theory of Relativity, have brought about a revolution in the world of science. As the result of all these researches in mathematics and physics, matter has been completely dematerialized. It has now been reduced to mere waves whose ultimate nature remains a mystery.

There is no physical substance behind the waves. If we assume some material basis for the waves, we will get into difficulties. It is impossible to imagine a material substratum which remains constant in the midst of the ever-changing waves. The process of change which affects the waves will not leave their physical basis untouched. If it also changes, then the purpose for which it is posited will be defeated. Both alternatives are therefore ruled out, and yet it is hardly possible to conceive of change except in relation to something unchanging. Since this permanent entity cannot be physical, we must suppose that it is metaphysical. Consciousness, which is the constant witness of all the vicissitudes through which matter passes, must be necessarily assumed as the substratum for the changing waves. Since it works through the mind, which is itself material, consciousness seems to assume the form of a physical substance underlying the wave motions. But, when the untenability of this assumption, as explained above, is realized, consciousness is disengaged from its material

appurtenance, and then it comes to its own. The waves cannot belong to it in any real sense, and are therefore treated as mere superimpositions. They become mere appearances of the ultimate Consciousness or Self.

That the reality of a thing is different from what it appears to us is well known to scientists. A straight stick introduced into water appears bent at the point where it touches the water. Our sense-organs have their limitations. They are not capable of responding to all the sensations that impinge on them. The human eye, for example, can only distinguish light rays whose vibrations are between 450 millions and 750 millions per second. At one end, we see 'red' and at the other 'violet'. Rays of shorter or longer wave-lengths are invisible to our eyes. Colour and sound are purely mental constructs. They are not to be found in sensations, arising from physical objects. They are imposed on the sensations by the mind. 'The mind', says Professor Eddington, 'weaves an impression out of the stimuli travelling along the nerves to the brain. The notion of a substance possessing the attributes of colour and sound is a pure mental construct.' Similarly, time and space, as also mass, have no real existence apart from the mind. The physical world is entirely abstract and without activity, except in relation to a mind. If this line of thought is pursued to its logical conclusion, it will culminate in the *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* of the Vedānta, and the world will then have to be treated as a mere idea in the mind of Īśvara.

Professor Eddington gives other instances also to show that epistemological considerations account for our inability to know things as they are. Our inability to observe what he calls 'distant simultaneity' or the velocity of ether as also our inability to know the exact position and velocity of a particle in the atomic world are alike due to certain inherent limitations of our sensory and intellectual equipment. His view that our knowledge is inviolably limited by our sensory and intellectual outfit is only the scientist's version of the concept of *māyā*, as it is understood in Advaita Vedānta. The

essence of the *māyā* doctrine is that, owing to the inherent limitations of our knowing apparatus, we see reality as quite other than what it is. We see the world of difference and change where, in reality, there is only Brahman, one without a second and free from mutations and difference. Through our sense-organs and intellect what we perceive is mere appearance and not the reality.

The doctrine of the three grades of reality (*sattātraya*), which is closely bound up with the distinction which Advaita makes between appearance and reality, would seem to be also implicit in the scientific thought of today. Molecules and atoms which present themselves to perception belong to one order of reality, and the invisible wave-packets to which they are reducible would seem to belong to another and higher order of reality. Since the ultimate nature of these waves remains a mystery, we must assume something behind them, and that will necessarily have to be given a still higher place in the order of reality. That there is a 'mysterious unknown' behind the waves is admitted by Sir James Jeans: 'The outstanding achievement of twentieth-century physics is not the theory of relativity or the theory of quanta or the dissection of the atom, but the discovery that things are not what they seem. It is the general recognition that we are not yet in contact with the ultimate reality' (*Mysterious Universe*, Cambridge University Press, p. 111). Elsewhere in the same book, describing the principle of indeterminism, he observes that 'the appeal of the New Physics to probability is a mere cloak covering our ignorance of the true nature of reality'.

Let us have a view of the structure of the atom. It has been analysed into electrons, protons, neutrons, and positrons. Round a central nucleus of neutrons and protons, a number of electrons are said to be revolving much in the same way in which heavenly bodies go round the sun. It is also said that the atomic world is no less spacious than the solar system. There are vast reserves of energy in it, exactly as there are in the fixed stars. Thus, we seem

to have in the infinitely small world of atoms an exact replica of the infinitely big universe of the galactic systems. The former is a microcosm, and the latter a macrocosm. 'As large as is the universe outside, so large is the universe within', says the Upaniṣad (*Chāndogya*, VIII.1.3). The conclusion seems to be forced upon us that the reality behind both is the same. It is Brahman, who, in another Upaniṣad, is said to be 'smaller than the small and greater than the great' (*Kaṭha*, I.2.20).

Recent researches in ultra-sonics also lend support to the hypothesis that the different forms of energy are mere appearances, and that, in its ultimate nature, it is one and uniform. We speak of mechanical energy, electrical energy, and sonic energy. It was discovered some years ago that the ratio of conversion from electrical to thermal energy was the same as the ratio which obtained in the conversion of mechanical energy into heat. It is now discovered that the ratio of conversion of sound into heat is the same as in the previous two cases. This law of conservation confirms the belief that energy, in its fundamental aspect, is one and uniform, though it appears in different forms as heat, light, electricity, sound, and so forth. These differences have their origin in pragmatic considerations. In view of the different functions it serves in the practical concerns of life, we give it different names. In essence, however, it is spiritual. It is Brahman.

The process of evolution according to modern science also seems to demand a spiritual principle behind it. The account given by Professor Alexander is typical of modern scientific theories of evolution. According to him, new qualities emerge from elements organized in a certain manner. From a knowledge of the constituent elements, it is impossible to predict what qualities would emerge, but when they are organized into a certain pattern, several new qualities suddenly come into being. The atom, for example, is a great deal more than the electrons and protons which compose it. At a late stage of evolution, mind arises as the expression of a living organism of an exceed-

ingly high degree of complexity. Matter and mind thus represent different levels of evolution. Nature climbs to life, from life to mind, from mind to consciousness, and from consciousness to freedom, through the increasing organization of matter. Deity is the final outcome of the evolutionary process.

But we may ask: What is the force or urge behind the organization? We need some kind of power, some '*nisus*', to organize the elements into increasingly complex wholes, to direct and integrate the physical elements. Chance grouping of atoms and molecules is hardly imaginable. This is the point of Śaṅkara's criticism of the Vaiśeṣika and Sāṅkhya accounts of creation. His objection to the modern scientific theories of evolution would be the same. How can we expect insentient Nature to climb from one level to another till it culminates in Deity? Unless there is a driving force behind Nature or implicit in it, it cannot evolve into higher and still higher forms. Instead of saying that Nature climbs in the evolutionary ladder, it would be far more correct to adopt the view set forth in the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Brahman willed to go forth into the forms of finitude, and the universe of names and forms emerged by gradual stages. It is the immanent spirit in the universe that manifests itself in forms of increasing complexity. Śaṅkara writes in his *Sūtra-bhāṣya*: 'Although one and the same Self is hidden in all beings, movable and immovable, yet, owing to the gradual rise in the excellence of the minds which form the limiting conditions of the Self, scripture declares that the Self, although eternally unchanging, reveals itself in a graduated series of beings, and so appears in forms of various dignity and power.' Among recent writers on evolution, Bergson and Lloyd Morgan have realized the need for a power other than the atoms and molecules to account for both the initial movement and the subsequent changes. Bergson speaks of the '*élan vital*' as a primordial principle which ingratiates itself into matter and directs the course of its evolution. Lloyd Morgan more definitely affirms the need

for a power which he calls God: 'I acknowledge God as the *nisus* through whose activities emergents emerge and the whole course of emergent evolution is directed.'

Judging from the trend of modern science, we will not be far wrong if we say that Advaita Vedānta is its logical culmination. Scientists have received a vision of a fuller reality beyond their confines, which they lack the courage to proclaim. In the not distant future, they will be so overwhelmed by this new vision that, almost unknown to themselves, they will declare that reality is one and uniform, that it is spiritual, and that it appears under different forms owing to our preoccupations and the limitations inherent in our knowing apparatus. They will thus be subscribing to the profound statement of the Veda: 'Truth is one; sages call it by various names.' At the end of the journey, they cannot but proclaim the triumph of the spirit.

Advaita Vedānta, therefore, has no reason to be afraid of the advances made by modern science. Every forward step that the latter takes brings it nearer to Advaita. It is becoming increasingly clear that philosophy and science are two parallel avenues to Reality. As truth cannot contradict truth, their paths are bound to converge at the end, however much they may appear to be different and even opposed to each other in the initial stages. It has been said that philosophy is the fulfilment of the sciences, in the sense that it synthesizes and harmonizes the divergent findings of the latter in terms of a comprehensive hypothesis. In view of what we have said above regarding the trend of modern science, we can go further and assert that Advaita Vedānta places the coping stone on the unfinished scientific edifice. It is the crown and consummation of all knowledge, including the scientific. From every point of view, the conclusion appears to be inescapable that the sciences are pointing more or less directly to Spirit as the hidden reality underlying the passing shows of the world; as the primal force which assumes the forms of different energies, such as heat, light, electricity, and so forth;

as the cohesive power which holds together the particles and the atoms; and, finally, as the field of force which keeps apart sun and moon, earth and sky, confining them to their respective orbits and preventing them from headlong collision. 'Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, the sun and moon are held in their positions; under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, heaven and earth maintain their positions' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III.8.9).

Thus, we find that some of the profound insights of the seers of this land are receiving empirical verification in the recent researches of scientists. Sir J. C. Bose, in his speech before the Royal Asiatic Society, said: 'The ancient seers of India had the vision of oneness in the universe and that of the spirit which indwells all forms of existence, animate as well as inanimate, and I am only proving their intuitions by observation and experiment on plants by instruments devised for the purpose.'



## THE RELIGIOUS NEED OF INDIA

BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

It will sound odd to many if I maintain that India needs religion most today. For it is generally known that India is religious-minded, and people from the rest of the world come here to see this land of ancient faith and piety. We are a poor and struggling lot here, but our meanest people have a kind of religious training that is striking to a foreigner, who is impressed by the crowds at the temples and the pilgrims at the holy places. I have no doubt that an average Indian believes in God and performs religious practices in one form or another in much greater measure than an average person in Europe or America. Yet, I submit that India needs today religion more than anything else. Only a religious revolution can save India from its present state of internal disunity and weakness and economic degradation, and from its squalor and confusion that even a passing foreign traveller cannot fail to mark.

What do I mean then by religion? What sort of religion do we already have in a large measure, and what do we lack?

Religion has three aspects. One is an implicit faith in some God who creates and rules

the world and a feeling of communion and piety towards Him. This feeling may be expressed in the form of prayers and sacrifices. This kind of pure religious attitude has to be distinguished from another sort which consists in treating God as an instrument of one's worldly good and, so, worshipping Him not out of pure love and piety, but out of desire for power and wealth. This aspect of religion has an element of the original magical form of religion, where coercion rather than submission is the chief emotional attitude. It is believed by the worshippers that God or the particular deities can be moved to do the things wished for if approached in the correct way, and there are elaborate rituals for every kind of worship, for every kind of worldly end desired. In India, these two forms of religion are most prevalent.

There are people who approach God in their privacy through pure love and meditation, and there are others who perform diverse rites and ceremonies for the sake of worldly prosperity. In each case, there is a faith in the spirit as the author and ruler of the world, which is essentially a religious feeling. But in none of these forms of religion, there is any necessary

sense of moral obligation to society, or desire to improve the state of the world through developing and organizing public spirit or socio-ethical notions. God or the gods of India are conceived by the pure devotees as indifferent to the world or humanity, which is a sportive, illusory creation (*līlā* or *māyā*), and one's business is to know this truth and forsake the world and seek refuge in the author of this shadow show. This means apathy and resignation on the part of these devotees, who may have the highest truth, but not the truest religion. By a true religion, then, I mean one that is related more to this world than the higher or the spiritual one; one that inspires people to meet and work hard for the betterment of their environment.

These devotees should not have any apathy and resignation towards the world, but must actively work for the upliftment of their neighbours for whom the world is so far not illusory. This is why the great leaders of modern India, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, and Mahatma Gandhi, took to social work, though they were Vedāntists, and knew that the world is a temporary affair and that there cannot be any escape from death, sickness, and sorrow that life entails. The *Gītā* stresses this social duty (*loka-saṅgraha*) for the devotees and urges them to act in a selfless way for the good of all. But, in spite of all this, the fact remains that a large section of the Indian people is socially inactive, and it follows a pure and private kind of religion which has, no doubt, its own truth, beauty, and joy, but which is not the whole of religion.

These devotees are not actively anti-social, though some of them are engaged in professions and trades which, if they come to think of it, may not be wholly right. For instance, a person may be a businessman; he ordinarily thinks that it is no harm if he has to bribe some authorities and petty clerks in order to get his tenders accepted or bills passed. He takes the prevalent system for granted, for he believes the world to be but a passing show which one cannot improve, and one must concentrate on

one's spiritual life, rather than on this worldly one. Thus he, though otherwise a very enlightened person and even a kind soul, indirectly helps corruption in society. He does not believe in any organization of society or strict law and order; for he trusts that God takes care of His children and that we cannot improve things by our reason and efforts. So he lets things drift.

The other sort of religious devotees in our country are less innocuous. They not only do not believe in social organization or strict moral codes, but positively want much laxity and scope for free enterprise, for only in such a state can they get whatever they want through their deities. These people offer prayers and sacrifices in right earnest for getting more money through any means, without ever thinking that any money got through unfair means is wrong and that it disrupts the country's economy and social harmony. Generally, the businessmen of our country take to this sort of religion, and they do not much care for the consequences of their adulteration of food-stuffs and medicines, and of their excessive profiteering or evasion of taxes. They do have a firm faith in God and in some moral codes as well, but they lack social sense altogether. Their religion does not teach them to be honest and aggressively good as citizens. They may give away large sums in charity, but never think of the cause of much poverty of the people or of giving better wages or providing better living conditions to their employees.

Let me speak of the third form of religion which is different from the above two forms and which India needs today. God, in this religious consciousness, is too mysterious and high above for man's direct knowledge and communion. It is useless for him to beg of God anything. God has given us intelligence, freedom, and capacity to work, and it is our duty to improve our state in the world by means of these powers. In doing this duty selflessly, or in the spirit of service to God, we can have a sense of communion with Him or participation in His creative work. Other people are regard-

ed as brothers, as God is our common Father. Thus a strong social sense is the essential part of the religious consciousness of this type. This humanistic religion of sympathy and service is what we need more than our esoteric and ritualistic kinds of religion. For we are out to build up, for the first time in history, a unified, economically developed, and strong India. We are undertaking big projects, which need for their success honest and hard work, and any corruption will pull down all our cherished constructions.

We cannot overlook today the weaknesses and dangers in the way of our building up a new India. The forces of social disintegration—the differences between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, one linguistic group and another—are there just as there are corruption, squalor, and filth in the cities. We want a religion that will teach us how to live nobly and cleanly and in a corporate manner. We are used to thinking in terms of our personal and communal interest, not in those of general good. We must face facts and start thinking constructively to improve things. We must

learn from our past mistakes in history and turn over a new leaf.

The idea of this new kind of religion is that, since the world is a passing show, we must not be too much attached to it. We must therefore shed greed and other narrow passions. But since it is after all created by God for us, and since He has given us powers to think and act, we must use these powers for the betterment of the world in the light of our best reason. We must have love and sympathy for the world. The moral of selfless action must be placed above esoterism and ritualism. The ethics of social justice must not be separated from religion, which must not be an escape and an opium for our people. Religion must teach us not only how to face death, but also how to face life. That much of the misery in our life is of our own making has to be understood, and a religion of a brighter and stronger sort has to be introduced. The great religious teachers of modern India have been telling us this very thing, but we have not as yet changed much. We need a religious revolution, without which all our socio-economic efforts will be of very little value.



## THE FORCE THAT WAS VIVEKANANDA

BY SRI KAILAS CHANDRA KAR

During the religious and cultural turmoil of the last century, when the country was going to be inundated by colourful surges of Western ideas and ideologies, there appeared Raja Ram-mohun Roy, the savant, who, in his attempt to stem the tide, gave shape to the Brahma Samaj. The Brahma Samaj did yeoman's service in saving the situation; but its appeal being confined only to the enlightened circle, it failed to spread its influence beyond urban areas into rural India, wherein lies the heart of the country, and thus could not find general acceptance as a recipe for the malady involved.

For an effective solution of the problem, the need of something more catholic in spirit and comprehensive in outlook was keenly felt. And it was to meet this demand of the time that Ramakrishna-Vivekananda appeared on the scene, as the symbol of a unique synthesis of the spirituality of the East with the realism of the West, to propound the all-embracing religion of love and service based on the loftiest pitch of philosophic thought on the one hand, but taking cognizance of the stern realities of the world on the other.

Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were not two



distinct individualities, but constituted one continuous whole. Just as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa had their counterparts in Lakṣmaṇa and Arjuna, so Ramakrishna also had his complement in Vivekananda. If the former may be conceived as energy in its potential state, the latter may be taken as the same in its kinetic form. In other words, Ramakrishna was the idea, and Vivekananda a commentary on it.

Narendranath (that was his name before he became Swami Vivekananda), however, with his Western education and rationalistic attitude, could not easily surrender himself at the feet of Ramakrishna, an unlettered Brāhmaṇa. It was after a series of tests and trials—when the intellectualism of Narendranath, the type of a scientific age, stood confounded in divine amazement—that he allowed his personality to lose itself in that of his master. This self-dedication of Narendranath, after the last trial of Ramakrishna in his sick-bed in the garden-house of Cossipore, is reminiscent of the surrender of Arjuna to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as set forth in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. He had now the taste of eternal bliss, and could no longer rest contented with lesser and transitory pleasures. Neither the inducements of worldly enjoyments, nor the thought of his family, nor even the tears of his widowed mother had the power to hold him back any longer, and he broke through the meshes of this worldly snare like a lion forcing its way through the bars of its cage. Narendranath was now reborn as Vivekananda, a *sannyāsin*, not for his own salvation, but for the benefit of the world. His life's stream had merged itself in the mighty spiritual current that Ramakrishna was, and now flowed on irrigating the arid grounds of self-centred doctrines and dogmas.

The multi-faceted life of Vivekananda may be likened, in the words of Shelley, to a 'dome of many-coloured glass'. But what lies at the centre, as the source of rays of different colours, is the self-effulgence of religion—not the metaphysical and static religion of rites and rituals, but the realistic and dynamic one of love and service. In whatever role—whether as a patriot, or as a socialist, or as an educationist—he may

appear to the analytic view, he is fundamentally an apostle of this practical religion, and all his activities in diverse fields are tinged with it.

Every nation has a definite ideal, and national progress depends on a devout and determined pursuit of it. The ideal of India has ever been religion, and this is why all our usages and activities are conceived and regulated on religious principles. Whether people with a purely materialistic outlook relish it or not, this ideal of religion cannot be denied and replaced without utter confusion and upsetting of life both in the individual and social spheres. According to the Swami, an attempt at it is bound to prove as abortive and disastrous as an endeavour on our part to push the current of the Gaṅgā against its eternal course back to its source, in order to divert it through a new channel of our choice. The fountain-head of Vivekananda's philosophy of life could not therefore be other than religion—religion adapted to the needs of the time.

As the torch-bearer of his *guru*, Swami Vivekananda devoted himself to the revival of the assimilative Aryan religion of ancient India. From the beginning of Indian history, beneath its outer crust of political din and bustle, has been flowing the current of that synthetic religion, bringing about unity in the diversity of races and faiths. It made possible not only the fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan cultures, but also the Indianization of invaders like the Greeks and Sakas, Pahlavas and Kushanas, Huns and Gurjars, who were induced thoroughly to identify themselves with the nation. Even the widely professed religion of the Buddha, through gradual transformation, got mixed up with it. After the tenth century A.D., at the time of the Muslim conquest, this co-ordinating spirit of the Aryan religion got lost for a time; but in the fifteenth century, there appeared divinely inspired souls like Rāmānanda, Kabīr, Nānak, and Caitanya for its revival. During the reign of Aurangzeb, it died out again. Then came the ideological storm and stress of the nineteenth century. At this time, Rama-

krishna, with the conviction arising out of his realization of the truth of diverse creeds, made his epoch-making utterance, 'As many faiths, so many ways'. Vivekananda, taking his cue from the great Master, set himself to the task of reviving the catholic outlook of the Indo-Aryan religion. The beneficial effect of this revival was not confined this time within the boundary of the country; through his efforts, it sought to spread its benign influence outside India as well.

In order that the different religions might be induced to become tolerant as well as respectful towards one another, shaking off their self-centred attitude, and to free their spirituality of its bleared effect derived from metaphysical bigotry, and for the recognition of the Infinite that is ever evolving itself through all that is finite, he laid before them, with his masterly exposition, those philosophic principles which go by the name of Vedānta and which, as the highest spurt of human conception and reasoning, have a universal appeal. The noble endeavour set on foot by him in this regard is working with increasing momentum and encouraging results. It was the same catholicity of the Aryan religion of ancient India that prompted him to address the Americans, in the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago, as 'Sisters and Brothers of America' in violation of the conventional form, and it may be hoped that the resonance of this historical vocative made by a divinely inspired soul, working imperceptibly on the minds of nations, will some day awaken brotherly feelings among them and induce them to bury their hatchets.

Once, when he expressed to Ramakrishna his earnest desire of remaining absorbed in that state of spiritual experience in which the soul loses itself completely in absolute Existence (*nirvikalpa samādhi*), the latter observed by way of affectionate admonition: 'You are so selfish! You seek only your own salvation! Look here, my boy, crores of human beings of the age are biding their time looking up to you in eager expectation. Service to these suffering

souls gripped in the coils of illusion, but viewed as the emblem of the Absolute is the noblest way of worship.' These words from the lips of one established on the monistic plane revealed to him the secret of true religion, and being imbued with that spirit, and with the compassion of Buddha and the enlightenment of Śāṅkara, he made the solemn resolve: 'Prepared am I, for the sake of suffering humanity, to be born and reborn a thousand times in this world of misery. These creatures wallowing in darkness and distress constitute the only Deity of my adoration. I do not believe in a separate godhead.' The short span of his life was all an unceasing effort for the amelioration of the condition of man in spheres both spiritual and mundane. To spiritual aspirants, he pointed out the futility of seeking for a different godhead, ignoring the One manifest in plurality before them, and held out the gospel of supreme knowledge and love: 'He serves God, who loves his fellow-men.' This conception of religion took a practical shape in his founding of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, which has brought the forest-dwelling monk to the human abode for service to man, and has effected a rare *rapprochement* between the apparently incompatible attitudes of detachment and love.

Charity begins at home; and so, of prime importance to him, in his campaign in the spirit of this religion, was service to his motherland groaning under the distress of bondage. He travelled on foot through the length and breadth of the country. At the sight of the misery and humiliation to which his countrymen were subjected, his heart bled. Lost in meditation on the rocky promontory of Kanyakumari, he visualized the stately form of the India that was eternal, and from the core of his heart went forth this peremptory mandate to his countrymen: 'For the next fifty years, let your motherland be the only God of your adoration. The worship of any other God may wait for the time being.' He made whirling tours round the globe, but his motherland, which was, to quote his own words, the cradle of his infancy, the pleasure garden of his youth, and the

Varanasi of his old age, was always enshrined in his heart.

His love for the country was not a matter of sentiment alone; it manifested itself in concrete forms and definite courses of action of a practical value. His burning patriotism was a direct source of influence to infuse a sense of prestige and a respect for national heritage into the minds of his degenerated countrymen, and his fiery spirit served to inject strength and vigour into the struggle for independence. His travels and activities in the West earned for the first time an exalted position for his obscure and neglected motherland in the galaxy of nations. He proceeded with his work for the upliftment of the people of his country according to a definite plan. He sought to raise the formal religion prevailing in the land to the status of a spiritual science by purging it of its adventitious blemishes in the light of the Upaniṣadic knowledge; to do away with the exclusiveness and self-complacency of the people by effecting a happy synthesis of the spiritual science of India with the material science of the West; to save the weak from exploitation and starvation by organizing a new social order that would be free from class distinctions; and to give womenfolk an honoured place in society by making proper educational facilities available to them. All these activities, which were inaugurated by him, are like the mariner's compass, directing the course of the 'leviathan' of independent India today.

It was the same spirit of religion that led to his conception of a new social order. In the social philosophy of Karl Marx, there is no place for religion, which, according to his finding, has been worked up out of the human instinct of fear based on ignorance, as a contrivance to exploit man. Since the social order of his conception is to be free from exploitation, religion has no place in it. But the standpoint of Vivekananda's social philosophy is quite the reverse, for, in it, religion plays the most vital role. In explaining man's leanings to religion in the light of Advaita Vedānta and his own spiritual experience, he said that, far from being

an offspring of fear, this tendency in man is a spontaneous impulse that tends his soul to identify itself and be one with the universal Soul, which both pervades and transcends the phenomenal world. He argued that this natural urge of the human soul for its consummation can never be an instrument of exploitation. It is only when this true religion is at a low ebb that hollow institutions and privileged classes come into existence, exploiting people either directly under cover of religion or as an indirect effect of it. According to him, true religion is the means not of exploitation, but of doing away with it, and this is why religious movements are always conspicuous in their determined efforts at levelling down all artificial distinctions. The social order conceived by the Swami is therefore based on religion. Under it, every man, however insignificant he may be, is to get an opportunity for developing his spirituality to the fullest extent. This is his test for a civilized society, as, in his opinion, 'civilization is the manifestation of the spirituality in man'. Peace is the outcome of cordial social relations, but this social amity is impossible of attainment without the development of the spirituality that is in man.

His views on education also were based on the principles of a practical religion. With the progress of educational psychology, educationists have come to look upon education as the development of the faculties that lie dormant in the child. Vivekananda gave a fillip to this conception of education when, in vital rapport with the Indian philosophic thought, he defined it as 'the manifestation of the perfection already in man'. This ideal of education lays before man an endless course of progress, inasmuch as, whatever may be the extent of manifestation, it is, by the very paradox involved in the term 'perfection', bound to remain incomplete, with still more progress always to be made till the individual enters the stage of realization, transcending the objective and subjective worlds.

But our system of education is not so designed as to provide the child with scope for the development of his latent faculties, which results

in the gradual manifestation of the 'perfection' that lies within him. The system introduced by foreigners—only for turning out scribes—is still continuing, with abrupt and piecemeal changes here and there. Making a plea for a man-making education, the Swami said: 'By education, I mean the acquisition of practical knowledge and not the one imparted by the present system. Only bookish knowledge won't do. Our children are in need of that education which makes for the formation of their character, strengthening of their will, flowering of their intellect, and their ability to fend for themselves.' The thing needful in this context is a co-ordination of the material sciences of the West with the Vedāntic knowledge of the East, the basic requirement on the part of the pupils being restraint, regard, and reliance on their own capabilities. This suggestion of the Swami has its corroboration in the opinion of the Upaniṣad, which enjoins the acquisition of knowledge both spiritual and material (*parā* and *aparā*). It also shows that he was not a visionary ignoring the realities of life, but a practical philosopher who was, in the language of Wordsworth, 'True to the kindred points of heaven and home'.

But even in independent India, the aim of education suggested by Vivekananda has not yet been accepted. No doubt, some headway has been made in the matter of giving education a practical bias, but no effective steps have yet been taken for the physical welfare of the pupils. The prerequisite for a healthy mind is a healthy body, and the Swami's behest to the weakling is to put off the chanting of the *Gītā* and to better utilize the time with a football in the field. But most of our 'Etons', being without playgrounds, are handicapped in the matter of training out 'Wellingtons' for the 'Waterloo' of their life. So far as his opinion for the inclusion of religion in education is concerned, it is also not known how far that will materialize, in spite of the recommendations of the Sri Prakasa Committee and the observations of the Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education. By religion, however, the Swami does not mean any-

thing sectarian or dogmatic, but a religio-philosophic code of universal appeal so drawn up as to instil a spirit of mutual love and sympathy into the pupils, dispelling all prejudice and narrowness from their mind. This may be termed 'human religion', and the so-called secularity of the State cannot stand as a bar to its finding a place in education.

If we take stock of the personal as well as the social life of man in the light of universally accepted principles of morality, we shall not fail to recognize a vast 'fault' or displacement of strata in his mental plane in respect of his personal and, for the matter of that, social life. This displacement is responsible for all the chaos in the ideological sphere. If serious attempts at the mental rehabilitation of future citizens are not launched, the human race is sure to meet its doom in the hands of Frankenstein's monster of its own creation. This mental rehabilitation of future citizens can be effected only by the joint effort of teachers and guardians through education on the principles of the 'human religion' suggested by the Swami. His own writings are a prolific quarry for the contents of this religious education, for there is no important problem relating to human life, the solution of which is not to be found in the works of Vivekananda. Standardized selections from his works may therefore be profitably included in the various grades of education as a subject of compulsory study. If, however, the educational authorities fail to recognize this dire need of the mental rehabilitation of future citizens, and cannot rise to the occasion, their parents and guardians, at least, may do a lot in this regard by inducing them to read the works of Vivekananda. Generally speaking, this is sure to lead to a betterment of the conditions prevailing at present, impelling people in diverse spheres of life—the merchant and the man of science, the politician and the professional man—to behave in a manner conducive not only to their own individual interests, but also to the greater interest of the society in general.

This, in brief, is an analysis of the salient features of Vivekananda's eventful and comprehensive life, and is an attempt, though

feeble and faulty, at focussing attention on the greatness and novelty of the force that was Vivekananda.

## THE CONCEPT OF RĀJA-YOGA

BY SRI BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

The term 'yoga' has been very popular in the philosophical literature of India. The use of the term can be frequently found in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. During the period of the Vedas and the principal Upaniṣads, it was current in the sense of 'union' or 'concentration', and it had not attained a technical meaning as 'citta vṛtti nirodha'. The words 'jñāna', 'bhakti', and 'karma' were used to signify certain mental and physical activities which could prove helpful in the attainment of liberation.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the terms 'jñāna-yoga',<sup>1</sup> 'bhakti-yoga',<sup>2</sup> and 'karma-yoga'<sup>3</sup> occur as compounds, while the whole of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is termed as *yogaśāstra* in the colophon at the end of each chapter. The system of Patañjali is historically placed after the composition of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Therefore, it would not be correct, in so far as the *Gītā* is concerned, to take the technical meaning of the term 'yoga' given by Patañjali and thus explain away the meaning of any of the four *yogas*, viz. *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, and *rāja-yoga*. We have to find out the meaning of *yoga* in the *Gītā* itself to do justice to the meanings of the various *yogas* recognized by it. The *Gītā*, II.48, gives *samatva*, equanimity of mind, as one of the meanings of *yoga*. We think, if we take this meaning of *yoga*, our task in determining the meanings of the various *yogas*, and particularly of *rāja-yoga*, will be easier.

When we take *samatva* as the meaning of *yoga*, the aim of the methods of *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, and *rāja-yoga* will be the attainment of *samatva*, by means of which the next stage, i.e. liberation, will be automatically attained. *Samatva* of the mind is the first and preliminary stage to be attained for liberation. Liberation can be attained, as Swami Vivekananda has put it, either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these.

The term 'rāja-yoga' is not found in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, but various yogic practices are prescribed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to attain the ultimate Reality. After the *Gītā*, Patañjali, in the second century B.C., formulated a system of yogic practices, known as *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, taking the support of the dualistic philosophy of the Sāṅkhya. This work of Patañjali is known as *Yoga-Sūtra*. Vyāsa, who is the earliest or the first known commentator on the *Yoga-Sūtra*, is commonly accepted as having lived in the fourth century A.D. He does not give the name 'rāja-yoga' to Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtra*, but he gives an authentic commentary on it, which is true in spirit to the Sāṅkhya philosophy.

*Aparokṣānubhūti*, which is attributed to Śaṅkara (c. eighth century), mentions the term 'rāja-yoga' (114, 143) and gives fifteen stages of it (102, 103), which include all the stages of the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* of Patañjali. But Śaṅkara explains these stages in a manner that suits his Advaita Vedānta. For instance, *samprajñāta samādhi*, according to him, is the cessation of all mental modes; it is a state of mind beyond

<sup>1</sup> III.3; XVI.6.

<sup>2</sup> XIV.26.

III.3, 7; V.22; XIII.24.

all change, but ever merged in Brahman (124). Śaṅkara thinks that a student of *rāja-yoga* must always practise *mūlabandha*, which is the origin of all that exists and by which inhibition of the *manas*, too, becomes a possibility (114).

In *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, which is also attributed to Śaṅkara, it is said: 'Meditation (*manana*) is hundred times superior to merely listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta,\* and assimilation (*nididhyāsana*) is hundred times superior to *manana*, but *nirvikalpa samādhi* is infinitely superior to assimilation' (367). Śaṅkara further remarks that the supreme Reality, Brahman, is verily realized by *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and not by any other means (368).

Śaṅkara is an uncompromising advocate of Advaita Vedānta, and he cannot be imagined to establish his concept of *rāja-yoga* on the dualistic philosophy of Prakṛti and Puruṣa. The supreme Reality, according to him, is to be realized by *jñāna-yoga*. *Bhakti-yoga* and *karma-yoga* are merely the means for self-purification, and they lead to *jñāna-yoga*. Arguing thus, it may be said that, according to Śaṅkara, *jñāna-yoga* and *rāja-yoga* are identical methods. But *rāja-yoga*, according to Śaṅkara, though not based on the Sāṅkhya philosophy, makes full use of the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* as given by Patañjali. Thus, for Śaṅkara, *rāja-yoga* and Patañjali's *yoga* system are not the same.

We have already stated that the term 'yoga' is frequently found in the principal Upaniṣads. The compound term '*rāja-yoga*', however, appears only in some of the minor Yoga Upaniṣads, e.g. *Maṇḍalabrāhmaṇopaniṣad*, *Yogatattvopaniṣad*, *Yogaśikhopaniṣad*, *Advayatārakopaniṣad*, etc. These Upaniṣads have been included in the list of the 108 Upaniṣads given in the *Muktika Upaniṣad*. But these minor Upaniṣads, including the *Muktika Upaniṣad*, do not seem to have been composed before the advent of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara's influence was widespread in the country. Therefore, many of the minor Upaniṣads, which bear clearly an Advaitic influence on them, are likely to have been created after the time of Śaṅkara.

The *Yogaśikhopaniṣad* mentions *mantra-*

*yoga*, *laya-yoga*, and *haṭha-yoga* as the gradual steps leading to *rāja-yoga*, which is the highest *yoga*. It is also mentioned there that these four kinds of *yogas* are included in *mahā-yoga*, which is only one, but called by these four different names. It defines *rāja-yoga* as the conjunction of the *rajas* with the *retas* (of Śakti with Śiva). By its practice, a *yogin* will attain psychic powers, e.g. *aṇimā* etc.

The *Yogatattvopaniṣad* prescribes a practice which has twenty stages, after which only *rāja-yoga* will be attained and not otherwise. These stages are: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇa*, *dhyāna*, *samādhi*, *mahāmudrā*, *mahābandha*, *mahāvedha*, *khecari*, *jālandhara*, *uḍḍiyāṇa*, *mūlabandha*, *dirghapraṇava-sandhāna*, *siddhānta-śravaṇa*, *vajrolī*, *amarolī*, and *sahajolī*.

The *Maṇḍalabrāhmaṇopaniṣad* expects a *rāja-yogin* to know well the nine *cakras* (their functions as well as control); the six *ādhāras* (the regions which are the supports of the *cakras*); the three kinds of introspection (internal, external, and intermediary); and the five kinds of ethers. Otherwise, he is a *yogin* in name only, possessing merely book-learning.

A careful perusal of these Yoga Upaniṣads shows that they have been influenced by the Pātañjala *yoga* and *haṭha-yoga* practices, though all of them advocate the Vedānta philosophy. For the realization of the *nirguṇa*, *nirviśeṣa*, and *nirvikalpa* Brahman, which is described in the Upaniṣads as of the nature of eternal consciousness and bliss, these Yoga Upaniṣads seek to expound the essentials of *rāja-yoga*. It appears that the Vedāntic seers had realized that the psycho-physical discipline prescribed by Patañjali could easily bring about the dissolution of the mind, through which *samatva* could be attained.

The *Yogatattvopaniṣad* accepts that no knowledge of Brahman can be possible without *yoga*, and *vice versa*. It says: 'How can knowledge become, of certainty, the bestower of liberation when unaccompanied by *yoga*? Likewise, *yoga* devoid of knowledge is incompetent to bring about liberation.' Therefore, it may be said that

the realization of Ātman or Brahman is made possible only when knowledge is raised to the degree of certainty by yogic practices. We have not only to hear about Brahman, but meditation and contemplation are necessary for the realization of Brahman.

These Yoga Upaniṣads are least inclined to talk about the Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy, except its practices. Patañjali has 'merely published and corrected the doctrinal and technical traditions of *yoga*'.<sup>4</sup> He is not the creator of the Yoga philosophy. He borrowed the philosophical principles from the Sāṅkhya and directed his 'effort to co-ordinating philosophical material around practical formulas for concentration, meditation, and ecstasy'.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, those who preached the Upaniṣadic philosophy of Brahman were perfectly justified in making use of the *yoga* practices for the realization of Brahman.

Vijñānabhikṣu takes *rāja-yoga* and Pātañjala *yoga* synonymously. In his *Yogasārasaṅgraha*, he says that he does not want 'to enter into the details of postures, because our subject-matter is *rāja-yoga*, in which postures occupy only a secondary position'. Thus, *Yogasārasaṅgraha* is a book on *rāja-yoga*. He has quoted from *Nāradya Haribhaktisuddhodaya*, in which Nārada is said to give a description of *rāja-yoga*. Nārada advises that the human self should be merged in the supreme Self: 'An aspirant is to merge the human self, which wrongly or needlessly conceives itself to be the doer of acts and enjoyer of the results—which is yet pure, on account of its being devoid of limitations—in the unconditioned supreme Self.' The idea of the human self existing apart from Brahman is an illusion, because such a differentiation is due to *māyā*. When a man is equipped with *yoga*, he becomes merged in Brahman.

This shows that Vijñānabhikṣu does not make a hard and fast distinction between the principles of Pātañjala *yoga* and the Advaitic conception of the identity of soul and Brahman.

*Hathayogapradīpikā* extols *rāja-yoga*. According to it, it is very difficult to know the fundamentals as well as the mystery of *rāja-yoga*. It can only be known through the precepts of a *yogin*. It takes *samādhi*, *laya*, *advaita*, *turiya*, etc. as the equivalents of *rāja-yoga*.

Swami Vivekananda has written a commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtra*, entitled *Rāja-yoga*. According to him: 'The science of *rāja-yoga* proposes to put before humanity a practical and scientifically worked out method of reaching the ultimate Truth.' He was not concerned with making a philosophical distinction between the Advaita Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya system. Śaṅkara and his followers are advocates of Advaita, and they always criticize the dualistic principles of the Sāṅkhya. The principles of the Advaita philosophy are intellectually more convincing than the dualism of the Sāṅkhya, and Vijñānabhikṣu has attempted to show the same in his commentaries on the *Yoga-Sūtra* (*Yogasārasaṅgraha* and *Yoga-vārttika*) and the *Sāṅkhya-Sūtra* (*Sāṅkhya-pravacanasārabhāṣya*), which have been interpreted along the lines of Vedānta. We do not think that Swami Vivekananda, while interpreting the *Yoga-Sūtra*, becomes an exponent of the dualistic philosophy. He was a strong supporter of the Advaita philosophy. Therefore, we are led to conclude that he recognizes the value of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* as advocated by Patañjali, and gives to it an honoured place by naming it as *rāja-yoga*.

After Swami Vivekananda, there have been a number of writers on *yoga*, who always identify *rāja-yoga* with the Pātañjala *yoga* system. Swami Akhilananda regards Patañjali as the father of *rāja-yoga*, who gives an elaborate treatment of the science of concentration.<sup>6</sup> E. E. Wood has discussed some useful exercises for students of *rāja-yoga* in his book *Practical Yoga: Ancient and Modern*. This book contains a free commentary on the *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali. Swami Nikhilananda writes: 'The method of *rāja-yoga*, practical and rational, has

<sup>4</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom*, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Hindu Psychology*, p. 104.

been tested again and again by Indian *yogīs*. Its technique can be followed in varying degrees by all, irrespective of their religion, in their practice of meditation and concentration.<sup>7</sup> 'In *rāja-yoga*,' according to Sri Aurobindo, 'the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified, and directed towards the divine Being.'<sup>8</sup>

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the psycho-physical technique of Patañjali has been recognized by all, seers and saints, for the purposes of the realization of the ultimate Reality. Both the ancient and modern advocates of *rāja-yoga* have not invariably associated themselves with the dualistic philosophy of the Sāṅkhya. The followers of *bhakti-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, and *jñāna-yoga* also advocate the use of the *yoga* technique for the realization of

the highest Reality conceived by them. This shows that *rāja-yoga* is independently capable of leading one to liberation; at the same time, it can be made use of in the other *yogas* as well for speeding up and facilitating the realization of the ultimate Reality.

It may be stated that *rāja-yoga* is a systematic and practical science which, by a psycho-physical discipline, brings the mind to equanimity (*samatva*), and gradually leads one to salvation. Its technique has been tested for generations by spiritual aspirants. The different schools of Indian philosophy do not prescribe any rigid discipline for their followers. The ultimate Reality can be realized by *jñāna-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*, or *karma-yoga*, or *rāja-yoga*, severally or conjointly. The choice of one or the other depends on the kind of temperament or aptitude of the individual aspirant. One can follow any of the *yogas* and attain liberation.

<sup>7</sup> *Hinduism*, p. 130.

<sup>8</sup> *On Yoga*, p. 695.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

During the past three years, we have been publishing a series of learned articles on *māyā* and *avidyā* from the pen of Professor Surendranath Bhattacharya, M.A., formerly of Bihar National College, Patna. Six articles have already appeared in this series. The seventh, entitled 'Māyā and Avidyā in the Post-Śāṅkara Vedānta', is in two parts, the first of which is included in this issue. The second part of this article will appear in the next issue. ...

In his third and concluding article on 'The Ālvārs and Their Religion of Love', Swami Smaranananda deals with the last three Ālvārs, namely, Tondaradippodi, Tiruppāṇ, and Tirumaṅgai. ...

Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., formerly Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University, shows in his article that, judging from 'The Trend of Modern Science', Advaita Vedānta is its logical culmination, and asserts that 'Advaita Vedānta places the coping stone on the unfinished scientific edifice'. ...

Dr. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury's article on 'The Religious Need of India' was received by us in March last. It was with deep sorrow that we learnt about his passing away at Calcutta in the first week of May after a brain operation. Dr. Chaudhury was a regular contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*. His services to *Prabuddha Bharata* in several ways will always be remembered by us. May his soul rest in peace! ...

The contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the revitalization of the different departments of our national life forms the subject-matter of the article 'The Force that Was Vivekananda' by Sri Kailas Chandra Kar, B.A., B.T., of Shillong. ...

'The Concept of Rāja-yoga' is by Sri Braj Bihari Nigam, M.A., LL.B., of M. L. B. College, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY

In 1963, India and the world outside will be celebrating the birth centenary of Swami



Vivekananda. It is now a fact of history that, among the great men who appeared on the Indian soil during the last century and worked to build up an 'Awakened India' by giving a fresh impetus to the different departments of her national life, the personality of Swami Vivekananda is one of the most outstanding. During the last sixty years, hardly has there been any institution in our country—political, social, cultural, or religious—which has not borne the impress of his forceful message, or a movement which has not drawn inspiration from this patriot saint of modern India. Directly or indirectly, Swami Vivekananda has powerfully influenced the India of our times. Today, he lives in the soul of his motherland.

To the world outside, Swami Vivekananda carried the message of Vedānta, and spread broadcast the gems of India's spirituality in different countries. At a time when India was little known beyond her borders, the Swami raised his powerful voice in defence of her religion and her people, and put his dear motherland once again on the map of the world.

It is a proud privilege and an honour for the nation to celebrate the centenary of this immortal son of Mother India. Since India attained independence, our national government has been encouraging and actively participating in the celebration of the birth centenaries of our great leaders who made notable contributions to the cultural and spiritual renaissance of our beloved motherland. We have every hope that the governments both at the Centre and in the States will enthusiastically come forward and plan a nation-wide celebration of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, who is one of the chief architects of modern India. Leaders of thought and public institutions and organizations in different parts of the country are already chalking out plans to observe the great event on a grand scale. We have no doubt that the occasion will rouse immense public enthusiasm, and the people will respond

spontaneously to the call of the leaders to make the celebrations a conspicuous success.

True, our country has been celebrating the centenaries of our great national leaders and paying due homage to their sacred memories. We would, however, wish to point out that the observance of the centenary of Swami Vivekananda should be marked with a difference, in that the occasion, wherever observed, should be conducted in an atmosphere of solemnity befitting the spiritual stature of the Swami. Amidst all the enthusiasm and joy that the occasion is bound to create, the celebrations everywhere should reflect the sublimity of his saintly character and breathe the universal spirit of his inspiring teachings. We would like to lay special emphasis on this aspect of the celebrations.

In this connection, it should be pointed out that the centenary year actually falls in 1963, and not in 1962, as it seems to be the impression in certain circles. Swami Vivekananda was born in January 1863, and it is customary to hold the centenary celebrations after the completion of a hundred years. So his birth centenary should be observed during the period between January 1963 and January 1964. It may also be mentioned that this is the period during which the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, both at the headquarters and at its several centres in India and abroad, will be celebrating the centenary of its illustrious founder, Swami Vivekananda.

At the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur Math, a provisional committee has already been constituted to plan the various programmes connected with the centenary celebrations, as well as to give to the people a lead in the right direction. As the centenary year is fast approaching, we wish to draw the attention of all admirers of the Swami everywhere to the need of making timely preparations for observing the occasion on a world-wide scale and in a befitting manner.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**FORERUNNERS OF JESUS.** BY LEROY WATERMAN. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1959. Pages 156. Price not mentioned.*

The various movements that culminated in the emergence of the teachings of Jesus have for long been matters of speculation. The scholasticism that busied itself with the Bible had till recently to bridge the gulf yawning between the Jewish legalistic-cum-nationalistic cult and the gospel of love and peace found in Jesus. The recent discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls has helped bridge this chasm. Professor Waterman of Michigan offers here a critical study of the great unknown prophet as found in Isaiah 40-55, and presents an appraisal of John the Baptist in the light of the Dead Sea scrolls. The thought of these two appears to be integral to the teaching of Jesus.

The second chapter gives an illuminating study of Isaiah 40-55, and the last three chapters are devoted to John the Baptist and to Jesus. The work should provide the beginning of a new evaluation of the Bible.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

**FREUD AND DEWEY ON THE NATURE OF MAN.** BY MORTON LEVITT. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1960. Pages 180. Price \$3.75.*

When we survey the contemporary scene, we notice greatly intensified efforts to strangle democracy and to stifle individuality and freedom. There is also a parallel tendency to suppress psycho-analytic psychology, which exposes the hidden motives to action in human beings. It is gratifying that, in the midst of this encircling gloom, the Philosophical Library should have brought out a highly stimulating volume, presenting, in simple and readable style, the leading ideas of the champion of democracy, Dewey, and of the founder of psycho-analysis, Freud. Perhaps, for the first time, pragmatism and psycho-analysis have been brought into close juxtaposition in the mind of the same thinker, who attempts to evaluate the leading concepts of each in terms of the other. This approach is bound to stimulate the reader into thinking along original lines.

Not that the volume is without defects. It has quite a few. The attempt made in Chapter I to trace some kind of common ancestry for pragmatism and psycho-analysis, on the basis of the slender foundation that Freud and Dewey were contemporaries, is a little far-fetched. Similarly, Chapter IV, which is valuable, in that it is the result of a painstaking effort to trace the intellectual antecedents of Freud and Dewey in Plato, Kant, Comte, Hegel, and James, and in Galton, Hartmann, Darwin, Herbart,

and Helmholtz, suffers because of a certain degree of artificiality necessary for supporting the main hypothesis that the two thinkers must have grown up in a similar environment. The next chapter, dealing with Freudian concepts, is a little disappointing, in that it skims on the surface. But these slight drawbacks are more than compensated for by the brilliance of Chapter VI, which, so far as the reviewer is aware of, presents a systematic psychology of Dewey. The contributions of Dewey as a philosopher and as an educationist are familiar to us. But few have cared to see in Dewey a systematic psychologist. The author of the book under review has earned our gratitude by drawing our attention to the valuable contributions of Dewey, the psychologist.

In this, as well as in the next chapter, there are far-fetched analogies and strained comparisons. The author seems to think that the germs of the concepts of conflict, repression, transference, ego, and, above all, of the unconscious are to be found in Dewey.

Taking an overall view of the picture presented by the book, the reviewer cannot but conclude that, as the result of the comparative study, Freud emerges as a dominant personality, and Dewey loses slightly in stature. Psychology is vindicated, and sociology and social psychology get to the background. This is a book worth studying as a healthy corrective to the undesirable trends in contemporary psychology.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

**LETTERS TO SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL.** BY M. K. GANDHI. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Pages 250. Price Rs. 2.50.*

This volume contains a bunch of letters of Gandhiji, translated from the original Gujarati, dealing mostly with the topics connected with the various phases of the independence struggle.

Letters, really speaking, mirror the contents of the writer's mind. The different moods of the writer, reflecting his fears and disappointments, hopes and joys, humour, love, or sympathy, can be felt in the pages of this book. The letters cover the entire period of the hectic days of our national struggle from 1921 to 1947. It is fascinating to read what Gandhiji's thoughts were on some of the important events that have shaped India's future—Bardoli *satyāgraha*; Round Table Conference; Bihar earthquake; Haripur Congress; Noakhali, Delhi, and Punjab disturbances; etc.

Students of history will derive much benefit from these letters, and the general reader will get a valuable insight into the personality of the Father of the Nation.

KESHAVA CHAITANYA

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYALAYA COIMBATORE DISTRICT

REPORT FOR 1959-1960

The activities of the Vidyalaya during the years under review were as follows:

*Teachers' College:* In 1959, 50 students were sent for appearing in the B.T. degree examination, and 42 passed. Attached to the college, there are a research department, an extension department, which provides in-service training to teachers in high schools, and audio-visual, evaluation, and action research workshops. The college organized group discussions, seminars, and a library course.

*High School:* This is a multipurpose high school. There is provision for teaching drawing, woodwork, agriculture, engineering, and music. Flower gardening, painting, and stamp collection are taken up by the students as hobbies. Strength: 182 students.

*Gandhi Basic Training School:* Spinning and weaving are the main crafts taught, with kitchen-gardening and bee-keeping as the subsidiary crafts. Strength: 73 students.

*Kalanilayam:* This is the model senior basic school attached to the Gandhi Basic Training School. Strength: boys: 341; girls: 222. Spinning, weaving, and vegetable gardening were the main crafts taught to the students.

*College of Physical Education:* The course of training imparted here consists of teaching the trainees organization, administration, and principles of physical education, methods of teaching and coaching, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, first aid, etc., with practical training in all these.

*College of Rural Higher Education:* The college offers a four-year course of training in rural service. Strength: 174 students.

*School of Agriculture:* Total strength: 29 students.

*School of Engineering:* Strength: 152 students.

*Rural Service:* Rural extension service is undertaken by the various institutions of the Vidyalaya, each institution working in conformity with its main work.

*Social Education Organizers' Training Centre:* The Centre, conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Community Development, Government of India, provides training to the social education organizers deputed by the South Indian States. So far, 168 social education organizers have been trained at the Centre in five batches. Present strength: 36.

*Dispensary:* Total number of cases treated: 14,287 (men: 8,308; women: 1,569; children: 4,410).

*Central Library:* Total number of books: 22,300. Total number of books issued during the years under review: 23,199.

*Industrial Section:* In this section, electric motors, centrifugal pumps suitable for agricultural and domestic use, and some textile machines are being manufactured.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR REPORT FOR 1959

*Religious and Cultural Activities:* Regular worship and prayers at the Ashrama shrine, observance of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, and celebration of *Durgā-pūjā*, *Kālī-pūjā*, *Kṛṣṇa-jayantī*, and Christmas Eve.

*Educational Activities:* (i) *Library and Reading Room:* Total number of books in the library: 3,503. Number of dailies received in the free reading room: 2; monthlies: 12; weeklies: 3. Apart from the above main library, there are 12 separate libraries for schools, containing a total number of 14,136 books.

(ii) *Students' Homes:* The Society is conducting two students' homes, one in the premises of the Society and the other at Sakchi area, the latter for the benefit of the boys coming from the rural areas to prosecute studies in high schools at Jamshedpur. The homes provide the students with the much needed spiritual atmosphere for building up good character. Total number of students: 34 (full free: 2; concession holders: 2).

(iii) *Schools:* The Society is running 14 schools in different parts of the city, with a total strength of 6,797 students, of whom 3,059 are girls.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA MANGALORE REPORT FOR 1959

The Mangalore Ashrama, from its inception in 1938, has endeavoured to spread among the people the ideas and ideals of Vedānta, in the light of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, and to create interest in spiritual life. During the year under review, study classes on *Ātmabodha*, *Sanat-sujātīya*, and *Jivanmukti-viveka* were conducted, and public lectures were given in different parts of the town and district. Brief talks on moral and religious subjects were given to the students of the Balakashrama run by the Mission. The Ashrama has published *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Mānasollāsa*, *Saraṇāgatigadya*, a life of Sri Ramakrishna, and *Viṣṇusahasranāma* in Kannada, and *Viṣṇu-tattva-vinirṇaya* with Sanskrit text and English translation.

The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated with a varied religious and cultural programme.

The Ashrama library has 807 books.