PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII SEPTEMBER 1963 No. 9

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, January 12, 1935

After some conversation on the new temple of the Master which was now under construction at Belur, one of the assembled devotees asked Swami Vijnanananda: 'Yesterday you said something about the message of the Vedānta and the Master's teachings which I could not comprehend well. Will you kindly elucidate it further today?' To this Maharaj said: 'According to the Vedānta, realization is possible only if you renounce the world. But our Master does not say so. He says renunciation of the world is not essential. If you are in a detached mood and disinterested with regard to the fruits of your action, you need not renounce the world. At the same time, he tells you to give up wealth and lust. That is the way with great souls: their statements seem at first sight to be so contradictory and their teachings also appear sometimes to be obscure.

'The Bible describes God in all His three forms, with attributes, without attributes, and as incarnate. Whenever God incarnates Himself in human form, He reveals Himself as such, as men would not understand Him otherwise. I am studying the Bible nowadays. It is a very forceful exposition, and inspiring also because it expresses truth. The teachings of the sages are all very inspiring and forceful, because whatever they said was based on their own practical experience and not on hearsay. Whatever they say is true for all time—past, present, and future—and for all states—waking, dream, deep sleep, and transcendental.

'In the transcendental stage of complete merger with the Infinite, there is no outward consciousness; only a slight sort of feeling remains there. When Śukadeva was practising spiritual austerities in the Himalayas, he would hear on all sides only one sound—Brahman. Jyotir-Brahman (the light of Brahman) was the only sound he heard echoing in the mountains. Do you know what the 'light' is ? It is very sweet and

soothing, representing joy and peace and enlightenment. In the English translation of *Devī-Bhāgavata,* I have written about Śukadeva; you can read it at leisure. It is just this light which I saw at Sarnath in front of the image of the Buddha, an infinite unbroken ocean of light, with myself as a tiny speck in it. The sound was like that of breakers, only it was sweet and joyous. The whole universe faded out, myself including. Physical consciousness was almost obliterated with only a trace of body-sense left. There was an intense joy. Even now, as I speak about it, I am filled with ineffable joy.

'The Buddha's personality was unique. Kāśyapa and other Brāhmaṇas, before they became his disciples, wanted to kill him. He was once made to sleep in a room full of snakes who, they thought, would make short work of him. They peeped into the room at night from time to time. On one of these visits, they found the room brightly illuminated. A huge jewel-crested snake had its hood spread over the head of the Buddha. They were rendered speechless at the sight, and in the morning, fell at his feet and begged his forgiveness. He forgave them. They became his disciples.

'If any person, at the time of his death, can fix his mind on any of these great souls, he is sure to fare well in the other world.'

Allahabad Math, January 16, 1935

Swami Vijnanananda had been studying the Bible these days. On this day, he had started reading the transfiguration of Christ according to the Gospel of St. Mark. There was only one listener, a solitary devotee, who listened with all reverence. In the course of reading, the Swami said: 'Jesus took James and John on to the top of a mountain where he became transfigured and his body assumed a lustrous brightness. Many sublime teachings of Jesus are incorporated herein. But he told his disciples: "These are not everything; there are many things subtle and esoteric about which I will tell you." I think, by this, he had meant teachings about meditation, contemplation, ecstatic moods, and so on.

'There are many things to be learnt about Self-realization. The more you learn, the greater will be your desire for further knowledge. There is no limit to the acquisition of knowledge. Purity, truthfulness, and honesty should be the basis of your life. And there should be faith. With these as foundations, a man will have full contentment in life, in whatever circumstances he may happen to be. That is the sign of a religious life—contentment in all circumstances.'

A couple of days after the above conversation, the subject of Jesus Christ's life and message came up again in course of talk. Addressing that particular devotee, Maharaj said: 'Other incarnations have, almost without exception, addressed God as "Father", whereas our Master was the first to invoke Him as "Mother". Keshab Babu once asked him to explain the reason for this, to which he replied: "You have seen the limitless ocean and the infinite firmament. With such manifestations of Śakti (primordial energy), can't you recognize the Mother? The Mother is the embodiment of Śakti. Nothing will come unless you call on the Mother. She is everything. As the Mother (or Śakti personified), She holds the sky and the universe and everything else. Without the Mother, you can hardly comprehend the Father. Without the Mother's help, can you recognize the Father?" Then Keshab Babu understood, and since then, he started worshipping God both as Father and Mother.

'Throughout the Bible, you read about lepers, which only shows the pitiable condition of Jews in those days—steeped in poverty, misery, and sickness. That is why you find Jesus every now and then healing the lepers.

'Our Master also possessed miraculous powers. We, of course, understood very little of him, only Swamiji comprehend-

ed him to some extent. He told the Master that he had no faith in gods and goddesses and only believed in the light of Brahman. One day the Master put him in a trance, and immediately the universe with everything in it faded before his eyes and he cried out in terror: "Oh, what is this you have done to me? I have my parents living." At these words, the Master smiled and said: "All right, nothing more at present." Does not that indicate the wonderful power of the Master?'

Remaining silent for some time, Maharaj continued: 'I was also inclined at first to worship God as Father. I, of course, entertained feelings of respect and reverence for the Mother, but felt greater attraction for the Father. Now, I invoke the Mother morning and evening and feel as if I am a small child sitting on Her lap.'

Allahabad Math, January 31, 1935

Just before the evening, some devotees were sitting round Swami Vijnananandaji. The talk going on was about *mukti* (salvation) and the life beyond. Maharaj was saying: 'At the time of death, a man loses his wits, he becomes enveloped in a sort of mental darkness. If only once he can utter the name of God at that time he may be saved as God takes charge of him. Unless one has acquired the habit of constantly thinking of God by long practice, everything becomes confused on account of the pangs of death, and one cannot think of God even once. So what is necessary is to constantly meditate on Him and pray to Him.

'Generally, after death, men go to *pitṛloka* —the world of their departed forefathers. When a man leaves his mortal frame, the angels of death come and carry his subtle body to a region according to his previous *karma* (actions), where he is welcomed by the denizens of that region. He passes his time pleasantly until, again in accordance with his *karma*, he comes down and is born again somewhere. If he is not born in congenial surroundings, he casts off the mortal coil and is born again in a more congenial environment. The influence of stars may also determine the length of a man's life. Confinement in a physical frame also diminishes the strength of mind. After giving up the mortal body, the mind gets great strength. Pure souls can know and understand all this. Our Master saw Swamiji come down from the *saptarṣi-maṇḍala*—the heavenly region of the "Great Bear"—where the seven sages dwell.'

* * * *

'The Gods and sages come to have a bath in the Triveṇī (the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and Sarasvatī at Allahabad). The best periods are the morning, midday, evening, and midnight. If they do not come, the place is no longer thought of as a holy pilgrim centre.'

'I have described to you how Mother Triveṇī revealed Herself to me. I had just had a dip in the sacred confluence, when I saw Her as a small girl with three braids of hair hanging from her head. Rakhal Maharaj, on learning about this vision, told me that the Goddess had actually appeared before me. The test of the reality of a vision is that the exhilaration of it continues for a long time. There is a feeling of intense joy and the heart is illumined. Even now the recollection of that Goddess as a small girl gives me a feeling of delight.

'The God Śiva also appeared before me once at Varanasi. From Allahabad, I was on my way to that place in connection with the construction of the Sevashrama hospital wards. I was going from the station in an *ekka* (a horse-drawn carriage) which overturned while taking a turn and I fell down with my leg inside the wheel and my heavy box on top of it. I was badly hurt, but managed to reach the Ashrama in another *ekka*. The doctors took charge of me, but I was running high temperature and prayed: "O Lord Viśva nātha, I came to your place in connection with the Master's work and this is what has happened. How will the work be done?"

Then I fell asleep and, at about two in the morning, the Lord Śiva, with matted locks and a smiling face appeared before me. I said: "O Lord Śiva, have you come to take me? But I cannot go now; I have to complete the Master's work first." But, without waiting to listen to me, He, with a radiant smile on His countenance, slowly came forward and held me in a close embrace. Immediately, my body became cold as ice and I said: "Now, farewell Lord; I have to do the Master's work." Smilingly He left me, and strange enough, in the morning, I found myself free from fever and the wounds had also healed. Even now I can see that benign countenance of Śiva, and it gives me a feeling of intense delight to talk of Him.'

Allahabad Math, February 1, 1935

In the evening, there was a gathering of monks and devotees. Maharaj said: 'Yesterday, in the evening, a good conclusion was reached on meditation. There are three particular regions of the body which are good for the purpose of meditation; the heart, the spot between the eyebrows, and the nerve centre in the brain (*sahasrāra*). Our Master used to say that the heart is the best place for meditation. Mahāvīrjī tore his chest open and showed the images of Rāmacandra and Sītādevī there. The physical heart is somewhat to the left of the chest, but Mahāvīrjī shows the meditation region in the centre. Meditation in the core of the heart is advisable, though that is not at all easy. Our Master said meditation on his picture would be enough. Go on doing it with all your heart and soul.'

A devotee: 'An intimate friend of mine has made good progress in the realm of spirituality and sees all kinds of luminous visions. But there he has stopped and cannot advance any further in spite of his best efforts. He has asked many *sādhus* and holy men, but got no assistance from anyone. He very much wants to see you or Gangadhar Maharaj some time.'

Maharaj: 'Yes, it can be arranged at Belur Math when I go there.' After a long silence, Maharaj added: 'If one invokes the Master, he can see so many luminous objects. But he must be invoked with all the heart and soul. He is the omnipresent light of the world, pervading the entire universe.'

Allahabad Math, February 10, 1935

Numerous monks and devotees were present in the evening. Songs of invocation of the Universal Mother were sung and hymns chanted, to which Maharaj listened with rapt attention like one entranced. After a time, he slowly said: 'Our idea is that Mother Kālī, in a whirl of delight, is dancing like one possessed. The universe is quaking under the rhythm of Her feet and rushing forward towards annihilation. To check this frenzied dance of the Mother, the Lord Śiva fell flat on the ground before Her; and when She saw Him lying at Her feet, She was overcome with shame and stopped Her dancing.'

Then Maharaj became introspective and stopped talking. And, after some time, he started speaking about the Master: 'Our Master was a very unassuming person and spoke also in a simple and straightforward manner. What he said seemed to be quite easy of comprehension. But the more you thought about his teachings, the more difficult they appeared. He had said to Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda): "I hold the key that will open the gate for you to *nirvikalpa-samādhi* (absolute oneness with the Infinite). Now you will do the Mother's work and then you will be immersed in this *samādhi*." Now I find there is no end to the Mother's work. The universe is in a perpetual whirl of motion and work has to go on constantly. Swamiji used to say: "My work here is done. Yet I am working in accordance with the Master's instructions, but my heart is always in Brahman."'

Then, with regard to himself, Maharaj said: 'Swamiji Maharaj once said: "I cannot say anything to Peshan (Swami Vijnanananda), because I see the Master in him." In reply to this, I said to Swamiji: "But he is in

every created being, and it is not surprising that, with your penetrative eyes, you will see the Master in me also." But Swamiji insisted: "No, Peshan, it is not that. I see distinctly that the Master has made his habitat well in you"; to which I replied: "You can say whatever you like, but I don't feel anything like what you say." What he meant was that the Master had occupied my heart. Whether I understood it or not, I felt happy to hear it. And it is a very good thing to stick to one fixed ideal. Steadfastness in a good cause is praiseworthy. I had always this attitude and have it even now.'

On another occasion, Maharaj felt very happy when he found a devotee sticking to his promise, and said: 'Our Master was a perfect example of adherence to truth. Once he said he would go to the lavatory, he would be sure to go, whether he felt an urge or not. If the Master had to go to Calcutta and the carriage was at the door, he would immediately get up and call the cab-man who, however, might be enjoying a smoke and taking it leisurely. The Master was impatient inasmuch as people would be waiting for him expectantly at Calcutta, and he wanted to be there as early as possible so as not to keep them waiting. He would feel relieved only when the cab started. Swamiji also invariably kept his word and never violated it except for very special reasons.

'The Master's adherence to rules and love of truth were really unique, unseen elsewhere. He used to say: "If in one particular case I am proved to be wrong, you will know I am wrong in every case." What a marvellous statement to make! It is impossible to speak like that, unless one is firmly established in truth. What a wonder! How strong the words and how sublime the idea!'

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE SOCIETY

[EDITORIAL]

The importance of the individual as a reckonable entity and the complex problem of relationship between the individual and the society have been the subject of controversial discussion from the very early times, and many thinkers—philosophers, sociologists, and politicians—have made various studies and have put forth different theories on the subject. Some are of the opinion that the individual is more important than the society and that every liberty should be given to him, even at the cost of society or organization. On the other hand, some say that society as an organized unit is more important, and all considerations concerning the individual are only subservient to the social and organizational welfare and progress. Individualism, however, held its ground for a long time both in the West and the East. Prof. C.E.M. Joad, in his *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics* writes: 'For the last two thousand years, the conscience of mankind has insisted, at any rate in theory, that the individual should be treated as an end in himself. For what, it may be asked, is a man for, or, as the Greeks would have put it, What is the true end of man? We do not, the fact must be admitted, know. But there is one thing upon which that part of mankind which still accepts Christ's teaching is agreed: it is that the true end of man includes the maximum development of his personality. We expect it, in other words, of a man that he should develop his faculties to their utmost capacity, utilize his powers to the full, and realize all the potentialities of his nature; that he should, in short, become as completely as possible himself. And since he cannot do

these things alone, it is the business of the community to make the good life possible for all its citizens: not any sort of life, be it noted, but the sort of life that seems to men individually to be good. "Political societies", to repeat Aristotle's aphorism, "exist for the sake of noble actions and not merely of a common life."'

The concept of individualism is, as a rule, associated with the type of society or state according to which its welfare consists in the well-being and free initiative of its constituent members. The principle of individualism insists that each citizen has the right to form his ideals, to choose his way of life for himself. 'That we should be able to freely express our thoughts and desires, on the platform, at the street corner, or in the press; that we should be entitled to worship whatever God we please and worship Him how we please, and that we should be entitled to worship no God at all'; that we should be free to choose the profession or way of life we think best for our maximum economic and intellectual welfare; that we should have the 'four freedoms' in an unrestricted way—these things and others like them taken together are the content of what is known as individual liberty—the core of individualism. It is often contrasted with collectivism and various forms of socialistic or communistic concepts where the consideration for the individual is subordinated to the good of the society or community, as determined by the group of people who rule the society. The concept of individualism, though old in origin, gained strength from the doctrine of *laissez-faire* that arose in the eighteenth century. This doctrine found, among others, a powerful advocate in Jeremy Bentham, a progressive political thinker of his time, who swayed the thoughts of many intellectuals and influenced a large number of institutions of the West in the nineteenth century. His arguments were: 'Since every person is the best judge of his own happiness, the more free he is left in his search for its attainment, the more certain he is to reach it; and since each man is equally entitled to happiness, all artificial barriers imposed by government in the way of its realization are necessarily evil.'

The principle of individualism looks apparently to be very sound, good and attractive. It has the elements to make the individual vigorous in his struggle for existence and make him optimistic and provides incentive to personal efficiency of the highest order. But when practically applied to the fields of economics and politics, without proper restrictions and safeguards, it allows scope for unhealthy competition, unbridled power-concentration and blind selfishness. A tempering principle, therefore, is necessary as a safeguard against these undesirable tendencies inherent in individualism. Herbert Hoover, writing on *American Individualism*, observed significantly: 'Our social and economic system cannot march toward better days unless it is inspired by things of the spirit. It is here that the higher purposes of individualism must find their sustenance. Men do not live by bread alone. Nor is individualism merely a stimulus to production and the road to liberty. ... Spirituality with its faith, its hope, its charity, can be increased by each individual's own efforts. And in proportion as each individual increases his own store of spirituality, in that proportion increases the idealism of democracy.'

But, as it very often happens, love of personal gain veils the correct vision of man and he is prone to run into dangerous ways regardless of the higher principles of life. Love of gain brings in its wake love of power and power ordinarily corrupts the powerful. That is what exactly has happened where individualism got the upper hand. Instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, combativeness, thirst for power, and adulation grew so much in the powerful individuals that they became extremely selfish and oppressive and the society as a whole started suffering. Many cases of inequity, tyranny, domination, and injustice made the majority of mankind unhappy and miserable. The personal superiority and hunger for power reigned

supreme, and altruistic outlook suffered heavily. And as these things went on increasing—as some undesirable things always do for some time—reactions in various spheres of thought and action set in. They gave birth to a number of social and political philosophies to counteract the evils of individualism. The comforts and luxuries of a handful of individuals at the expense of the teeming suffering millions could not be tolerated for long and this sort of ultra-individualism as a philosophy of social and political structure had to receive a setback though, even now, the importance and value of individual qualities and personal character are a recognized requisite for progress and prosperity and will be so at all times. This fact, however, cannot be overlooked and denied that there is today a clear struggle for supremacy and power between the two types of society or state—individualistic-minded, or we may say democratic, and communistic or authoritarian.

II

In India also, much stress has been laid on the individuality of man. The Indian philosophy, specially the Vedānta, recognizes the greatness of each individual soul and stresses the need of the development of individuality. But this is somewhat different from what we said about individualism earlier. Here the concept of individuality has a spiritual backing and it is this that makes the difference. The glory, the power, and the potential divinity of each individual are stressed through and through in the Hindu scriptures. The individual, the Upaniṣads hold, is in essence none else than the supreme Self. But this individual is not the little self that we commonly understand by our individuality. It is not the puny, thirsty, hungry, self-seeking individuality that, in the midst of ignorance of its own nature, only tries to rob others to sustain the bundle of nerves and the lump of flesh that deceptively present themselves as the individual self. 'Here I stand,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'and if I shut my eyes and try to conceive my existence, "I", "I", "I"—what is the idea before me? The idea of a body. Am I then nothing but a combination of material substances? The Vedas declare "No". I am a spirit living in a body. I am not the body.' The realization of this consciousness and the manifestation of the individual spiritual content—which is really the same with the universal unity that is the only truth—is the end and aim of all Indian social, ethical, and religious systems. The ideal is to transcend the limits of egocentric sphere and enter gradually the vast and limitless realm of universal thought and cosmic unity. The whole of Hindu sociology is based on the concept of elevation of the individual by and by from a lower existence to a higher one, ultimately to reach the core of that unity—when lower and higher, evil and good, you and me disappear and the blessed experience of non-dual entity fills the entire being of the individual—nay where the individual loses his isolated existence in the Universal—which is one without a second. It is this reading of Indian system of society which enabled Swami Vivekananda to declare that 'the national ideals of India are renunciation and service'—renunciation and sacrifice of the lower ideals and smaller good for higher ideals and better good. The idea is very common and popular among the Hindus that one has to sacrifice the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the country, and the country for the world, and the whole world for the soul. The Hindu social orders and systems of ethics are made subservient to the demands of the spirit. Swami Vivekananda, on the concept of this aspect of our social philosophy, emphatically says: 'Oh India! ... Forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life, are not for sense pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar, forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the Universal Mother; forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers.'

III

But, in spite of the fact that we in India have backed the principle of individualism through a higher spiritual outlook, where individualism gets a wider scope to merge into universalism for its fulfilment, the fact has remained that too much of individual thinking has led to a serious lack of the element of organization in us. What is to be done then? Should the concept of individualism—a concept traditionally supported by the Indian scriptures and philosophies —be abandoned? We do not think it is necessary.

The course open to us at this critical period of the conflicting tendencies of modern times and national emergency is not only to keep close to our age-long traditions of individualism peculiar to the genius and talent of Indian culture, but at the same time, to adapt ourselves to the new environments by assimilating the good points of the Western organizational strength. These good points are concerted action for a noble cause, the co-ordination of wills for the same, and the power of organized efforts at the same time to ensure the full freedom and development of the individual, both secular and spiritual. The social, and also the political structure should be such as to create such conditions in which, to quote Prof. Joad again, 'the individual can pursue absolute values, ... where its members more clearly apprehend the values of truth, moral virtue, beauty, and happiness, and embody them more fully in their lives'.

'Two of these values, namely, those of moral virtue and happiness are, however, pursued and realized in the service of the community. We must add, then, that a good community is one which offers its citizens opportunities for the development of their personalities and the realization of these absolute values in its service.' A successful democracy is that system of government 'under which every citizen has an opportunity of participating, through discussion, in an attempt to reach voluntary agreement as to what shall be done for the good of the whole ... while not forgetting that the true end of the state must be sought in the lives of the individuals.'

Fortunately, India is pledged to such a system of government and social order. The present national trends are towards establishing that ideal type of democratic society where every individual shall enjoy the utmost liberty and four freedoms—the freedom of thought, the freedom of speech, the freedom of action and the freedom of worship—and all these for the supreme freedom of one's spiritual development. And the Indian genius is very much suited to this type of social order.

The ancient institutions of caste, village community, and joint family were based on this principle of mutual co-operation of the individual and the society. The good of one is inseparably bound with the good of the other. These systems have, no doubt, been seriously affected these days by so many factors of modern civilization based on the principles of natural selection and survival of the fittest—i.e. competition. They have, thus, ceased to serve the useful purpose that they did before. It is now the duty of the Indians to reform and adapt them to their present-day needs. This is only possible if we can give up our undesirable attitude of drifting and despair and seriously organize ourselves in the work of regenerating our good and noble institutions. Social and national drawbacks and shortcomings can hardly be removed by the effort of only a few. It is wrong to think that things will right themselves in their own way without the concerted action and united strength of the individuals who form the nation. We must be good, honest, hardworking, and sacrificing individuals, fused together into an organized effort for national welfare. 'To make a great future India,' Swami Vivekananda said about sixty years ago, 'the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills. Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharva-Veda

Saṁhitā which says, "Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations. That the gods can be worshipped by men is because they are of one mind". Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities . . . , the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future of India depends entirely upon that. This is the secret—accumulation of will-power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus.'

We Indians, therefore, standing as we are on the threshhold of a new era in our national life, consequent on the attainment of our long-cherished political freedom, and with various plans and projects before us, have to look to our glorious past to draw inspiration from the genius of the race, and at the same time, keeping in tune with the march of civilization, we have to face the present with courage and confidence to plan for a great future life-order, where the individual and the society will be an integrated whole—offering the best to a man to develop his individuality economically, politically, and spiritually and where the individual will look upon the society as the reflex of the infinite universal Mother, and shall be ever ready to sacrifice his all for the good and greatness of the society.

THE VIVEKANANDA ROCK

[CONTRIBUTED]

About 200 yards south-east of the Kanyakumari temple in South India, off the shore, there are two rocks very close to each other in the shallow sea. The rocks together are now known as the Vivekananda Rock, their old name being Śrīvelipāra. The census report of 1951 (Trivandrum District Census Handbook 'C' Gazetteer) says: 'Among the rocks lying off the shore, is the Vivekananda Rock so called because, towards the end of 1892, the Swami came to the Cape and was so fascinated by the place that he swam to the rock and sat there in meditation for a time. It is said that he looked northwards at the great land and its teeming millions, and resolved to dedicate himself to the service of his country and spread the message of Vedanta to the West.' In the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples, this event, which marked, as it were, the beginning of a new chapter in Swamiji's life, and the nation's history, is described thus:

'The Swami next journeyed on to Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), the southernmost extremity of India. Now was finished that great pilgrimage which extends northwards to those distant snow-clad regions where the Himalayas pass into Tibet. He thought of the sacredness of India and of the deep, deep spiritual life of which Badarikashrama and Kanyakumari were the towering landmarks. He was eager as a child to see the Mother; reaching the shrine he fell prostrate in ecstasy before Her image. Worship finished, he crossed to a rock which was separate from the mainland. About him the ocean tossed and stormed, but in his mind there was even a greater tempest. And there, sitting on the last stone of India, he passed into a deep meditation upon the present and future of his country. He sought for the root of her downfall, and with the vision of a seer he understood why India had been thrown down from the pinnacle of glory to the depths of degradation. The simple monk was transformed into

a great reformer, a great organizer, and a great master-builder of the nation. ...

'Ay, here at Kanyakumari was the culmination of days and days of thought on the problems of the Indian masses; here was the culmination of hours of longing that the wrongs of the masses might be righted. His eyes looked through a mist of tears across the great waters. His heart went out to the Master and to the Mother in a great prayer. From this moment, his life was consecrated to the service of India, but particularly to the outcast Nārāyaṇas, to the starving Nārāyaṇas, to the millions of oppressed Nārāyaṇas of his land. To him, in this wonderful hour, even the final vision of Brahman in the *nirvikalpa samādhi* and the bliss thereof became subservient to the overwhelming desire to give himself utterly and entirely for the good of the Indian people. And his soul was caught up in an ecstasy of vision of the Nārāyaṇa Himself—the Supreme Lord of the universe, whose love is boundless, whose pity knows no distinction between the high and the low, the pure and the vile, the rich and the poor. To him religion was no longer an isolated province of human endeavour; it embraced the whole scheme of things not only the *dharma,* the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the meditation of sages, the asceticism of great monks, the vision of the Most High, but the heart of the people, their lives, their hopes, their misery, their poverty, their degradation, their sorrows, their woes. And he saw that the *dharma,* and even the Vedas, without the people, were as so much straw in the eyes of the Most High. Verily, at Kanyakumari the Swami was the Patriot and Prophet in one!' (first edition : 1912).

Thus, historically, this rock symbolizes an important event in the renaissance of India, for here one of her greatest sons decided upon the course of action he was to take so as to raise his motherland from the morass in which she was unfortunately plunged during one of the darkest periods of her history. This rock is a symbol, so to say, for the Indian people, of their national aspirations and of the vitality that rejuvenates their country and culture again and again to rise to the needs of the time, and play her proper part in the affairs of mankind. Naturally, therefore, this rock which was sanctified by the holy touch of the great Swami and by his deep fruitful meditation on it, has been a place of adoration and importance to the people of India, specially to the Hindus.

Hence it was quite in the fitness of things that the Kanyakumari Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee, in co-ordination with the Central Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Committee, made a proposal about a year back to put up on this rock a suitable memorial to the illustrious Swami during his birth centenary which commenced on the 17th January 1963. It was decided that, among other things, a statue of Swamiji should be placed on the said rock where he sat in meditation, and the rock should be connected to the shore by a causeway. The Kanyākumāri Devoswom Board (temple authorities), under whose jurisdiction the rock lies and who observe the annual function of *Kārtikadīpam* day with *pūjā* and lighting of lamps at the *abhiṣekapīṭham* (spot for ceremonial worship) there, had approved the idea. Accordingly, an all-India appeal was made for the needed funds, and the response, we learn, had been very heartening.

But in the meantime, while preparations for the intended memorial were going on, a few persons, said to be local Catholic fishermen, planted a cross on the rock in the midnight of April 4, 1962. A claim was also made simultaneously that the rock in question belonged to the Christians as, according to hearsay evidence, St. Xavier, when he visited the Cape, had taken shelter on the rock. The Kanyakumari Centenary Committee and the local Hindus were naturally perturbed at this unwarranted action of the Catholic fishermen. So they made a representation to the concerned authorities who fully enquired into the matter. The District Revenue Officer himself visited the place and, as reported, it was agreed, in consultation with the local

clergymen, who denied any knowledge about the planting of the cross on the rock and regretted the incident, that the cross would be removed and the centenary committee could proceed with its plans. Accordingly, on the 17th January 1963, the auspicious hundredth birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, on which date started the world-wide birth centenary celebrations of the Swami, a marble tablet with suitable inscription was fixed on the rock as the initial step towards the proposed memorial.

But the trouble-makers were not at rest; one night, a few months ago, they surreptitiously crossed to the rock, reportedly desecrated the marble tablet, and threw it into the ocean. The people's feeling was roused that such a thing should have been allowed to happen, and the Madras Government was again informed of the unwelcome occurrence. But, strange to say, by this time the State government had come to be in two miuds. We do not know what pressures, if any, brought about this change in their attitude. They are, it is said, now wavering in the matter. The *Organiser* of Delhi, in its issue dated July 22, 1963, reports: 'Would you believe it, the Government of Madras is unwilling to permit the erection of Swami Vivekananda's statue at the Vivekananda Rock, Kanyakumari, because it is afraid it might not be able to protect the off-shore memorial against the "vandalism of Christian fanatics"?'

The report further says that a deputation led by Dewan Anand Kumar (former Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University) and others, including Barrister N. C. Chatterjee, Lala Hansraj Gupta, and Sri A. K. Jain, met the Hon'ble Minister for Hindu Endowments, Madras Government, and discussed with him the whole matter. But it adds that the Madras Government is now unwilling to permit the proposed memorial on the rock itself and 'has been pressing the committee (the centenary committee) to agree to setting up the statue on the shore itself "where it would be well protected".'

All this brings certain thoughts uppermost in our mind. Being the most tolerant people, the Hindus, who form eighty-five per cent of the Indian nationals, are happy when they see their brethren of the minority communities in India enjoying full freedom to follow their own respective religions in peace. Nay, if there were any restrictions regarding it, the Hindus, by their very constitution and nature, would be the first people to protest against them. As Swami Vivekananda has said, 'It is here (in India) and here alone that the Hindus build mosques for the Mohammedans and churches for the Christians'. The Hindus have held an Akbar or a St. Xavier with all respect and love due to them. But does it mean that the minority communities should abuse this freedom and tread upon the legitimate rights and sentiments of the majority community. And suppose they do so due to some reason best known to them, should the government be a party to it?

Again, the rock referred to above need not be an object of adoration only to the Hindus. For here it is associated with the sacred memory of one who, because he was a Hindu of the highest order, did not think in the narrow terms of caste or creed or colour. He declared, 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother', and was not content with the laying down of one precious life of his for his countrymen. He prayed: 'May I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls.' Indeed, are not the Christians and others in this country also Indians, and do they not come within the 'sum total of all souls'? Should they not feel happy to show respect to one who unmistakably believed in the harmony of all religions and who, though justly proud of being a Hindu, could dare to say in his characteristic catholicity: 'Our salutations go to all the past Prophets whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race, clime, or creed! Our salutations

go to all those Godlike men and women who are working to help humanity, whatever be their birth, colour, or race!'? It was Swami Vivekananda who, speaking with the foresight of a seer at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, declared: 'Holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and ... every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight", "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and peace and not Dissension".'

Telling about an occasion which reflects the deep veneration the Swami had for the Son of Man, Romain Rolland, the great French savant, writes: 'He crowned his stay in Europe by a short journey through Italy. He went to salute da Vinci's *Last Supper* at Milan, and was especially moved by Rome. ... He was profoundly touched by the memories of the first Christians and martyrs in the Catacombs, and shared the tender veneration of the Italian people for the figures of the infant Christ and the Virgin Mother. They never ceased to dwell in his thought. ... When he was in Switzerland he came to a little chapel in the mountains. Having plucked flowers he placed them at the feet of the Virgin through the hands of Mrs. Sevier, saying: "She also is the Mother." One of his disciples had later the strange idea to give him an image of the Sistine Madonna to bless, but he refused in all humility, and piously touching the feet of the Child, he said: "I would have washed his feet, not with my tears, but with my heart's blood." It may indeed with truth be said that there was no other being so close as he to the Christ.'

Swami Vivekananda, like all the true Prophets, was much above the narrow conceptions of race or religion, a fact which has been acknowledged by many Christians who flocked to hear him when he spoke before them in the West. Today, too, many Christians assemble during this centenary year to offer him their tributes of love and respect in congregations and meetings that are being held not only all over India but also in many towns and cities of Asia, Europe, and America. Is it not, then, an irony of circumstances that when the different communities of the world are vying with one another in demonstrating their deep regard to this great teacher of mankind, a section of the Christians in India should be so small-minded as to stand in the way of perpetuating his illustrious memory? Is it not sacrilegious to the memory of one who unequivocally pronounced: 'I accept all religions. ... I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedans; I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before the crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhistic temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his Law'? We expect that these people, who are unfortunately misguided at the moment, will come to reason and see light. If, however, they are really so perverted as to refuse to open their eyes, should the others, the liberal people and the government, put up with such audacious atrocity and remain silent spectators, just because this country professes to be a democratic secular state?

We earnestly hope that the whole matter will be assessed rightly, and the Vivekananda Memorial will in time come up on the rock itself to prove to posterity that the just and rightful efforts of the many in a noble cause cannot be hampered and nullified by the machinations of a misled few.

MEANING OF ADVAITA ACCORDING TO VIJNĀNA BHIKṢU

By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

Vijñāna Bhikṣu who belonged to the latter part of the sixteenth century A.D. wrote a commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa. His object was to bring Brahma-Sūtra into a harmonious relation with all the orthodox systems of ancient Indian philosophy, because in his opinion, real antagonism exists between orthodox systems and heterodox systems only. One orthodox system is in no way radically opposed to another orthodox system.

Being a philosopher of a true synthetic outlook, he had also tried to prove that the roots of all orthodox systems could be traced to the Upaniṣads. So far as the Sāṅkhya philosophy was concerned, he primarily tried to prove that the said system was not atheistic. The Sāṅkhya philosophy, too, could be based on the *Brahma-Sūtra* and could be brought in line with the Advaita philosophy. In his opinion, the word *'advaita'* has not been used in its proper sense by Śaṅkara, as a result of which a false gulf has been created between the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta philosophy. If the word *'advaita'* could be used in its right sense, then there would not have been any difficulty in comprehending fully the harmony between the Sāṅkhya-Yoga and the Vedānta philosophy.

According to Vijñāna Bhikṣu, the word *'advaita'* does not imply the absolute non-difference between the individual soul and Brahman; nor does it assert the unreality of the *Jīvas*. He has used the word *'advaita'* to mean *avibhāga*, or non-separableness between Brahman and the individual soul. Like Rāmānuja, he has also admitted the reality of the three *tattvas*—Prakṛti, Puruṣa, and God. Prakṛti is the unconscious dynamic principle and Puruṣa is the static principle of pure consciousness; both of them are brought together by God as a result of which the creative disturbance of the three *guṇas* takes place in the bosom of Nature immediately (*asmābhistu prakṛtipuruṣasamyoga Iśvareṇa kriyate*, I.1.2.)

According to dualistic and atheistic Sāṅkhya, Prakṛti is independent and its dynamism is due to its own nature. According to Bhikṣu, however, cosmology is a cosmic history of Puruṣa and Prakṛti which are brought together for creative purposes by God. Puruṣa and Prakṛti are independent of each other, but they are to act jointly for the creation of a purposeful world. The joining together of spirit and matter is possible, only because both of them rest on a common substratum, i.e. God.

It is clear from the writings of Bhikṣu that he is not at all in favour of accepting a single differenceless Brahman as the sole reality; nor is he in favour of admitting this world as a play of two wholly independent principles, like spirit and matter of any dualistic system. In his opinion, an unconscious principle cannot, of its own accord, enter into an effective and creative relation with Pure Consciousness. This must be done by a spiritual being higher than both Puruṣa and Prakṛti. The greatness of God and the littleness of both man and the world do not suggest a theory of absolute non-dualism; on the other hand, the very conception of God as the substratum of both man and the world prevents us from imagining a separable relationship between God and either of the two *tattvas*, i.e. spirit and matter. The creative process in Nature begins at the will of God. Prakṛti has no independent teleological power by dint of which it can move and change of its own accord. Both Prakṛti and Puruṣa are energies of God and, as such, they have no existence apart from Him. Prakṛti is the changeable stuff of the universe. Puruṣa is the ground of all sorts of world-experience (*bhogāśraya*), and God is the ultimate sub-

stratum of both Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Both Puruṣa and Prakṛti remain indistinguishably merged in God prior to creation, and this indistinguishable union of the three *tattvas* is what has been described as '*advaita*' in the Upaniṣads. God, according to Bhikṣu, is the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the material and the efficient cause of the world, the *sākṣin* of all and is also the *aṁśin* of which the individual self is the *aṁśa*. In each of these aspects, the relation of '*avibhāga*' holds true between God and the other two *tattvas*, and this sense of *avibhāga* is the proper sense in which the Advaita Śruti texts should be understood.

GOD AS THE ADHIṢṬHĀNA-KĀRAṆA

According to Bhikṣu, *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* (substratum) is that which, by remaining inseparably related (*avibhaktam*) to the real and changeable material cause, prompts the latter to create the cosmic order.[1] The *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* is also that in which all things remain in a non-manifested, subtle condition (*yasmin layam yāti*) at the time of dissolution. Both these characteristics belong to God only and not to any other being. Further, He is also the ultimate Being into which the individual souls enter in the state of final realization. The goal is '*sāyujya*' and not '*aikya*' with Brahman. In whatever way God is looked at, there is always this relation of inseparability (*avibhāga*) between Him and Puruṣa and Prakṛti.

Although God is the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa*, and in this sense, is also called the original cause, still His causality is not to be understood in the ordinary sense of the causality of a modifiable principle.

God is the unmodifiable principle of pure consciousness which vitalizes Prakṛti by His presence as the only witnessing self of the pre-evolutionary stage. Prakṛti, in its essence is pure potentiality which can evolve into definite categories of the world only through its relation with the Puruṣa. This association between Puruṣa and Prakṛti or pure potentiality and consciousness is possible due to the presence of Divine Consciousness which shines in its full glory through the three stages of creation, preservation, and dissolution of the world. The conception of God as the vitalizing principle of the modifiable stuff of the world is also present in the philosophy of Śaṅkara. God in the Śāṅkara-Vedānta is Brahman reflected in Māyā and it is due to the reflection of consciousness in Māyā that the blind *upādhi* of God changes at once into an active potentiality of a meaningful creation. Brahman dissociated from Māyā is simply the differenceless and static consciousness. God of Bhikṣu is pure consciousness associated with *śuddha-sattva* which is His *nitya-upādhi*. God is able to think or will through the instrument of *śuddha-sattva* alone. In His true nature, God is only pure consciousness devoid of all forms of agency.

Like Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, Bhikṣu, too, has ascribed the power of vitalizing the material stuff of the world to God, but while Rāmānuja has admitted this power as an *aiśvarya* of the highest Being, and Śaṅkara has described it as phenomenal and false from the transcendental point of view, Bhikṣu has sought an intermediate position between the two. In essence, his God is devoid of all qualities and power which actually belong to His *upādhi;* but since His *upādhi* is eternal, all qualities and powers are always ascribable to Him.

GOD AS THE MATERIAL AND THE EFFICIENT CAUSE

Since God is the substratum of the modifiable stuff of the world, God is also called the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) of the word. The word '*upādāna*' has, however, been used here in a sense which is entirely different from the sense in which modifiable Prakṛti is the *upādāna* of the world. Since the foundational principle cannot be separated from that of which it is the foundation,

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[1] *Vijñāmṛta-bhāṣya*, I.1.2. Chowkhamba Publications, p. 32.

God cannot be separated from the world. The real modifiable stuff of the world is Prakṛti, but God as the substratum of both Prakṛti and the world has been described as the *upādāna-kāraṇa* of the world (*vikārikāraṇavāda-adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇasyāpyupādānatvavyavahārāt*). Where non-separableness between the cause and the effect is due to the relation of inherence, there the cause is a changeable one; but the cause is simply the unmodifiable substratum of the effect where, though non-separable from the effect, it is still not related to it by the relation of inherences. *Ākāśa* is the *upādāna-kāraṇa* of the air only in the sense of its unmodifiable and inseparable substratum. The real modifiable cause of the air is *sparśa-tanmātra*. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers have described this type of causality as the efficient causality of God. According to Bhikṣu, however, this *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇatva* of God is different from *nimitta-kāraṇatva* since, in the latter case, the efficient cause can be separated from the effect. The foundational principle, on the other hand, can never be separated from the effect that is grounded on it. So Bhikṣu has mentioned four forms of causes: (1) *samavāyī*, (2) *asamavāyī*, (3) *nimitta-kāraṇa*, and (4) *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa*.

When God is spoken of as the efficient cause of the world, then also, the efficient causality of God refers simply to His witnessing character (*sūryavat sākṣitāmātreṇa jñānadvāraiva nimitta-kāraṇam Brahma*). The *sūtra 'Janmādyasya yataḥ'* refers to God as the unmodifiable and inseparable substratum, and it is only in this sense that the epithet of material causality has been ascribed to Him. In Himself God is only pure, static consciousness, but since it is never separated from its *upādhi* in the form of *śuddha-sattva*, the agency, activity, etc. which belong to the *upādhi* are also attributed to God. Here, God is not the unmodifiable gronnd of falsehood or appearance as has been admitted by Śaṅkara. On the contrary, He is the unmodified substratum of a real world that has been evolved from a real changeable cause in the form of Prakṛti. At the time of dissolution, Prakṛti ceases to have any activity and it also becomes subtle and indistinguishable from God. This is the meaning of *prakṛtilaya*: Prakṛti, the real cause of a real world, is never destroyed. Puruṣa, too, in this state, withdraws all its epistemological activities and this inoperative state of Puruṣa is what is meant by the mergence of Puruṣa in God. These facts show that during the state of dissolution, God remains inseparable and indistinguishable from Puruṣa and Prakṛti. This indistinguishable nnion of the three *tattvas* is what is described in the Śruti as *'advaita'*.

Again, when one soul is liberated, other souls remain in a bound condition. So, Prakṛti remains in existence and continues to work for the benefit of the bound souls. The activities of Prakṛti come to an end in respect of the released soul only. That particular Prakṛti which is meant solely for the enjoyment of the soul that has been released, becomes very subtle and gets merged in its substratum (i.e. God). The released soul also enters into God and remains indistinguishable from Him. Hence in the state of release too there is *advaita* or the relation of *avibhāga* between the three *tattvas*.

GOD AS THE WITNESSING CONSCIOUSNESS

According to Bhikṣu, God is to be regarded as the prime witnessing consciousness, since prior to creation, there remains no other principle which can possess the attribute of *sākṣitva*. Unless this *sākṣitva* is attributed to God who is the sole principle of revelation in the pre-evolutionary stage, creation of the world cannot be explained.

GOD AS AMŚIN AND THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL AS THE AMŚA OF HIM

Since God is the primary principle of consciousness, He has been described by Bhikṣu as the *amśin* from whom the individual souls are derived as so many sparks from a single fire.

Like sparks, they too resemble God in so far as they are of the nature of consciousness. Although the souls have separate being, still they have no separate and independent existence of their own. Both Puruṣa and Prakṛti exist in God who brings them together at the time of creation. God, as the supreme principle, shoulders the sole responsibility for the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the world. *Amśatva* implies truly the *sajātīyatva* of God and also the inseparableness of the individual soul from God. The words '*sampat*', '*laya*', etc., too, mean nothing but non-separableness (*avibhāga*). The objection that partless Brahman cannot have parts is not sound, since in actual life, the son is always regarded as a part of the father. There is also *avibhāga* between the father and the son in the sense that the son will always remain related to his father by the relation of sonship throughout the whole period of his existence. The two together will constitute a single family unit, in spite of their having separate beings of their own.[2] It is because the individual is a part of God only in the sense in which the son is a part of the father that there is no difficulty in admitting the soul, too, as *vibhu*. When the infinite soul manifests itself through its *upādhi*, it appears as finite and limited.

From the above discussions, it can be reasonably held that according to Bhikṣu, the word '*advaita*' has been used in the Śruti texts with a view to proclaiming clearly that both Puruṣa and Prakṛti rest solely and wholly on Brahman which is their *adhiṣṭhāna* or the ground-principle. In the absence of this *sadādhiṣṭhāna*, the co-operation of two principles having separate *sattā* and separate *sthiti* cannot be logically explained.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja have also admitted Brahman as the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa*, but the sense in which Bhikṣu has spoken of Brahman as the *adhiṣṭhāna* is different from that of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is only the *adhiṣṭhāna* of illusion. It is not the substratum of any metaphysically real power. In Rāmānuja, on the other hand, we find that Brahman is the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* of *cit* and *acit* both of which are regulated, controlled, and guided by this highest Reality. Just as the car driver is the ruler of the car, in the same manner, Brahman is the ruler of both *cit* and *acit*. In the opinion of Bhikṣu, however, it is only as the primary foundational principle of revelation that Brahman is regarded as the sole substratum of all things and beings of the world. All powers and glories really belong to *śuddha-sattva* which is the *nitya-upādhi* of the ultimate Reality.

In fact, Bhikṣu has not made any distinction, like Saṅkara, between Saguṇa Brahman and Nirguṇa Brahman as belonging to two different levels of existence and reality. In his opinion, although Brahman, in essence, is pure and *nirguṇa*, yet being eternally associated with the adjunct in the form of *śuddha-sattva* in which *viśvākāra-vṛtti* is eternally present, the highest Being assumes for all time the role of a revealer and manifests the *sāttvika-vṛtti* of the world-form by His own light. Thus, according to Bhikṣu, Brahman and Iśvara do not belong to two different levels of reality. The representation of Brahman as God is not a concession to the weakness of the ignorant mind. Both are equally real. When Brahman is thought of apart from the *upādhi*, the highest Reality is *nirguṇa* and when it is thought of along with its *upādhi* which comprises powers and glories, Brahman is legitimately described as the omnipotent God. Brahman, in the philosophy of Rāmānuja, however, is always a qualified one and is the ruler and supervisor of the whole universe.

Further, the word *avibhāga* used by Bhikṣu to mean *advaita* has a connotation slightly different from the connotation of the expression '*apṛthaksiddhi*' used by Rāmānuja in his philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Of course,

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

the word *apṛthaksiddhi* or inseparableness has been used by Rāmānuja in his philosophy with a view to explaining the organic nnity of the three *tattvas—cit, acit* and Īśvara; but this inseparableness (existing between *cit, acit,* and Īśvara) is, in his opinion, identical with the inseparable relation existing between the body and the soul of a living being. Here, if one wishes, one can perceive soul and body as different, although from the practical point of view, the soul and the body are generally treated as one. The oneness or unity established between *cit, acit,* and Īśvara by the body-soul relation exists in the same manner in both the unmanifested and manifested conditions of the world. Even in the state of release, this unity continues to hold good from the standpoint of the Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. According to Bhikṣu, however, the unity created by *avibhāga* exists only in the unmanifested condition, when Brahman alone is felt and the other two *tattvas* (Puruṣa and Prakṛti), being devoid of their activities, remain merged in the supreme Reality. In the manifested condition, the relation between Brahman and the two other *tattvas* is not like the relation of an indistinguishable union created by throwing the water of a jar in a pond; on the other hand, the relation of *avibhāga* then resembles the relation of inseparableness existing between the father and his son as both of them constitute one family unit.

Here it can be pointed out very cogently that non-difference or oneness existing between the father and the son is less prominent than the non-difference which is admitted to exist between the body and the soul from the practical point of view. The father and the son possess different bodies and their experiences of pleasures and pains are also different. So, from this point of view, Bhikṣu's explanation of *advaita* in the manifested condition of the world is not very satisfying.

In fact, Bhikṣu has introduced God in his philosophy simply as a static principle of revelation. He is not the real creator, preserver, and destroyer of the world. All activities, all thoughts, and all feelings belong to His *prakṛti-mūlaka-upādhi* only. Hence although Prakṛti has been assigned a subordinate status, still because of the essentially inactive nature of Bhikṣu's Brahman, the independence of Prakṛti has been maintained to a very great extent in his philosophy. God is only the *sākṣin,* a mere revealing principle. The vitalization of pure potentiality by consciousness is necessary even in the pre-evolutionary stage and so God has been introduced in the philosophy of Bhikṣu primarily with a view to satisfying this very essential need. In his opinion, it is not proper to describe the philosophy of Sāṅkhya in an atheistic manner, because in the pre-evolutionary stage, it is the consciousness of God alone that can account for the intelligization of the unconscious potentiality of Prakṛti for the creation of this world, which is the moral stage for the spiritual development of so many individual souls.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: HIS LIFE AND CONTRIBUTION

By Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao

All over the world the birth centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda—the radiant monk and the cyclonic Hindu—is being conducted with great joy and sincere thanksgiving. He represents the best that is in the Eastern wisdom combined with modern knowledge. He is in the royal line of the great tradition of India's spiritual savants who have lighted the path for humanity.

The times in which Swami Vivekananda lived experienced a renaissance of the Spirit. The effect of European thought and ideas on

the life of Indians was far reaching. English education produced different reactions in the minds of the Indian people. The orthodox sections kept their Vedic heritage sealed with themselves and did not learn the English language or allow modern ideas to influence them. In their frantic effort to preserve their ancient tradition, they petrified it. People in another section, on the other hand, were very much fascinated by the Western ways and views of life, and adopted them blindly. These people declared that to be Indian was to be uncivilized. They regarded everything Eastern as useless. There was a third section of people who were wise and had the power of discrimination and were rooted in Indian culture. They did not blindly swallow all that the West gave them. They were fascinated by the West, but not subjugated. They were shaken, but not shattered. They faced the challenge to the religion and spirituality of India, posed, not only by modern science and secular thought, but also by the insistent and many-faced Christian missionary propaganda. There were several renascent movements to modernize Hinduism. The most prominent among them was the Brahmo Samaj. It sought to fight the social evils of the age and stuck to the religion of the Upaniṣads and the worship of an impersonal Godhead. Keshab Chandra Sen and Maharshi Devendranath Tagore were its leaders.

During his boyhood, Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda's pre-monastic name) used to attend the meetings of the Brahmo Samaj. He had an acute sceptical mind which never could surrender claims of reason, and which hated superstition and irrational faith. He had read Hume, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and other Western thinkers. There was another deep aspect of his personality—his irrepressible devotion to the spiritual ideal and his fearless spirit of dedication. His faith in the supremacy of reason and his yearning for spiritual realization were at war till he found his *guru*. The modern religious movements of the time were not so deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the land. They were mostly a sort of compromise between the East and the West, and were somewhat apologetic about their stand. None of them had authentic experience as the basis of their doctrines. This did not satisfy Vivekananda's deep spiritual urge. He was in search of someone who, on the strength of his own realization, could satisfy his spiritual yearnings. In this context, Naren came to know about Sri Ramakrishna from one of his relations and from Professor Hastie, who were admirers of Sri Ramakrishna. Professor Hastie of the Scottish Church College, Calcutta, was teaching Wordsworth's poem, *The Excursion*. He lighted upon a passage describing the mystic mood:

> In such access of mind, in such high hour
> Of visitation from the living God
> Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired
> No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request
> Rapt into still communion that transcends
> The imperfect offices of prayer and praise
> His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
> That made him: it was blessedness and love.

The students, among them Naren, too, did not understand what this passage meant. The Professor said: 'Such an experience is the result of the purity of mind and concentration on some object. I have seen only one person who has experienced this state of mind and he is Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineshwar. You can understand this if you can go and see him.' Thus Narendranath was brought to his future *guru*.

The master-pupil relation—specially in the spiritual world—is a unique thing. Seeking the spiritual preceptor is not an act of convention, nor is it a mere blind formality. It is a part of all the great and sound spiritual traditions in the East and the West. The Sanskrit word *guru* means the dispeller of darkness. It is the living voice that transmits knowledge. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* declares: 'He who has the *guru* knows.' Independent self-study of the scriptures does

not give, even to a very intelligent man, spiritual illumination. The scriptural truths glow with meaning only when lighted by the teaching of the *guru*. Suso, the Western mystic, writes: 'The knowledge of the Divine comes through the living word of a living person, for the word on the parchment or in the book is lifeless.' Śaṅkara, in the very first verse of his book *Śata-ślokī* describes the *guru* as superior to the alchemist, for the simple reason that the alchemist can only transmute the base metal into gold, but he cannot impart to it the very transmuting power. But this the *guru* does in his disciple and thus surpasses the alchemist. Ramakrishna is the ideal *guru* in this sense. In the history of the spiritual encounters between an aspirant and a master, the encounter of Naren and Ramakrishna is unique. Traditional Vedānta believes in a wisdom which is achieved through instruction, but a worldless wisdom is attained through an awakening that comes on one suddenly. This is what Sri Ramakrishna did for Naren. The real Master waits for the pupil. The first two meetings of Naren with Ramakrishna are memorable and awe-inspiring. They can be described best in Vivekananda's words. He had been to Ramakrishna with a few friends and had sung a song. He writes: 'Well, I sang that song, and then, soon after, he suddenly rose, took me by the hand, and led me out on to the porch north of his room, shutting the door behind him. It was locked from the outside, so we were alone. I thought he was going to give some advice in private. But, to my utter amazement, he began shedding tears of joy—floods of them—as he held my hand, talking to me tenderly, as if to an old friend. "Ah!" he said, "You have come so late! How could you be so unkind—keeping me waiting so long? My ears are almost seared, listening to the talk of the worldly people. Oh, how I have longed to unburden my heart to someone who can understand everything—my innermost experience!" He went on like this, amidst his sobbing. And then he folded his palms and addressed me solemnly: "Lord, I know you. You are Nara, the ancient sage, the incarnation of Nārāyaṇa. You have come to the earth to take away the sorrows of mankind." And so forth. I was absolutely dumbfounded by his behaviour. "Who is this man I have come to see?" I said to myself. "He must be raving mad! Why, I am the son of Visvanath Datta and he dares call me Nara." But I kept quiet and let him go on. Presently he went back into his room and brought me out some sweets and sugar candy and butter; and he fed me with his own hands. I kept telling him, "Please give them to me—I want so share them with my friends", but it was of no use. He would not stop until I had eaten all of them. Then he seized me by the hand and said: "Promise me you will come back here alone." He was so pressing that I had to say yes. Then I went back with him to join my friends.'

This passage brings out the divine mission of Swami Vivekananda. It was not an accident that took him to Ramakrishna. The intellectual in Vivekananda and his sophistications were only on the surface. There was an intuitive capacity in him which did not dismiss the validity of the mystical and spiritual experience. He wanted a certain conviction in ultimate Truth and the immediate realization of the same. During his first meeting, he asked Sri Ramakrishna a question which he had been asking all other saints, 'Have you seen God?', and he obtained a positive answer. The Master had told that he saw Him as he saw the objects around him, only more intensely. And this immediate self-evident spiritual experience Sri Ramakrishna transmitted to Narendra also.

With this, Narendra had his spiritual rebirth, and he became a *siddha-puruṣa*. The intellectual conviction in him about the existence of God got transformed unto the fullness of experience and he wished to remain for ever in that state. But the Master admonished him: 'For shame! How can you ask such things? I thought you were a vast receptacle of life, and here you wish to stay

absorbed in personal joy like an ordinary man! ... This realization will become so natural to you, by the grace of the Mother, that in your normal state, you will realize the one Divinity in all beings; you will do great things in the world; you will bring spiritual consciousness to men, and assuage the misery of the humble and the poor.' Thus he reminded Narendra of his mission.

After Sri Ramakrishna attained *mahā-samādhi* in 1886, Vivekananda felt that the message of the Master should be carried to the four corners of the world and shared by all, and he was consumed by this passion. He held with love the fifteen monastic disciples of his *guru* together. They all lived in a dilapidated house where they installed the ashes of Sri Ramakrishna in a shrine. They renounced the world and took the monastic vow in the traditional fashion. They stood a lot of privation and ridicule. It is on record that they lived on mere boiled rice and salt with some bitter herbs for quite a long time. They owned a set of clothes in common, to be worn by any one who had to go out to the city. It is the undaunted spirit and impregnable will of Swami Vivekananda that bound them fast to their mission. He had wonderful powers of leadership. His love and regard for his Master is best expressed in his words: 'He (Ramakrishna) is the latest and the most perfect—the concentrated embodiment of knowledge, love, and renunciation, catholicity, and the desire to serve mankind. He must have been born in vain who cannot appreciate him! My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life after life.' Again: 'The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Śaṅkara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Caitanya, one who would see in every sect the same spirit working, the same God; one who would see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the outcast, for the downtrodden, for everyone in this world, inside and outside India; and at the same time, whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonize all conflicting sects not only in India, but outside of India and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence. Such a man was born, and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet for years.'

After the Master's death, Swamiji wandered all over India for over a period of six years. He gained first-hand knowledge of the downtrodden condition of the masses, their hunger, poverty, misery, social disabilities, illiteracy, lack of self-confidence, and loss of the soul. He was deeply touched and a grim determination arose in him to modernize India without making her lose her spiritual soul and unique heritage. Further, he always believed in the mission and greatness of India. His love for India was second only to that for his Master. He felt the greatness of India's philosophy and religion, and believed that India had a message for the world. India, by her exertion and example, can save the world and save herself. He was proud of being an Indian, and called upon all Indians to take pride in their heritage: 'Thou, brave one, behold, take courage, feel proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim: "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother. The Indian is my life. India's gods and goddesses are my gods. India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age"; say brother: "The soil of India is my highest heaven, and the good of India is my good".' On another occasion he declared: 'The very dust of India has become holy to me, the very air is now to me holy, it is now my holy land, the place of pilgrimage, the *tirtha* and I am eagerly waiting for the blessed day when I shall be able to roll myself on the sacred dust of India.'

His love for India, his faith in the greatness of her spirituality knew no bounds. After a long and eventful tour throughout India, sitting on the rock at Kanyakumari, he felt the need to serve and plead the cause of India in all possible ways. He saw two facts clearly

and dedicated his entire life and his all to them. He not only saw that India had a mission in the modern world as a force for spiritual regeneration, but he also saw that this force could not become effective until the social and economic conditions in India were adequately improved. It was in this context, that he thought he could seek the aid of the United States of America and planned to go there. In the words of Sister Nivedita, Swamiji had a twofold purpose: one world-moving and another nation-building. As for the latter, he was an excellent nation-builder and a true patriot. His nationalism was not narrow, nor cheap or vulgar. He not only loved his country, but wanted to make it lovable. He ceaselessly sought to remedy the shortcomings of the Indian nation; he was hard on her sins and unsparing in his criticism of her faults, though India was always the *puṇyabhūmī* (the holy land) to him. He strove to interpret the East to the West and the West to the East. He realized with Goethe the great truth that 'the Orient and the Occident cannot be separated any longer', and by his own words and actions brought them closer.

On the international field, he pleaded for the fellowship of faiths and mutual tolerance and gave the fundamental tenets of the universal religion which at once satisfies the demands of reason and needs of humanity. His address before the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, on the 11th September 1893, marked out a memorable day in the history of Hinduism. The enormous effect of his speech there was due to two factors: his personality and his transparent sincerity. The success of his speech was not merely due to its intellectual content or its charm. There was the spiritual experience behind it and the utter sincerity of feeling. When Swamiji addressed the audience as 'sisters and brothers', he really felt it; it was not a cheap polished claptrap, nor a formal oratorical phrase, but a deeply felt simple truth. The speech made him the adored of America. He had the pick of the society at his heels and lecture bureaus vied with one another to organize a tour for him. He became overwhelmed with the lavish and sincere love shown by American hospitality to him. In spite of that, his life was exposed to the crudest publicity and was subject to a brutal curiosity which was sickening at times. But he stood this all and preached the Master's message. However, he did not talk much of his *guru*, because he felt that preaching the principles had a more abiding result than preaching the personality. His first tour of America for four years, from 1893 to 1897, and his second in 1899-1900 paved the way for a permanent foothold for Vedānta in the United States, and today, several Vedānta societies are distributed over the face of America.

Swamiji's triumphal return was celebrated all over India and his clarion call to his own people, 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached', electrified the whole nation and various movements were set in motion for the regeneration of the country. Vivekananda was a great organizer. He knew that the stability of a work rested on strong organization and sincerity of its workers, and with this end in view, he founded the Ramakrishna Math and Mission at Belur, on the bank of the Gaṅgā. The service this organization, with various branches throughout the country and also in foreign lands, renders is significant and considerable and admirably fulfils the hopes and expectations of its great founder—Swami Vivekananda.

ART AND LIFE

By Sri P. Sama Rao

Art means and includes every creational activity that endures, and the enjoyment of its fruits, too, in the biological, aesthetic, and the spiritual realms of existence. Art has its springs in the Fount of all Life, and follows in the footsteps of the All-Creator. Its volition lies mostly in the close imitation of His melodious forms and shapes sensible to mind and intellect, mundane and supra-mundane.

Purification of personality, as a preparation for the apprehension of the eternal values of life, properly belongs to the domain of metaphysics, while the melodic expression of these values in sensible forms and shapes is the due concern of aesthetics. But the biological element is common to both the domains, for it is the creational activity which results in beauty, physical and non-physical. The true source of art is, however, the synthesis of the physical, intellectual, and emotional activities. The creation through any one of them solely, however perfect it be, is but a partial reflection of the Reality.

The Lord is the embodiment of all beauty, and His creatures are beautiful in the measure they partake of His sweetness (*mādhurya*). For it is the handsome parents who give birth to handsome children, factually and metaphorically. He is the embodiment of the Reality, too, and the best and the most comprehensive representation of this embodiment is only finite and conditioned, while the Reality is infinite and unconditioned. Time and causality do not touch Him at all for He is transcendent, immortal, and eternal. These primary qualities of the Supreme are indescribable. The best concretization of them can only be symbolic and suggestive of His glory. And the concrete symbols which are usually employed to denote His infinite glory are in their very essence finite, and can in no manner be taken to represent the entire Truth.

The Absolute which is qualityless and infinite cannot be the content of an affirmative statement : for every affirmation in positive terms becomes conditioned by definite thought which does not permit of imagination beyond it. But a description by the negative process (*Vide Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*) in its very nature of implication allows free scope for imagination and intuition, and could suggest an infinity of attributes that is verily the characteristic of the Absolute. The abstract, too, in its very nature, is indefinite and unconditioned, while the concrete is definite and conditioned. At best, the concrete could only be suggestive, and thereby, in its maximum efficacy, become symbolic of an abstract quality.

A symbol is a concrete representation of something that is abstract, and therefore, an aid for the transfigurement of the abstract. The highest quality of the concrete symbol is its adequacy, and also its propriety for such a representation. Its efficacy lies in its perfection in setting out as fully as it can the essence of the abstract. At its best, a symbol is only a derivative, and its relation to the original is like that of the synonym to the primal word.

But the symbols are indispensable aids for an interpretation or understanding of the nature of the Infinite. The science of symbolism depends upon arts of association. In this process, only the essentials common to the symbol and the associated are considered. The association becomes the more complete when it establishes a sort of identity between the two.

Words and their seed-syllables, gestures made of limbs, the lightning flashes from eyes, colours, notes of sounds, shapes and forms are all symbols of some quality or other. They

denote and suggest something, something more than they factually and literally stand for. The mystic sense of the artist and the *sādhaka* always sees the redoubtable *elan* of the Divine in them.

Om is the sound representative of the Absolute. It is made up of the *sapta-svaraḥ* (*ṣā, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*), the seven notes which have each a symphonic form of its own, suggestive of distinct *guṇas*. The uncoloured ray of the sun which, for want of better description, we call the white is composed of *sapta-dhātus* (violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red); a perfect blend of these sets in each case suggests the Ineffable Supreme in His absoluteness. Light is sound and sound is light. Nowhere is this supreme synthesis so beautifully and yogically expressed as in the *Uttara-Gītā* (V. 40-42): 'The sound that emanates from the *anāhata* gives brith to *dhvani*. *Jyoti* (light) is immanent in *dhvani*. Manas (etherealized mind) is immanent in the *jyoti*. It is only when the mind gets merged with the Absolute (the All-pervading Viṣṇu) that one attains his ultimate Goal.' This is the secret of *nirguṇa-upāsanā* as well as that of the Advaita.

As soon as *jīvas* (selves) embody themselves on the physical plane, they chant the Ajapā-Gāyatrī (*Ham-Saḥ* or *Aham-Saḥ*) with a wail, as it were, yearning for reunion with their Creator. The duly proper lullaby exhorting them to rest and quiet in their physical sojourn on earth, and in the melody of queen Madālasā to her babe, is to wish them 'to become pure, then acquire knowledge of perfect detachment, and thereby acquire strength to escape from the net of the world.'

Intuition is a higher reason with an incomprehensible logic of its own. One cannot determine its form or extent, its depth or nature. All that can be said about it is a surer approach to the Truth than reason, and can more powerfully apprehend it. Intuition varies with its possessor. The diverse mystic experiences of God-filled minds are good instances. No two mystics have felt the Reality perfectly alike. But the essence of their experience has been beatific and one and the same. Intuition may be defined roughly as the subtlest imagination that is neither fantastic nor false, neither conceited nor insolent, but ever open and humble and quite sensitive to record truly the faintest intimations from worlds beyond one's own. Intuition can also be likened to that light that, in its intense flashes, effaces its own form, floods all space with its glow, and discovers the Truth Eternal that lies concealed under phenomenal existence.

Art is a great constructive force. Its enduring qualities always bind the atoms of both the animate and the inanimate together. Art is therefore love, and love we express in thought, and act binds us fast to individuals and to the Supreme. Love is therefore a healthy ingredient of life. True love is always selfless and pure. Art in life and life in art are the two faces of the one and the same medal, the escutcheon, as it were, of all spiritual activity.

Art in love is a patterned approach, a courtship, for the grace of the loved. It is seductive. Love, pure and simple, is always selfless and ennobling. That which so allures and ennobles is both the form and the content of beauty. It is its very essence. This beauty is cohesive in its very nature and is as immanent as God's immanence in creation.

This beauty ties us down to the physical plane with its sensuous, though transient, phenomena of form, tint and sound in the first instance, and then to the non-physical and the spiritual. While effacing all individuality, beauty widens its sphere of action and empowers the self to soar into realms metaphysical and ethereal. It is the bait forged in His own essence and employed by the Master-Angler to draw up the errant fish unto Himself. Works of high art as well as works of saintly conduct are reminiscences of His peerless glory.

It is said that man is cast in the image of his Maker. That is so because man's creativeness, though circumscribed by quality, is no less enspelling as His. The more the human

approximates to Him in His essence of beatific quality (*ānanda*), the more enduring would become his works. In other words, his perfection alone can endow him with divine personality, and this divineness alone can ever prompt or achieve for him results of permanent value. *'Devo bhūtvā devam yajet'*—'Having become divine worship the Divine' is a great spiritual injunction. Thus 'playing the sedulous ape' to the Divine is the preliminary step in both adoration and true devotion.

Perfection in art, as elsewhere, is the result truly of an emulation of the Divine. The Absolute is ineffable and unmargined by quality. The colourless ray that symbolizes Him splits into diverse colourful rays and fills space with its own multiple radiance. This is 'Life's dome of many-coloured glass which stains the white radiance of Eternity, till Death tramples it to fragments'. All works of art and virtuous action are arcs of such radiance, vestiges, as it were, left on the way of holy endeavour to reach the Divine.

The means employed to exhibit a conception that is abstract is the technique. It means every attempt made to crystallize the thought by way of expression in no uncertain or dubious terms. Only yogic vision into the essence of things can help to attain clarity. The mind must be pure and serene in order that it duly registers every 'intimation of immortality' from the Supreme and reflects it perfectly in art and conduct.

Every trait and hue, and every note of sound, has each a form of its own symptomatic of the Divine. And each has its own emotive significance. For God is the author of everything. His infinite love knows no regimentation. It flows over both the good and the bad like the sunlight illumining everything. He is form in every form and sweetness in every melody of tint and sound and conduct. He is perfection of every sort. His peerless form is a delineation of only His essential attributes, *Śāntam*, *Śivam*, and *Sundaram*. Every human act in art or conduct should partake of His essential quality. All high art is therefore hieratic in that it is an emulation of the Divine.

Sketchiness in rendering of form with sharp and broken lines of erratic depth or the bedaubing of surface with imbalanced and meaningless colour masses, or by hellish shrieks joined to serpentine hisses, all in the name of harmony and impressionism, land us nowhere. They amount to caricature of His comliness and glory. This Rabellaisan technique is out of place in art. Cubism, Fauvism, Surrealism, etc. are products of eccentric personality and mental aberration. It is an egoism that kills itself. These tendencies in art are not impersonal, self-annihilating, peaceful, or untramelled. In the effort to enfranchise themselves their protagonists are caught in the toils of their own predilection. Freedom is not libertinism or perseverence in a quality that is doubtful or evanescent.

Perfection knows not itself, yet it is conscious of perfection outside of itself. In its creational activity perfection distils only the essence of things in its works. It envisions permanent values from out of phenomenal existence and embodies them in glamorous shapes and forms. It will not be seduced by externality or appearance. There is divine spark in every bit of creation, and in the transcription of it by the artist in his own work or conduct, he but emulates the Divine.

Technique is the means employed to attain an end. True meditation and due concentration are one and the same; it is perfection in action (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*). Perfect technique is consistent with and adequate to the object desired and attained. It is adequate and proper only when it hits off its object in a simple, direct, and sensuous appeal, evoking the same feeling or emotion as that possesed by the object, that is envisioned and materialized. Perfect identification with the essence of the object is the proper approach to an understanding of it. Without such an understanding, there could be no correct delineation or imaging forth of the object. Thus the perfection in creational

process is commensurate with the perfection of the creator.

Human perfection, however, is only an approximation to the Divine. Duality is the bedrock of our regard to and kinship with Him. It lasts as long as the adoration of quality—*saguṇa-upāsanā*—endures. All works of art are, therefore, the products of such a relation between the human and the Divine. In a way, as Roger Fry has observed, all art is a blasphemy in that it seeks to delimit the Limitless, and stains the Colourless with the hues of one's own predilection and fancy. There is no end, therefore, to apologies expressed by the highest artists like Śrī Śaṅkara to the Absolute, because the best picturization of the Absolute is imperfect and is not all that could be said of Him. Besides, He is ineffable.

Devotion to one's ideal, like the attachment to one's own kith and kin and acquisitions, is in essence the same as that to the Godhead, from whom they have all proceeded. The only apparent difference is that the love of things in the mundane is usually selfish and influenced by the common equation between the cause and effect, which is enslaving; while the true love to the Godhead is selfless, untramelled, and transcendent. If the latter yearns for anything at all, it is to serve the Godhead in the humble manner as Śrī Hanūmat did, till in the fullness of time he is merged with Him. Duality is, therefore, the phenomenal means that leads to the non-duality of the Absolute (*Advaita*). *Sālokya, sāmīpya, sārūpya* are but the progressive steps to *sāyujya,* the final union.

Art in its highest manifestation is love: for, God is Love and out of love He creates the worlds, maintains them, and destroys them when virtues (*dharma*) fail and sin (*adharma*) engluts them. So art cannot be but love. It is the divinity in him, in whatever measure it be, that inspires the artist to create. Whenever his creations teem with life, he could be deemed to have touched the 'hem of Eternity'.

Life in the blade of grass that spins its rhythm on the air is as precious as the vaunting of kingly glory in mansions. On his deathbed Lao-Kung (famous Chinese artist) was solicited by his devoted disciples, by way of parting message, to answer their question: What that highest purpose may be to which mortal man may aspire? A strange light shot out of Lao-Kung's eyes; he dragged himself to the spot where stood the one picture of the lively blade of grass he had painted and which he loved best. 'It was not merely a blade of grass, for within itself, it contained the spirit of every blade of grass that had ever grown since the beginning of time.' Pointing to this blade of grass, the old man said: 'That is my answer. I have made myself the equal of the gods, for I, too, have touched the hem of Eternity.' As *Agni-Purāṇa* has confirmed, every artist is a *kavir-manīṣī* in his own way; for 'a perfect artist is the unconditioned lord in the infinite realm of creation which bows down to his will'. It is too true to be stressed that the poet is an 'unacknowledged legislator of the world'.

Spiritual success in life is the attainment of godly perfection. The modus may be likened to the process of the sculptor who hacks and hews lively form out of the dead and crude mass of stone or metal. A perfect living is but imaging Him forth in a charming tapestry out of our *guṇas* (qualities) here with our thoughts and acts perfectly designed and executed in selfless dedication of ourselves unto Him.

A work of art is, therefore, a glamorous pattern of life, for 'in every gladness', He is 'the deeper Joy behind' (MacDonald). And the 'true life of man is the knowledge of God' (Westcott). Is it not then true that art in life and life in art are one and the same?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT MAYAVATI: A DAY BY DAY RECORD

By Brahmachari Amal

Swami Vivekananda visited the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati in the Himalayas during January 1901. Although it was a short and uneventful visit, yet it is full of interest to the devotees and students of the Ramakrishna movement. Swami Vivekananda travelled much, throughout the whole of India and around the world, but the Himalayas had always a special fascination for him. His dream was to retire to the Himalayas and lose himself in meditation.

And yet his mission was to work and establish a movement for the regeneration of his motherland. He used to say that he often tried to retire in the Himalayas, but that some force, as it were, always pushed him out. But his love for the king of moimtains remained in the background of his mind.

This dream of Swamiji was first expressed one day in August 1896, when he was travelling in the Swiss Alps with Capt. Sevier and Mrs. Sevier. The scenery and the people reminded him strongly of the Himalayas, and he expressed his feelings to his companions. He said that he longed to establish a monastery in the Himalayas where he could retire from his work and end his days in meditation. It was also to be a place where his Indian and Western disciples could live and work together. Capt. and Mrs. Sevier were struck by the idea and later decided to establish such a monastery. They came over to India with Swamiji and began to search for a suitable location. They lived for some time in Almora, but the location did not have the seclusion they wanted. Swamiji himself searched for a good place during his tours, but without success. At last, during his trip to Kashmir, he left the matter in the hands of the Seviers who began to search the more remote areas of Almora district, in company with Swami Swarupananda. After much searching, they discovered the estate of Mayavati and at once decided that this was the best place for the Ashrama. It was beautiful, with hills and forests, secluded, and it had a striking view of the snow ranges.

They made the purchase and moved to Mayavati on March 19, 1899. A press was set up there, and the *Prabuddha Bharata* which for a short period came out from Madras and Almora, began to be edited and published from here. Swamiji, of course, was greatly pleased at the fruition of one of his most cherished dreams. He wrote a short article in March 1899 for inclusion in the prospectus of the Ashrama. In this he clearly set forth the ideal of the Advaita Ashrama.

'In Whom is the Universe, Who is in the Universe, Who is the Universe; in Whom is the Soul, Who is in the Soul, Who is the Soul of man; knowing Him—and therefore the Universe—as our Self alone extinguishes all fear, brings an end to misery, and leads to infinite Freedom.

'To give this one Truth a freer and fuller scope in elevating the lives of individuals and leavening the mass of mankind, we start this Advaita Ashrama on the Himalayan heights, the land of its first expiration.

'Here it is hoped to keep Advaita free from all superstitions and weakening contaminations. Here will be taught and practised nothing but the doctrine of Unity, pure and simple; and though in entire sympathy with all other systems, this Ashrama is dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V).

Several monastic workers were sent to the Ashrama and regular work began. Three months later, Swamiji left on his second visit to the West, and he did not return to India until December 1900. He was tired, in poor health, and his mind was becoming more and more withdrawn from the external affairs of the world. While still in Europe he had

had a premonition of the death of Capt. Sevier. When he arrived at Belur Math on December 9, 1900, this was confirmed. Capt. Sevier, who was a beloved disciple, had died on October 28, 1900. Swamiji at once decided to go to Mayavati, and telegraphed his decision to Mrs. Sevier.

He left Belur Math later in the month and arrived at Kathgodam on December 29. It was a bad time of the year, and there was a very severe winter with much snow. The party suffered badly during the journey to Mayavati, but at last they arrived on Thursday, January 3, 1901.

There are several sources which give us information about his visit. Swami Swarupananda kept a short diary, which provides the day by day outline of events. Swamiji wrote various letters and articles during his stay, and these are to be found in the *Complete Works*. The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples provides further information. A few more details are also to be found in *Atīter-smṛti*, in Bengali, by Swami Shraddhananda.

In the remaining portion of this article, we will first quote the excerpts concerning Swamiji from Swami Swarupananda's diary record. It is brief and the sentences are often short and telegraphic in form. Following the diary record, we give whatever other information is available about the events of the day, with liberal quotations from the few known letters and articles written at that time.

Before beginning we may mention the names of those who were then residing at Mayavati. We learn from the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* that shortly after the founding of the Ashrama he sent four monastic workers to Mayavati. These were Swami Sachchidananda (Senior) also known as Burobaba, Swami Virajananda, who later became President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Swami Vimalananda, and Brahmachari Harendra Nath. The last mentioned worker is not named in the diary record, so it is possible he was not present when Swamiji visited the Ashrama. In addition, a young American named Charles Johnston had come from New York to live at Mayavati. He took the vows of *brahmacarya* and was known as Brahmachari Amritananda.

We may now begin the daily record. (The blanks are due to illegibility).

January 3, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji arrived first after we had taken the morning meal; accompanied by Gobin Lal Shah (—) after 12 before 1 O'clock. He looked very much pulled down. Swami Virajananda appeared next—Swamis Sivananda and Sadananda following long after. The whole party was caught in a blizzard halfway between Dhari and Mournalla and took shelter in a shop (on the 31st) except Sadananda and Gobinlal who got separated and reached Mournalla that evening. The next morning the main party reached Mournalla and they all stopped the day and night there.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (First Edition) reads as follows: 'The next day the Swami arrived at Mayavati. On the opposite hill he caught a view of the Ashrama buildings and the site pleased him immensely. When he came to the stream in the khud (canyon) below, he heard the bell of the monastery striking twelve, and he was so anxious to reach the Ashrama that he mounted a horse and spurred it on. The monastery had been artistically decorated for this great occasion—the visit of the leader of the Order, the revered Guru of the Brotherhood. Evergreens and flowers and water-filled jars had been placed at the entrances, as marks of an auspicious and hallowed event. Needless to say, the joy of the disciples at the Ashrama knew no bounds at meeting Swamiji after so long a time.'

Yes, the disciples were overjoyed at this meeting with Swamiji, and they vied with one another in serving him in every possible way. This is a potential source of conflict between the ideals of East and West. In India reverence to one's superiors, and especially

to one's Guru, is expressed by bowing to him, and in many acts of humble and menial service. The West, and especially Protestant America, believes in self-confidence and self-assertion, and rejects any exaggerated form of homage to great men. 'All men are created equal.' Both ideals are true and noble in their own place and perspective, but there is every chance of misunderstanding between the two. Therefore, on the very day of his arrival at Mayavati, Swamiji took pains to explain the Indian ideal to the American disciple, Amritananda. He said: 'You see how they serve me! To a Westerner, especially to an American, this devotion may seem servile, and you may be shocked at the way I am accepting all this service without remonstrance. But you must understand the Indian idea. Then everything will be clear to you. This is the spontaneous devotion of the *śiṣya* (disciple) to the *guru*, who looks only to the motive. This is one of the means by which the *śiṣya* becomes spiritualized.'

January 4, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji went out for a walk down to the Lohaghat boundary in the morning and rode back. Hail came on as we were returning and it began to snow the whole day with slight remissions. It fell about 6 inches. Stopped in the evening.'

January 5, 1901

'Temperature 36° in the morning. Clear, but snow-bound in the morning. Conld not get out for walk. Swamiji well.'

On this day, Swamiji spoke to Swami Swarupananda about his ideas and the work which he wished to be done from the Ashrama. He urged him to work for this with great energy and devotion. The Swami replied that he would do what he could, but that, if the work was to be successful, the others would have to work with him and agree to stay at the Ashrama for a minimum of three years. Accordingly, Swami brought up the subject when all were together, and one by one he asked them if they agreed to stay and work at Mayavati. All agreed except Swami Virajananda. He wished to live a life of exclusive meditation practising austerities and living on alms. Swamiji tried to dissuade him.

He said: 'Don't ruin your health by practising austerities, but try to profit by our experience. We have subjected ourselves to extreme austerities, but what has been the result?—the impairing of our health in the best years of manhood, from which we are still suffering. Besides, how could you think of meditating for hours? Enough if you can concentrate your mind for five minutes, or even one minute, and for that purpose a certain hour in the morning and evening is what is needed. For the rest of the time one has to occupy oneself with studies and some work for the general good. My disciples are to emphasize work more than austerities. Work itself should be a part of their *sādhanā* and their austerities.'

There was much discussion. Swamiji admitted later that 'though he had been speaking thus, he knew at heart that Kalikrishna (Swami Virajananda) was right, that he understood his feelings, and that, in truth, he, more than anybody, glorified the life of meditation and the freedom of the monk.' On being questioned later, Virajananda, however, thought it best to yield to his *guru* and abide by his commands.

January 6, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. A clear day. Snow hardened by the frost. Many visitors from Champavat. Swamiji well—went for long walks both in the morning and evening.'

On this day, Swamiji wrote a letter to Mrs. Ole Bull containing an interesting and appreciative description of Mayavati. Some excerpts are given below.

6th January 1901

'My Dear Mother,

Mrs. Sevier is a strong woman, and has borne her loss quietly and bravely. She is

coming over to England in April. . . .

'This place is very very beautiful, and they have made it simply exquisite. It is a huge place, several acres in area, and is very well kept. I hope Mrs. Sevier will be in a position to keep it up in the future. She wishes it ever so much, of course. ... It is snowing heavily here, and I was caught in a blizzard on the way; but it is not very cold, and all this exposure to the snows for two days on my way here seems to have done me a world of good. Today I walked over the snow uphill about a mile seeing Mrs. Sevier's lands; she has made beautiful roads all over. Plenty of gardens, fields, orchards, and large forests, all in her land. The living houses are so simple, so clean, and so pretty, and above all, so suited for the purpose.

'All here send love.

Ever your loving son,
Vivekananda

P.S. Kālī has taken two sacrifices; the cause has already two European martyrs. Now, it is going to rise up splendidly. . . .

'The snow is lying all round six inches deep, the sun is bright and glorious, and now in the middle of the day, we are sitting outside, reading. And the snow all about us! The winter here is very mild in spite of the snow. The air is dry and balmy and the water beyond all praise.'

January 7, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Clear in the forenoon. Swamiji, Burobaba, Sivananda, Mother, and self walked up to Dharamghar and back in the morning. Swamiji did it fairly well. Wants to build a house thereon. Cloudy in the afternoon. Swamiji felt a little indisposed towards the evening.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* gives further information about the visit to Dharamghar hill: 'Of all the many points of view that one gains of the snows at Mayavati, that at Dharamghar, the highest hill within the Mayavati boundaries, affords the finest view of the snow range. Here, shortly after his arrival, the Swami spent one morning together with the inmates of the monastery. He was extraordinarily pleased with the site and its charming scenery and said that he must have a hermitage erected on that very spot, where he could meditate in undisturbed solitude.'

One other event may be mentioned here, although the exact date when it took place is now unknown. Swamiji had intended that the Mayavati Ashrama should be dedicated to Advaita alone, as may be seen from the excerpt which has been quoted from his article for the Prospectus. No forms of dualistic worship and practice were to be introduced. Yet, when he arrived at Mayavati he found that one room had been set aside as a shrine room, and that regular ritualistic worship was done there with flowers, incense and other offerings. 'He said nothing at the time, but that evening when all were gathered about the fireplace, he spoke vehemently in denunciation of Thakur-Puja (ritualistic worship) in an Advaita Ashrama. It should never have been done. Here attention was to be paid only to the subjective elements of religion, such as private meditation, individual and collective studying of the scriptures, and the teaching and culture of the highest spiritual monism, free from any dualistic weakness or dependence. . . . Though the Swami let them know how strongly he felt against the introducing of the external forms of worship there, yet he did not order them to break up the worship room at once. He would not take an immediate step to shock the feelings of those who were responsible for it. That would be using his power. They themselves must see their own mistake and grow out of it. But the Swami's uncompromising attitude on the matter, in which his two Advaitin disciples, the Swami Swarupananda and Mrs. Sevier, fully shared ..., led to the discontinuance of worship and, ultimately, to the dissolution of the Thakurghar (shrine room)' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 8, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji did not go out. It began to snow about 3 p.m. Temperature 38°. Stopped snowing in the evening. Swamiji did not sleep well the first part of the night.'

January 9, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. Cloudy. Snow did not melt. There was no frost. Mr. Beadon[1] and Chirapani Babu (Pandit Kashi Ram) came over by invitation from Mother* in the afternoon to see Swamiji and stopped the night. Swamiji, Mother, self, and Burobaba went out for walk in the morning to the Bungalow. Swamiji did not go out in the evening. Mother, Burobaba, and self went out Lohaghat way in the evening.'

January 10, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. No clouds. Grand snow view in the morning here. . . . Swamiji wrote an article about the Tamilians for *Prabuddha Bharata* in the afternoon and evening, which he read to us. Swamiji slept in the sitting room.'

Swamiji's article on 'Aryans and Tamilians', which is published in the *Complete Works*, Vol. IV, is an interesting study of the ethnology and social organization of India. He points out that virtually every known race and nationality has poured into India with almost every stage of social development, and 'whatever may be the import of the philological terms "Aryan" and "Tamilian", even taking for granted that both these grand sub-divisions of Indian humanity came from outside the western frontier, the dividing line had been, from the most ancient times, one of language and not of blood.'

January 11, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. A very fine day. Swamiji not very well.'

January 12, 1901

'Temperature 44° in the morning. 50° in the afternoon. Swamiji feeling better, came out for a walk. Regulated the time of Badri Shah's sun dial, which he gave away to us. Virajananda made ice-cream. Swamiji felt bad towards evening, but sang a little. So did Sivananda. Swamiji had a sleepless night. Wind sprang up at night.'

Ice-cream was one of Swamiji's favourite dishes, and so serving it was a special treat for him. 'On the twelfth, there was an ice-cream party, through the efforts of the Swami Virajananda, who made a huge, delicious block of it with the help of the thick coating of ice that settles at this season on the surface of the lake. The Swami was delighted with this favourite dish of his' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 13, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Tempestuous. Rainy and cloudy. Rained off and on the whole day and night. . . . Swamiji feeling better. Swamiji had a very good night.

'Swami Vivekananda's birthday—he is 37 today.[2] Was 29 when he spoke at Chicago Parliament of Religions first.'

January 14, 1901

'44° in the morning. Raining. Swamiji and Mother feeling much better. Tempestuous. A heavy and continuous rain. . . . Swamiji wrote a para about the Theosophists and began the article on monks as teachers in reply to Justice Ranade's speech in the Social Conference. Thunder and lightning. A little snow fell at night.

'Pitaji's (Capt. Sevier) birthday. He would have been 56 today.'

Though he appreciated much of the address, 'expressed with an earnestness of goodwill and gentleness of language' that was truly admirable, he was critical of the last part of the address which, evidently, criticized *sannyāsins*, and advocated the formation of

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[1] A son of a late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.
* Mrs. Sevier, as she was called.

[2] This is evidently a miscalculation. Swamiji was actually thirty-eight years old on this birthday. He was thirty when he spoke at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago.

a body of teachers who possessed all-round experience (that is, who were married).

Swamiji, in this article, protested against this view and vindicated the position of the monk. He explained how the monks from the Vedic times tapped 'springs of spirituality and ethics'. From this they were able to 'propagate their marvellous spiritual and social reforms and which, reflected third-hand, fourth-hand from the West, is giving our social reformers the power even to criticize the *sannyāsins*'.

January 15, 1901

'38° in the morning. Cleared up. A little (snow) on the ground. Swamiji feeling very well. Mother and self cleared the water course in the morning. Swamiji came out up to the lake.'

Swamiji wrote a letter to Mr. Sturdy on the 15th. A few excerpts follow.

15th January, 1901

'My Dear Sturdy,

Capt. Sevier passed away about three months ago. They have made a fine place here in the mountains and Mrs. Sevier means to keep it up. I am on a visit to her. ...

'So sorry to learn the passing away of Mrs. Sturdy. She has been a very good wife and good mother, and it is not ordinarily one meets with such in this life.

'This life is full of shocks, but the effects pass away anyhow, that is the hope. ...

And I am ever yours in the Truth,
Vivekananda.'

Swamiji enjoyed walking by the side of the lake. One day, while walking there with Mrs. Sevier and some other disciples, he said with the most lovable childlikeness: 'In the latter part of my life, I shall give up all public work and would like to pass my days in writing books and whistling merry tunes by this lake, like a free child!'

January 16, 1901

'38° in the morning. Cloudy in the morning. Very chilly. ... Swamiji had a good night and feeling very well. Swamiji went out for a walk in the evening with Mother. Mother wrote to Tahsildar. The latter sent his horse in the evening for Swamiji.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* says: 'The fact that he was confined to the house most of the time because of the frequent snow-falls, and that his physical condition was not strong enough to bear the severe cold, made the Swami impatient to go down. But it was found to be most difficult to secure coolies even by paying them at a much higher rate, as none was willing to make the arduous journey through snow. This only added to his restlessness.'

January 17, 1901

'40° in the morning. Very cloudy. Swamiji had a bad night. Chafing at the coolies not having arrived.'

This was Swamiji's last night at Mayavati. 'On the evening previous to his departure, when he was talking in a pleasant mood to his disciples as to what should be done if no coolies were available, Virajananda came to the fore with the remark: "Never mind, Swamiji! In that case we ourselves will carry you down somehow!" At this the Swami laughed outright and said merrily: "Oh! I see, you are scheming to throw me into the khud (canyon)"' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 18, 1901

'Looked clear in the morning. Self left about 6.30 a.m. for Chirapani to get coolies, Got 10 coolies, and sent them at about 11.30. ... Met Swamiji and party on the northern hillside above Saraju, returned with him to the Dak Bungalow. ... Stopped the night at Dak Bungalow. Swamiji in good spirits. Tahsildar called in the evening.'

The Dak Bungalow was at the nearby Tahsil town, Champavat. Swamiji left Mayavati about noon, and as mentioned above, met Swami Swarupananda on the way. The party stayed at Champavat overnight, and Swamiji left the next morning.

This was Swamiji's only visit to Mayavati.

It was short, and yet it was long cherished in the hearts of his disciples. It had a decisive effect on the future development of Mayavati. Truly, even the minor events in the life of a great soul will amply repay close study. It is with this conviction that we have presented this detailed account of Swamiji's visit to Mayavati.

TOWARDS AN IDEAL EDUCATION

By Sri S. M. Chingle

The importance of education in making or marring the destiny of a nation can hardly be over-emphasized. Great is the power of education in forming the character and opinion of the people, specially the future citizens of a country. We have to be very cautious, therefore, in framing our educational policies and formulating our educational ideas which, on the one hand, should be true to the genius of our land and its age-old cultural traditions and ideals and which, on the other hand, should be adequate to serve the pressing needs of our growing democratic society and which should also enable us to face any emergency, like the one at present. Only the right type of education can develop the knowledge, discipline and loyalties which together result in keeping up the morale of a people in a period of crisis.

Today, however, the field of education presents many difficulties and numerous problems which defy an easy solution: for example, problems like the growing student indiscipline, lowering of standard in all branches of learning, commercialization and prevalence of malpractices in the sacred temple of Minerva, the evils of an examination system which leaves much to be desired, the thorny problem of the medium of instruction, and so on and so forth.

What, then, are we to do? Are we simply to watch the scene and sit with folded hands doing nothing? There seems to be no justification for any cry of despair and a helpless, much less a callous, attitude. It is the bounden duty of every self-conscious citizen of this great land of Bharata to take care that he does not himself contribute in any way to these or any other evils. If everyone of us were to think in terms of the first person singular instead of the third person, an important step would have been taken in arresting the evil trends which are a matter of deep concern to us all. For the sight is not uncommon that those who cry hoarse over the evils themselves contribute most to the same. But surely adding fuel to the fire will not extinguish it. James Allen rightly says: 'Frequently the man of passion is most eager to put others right; but the man of wisdom puts himself right. If one is anxious to reform the world, let him begin by reforming himself.'

It may be noted in this connection that there are two kinds of education—the one which we receive from others and the other which we give to ourselves, and undoubtedly, the latter is by far the more important of the two. We can profit from the first only to the extent that we are ready to educate ourselves. It is our receptivity that determines the profit that we derive from the first. Obviously the first is bound to be limited by various factors, but the second can and should be a life-long affair and is applicable equally to the teacher and the taught. As soon as the process of self-education is stopped, stagnation sets in, and stagnation may even cause stinking. Intellectual stagnation is tantamount to intellectual suicide. Above all the other fields, it is in the field of knowledge that activity, new

and ever-new activity, is life, and inactivity is death. Śrī Dattātreya, with as many as twenty-four teachers, is the ideal *par excellence* for life-long self-education, which does not spurn the lowest of low creatures but gives a place of honour even to inanimate objects. Ekalavya is another outstanding example of this type of education.

Education is indeed a bilateral affair—an affair between the teacher and the taught, and both should exert themselves to play their role well. If the teacher takes his job seriously and becomes a real intellectual light to his students, if he kindles the real fire of knowledge in them and inspires real love for his subject of teaching, if he helps them in doing their own thinking instead of making them mere carbon-copies of his thinking which itself may well be, in most cases if not all, second-hand and a pale imitation of others' thinking, if he puts before them by his own shining example the high ideal of virtue, becoming a man of learning and wisdom, then there could be no reason why most of the students should not make a new beginning in their educational career and open a new profitable chapter in their lives. An ounce of example is definitely better than a pound of precept.

But it may well prove a pious wish in the absence of a proper atmosphere and incentive for the teachers to acquire and impart knowledge. Care should be taken to see that the teachers are made free from financial worries, are provided with the necessary material and leisure for study, and are not overburdened with work. Let us not make drudges of our teachers. Bertrand Russell's following warning must be heeded in this connection : 'Those who have no experience of teaching are incapable of imagining the expense of spirit entailed by any really living instruction. Overwork causes intense fatigue and irritable nerves and a .mechanical performance of the day's task.' So also there should be ample scope for intellectual independence in the academic circles. Real democratic spirit can thrive only in such an atmosphere.

Students, too, should likewise understand and play their role well. A sense of discipline is the first thing that is demanded of them. But in place of an externally imposed discipline, they should learn to cultivate self-discipline. Real discipline comes from within; it springs from one's own will. Such a discipline is an asset in life. So also, in spite of the exigencies of examinations, it should not be impossible for them to cultivate spontaneous and ardent love for knowledge. With a genuine love for knowledge and studious habits, examinations would be a source of pleasure instead of pressure. The students should not take to guides and such other second-hand aids, but they should aim at becoming guides unto themselves. Let their study be first-hand, intensive as well as extensive. Such a study will be its own reward. A proper understanding will yield enjoyment of the subject. There is no greater light than the light of knowledge. To ignite this lamp of knowledge should be the aim of every student worth the name. A study on these lines, with this high end in view, will result in making a new person of the student concerned. It will widen his intellectual horizon and will exercise a liberalizing influence on him. It will give rise to that imaginative sympathy which is the hall-mark of a real education. Students should likewise be careful in cultivating good manners, respect for their elders, a right sort of social behaviour and above all, a sterling character. All such higher values of life do not cost anything to practise. They do not involve at any time any want of finances or foreign exchange. What is necessary is only a strong determination and an iron will to acquire the same.

The importance of having a well-defined and well-formulated ideal can hardly be exaggerated. Every civilized and cultured nation takes care to do so. It is therefore necessary to re-define and re-formulate our national ideal of education. But, unfortunately, we have neglected this important aspect of education in the post-independence period. We

simply continued the ideal set by an alien government, the only aim of which was to perpetuate its stranglehold on us. For this it created the steelframe of bureaucracy and the able I.C.S. cadre to run the government which was in no way responsible to the people. But this ideal is utterly unsuited to our new democratic set-up in which the administrators are expected to be at the service of the people. We do not, however, have this thing today to the extent desired. Red-tapism and a bureaucratic indifference to the public weal is not an unfamiliar sight even today. This is quite natural in the absence of a well-defined and a properly oriented ideal of education. It is the duty of all thoughtful men in the country to exert themselves in this important task of formulating such an ideal and work it out. The present national emergency has made this task all the more imperative.

While thinking of any national ideal of education, one thing should always be taken into consideration. India is too inalienably wedded to the democratic ideals and the democratic ways of life to follow the pattern, in this respect, of the totalitarian states. Respect for the individual and his fundamental rights, respect for knowledge and truth in place of 'guarded ignorance', and distorted 'sacred facts', and such other cherished values cannot be sacrificed. Our national ideal of education should be consistent with these basic tenets of democracy.

We need not search for the needed ideal anywhere outside the country. Our ancient traditions and culture point out to the ideal in unmistakable terms. That ideal is summed up in the pithy statement: *'Sā vidyā yā vimuktaye*—That is education which leads to liberation.' It may be asked, liberation from what? The reply is, liberation from ignorance in all walks of life—ignorance of the three R's, of science and technology, of proper social relationship, and of all the higher values of life like the moral, the aesthetic, and the spiritual. An all-sided, all-round progress of the nation demands the removal of ignorance in all these fields. Positively stated, the ideal comes to the cultivation of the four ends or values of life—*dharma, artha, kāma, and mokṣa*. Here we have a well-balanced scale of values in which no aspect of life is underestimated and none over-estimated. Here the economic and the hedonistic values go hand in hand with moral and spiritual values. The study of science and technology is indispensable to assure a minimum standard of living to the underfed and under-clad masses. Likewise, theoretical and practical education for the defence of the motherland and for the preservation of our hard-won freedom is a 'must'. Without them all our development plans will come to nought. Pursuit of the higher values of life is the *raison d'etre* of all our activities and these must be paid due attention. Spirituality above all others has been our forte and care should be taken to see that it remains so.

Dharma is foundational to all the values of life. *Dharma* does not mean 'religion' in the narrow sense of the term. It stands for well-defined duties and codes of conduct for all persons and all classes of people in all walks of life. A student has his *dharma,* so has an administrator, a fighter, a businessman, a man of learning, etc. A proper discharge of their respective duties by all is conducive to the well-being of the individual no less than that of the society and the nation.

An education which aims at such an all-round, all-sided development of life is what is needed today. In it no aspect of life is to be neglected, none overemphasized. Anything less than that may lead to an unhealthy and lop-sided development. The ideal education which we have in view has been appropriately termed 'integral education' by Sri Aurobindo. An integral education takes into account the entire complexity of a man's nature. 'Education, to be complete, must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being; the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic, and the spiritual. ... All must continue, completing each other, till the end of life.'

Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary we are celebrating this year, laid great emphasis on this type of education: 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making education.'

It is, therefore, the sacred duty of all Indians to gird up their loins to bring this ideal into practice, in order to lead our motherland to all-round progress and perfection. Thus only we shall prove ourselves to be dutiful sons of the soil and also true citizens of the world.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA

By Miss Alice H. Cook

'Oh, East is Eest
And West is West
And never the twain shall meet.'

So wrote the well-intentioned Rudyard Kipling in 1890. And, in 1893, a magnificent figure emerged from the East and came to the West to prove the falsity of that statement.

As we all know, Swami Vivekananda's initial appearance in America was at the Parliament of Religions in 1893. And what did that audience—somewhat bored by long dull talks by former speakers—behold as they looked towards the platform on that eventful afternoon? A princely being, clad in a handsome bright monk's robe, taking possession of the stage, and of their hearts and minds as well, speaking with fiery enthusiasm. And of what did he speak? He spoke of freedom and of the essence of religion. Little wonder that the audience was enthralled. For this was an audience with an American heritage, and Swamiji was enunciating the ideals upon which this nation was founded.

In the year 1620, a little band of pilgrims in a frail vessel braved the turbulent waters of the Atlantic Ocean and came to these shores seeking freedom—particularly religious freedom—seeking to worship God in their own way, seeking the essence of true religion. And in the years that followed, other ships came bearing pilgrims from different lands to join the original settlers, all seeking freedom, all pioneers in the field of democracy.

In the material prosperity which then descended upon the nation, those ideals had in many instances been lost sight of, were lying dormant. And sins were committed in the name of democracy, just as sins have been committed in the name of religion; but there is always an undertone of struggle to keep those ideals alive. It took this colourful character from another world, as it were, to revivify the American spirit, to reactivate the original principles of freedom in America. A native American could not have accomplished it so effectively.

And Vivekananda was himself a pioneer in bringing the East to the West. He had leaped from his monk's quarters in India to what was for him a completely strange land, where his dress was unique, where the manners and customs and speech were different from those to which he was accustomed. But even as he had so mastered the language that he spoke in the most eloquent English—far more eloquent than that which the great majority of his listeners could use—so, too, were his thoughts and expressions like those of a man of God, coming from a wellspring of compassion and consideration for others, the origin of all courtesy. To quote Emerson: 'The sainted soul is always elegant and passes unchallenged into the most guarded ring.'

Thus he was not only accepted everywhere with acclaim, but even, I fear, was exploited by some of his hostesses, who exploited royal-

ty whenever they got a chance. Swamiji was true royalty. But the truly enlightened part of 'the most guarded ring' was comprised of those who, by their very nature, could not exploit, who could only sit at his feet and learn—those who were to form the nucleus of his little band of followers here. They formed the solid rock upon which the Vedānta philosophy was to stand in the West; and many of them were people of influence and import.

The end and goal of Swamiji's teaching in America was liberation—of which freedom is the shadow. He instructed his American students in the great principle that lay behind their national ideal of freedom.

He was living a life of the greatest intensity. As one commentator put it: 'Only a man of Vivekananda's calibre could have withstood the intensity of those days.' Not only was every hour of his life crammed with the greatest activity—activity which he did not want because he longed for the quiet peace of his monk's life in India—but into his activity he put the deepest emotion. So great was his fervour to get his message across.

In addition to giving private lessons to his own band of disciples, he allowed himself to accept assignments from a lecture bureau in order to obtain funds for his work in America and in India. Soon he was beset by many hardships: he was duped by the lecture bureau; some religious fanatics waged a campaign against him, sending out letters to those hostesses who had offered him hospitality, so that, in some instances, he later found their doors shut against him. Then, again, he found himself being misinterpreted in Calcutta, his mission in America being given a political significance. But he always forged ahead. His triumphs were the greater for the overcoming of his handicaps.

And has any one person ever done more to dispel ignorance and superstition—superstition in the West with regard to the East, ignorance in the East with regard to the West? Swamiji tackled this problem with all his might. And to the East he brought a new interpretation of Christianity to replace the limited idea of the Christian religion which had for so long been disseminated in India.

In the many new events which happened, he tried to overlook the undesirable elements in American life and to turn each new experience to advantage in solving the problems of his own beloved country. With his keenness of insight he tried to distil the essence of all that was best in America to hold as an ideal to India. He was enthusiastic in his representation to India of the social reforms—the penal reforms, the care of the mentally ill and the aged—in America. And even though these reforms fall short of what we all would like them to be, he could see what we as a democracy were striving to accomplish, and he looked at our motives as well as at our results.

This, then, was the gift that Vivekananda took from America to India: his interpretation of the democratic ideals—the struggle of a democracy for freedom, for a casteless society, for opportunity for the individual, for relief from the anxiety of old age and sickness. And with these went another gift: some earnest American disciples.

And the gift he brought from India to America was the religious tradition of centuries, the wisdom of the Eastern sages, and he brought himself, the product of ancestry of great devotion, of his training as a monk, of the background of his brother-monks in the Ramakrishna Order, of the benevolence and the struggle for serenity and understanding of the people of India. Even the robe that he wore was a donation from Indian brethren who wished him to take to America their whole-hearted goodwill—wrapped in the most attractive package possible. And most of all, he brought the spirit of Ramakrishna, who had given him the power to work through him. Ramakrishna had even said to him: 'There is no difference between you and me.' And he brought Vedānta to America, paving the way for future Swamis to come here.

So the arms reached across the continents—from the East to the West, and from the West to the East—in an embrace so strong as to merge the two. It was only from a small segment of the population, it is true, but a very earnest segment, comprised of those who could comprehend that the spirit of India was the spirit of America and that the spirit of America was the spirit of India. And by that embrace the door was opened—only a crack—but it was an opening for understanding among all the peoples of the world. For the link with the spirit of Ramakrishna and of India was a link with understanding of all religions everywhere.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The article on 'The Vivekananda Rock' acquaints our readers with the proposal of a memorial to Swami Vivekananda, which is to be put up on the rock as also with the unexpected difficulties that have lately arisen in its way. We hope the readers will share the views expressed by the writer. We also believe that, with the enthusiasm and goodwill of one and all, which the cause deserves, the whole matter will be correctly judged and the intended memorial will be set up without much delay. ...

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Patna, in her learned article in this issue, deals with the meaning of Advaita according to Vijñāna Bhikṣu, a profound, but less known, philosopher of the sixteenth century. Being a philosopher of a truly synthetic outlook, Bhikṣu has, in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, tried to lay stress upon the harmonious relation that exists between the different orthodox systems of Indian philosophy. The article seeks to help us understand the meaning of Advaita from a new angle of vision. ...

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., of Venkateswara College, Tirupati, in his article, 'Swami Vivekananda: His Life and Contribution', makes a rapid survey of the chief events in Swamiji's life and focusses our attention on his contribution in national and international fields. ...

Sri P. Sama Rao, B.A., B.L., of Bellary, in his article 'Art and Life', says that all art is a concrete representation of something that is abstract and the highest abstract to be realized in life is the Divine. Therefore, art, to be of real value, must be inspired by divine sentiments, for 'art in its highest manifestation is love', and what is pure love but God?

'Swami Vivekananda at Mayavati: A Day by Day Record' by Brahmachari Amal of the Ramakrishna Order is an account of Swamiji's brief stay at Mayavati in the winter of 1901. Though short and uneventful, Swamiji's visit was an inspiring occasion to the inmates of the Ashrama and 'had a decisive effect in the development of Mayavati'. ...

In his article 'Towards an Ideal Education,' Sri S. M. Chingle, M.A., of the Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, East Khandesh, Maharashtra, pleads for the formulation of a sound educational ideal in present-day India, the implementation of which will bring all-sided development in the life of the nation. ...

'Swami Vivekananda and the Spirit of America' is an adaptation of the talk given by Miss Alice H. Cook at the annual dinner of the Vedanta Society of New York, U.S.A. She points out here how East and West were brought closer by Swamiji's visit to America.

RELIGION AND HUMANISM

Dr. A. C. Das, M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Calcutta, has written a thoughtful article in the *Calcutta Review* of May last. While tracing briefly the history of humanism right from the Greek thought down to the scientific humanists like Comte of the modern times, he has dealt with the humanistic thinking found in the religions of the East and the West. He has made particular mention, in this respect, of the teachings of Jesus Christ and Srī Caitanya. Coming down to Swami Vivekananda's teachings, he says: 'His teaching gives us a view of human life which can well be called spiritual humanism. ... He pointed out that wherever is a human being there is God indeed, meaning that man is the medium through which God manifests Himself. But the question is: If God in fact pervades the world, why emphasize man as such? Vivekananda got his cue from his master who was convinced that though God is everywhere, He manifests Himself more in man than in any other being or thing. Man is, therefore, the highest medium of the manifestation of God. With Vivekananda this idea became a spiritual force, indeed the new foundation of a new kind of humanism.' Explaining further his point through the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, Dr. Das concludes by saying: 'Some may seek to minimize his contributions, saying that he (Vivekananda), like many of his predecessors, only preached the service of men as the service of God. But the conception of the service of men as the service of God does not necessarily mean or need an immanent God. We can well serve God by serving His creatures—men.

'Vivekananda did not stop with the conception of service, however. He emphasized worship, although he expanded its meaning. With him worship of man as a visible form of God does not mean worship with flowers and leaves. It only consists in the activities that supply the needs of the needy and poor in every sense of the terms—of those who are poor in body or in soul or in both—who have nothing to eat, no house to live in, who are wicked and ignorant too. And it is the attitude adopted that makes worship of such service. In Comtean Humanism one who serves humanity serves it, and there is nothing in it to lead to one's inner development. Furthermore, Comte only replaced religion by humanism. Vivekananda, on the contrary widened the conception of service and in fact effected a synthesis of humanism and religion, of even science and religion, for in his humanistic religion scientific knowledge itself is to be utilized for the good of humanity, not for its annihilation. This new kind of humanism makes men veritable temples of God and would inspire in one an attitude of adoration and love towards others and thus function as the foundation of a new World Order with the deepest human values intact.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RAMAKRISHNA LIVES VEDĀNTA. By Swami Chidbhavananda. *Published by the Secretary, Tapovanam Publishing House, Tirupparaithurai, Pages 487. Price Rs. 7.*

Various publications of authentic biographies and collected sayings of Sri Ramakrishna are available in different languages. But the present work cannot be grouped among those familiar many. Both in his approach and presentation of the subject, the author has struck a new note and adopted a new method. As he rightly states in his introduction, the book is not a biography of the Paramahamsa; nor is it a collection of his sayings. It is an attempt to interpret the events of the earthly sojourn of the Saint of Dakshineshwar as living illustrations of the age-old Vedāntic principles with which the life of the people is vitally connected. And these connections are brought out at different levels —individual, domestic, social, and national. It is an effort to draw out the implied significance of those events and to relate them to the Saint's own mission

of not only living the ancient Vedānta, but also of providing the relevant corrective to it as required by the modern times. Undoubtedly, the author has met with great success in this direction. The first four chapters of the book are replete with instances that testify to this statement.

His treatment of Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda brings in bold relief both their roles in the fulfilment of the mission of the Paramahamsa and their own greatness as his ideal wife and foremost apostle, respectively. The chapter on 'Life-education' contains thoughts capable of giving a new shape, a purposeful direction, and a deeper content to modern education.

One would wish that the utterances of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda are quoted exactly and not their substance in author's own words put in inverted commas. The incident referred to in page 372, of the old woman being advised by Sri Ramakrishna to meditate on a pet lamb, the only object of her love, does not seem to appear in that form in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* or *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Līlā-prasaṅga,* the two source books on Sri Ramakrishna's life and sayings. There is, however, a similar incident when an old woman was advised to look upon her nephew as 'Gopāla'—the boy Kṛṣṇa of Vrindaban.

After saying all this, it must be pointed out that the author has, on many occasions, used too much liberty in his interpretation of some of the salient utterances of Sri Ramakrishna and some incidents connected with his life. This gives rise to controversy and the need of conscientious criticism and refutation. But such a discussion is beyond the scope of a short review and they should therefore be left to the careful consideration and wise judgement of the readers. What one thinks about one thing need not be the opinion and conviction of all, as is but natural when we take into account the different background, make-up, and power of assessment in different persons. Just as the author has shown an independent mode in his thinking, the readers, too, are entitled to the same independence in assessing many of his deductions, conclusions, and categorical statements based on them.

The language and style of the book are crisp and simple and the careful elimination of the names of persons and places makes it easy reading even for a newcomer to Ramakrishna literature. The book will be welcomed by all who take to a serious study of practical Vedānta in the light of the life of Sri Ramakrishna.

S. P.

RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS. *Published by the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, Sikkim. 1962 (Limited Edition). Pages 53. Price Rs. 25 or Shillings 50. (Indian Distributors: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, G.P.O. Box. No. 897, Calcutta-1).*

The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology of Gangtok was started in 1958 under the patronage His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim to encourage research and scientific study in the field of Tibetology. The present publication, brought out elegantly in double-crown quarto size on specially thick paper, contains the masterly reproduction of five coloured plates and two half-tone plates of Icons and Thankas. Each plate is accompanied by a descriptive text with iconographic data; and there is also an account of the lives and thought of eight great Masters: Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dīgnāga, Dharmakīrti, Guṇaprabhā, and Śākyaprabhā. Plate VII contains the Thankas of them.

The Introduction at the beginning of the volume mentions the object of its publication: 'Our intention was not so much to produce a work for the use of academic circles as to make known, through these great works of religious inspiration, the more important aspects of Mahāyāna philosophy and iconography to a wider circle of readers.' Care has, therefore, been taken 'to avoid technicalities and to steer a middle path in matters of controversy'. But every care has been taken to make the texts authentic; and for that, apart from the help of standard books on the subject, opinion of a number of Lamas and scholars has been taken in preparing the texts, though, the publishers make it clear, these Lamas and scholars are not responsible for the general opinions and findings expressed in the book. The book contains very useful appendices of a Sanskrit-Tibetan glossary, some place names, original sources, and a bibliography.

We have no doubt that this publication will be welcomed by all those interested in the study of Tibetology, as a valuable addition to the literature on the subject.

S. C.

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND SARVODAYA. By Dr. V. P. Varma. *Published by Lakshmi Narayan Aggarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra. Pages 308. Price Rs. 12 (Students' edition), Rs. 15 (Library edition).*

Dr. Varma's endeavour to present the various facets of the political philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and link it up with the ideal of Sarvodaya, in the eleven chapters of this book—Part I comprising the first nine chapters on political philosophy and Part II dealing with Sarvodaya in the next two—meets with a remarkable success in separating the relevant from the irrelevant, the essential from the non-essential, and squeezing out the core out of a tangled mess of literature that abounds over the Father of the Nation. The academic detachment that the author exhibits in evaluating the political philosophy of the Mahatma and his knack in expounding in a lucid fashion the ideal of Sarvodaya deserve all praise regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with the views expressed on the various points. The Mahatma remains a mystic enigma to most of the people who desire to understand him in view of his unique ways of thought and action, and to unravel such a highly com-

plex personality, to bring him down to the plane of rational appreciation is by no means an enviable task. Dr. Varma has done this job remarkably well.

The book starts off with an analysis of the personality and leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. There is a chronological delineation of the successive phases in the evolution of Mr. Gandhi to the stage of the Mahatma and his matyrdom like the other prophets of the world. The next step tries to excavate the philosophical and psychological foundations of Gandhiji's approach to life. Here we find a good analysis of 'Divine Determinism' (p. 64). This is followed by a sift of the link between religion and ethics on the one hand and Gandhiji's political philosophy on the other. Dr. Varma points out that Gandhiji regarded politics to be a branch of ethics, the central core of which was embedded in the principle of non-violence, comprising boundless love and compassion and 'meticulous care for the rights of the least' (p. 98). In substance, this part deals with the necessity to bring about a revolutionary moral transformation of man to ensure unfailing conformity with the ethical norms.

The 'sociological foundations' of Gandhian philosophy explains the means and methods of mending the maladies of the modern industrial civilization. The emphasis on a predominantly rural civilization with the necessary amendments to remove manifest absurdities is a prominent point which Dr. Varma brings out in his analysis of Gandhian sociology. The remedies for social disharmonies based on the Gandhian prescription of 'change of heart' are also examined in this context.

The politico-economical philosophy of Gandhiji is based on the ideal of 'Rāmrāj', which, according to him, is the highest ideal of democracy. The privileged classes are not to be forcibly dispossessed, but are to be converted spiritually to be the trustees of the society. There is to be a commonwealth of mankind based on peace and non-violence. The evils of the present civilization in terms of the craze for power, the lust for wealth, the mania for pomp and splendour, the mad pursuit of vainglorious distinction would all disappear when every member of the society is so imbued with the spiritual ideals as to flourish on renunciation rather than on acquisition. Eventually we come to 'Sarvodaya' which brings us the realization in practice of the ideal of 'Pipa's song' 'All is well with the world'. Dr. Varma seems to come to the conclusion that Sarvodaya is synonymous with Gandhism.

Had the author been a little more critical to explore the distinction between the ideal and the practicable and had he cared to discover the *modus operandi* of achieving the ideals, his endeavour to explore the various facets of the Mahatma would, perhaps, have been more fruitful.

H. G. KULKARNI

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1961-62

During the year under review, the activities of this Charitable Hospital were as follows:

Indoor Hospital: Total number of beds: 50. Total number of cases admitted: 1,441 (medical: 1,278; surgical: 163). Details of treatment: Number of cases cured and discharged: 1,272; Discharged otherwise: 112; died: 27; remained under treatment at the end of the year: 30. Daily average of beds occupied: 37.53.

Outdoor Dispensary: (i) *General Section*: Total number of patients treated: 86,780 (new cases: 20,818): (ii) *Surgical section*: Total number of cases treated: 779; (iii) *Dental section*: Total cases of tooth extraction: 340; (iv) *E.N.T. section*: Total number of cases treated: 1,815.

Pathological Department: Total number of specimens examined: 3,545.

X'Ray and Electrotherapy Department: X'rays taken: 621; Total number of patients treated in Electrotherapy Department: 608.

Library: There were 4,245 books in both the Sevashrama and the patients' libraries. The Sevashrama received many journals and newspapers.

Kumbha Mela: The famous twelve-yearly Kumbha Mela was held in Hardwar in March and April 1962, when nearly fifteen to twenty lakhs of people visited the place. The Sevashrama arranged a temporary hospital unit of 50 beds in addition to the regular beds in the Sevashrama. The excellent health arrangements did not necessitate the use of the extra beds much. But the Sevashrama treated 403 indoor cases and 21,592 outdoor cases during the Mela. Nearly 3,400 persons were inoculated against cholera at the Sevashrama. Besides, about 450 pilgrims and 130 *sādhus* were accommodated during the Mela. The Sevashrama organized various cultural and religious functions also during the period.

Immediate Needs: (i) Rs. 1,50,000 for the construction of new wards in place of the old ones; (ii) Rs. 60,000 for a new monastic workers' quarters to replace the old one; (iii) Endowment for 29 beds at the rate of Rs. 8,000 per bed.