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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Belur Math, April 13, 1935

In the evening many visitors had come for Vijnananandaji's *darśana*. One of them asked him : 'Sir, what is the cause of rebirth ?'

Maharaj : 'It is due to desire. If you can get rid of all your desires, rebirth will not take place. If I push a thing, for instance, it will move so long as it has got that momentum ; and if not pushed further, it will then stop. We provide new impetus to our *karmas* in every birth, thus continuing the cycle of re-births. But if we check it completely, that is if we rise over our desires, we will have no further rebirths.'

The gentleman talked of Kant and Hegel and the operation of cause and effect, to which Maharaj said : 'You see, the whole of a cause does not appear as effect ; some part of it remains unexpressed too.'

The gentleman tried to counter it by raising a detailed argument on the subject and quoted the views of Kant and other philosophers, to all of which Maharaj listened with an amused smile and then said gravely : 'You better leave these debates and arguments alone. We have got a brain of very limited capacity ; and for realizing God, all this hair-splitting is of no use. What you require is burning faith in Him. In order to be firmly established in that faith, you may raise one or two valid points, but nothing more. Our arguments are just like arm-chair discussions ; they lead us nowhere. We argue about God and then go home and lie down in bed. That is not religion, and it does not contribute to peace of mind. I, too, in my younger days read Kant and Hegel and I told Paramahamsa Deva : "You don't know anything, my dear Sir. Have you read these books ?" His reply to it was : "What are you saying ? Leave your books and treatises aside. They don't provide true knowledge. They are *avidyā* (lower knowledge)."

'That is how I was forced to give up arguing. What is wanted is such faith. But we must have that faith implanted in us if we want to see God, whereas divine incarnations already have it. That is the only difference. They have seen God ; we too will certainly see Him, only it is a matter of time.' Then referring

to a legend[1] about Nārada and two devotees of God, Maharaj said: 'When the latter devotee was told that he would see God after the lapse of as many years as there were leaves in the tamarind tree under which he was sitting, he started dancing in an exuberance of joy, at which Nārada asked him in amazement: "Why does that give you so much happiness? There are innumerable leaves in that tamarind tree." The devotee said: "But some time I *will* see God and attain salvation. That is great joy indeed!" This is the kind of faith that is needed. Otherwise arguments and discussions only cloud the issue and create confusion. And take even Kant and other philosophers. In the end they say: "One cannot be sure that God exists. But behind this entire world of creation, there is something which guides everything in an orderly fashion." All that means precious little. On the other hand one *can* see God, talk with Him, and touch Him. Do they say such things? If not, what is the use of their philosophy?'

Devotee: 'But you, Sir, stand on a different plane, and we are ordinary beings. Can we achieve spiritual enlightenment at all?'

Maharaj: 'Yes, certainly. There is a story that a very well-read man went to a *sādhu* to be helped in the way of Self-realization. The *sādhu* told him, "First of all you have to unlearn all that you have learnt in books, and then you can come to me." So you see that book-learning is useless for the purpose you have in view. The only thing required is faith.'

Two devotees just then arrived for initiation. They had come from distant Barisal. Maharaj continued: 'See from how far away they have come for getting initiation. If you ask me as to why they should come, what shall I say? They have come evidently because they have got faith in God.' Then he intoned a Bengali verse which means: Faith helps one meet Kṛṣṇa but vain arguments lead one astray.

For some time Maharaj was silent and then said: 'Listen to a funny story. A boat was going along the Ganges, and there was an atheistic Brāhmaṇa in it. He had no belief in any god or goddess. Now a storm arose and the boat was about to sink, when that Brāhmaṇa out of fear suddenly cried out, "O Mother Durgā, save me." One of the men asked: "How is it that *you* are praying to the goddess?" The Brāhmaṇa said, "I know there are no gods or goddesses; but should there be any, it will serve the purpose now." The story evoked much laughter in those present.

On another day a young devotee came to Vijnananandaji and after bowing to him, earnestly said: 'Maharaj, I am working under a businessman, and it is impossible to work there without telling lies. I want your advice about it. Will these little falsehoods stand in the way of my realizing God?' Maharaj said, 'Deviations from truth will surely hamper realization of God. God is truth and to realize Him you have to be completely truthful.'

Hearing this one of the visitors said: 'But in business a little untruthfulness does not matter much.' At this Maharaj said to the devotee: 'What a strange thing to say! You should not listen to what other people say. Your duty is to endeavour to be truthful under all circumstances. But if at times owing to special reasons you have to utter a falsehood, it need not worry you too much, because while you are subordinate to another person, you cannot help obeying him. If you be completely truthful, you will only lose your job. Now go on working as you are doing; afterwards, when you are more free, you can follow your own inclinations and stick to truth at all times. But know it to be the last word that to realize God you have to be wholly truthful in thought, word, and deed.'

Allahabad Math, April 23, 1935

Two monks had come from Varanasi to see

[1] Refer *Raja yoga* by Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vijnanananda who was in a very cheerful frame of mind in their company. In course of conversation, the talk turned to the greatness of Swamiji and Rakhal Maharaj, on which Maharaj said: 'As between them one complemented the other. Each was superior in his own sphere. Ordinarily they are not comparable. Swamiji gave the ideas and Rakhal Maharaj translated them into action.

'At times Swamiji used to scold us severely. As I was under the care of Rakhal Maharaj, I did not receive very much of Swamiji's scolding. Once Swamiji said that from one point of view India's decadence was due to her sages. I thought Swamiji was decrying them and objected: "No Sir, you are wrong about these sages." Swamiji's face turned red and he told Rakhal Maharaj who was pacing about there: "See, Rakhal, Peshan says I do not know anything." Rakhal Maharaj comforted him saying: "Why do you take him seriously? He is just a boy and understands very little." Swamiji at once cooled down just like a child.

'Rakhal Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj were the two souls who came in contact most with Swamiji, and so had to bear the brunt of his scolding. One day Swamiji was roundly abusing Rakhal Maharaj who went inside the room and shut the door. On the next morning Swamiji sent for Rakhal Maharaj and as soon as he came in, Swamiji affectionately embraced him and said: "Brother Rakhal, I abused you very badly yesterday. My temper somehow got the better of me." And Rakhal Maharaj immediately said, "What does that matter? You scold us for our own good. That need not upset you at all." And Swamiji was pleased. They went on talking on many subjects after this.

'To those who went to Swamiji for initiation he would say, "You think I possess only a pleasant demeanour; but if even after seeing me in one of my violent moods you feel inclined to get initiated by me, you are welcome." And the boys would reply, "Yes, Maharaj, we can put up with everything."

'Nowadays there is no scolding in the Math. Formerly there was as much scolding as there was much love, too.

'Once (at the Belur Math), while taking a stroll, Swamiji told me: "The Master's temple will be here." He pointed out the exact spot where the construction has now started. Then he asked me: "Shall I live to see it?" I said, "Yes, Maharaj, you will see it all right." He was silent for some time and then said: "Yes, I will see it, but from above." Now that the temple is being built, he is seeing it from above.

'When I was in Belur Math looking after the construction of the masonry steps in front of the Math building leading down to the river, I saw one hot summer day Swamiji on the upper verandah sipping cold drink. I too was feeling thirsty, when one of Swamiji's attendants came with a glass tumbler in his hand saying, "Swamiji has sent this cold drink for you." I felt supremely happy but found only a few drops at the bottom of the tumbler. I felt disappointed and at the same time annoyed to see that Swamiji had thought fit to indulge in a practical joke when I was feeling so terribly thirsty. Anyway, I took those few drops as his *prasāda* and strange to say, immediately my thirst was quenched and I felt relieved. It was an amazing experience. When after finishing the work I was returning to my room, Swamiji asked me if I had taken the cold drink he had sent me. I said, "There were only a few drops but that was enough to quench my thirst." He was very pleased to hear it.

'Swamiji never scolded anyone without reason. He loved us dearly and scolded us for our own good. After his last illness he was slowly convalescing, and on the day he went to see the Uttarpara Library, I left for Allahabad. A few days later I got a telegram conveying the sad news of his passing away. The day before I got it, I saw him while meditating in the shrine room of Brahmavadin Club. I was wondering about it and the telegram explained the mystery. I had a vision of Rakhal Maharaj also before he passed away.'

Patna Ashrama, October, 1935

At the earnest request of a devotee of Patna, Swami Vijnanananda went there in the last week of October, 1935. On the occasion of the Kāli-pūjā at the residence of a devotee, he went there and created an atmosphere of divine joy and exhilaration. It was a memorable Kāli-pūjā for the Patna devotees. After initiating a Brahmacārī, he told him: 'Give me something.' The Brahmacārī placed some flowers in his hand which Maharaj kept in his pocket and said, 'You have paid the Guru's dues.'

On another occasion he said to an initiated disciple: 'You should look upon the Master and the Holy Mother as one and the same. You must remember that without the Master's grace you cannot get the Holy Mother just as without the Holy Mother's grace you cannot get the Master. The Master is like Nārāyaṇa and the Holy Mother is like Lakṣmī. You should pray to the Holy Mother for strength without which nothing can be done. From the Master you should ask only for pure *bhakti*. You should worship Swamiji as the Lord Śiva. Swamiji's mother worshipped Śiva and got Him as her son.'

In the course of a discussion at Patna, Maharaj said one day: 'One night at Dakshineshwar, it being late, I stayed with the Master. He got some food for me from the *nahabat* (music chamber) and himself fixed the mosquito net over my bed. When I lay down he said, "Do you know why I love you boys? You are all my own, and the Divine Mother has told me to love you all." After a long talk I fell asleep and the Master tucked in the loose end of the mosquito net. In the morning he called me, told me to meditate and himself clapping his hands, chanted the name of Hari.

'How he loved us! We cannot love you like that. We became mad for him after seeing him but you are mad for him even without seeing him but simply hearing about him. How lucky you are!' Maharaj's countenance brightened as he said this, and tears of joy trickled down his cheeks.

On the day he was preparing to leave Patna for Allahabad, it started raining heavily and the devotees wanted him to postpone the journey, to which he said: 'That is out of the question. I have promised to go, and so I must stick to my word. Our Master always kept his word. If he said he would go to the latrine, he would make it a point to go, whether he felt the need for it or not. Truth must be strictly adhered to; that is the beginning and the end of religion. You cannot realize God unless you are perfectly and transparently sincere. And that is possible only for three classes of people: children, lunatics, and the liberated souls. Our Master had the sincerity of a child and sometimes he would throw off his clothes and play with small children. He did not, like other people, suffer from a sense of shyness or shame.'

Barisal Ashrama, November-December, 1935

In the newly built shrine room of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Barisal, a photograph of the Master was to be installed and at the earnest request of the local monks and devotees Swami Vijnanananda went there on the 25th November, 1935, and stayed for nine days. The devotees and the Ashrama *sādhus* who came in contact with him during that time, savoured the charm of his saintly character and as a result a permanent change was wrought in the spiritual life of many of them. His life which was filled with deep spiritual experiences left an indelible impression and gave a lasting stimulus to everyone. Some of the religious discourses given by him on that occasion at different times are given below. In the afternoon of his arrival at Barisal on November 25, many people of the town assembled in order to see him and listen to his religious discourse.

On a table in his room was a large portrait of the Master, and an air of spirituality pervaded the atmosphere. No one felt like breaking the deep stillness in the room. Then at the request of the visitors, Maharaj de-

tailed some of his supernatural experiences. A sublime brightness suffused his countenance; and pointing to the Master's portrait, he said gravely, 'He is hearing everything.' With regard to the Master, Maharaj said: 'I was sitting at the Master's feet one day at Dakshineshwar when a gentleman from Konnagar came to see him. When after sometime he departed, the Master told me: "I can see people's inside as clearly as one sees things in a glass case." I was therefore nervous at the idea that my innermost being was also clearly revealed to him. "What a dangerous man he is!" I thought. Yet he always spoke about the good things of people and never about their evil side.

'When I first heard the Master say "Rāma and Kṛṣṇa of the past have now combined in this body as Ramakrishna", I felt somewhat sceptical. I thought that though he was talking incoherently, on the whole he was a good and simple man. Later, the Master solemnly said one day, "The One that dallied with the milkmaids at Vrindaban is now in this body." Seeing his fervour and the luminous brightness of his countenance, I believed him. He then explained to me what the conquest of lust meant.' Maharaj became somewhat introspective now, and after some time said: 'Perhaps you think I was hypnotized.' He then chuckled and his eyes indicated that there was no truth in such an inference. After a while he said seriously, 'I was a boy when I saw the Master and I could not have his company for long, and so I understood very little of him.'

THE TWO VIEWS

[EDITORIAL]

There is a beautiful story, full of meaning for many of us, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. It has been freely translated by Aldous Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy* as follows:

That Self who is free from impurities, from old age and death, from grief and thirst and hunger, whose desire is true and whose desires come true—that Self is to be sought after and enquired about, that Self is to be realized.

The Devas (gods or angels) and the Asuras (demons or titans) both heard of this Truth. They thought: 'Let us seek after and realize this Self, so that we can obtain all worlds and the fulfilment of all desires.'

Thereupon Indra from the Devas and Virocana from the Asuras approached Prajāpati, the famous teacher. They lived with him as pupils for thirty-two years. Then Prajāpati asked them: 'For what reason have you both lived here all this time?'

They replied: 'We have heard that one who realizes the Self obtains all the worlds and all his desires. We have lived here because we want to be taught the Self.'

Prajāpati said to them: 'The person who is seen in the eye—that is the Self. That is immortal, that is fearless and that is Brahman.'

'Sir,' enquired the disciples, 'who is seen reflected in water or in a mirror?'

'He, the Ātman,' was the reply. 'He indeed is seen in all these.' Then Prajāpati added: 'Look at yourselves in the water, and whatever you do not understand, come and tell me.'

Indra and Virocana pored over their reflections in the water, and when they were asked what they had seen of the Self, they replied: 'Sir, we see the Self; we see even the hair and nails.'

Then Prajāpati ordered them to put on their finest clothes and look again at their 'selves' in the water. This they did and when asked again what they had seen, they

answered: 'We see the Self, exactly like ourselves, well adorned and in our finest clothes.'

Then said Prajāpati: 'The Self is indeed seen in these. That Self is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.' And the pupils went away, pleased at heart.

But looking after them, Prajāpati lamented thus: 'Both of them departed without analysing or discriminating, and without comprehending the true Self. Whoever follows this false doctrine of the Self must perish.'

Satisfied that he had found the Self, Virocana returned to the Asuras and began to teach them that the bodily self alone is to be worshipped, that the body alone is to be served, and that he who worships the ego and serves the body gains both worlds, this and the next. And this in effect is the doctrine of the Asuras.

But Indra, on his way back to the Devas, realized the uselessness of this knowledge. 'As this Self,' he reflected, 'seems to be well adorned when the body is well adorned, well dressed when the body is well dressed, so too will it be blind if the body is blind, lame if the body is lame, deformed if the body is deformed. Nay more, this same Self will die when the body dies. I see no good in such knowledge.' So Indra returned to Prajāpati for further instruction. Prajāpati compelled him to live with him for another span of thirty-two years; after which he began to instruct him, step by step, as it were.

Prajāpati said: 'He who moves about in dreams, enjoying and glorified—he is the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Pleased at heart, Indra again departed. But before he had rejoined the other angelic beings, he realized the uselessness of that knowledge also. 'True it is,' he thought within himself, 'that this new Self is not blind if the body is blind, not lame, nor hurt, if the body is lame or hurt. But even in dreams the Self is conscious of many sufferings. So I see no good in this teaching.'

Accordingly he went back to Prajāpati for more instruction, and Prajāpati made him live with him for thirty-two years more. At the end of that time Prajāpati taught him thus: 'When a person is asleep, resting in perfect tranquility, dreaming no dreams, then he realizes the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Satisfied, Indra went away. But even before he had reached home, he felt the uselessness of this knowledge also. 'When one is asleep,' he thought, 'one does not know oneself as "This is I." One is not in fact conscious of any existence. That state is almost annihilation. I see no good in this knowledge either.'

So Indra went back once again to be taught. Prajāpati made him stay with him for five years more. At the end of that time Prajāpati taught him the highest truth of the Self.

'This body,' he said, 'is mortal, for ever in the clutch of death. But within it resides the Self, immortal, and without form. This Self, when associated in consciousness with the body, is subject to pleasure and pain; and so long as this association continues, no man can find freedom from pains and pleasures. But when the association comes to an end, there is an end also of pain and pleasure. Rising above physical consciousness, knowing the Self as distinct from the sense-organs and the mind, knowing Him in his true light, one rejoices and one is free.'

II

The above story illustrates the two principal views of life held by men from very old times. The one is the view that human life is primarily a physical affair controlled by the laws of nature and the end of it lies in living a materially happy life for oneself and provide for such happiness for others of his family or his race. This view says that the physical existence is all what is real and one need not think in a life after death. The other view holds that life has a meaning larger than the satisfaction of its material needs alone. The

real joy of life comes when one transcends the thraldom of matter and becomes the Spirit that he really is. All the scriptures of the world hold this view and proclaim that the object of their teachings is to lift man up from his erring human nature to perfect divinity. They refuse to accept the mere materialistic explanation of human existence on earth. The beginning and end of life are not bounded by its material aspects only; it has ethical and spiritual aspects also which in reality are its essence, and the soul does not return to dust with the decay of the body.

The above story also shows another great truth which we are apt to overlook easily. It is this that not only individuals but also societies are saved or destroyed by the extent of their knowledge and following of the ideals and objectives before them, and for this the leaders of the societies are greatly responsible. It is actually the leaders who give direction to the thought and opinion of the common people. The multitude generally look up to their leaders for guidance and they follow them almost blindly. The problems of meeting the necessities of daily life are so engrossing to the common people that they can hardly find it possible to think of other things, nor have they generally either the leisure or the capacity, or even the energy to think about the higher aspects of life. Whatever ideologies are put before them by their self-appointed or even chosen leaders, whom the common mass of men in their helplessness cannot but depend upon, the people only accept at secondhand on trust. They are incapable of prolonged thoughts and sound judgements or even discerning power of calculative decision and whatever, therefore, a clever and self-asserting man places before them, it is accepted generally and thus the society is easily swayed by the ideas of these leaders. The leaders have, therefore, a great responsibility on them and they must be very careful and conscientious about what they say or preach or do. The *Bhagavad-Gītā*, also, says that whatsoever the superior person does, that is followed by others; the standards and norms he establishes, the common men only go by them.

Virocana was the leader of the demons. He was satisfied with the thought that the body was everything and believed that man's sole happiness lay in taking care of it in all possible ways. The only aim of life to him was to provide for the ways and means of the enjoyment of the flesh for as long a time as possible; and for the achievement of this end, one need not bother oneself about the rightness or wrongness of means. End justifies the means, and all that make for the material happiness of man should be regarded as good. Man does not come but once, hence the opportunity provided should be made full use of in enjoyment of all sorts of pleasure by satisfying the thirst and hunger of the senses. This ideology of Virocana, the leader of the demons, has been accepted as the philosophy of life by his followers and represents a school of thought. Hence we have the conception of the *asuras* and the *āsuric* code of life, so graphically described in the ***Bhagavad-Gītā*** **as** *āsuric sampattis or* demonical attributes of life. According to this code, the whole world may be looked upon like a forest in which survival and success come only to those who can use their teeth and claws well and resort to the use of violence in all its myriad forms. The scriptures of the world are filled with the exploits of the followers of Virocana and of the havoc they sought to bring upon the peace and prosperity of the society as a whole. Even amongst us today, we have men subscribing to this view in more or less degrees.

On the other side, there is Indra, the leader of the gods, to whom the insistence of material values alone does not seem sufficient. He finds that such a partial view is incapable of giving real meaning to life and its goal. To him life extends beyond the existence of physical forms and he, in his arduous search for Truth, finds out that real life rests in Spirit and that such a life can be sustained only by a process of penance and sacrifice of

material enjoyments. He seems to have found out the clue to true happiness and believed in the dictum of the seers which says: 'The infinite is happiness. There is no happiness in what is finite.' The followers of Indra, the gods, took this philosophy as the basis of life and the *Gītā* beautifully extols this as the *daivī* or godly attributes of life and assures that life has its meaning only in the pursuit of these *daivī sampattis* or godly qualities. This is verily the spiritual way of life and also the way to real joy and peace.

III

This way of spiritual life, however, entails suffering, but, at the same time, it is this way only which contributes to the gradual unfoldment of the Spirit in us and thus ensures true happiness. In every man lie dormant the immense potentialities of the soul, which naturally seek their manifestation in a higher sort of life. *Sādhana* (and it may have various forms) is the conscious way by which we help this process of manifestation become easier and quicker. To gain spirituality is nothing like acquiring something from outside of us. It is a process of unfoldment which comes from within. 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest that divinity within,' says Swami Vivekananda. This unfoldment goes on in every individual in different ways through various stages and circumstances in accordance with the effort we put in for it. The *Bhagavad-Gītā,* therefore, tells us in unambiguous terms that it is we who are the makers or destroyers of our destinies. 'A man should uplift himself by his own self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself. The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by the self. But to the unconquered self, this self is inimical and behaves like a foe.' It teaches us to engage ourselves wisely in the struggle. Our sufferings are mostly due to the fact that we often confuse happiness with pleasure. Pleasure owes its origin to matter, whereas happiness is connected to the Spirit. The pain and sorrow that we suffer from our blind pursuit after pleasure have a baneful effect on us and it gradually drags us down to a lower state when we find nothing but weakness, degradation, and despair in the end. But sufferings, on the other hand, for the Spirit help us manifest the potentialities of the soul and leave us stronger. They kindle the inner fire that burns out the dross and dirt of our life. All men of wisdom have had to pass through this ordeal of suffering and all who pursue this way have also to do the same. There is no short cut to it and this process is termed as *tapasyā* or austerity—the austerity of body, the austerity of mind, and the austerity of speech. It is enjoined in the scriptures that to gain real happiness, it is necessary that one should pass through these austerities with a steadfast determination, unflinching faith, never failing patience and all through with an equanimity of mind, where pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat cannot disturb the struggling aspirant. All these notions connected with duality are impermanent in nature and only baffle a weak mind. The Bible also tells us: 'Accept whatever is brought upon thee and be long suffering when thou passest into humiliation. For gold is tried in fire, and acceptable men in the fire of affliction.'

IV

But there are many dangers and pitfalls in this way of struggle and one has to be careful about these. A very common mistake that we commit is that we very often forget that going the way of Spirit does not mean shrinking from our duties and responsibilities till we really have them for us. A beautiful *śloka* of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says: 'He, who having turned his face from his duties and obligations, merely utters the name of Kṛṣṇa mechanically, not only deceives the world, but deceives himself also and brings dishonour to the god whose devotee he pretends to be.' To become religious is definitely not escaping the struggle of life, which the performance of

duties and fulfilment of responsibilities entail. Those who flee from their duties and take to unwarranted short cuts in their haste to reach the goal, often find themselves in difficulties at last.

The world is a sort of moral gymnasium where we have to take exercise and become strong for spiritual pursuits by performing our duties honestly. This is a great lesson that we should learn from all great men, whom we honour and worship for their spirituality even, let alone the successful people in the other fields. Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches us that a man devoted to his duties easily attains the perfection necessary for a spiritual life. 'From whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty a man attains perfection.' So, a man can advance from any position, doing his duties honestly and looking forward for a way out of them gradually when he would be perfect and fit to devote himself completely to God. 'By doing well the duty which is nearest to us, the duty which is in our hands now', says Swami Vivekananda, 'we make ourselves stronger; and improving our strength in this manner step by step, we may even reach a state in which it shall be our privilege to do the most coveted and honoured duties in life and in society.' He further says: 'Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of the worship of God.' This is one great lesson we must never forget while we are on our way through life to higher reaches.

But performance of duty is not so easy. Duty often becomes bondage with us if done without proper outlook. 'Duty becomes a disease with us;' says Swami Vivekananda cautioning us, 'it drags us ever forward. It catches hold of us and makes our whole life miserable. It is the bane of human life. This duty, this idea of duty is the midday summer sun which scorches the innermost soul of mankind. Look at those poor slaves to duty! Duty leaves them no time to say prayers, no time to bathe. Duty is ever on them. They go out and work. Duty is on them! They come home and think of the work for the next day. Duty is on them! It is living a slave's life, at last dropping down in the street and dying in harness, like a horse. This is duty as it is.' But how can such a dreadful thing be made sweeter and more agreeable? Is there no way then to make the performance of duties easier, since we should neither escape nor can avoid the performance of duties? In answer to this anxious question of ours, the Swami says, 'Duty is seldom sweet. It is only when love greases its wheels that it runs smoothly; it is a continuous friction otherwise. How else could parents do their duties to their children, husbands to their wives and *vice versa?* Do we not meet with cases of friction every day in our lives? Duty is sweet only through love.' And to see that duty does not bind us further we have 'to be unattached and to work as free beings, to give up all work unto God.' This is the secret of work, the right key to open the doors to that 'blessedness, eternal peace arising from perfect freedom' which 'is the highest concept of religion.'

THE INDIAN IMAGE OF THE IDEAL GURU
(A REFLECTION OF SWAMIJI'S PERSONALITY)

By Professor P. S. Naidu

Down the ages, in the annals of human history, the Guru has been held in great respect. In some cultures, the Guru has been almost deified, and we in India, have unhesitatingly identified him with Divinity. Deep compassion, abounding grace for the repentant, and readiness to take on the sufferings of devotees or disciples, are characteristics which the Guru has, and which are also found in the great *avatāras*. But, times have changed. Not that the passage of time makes any difference to the eternal and absolute values: it does make a difference to the human approach and the human attitude to these values. And Kaliyuga has created an upheaval in many settled convictions in the human mind. The transcendental and the mystical had to give place to the rational. There was a general lowering of value-criteria from the spiritual to the psychological level. And this had its repercussions in the attitude to the teacher. The Gurn was no longer looked upon as one who helped you to realize the divinity latent in you, but as one who instructed you in skills, mental and manual. He was no longer an educator in the true sense, but an instructor. It will not be out of place to point out here that the steady impoverishment of the image of the Guru in the Indian mind was, to a large extent, hastened by the influence of foreign cultures, Semitic as well as Teutonic. The net result was that in the nineteenth century the teacher in our country was looked down upon as an artisan, or at best as a technician, and a wage earner.

The unfortunate tendency outlined above is perhaps best illustrated in the analytic approach which modern psychology makes to the study of teaching as a profession. In spite of the holistic or *grstalt*-approach to personality, advocated by the youngest of the psychological schools (which happens to be German-Jewish in origin), the dominant tendency is to analyse, and break up the personality of the teacher into component traits. Extensive 'objective' studies of the qualities of a successful teacher have been made, and batteries of teaching-aptitude tests have been constructed. A few examples may be cited here, to indicate how far these well-intentioned investigators have departed from the true image of the teacher. One of the early studies mentioned the following as the qualities which one who seeks to enter the teaching profession should have, if one expects success: 1. Address (alertness, dexterity, skill, etc.), 2. Personal Appearance, 3. Optimism, 4. Reserve, 5. Enthusiasm, 6. Fairness, 7. Sincerity, 8. Sympathy, 9. Vivacity, and 10. Scholarship. This list was based on the opinion of administrators and principals, and was considered not up to the mark. The teachers themselves were invited to draw up a separate list of, what they considered to be, the traits leading to success in their profession. They chose to construct a rating scale under the following heads of 'Efficiency': physical, moral, administrative, dynamic, achieved, projected, supervisory, and social. Similar studies made recently in our country brought more or less similar results, but with one significant difference. Great stress was laid on the moral qualities of the teacher, and on the level of his spiritual aspirations and attainment. These analytic studies are going ahead with great enthusiasm, and seriousness of purpose. They have a limited value, and it is not our intention to discourage them. They are valid within limits, but they are not adeqnate. They take us nowhere near the true image of the ideal teacher. A teacher is not assembled out of given psychological traits and pedagogical qualities. He is an individnal, a living, growing, dynamic *person,* steadily developing the

latent divine spark in him. The totality (or *gestalten*) of his personality and individuality should not be lost sight of when we are trying to understand him as a teacher.

The naturalists and psychologists, in our country and abroad, have lost sight of the teacher as a person. The philosophical idealists have not. They have with keen insight made statements about the teacher, and it is in these statements that we have to look for the image we are seeking. Creative thinkers in the field of philosophy of education have been particularly interested in studying the personality of the teacher. It is interesting to note that, depending on their general philosophical outlook, they have given us different images of the teacher, from widely differing perspectives. Naturalistic philosophy of education pushes the teacher to the background, and ignores his personality. Realism is slightly better. The teacher is given a place in the realistic scheme of things, but the realist is so uncertain about his view of the dynamics of human personality, and so vacillating is he between determinism and freedom that no clear image of the teacher emerges out of his philosophy of education. If from realism we turn to pragmatism, we find that we are gradually emerging out of the woods. The teacher is viewed benevolently in the role of the parent in the family. He is to give guidance and sometimes exercise authority, but he must always respect the freedom of the learner. He has to plan for learning activities for socializing the child. And that is the best image that pragmatism can present of the teacher.

When all is said and done, realism, naturalism, and pragmatism give us either a pale and lifeless picture of the teacher or no picture at all. It is only when we turn to idealism we feel thrilled and inspired. The idealist has a very clear conception of the personality of the teacher, because he is clear about the ultimate aims of education, and of the means to be used for realizing those aims. The teacher occupies a central place in the idealistic scheme of education. 'The teacher is more the key to the educative process than any other element comprising it.' It is only in a philosophical system, which views the teacher from this exalted perspective, we can expect to find a correct image of his personality. Nor are we disappointed in our expectations.

The idealistic image of the teacher begins with the inspiring statement: 'The teacher is a co-worker with God in perfecting human nature.' Can the human mind conceive of any more exalted ideal for the noblest of professions? The teacher is the privileged servant of God. He is called upon to discharge the sacred duty of helping and perfecting child nature. And it is for him to measure up to the demands made on him by divine will.

To be a co-worker with the divine Father, the teacher has to possess certain unique qualities. These are, according to Western idealists, the capacity to present to the child a model or image of reality in his own person. For the child, the teacher is, in a very real sense, the personification of all that is best in the world it lives in. Yet, in spite of this dominating position he occupies in the child's little world, the teacher should as often as possible, withdraw to the background, allowing full freedom for the child to develop its inner self.

To discharge this double function of leading the child by the hand, and allowing it to walk ahead unassisted, the teacher has to be a master of child psychology. He should possess complete knowledge of the stages of child development. With this knowledge as background, the teacher should be an accomplished master of the art of communication. Not only should he be an accomplished scholar in his own field, he should also have the skill to communicate the knowledge he possesses to the child, at the level where the latter stands.

It is not enough for the teacher to have the skill to put over, *at the cognitive level,* the knowledge that he has, but he has to influence

the child *at the conative level, too*; in fact, he has to shape *the total personality* of the child. The teacher has to function as a friend, philosopher, and guide. This function he can discharge by leading an exemplary life himself, by continuing to learn throughout his life in a spirit of humility, and by having an abiding faith in what he teaches and in the missionary character of his profession.

And, at a lower level, the teacher should have the capacity to communicate to the child the skills he possesses. He should also be a master craftsman in his profession.

In short, he should have infinite faith in his profession, in his subject, and in the child he has to teach.

This idealistic profile of the teacher's personality is very impressive indeed. But it lacks proper spiritual orientation. It has to be translated in the language of Vedāntic idealism. And it is here that the personality of Swami Vivekananda comes in. In Swamiji we find the perfect embodiment of the Indian image of the Guru. I should put it this way: The Indian conception of the ideal Guru is only a generalization based on the Vedāntic traits in Swamiji's towering personality. That he swayed vast audiences by his teachings, that he was able to convey difficult Vedāntic ideas and ideals to the minds of Western scholars, and that he was able to mould and transform the nature of those whom he taught, are well known facts. Now, let us see what it is in him that made Swamiji an ideal Guru.

From the Vedāntic standpoint the Guru should have attained the goal to which he wants to lead his pupils. The Western idealist will say, the teacher should be a master of his subject. The Vedāntin says he should be a master of that *one subject* or *supreme subject*, namely Self-realization. He should have realized the highest truth. He should have attained Parabrahman.

He alone knows the path who has reached the goal. The pitfalls on the way, the hurdles, the steep inclines, the deep depressions, and the hidden traps are all known to that person alone who has reached the destination. And knowing them, he can act as a competent guide to others following the path. The true teacher is one who knows the difficulties on the path to realization, and can guide his pupils with success.

Swamiji, under the inspiring guidance of the Great Master Sri Ramakrishna, reached the goal, and knew every inch of the path. So much so, later, after the *mahāsamādhi* of Sri Sri Guru Maharaj, when he had to take charge of the first group of the devoted disciples, he knew what path was suited to each one of them and at what pace each should be taken along.

In a true enough sense Swamiji was a co-worker with Paramahamsa Deva, the *avatāra* of this century, in perfecting human nature. He was a true personification of Reality for his *gurubhāis*, and today he continues to be the same to us, if we care to (or if we have the courage to) follow his steps. And he was a master of the psychology of the learner—the psychology which reveals one's past *saṁskāras*, one's burden of accumulated propensities of all the past births, and tells the Guru where the disciple stands. Knowing the exact level reached by the total personality, comprising body, mind, and soul of the disciple, the Guru can give the push in the right direction, and with the right momentum, so that the pupil makes steady progress towards the goal. This is the kind of psychology that Indian idealism recommends to the teacher, and this is the psychology in which Swamiji was an accomplished master.

That the teacher has to pay individual attention to the learner, and give him individual guidance goes without saying. Psychology, which in recent times devoted much of its attention to the study of individual differences, strongly supports the pedagogical principle of individual instruction. But sheer psychology does not go deep enough. It is idealistic philosophy, and Indian idealistic philosophy in particular, that penetrates to the very core of individuality. Swamiji has taught us the

true meaning of individuality. This individuality has to be interpreted at the spiritual level, or in terms of the level of attainment of the individual soul : as many individuals, so many paths. The Guru has to know the exact level that his disciple has already reached, and in terms of this level of attainment, he has to give him individual guidance for his final liberation.

In giving individual guidance the Guru has to remove the obstacles that obstruct his pupil's progress. He has to dissolve the crust which surrounds his true personality and dims its lustre. Sometimes the Guru may have to rescue his disciple through vicarious suffering. The blazing fire of the Guru's spiritual personality has to consume the sins of his disciple.

The Guru, in our view, is the very personification of compassion and mercy and of grace. Swamiji's entire life on earth was suffused with this infinite tenderness and love for the poor, the downtrodden, and the suffering. And it is he who has taught us to see the divine in the outcaste, the pariah, and the enslaved. It is from him we learn the lesson that all service is to be rendered in the spirit of worship of the divine in the person served. If you are nursing an invalid, consider yourself as the devotee worshipping at the altar of your *iṣṭa-devatā*—the altar being the body of the invalid, and the *iṣṭa-devatā* as incarnated in him. If you are donating money to build a hospital or a school or a bridge, consider yourself lucky in that you are permitted to make an offering at the altar of divinity, and, if as a teacher you are engaged in shaping young minds, consider yourself as a specially privileged person entrusted with the task of blowing into a blazing fire the smouldering spark of divinity in each child entrusted to you. This is the spirit in which the teacher has to view the sacred duties of his profession.

And this leads us to the last and the most important view of the image of the teacher we are trying to build up. The teacher's life has to be spotlessly pure. *There is no question of a private life apart from a public life for the teacher.* For him all his life is public, open to the gaze of his pupils. In other professions, one may do what one pleases with one's leisure, and with one's private life ; not so in the teaching profession. The teacher's private life, and his life during leisure time have to be pure, and as transparent as crystal glass.

Such is the image of the teacher that we get by a reverential study of Swamiji's life and such are the demands that Indian Vedāntic idealism makes of the teacher. The question may then be asked : How many of us, the present generation of teachers, are fit to be called teachers? It is true that the image presented in this article is the very ideal of perfection, and few can measure up to it. But, I may take the liberty of toning down the demands by saying that every teacher should (1) unhesitatingly and unreservedly accept the ideal as his own ideal, and (2) take every step within his reach to attain this ideal. Surely a teacher can and should accept these two conditions, or quit the teaching profession.

THE PLACE OF KARMA IN THE ADVAITIC SCHEME OF DISCIPLINE

By Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian

(Continued from the previous issue)

III

KNOWLEDGE IS SUBSIDIARY TO KARMA

In the two views which we examined and rejected above, *karma* and knowledge were treated as the subsidiary and the principal respectively with a view to show that *karma* is the direct means to Self-knowledge. There are those who reverse this relation and argue that the knowledge of the Self stands in a subordinate relation to *karma*. They argue that only a person who knows that his Self is different from the body, and that it outlives the body to enjoy the fruits of *karma* like heaven, which manifest themselves after the death of this body, will perform the Vedic *karmas*. By getting this knowledge, the agent becomes qualified for actions. The qualification which the agent thus acquires is analogous to that which the rice-grains acquire by being sprinkled with water. Just as the rice-grains become fit to be used in the sacrifice due to the purification (*saṁskāra*) which sprinkling causes in them, so also the agent becomes qualified for actions through the knowledge which he acquires. In short, the knowledge of the Self, according to this view, stands in a subordinate relation to *karma* by becoming a purificatory subsidiary to the agent.[20]

Maṇḍana brings out the untenability of this view by pointing out that there is no evidence like context (*prakaraṇa*), etc. to show the subsidiary relation of knowledge to *karma*.[21] In the case of sprinkling the rice-grains, its relation to *karma* is known through context (*prakaraṇa*). No purpose is going to be served by sprinkling the rice-grains which are not used in *karma*. But when the rice-grains which are used in *karma* are sprinkled, there arises an unseen potency which is related to the supreme unseen potency of the *karma* under reference. So we are able to know through the context that the sprinkling of rice-grains is related to the sacrifice under reference. But no such evidence is available to show the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma*. The section which deals with the knowledge of the Self falls outside the ritualistic portion of the Veda, and so it is impossible to establish the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma* through context.

Nor is it possible to establish the relation through syntactical connection (*vākya*). There is, for example, the passage: 'He whose sacrificial laddle is made of *parṇa*-wood. ...'[22] The laddle (*juhū*) which is referred to in this passage is a special implement which is used in ritual only. Through syntactical connection implied in the passage 'He whose sacrificial laddle is made of *parṇa*-wood' it is known that 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' is subsidiary to the laddle. Since the laddle is invariably related to the rite, 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' also comes to be related to the rite. Thus it is established that 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' is subsidiary to the rite through the sacrificial laddle. But no such relation between knowledge and *karma* can be shown through syntactical connection. The self which is the agent cannot be used as a mediating link to establish the relation between knowledge and *karma*. Unlike the laddle which being indispensable for the rite is invariably related to it, the agent is not invariably related to Scripture-ordained *karmas*

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[20] *BS*, Part I, p. 28.

[21] The evidences indicative of the subsidiary relation are six: direct assertion (*śruti*), indication (*liṅga*), syntactical connection (*vākya*), context (*prakaraṇa*), position (*sthāna*), and designation (*samākhyā*). *Vide Mīmāṁsā-paribhāṣā*, p. 23.

[22] *Taittirīya-saṁhitā*, 3-5-7-1.

alone : the agent performs the secular acts in the same way as he does the Vedic *karmas*. Thus it is clear that we cannot establish the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma* through syntactical connection.[23]

Since there is no evidence like context (*prakaraṇa*), syntactical connection (*vākya*), etc. to show that knowledge is subsidiary to *karma*, it must be admitted, argues Maṇḍana, that the knowledge of the Self has an independent fruit of its own, and that statements like 'He does not return hither again',[24] which declare the fruit that will accrue to one who has attained Self-knowledge, should not be brushed aside as *arthavādas*. The contention that the pursuit of the Vedic *karmas* is the perceptible result (*dṛṣṭa-phala*) of the knowledge of the Self is absurd. It is true that a person will not perform the Vedic *karmas*, whose fruits manifest themselves only after death, if he does not know that the Self is the agent, and that being eternal it outlives the body to enjoy the fruits. But the knowledge of the Self which we get from the Upaniṣads is not conducive to the pursuit of the Vedic *karmas*; on the contrary, it is positively prejudicial to it. The Upaniṣads declare that the Self is neither the agent nor the enjoyer. There is, for example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text which reads : 'The Self eats nothing.'[25] In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* we come across the passage : 'The other looks on without eating.'[26] We are told in the *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* that the Self is 'without parts, without activity'.[27] While the first of these passages purports to show that the Self is not the experiencer, the last one denies the agency of the Self. The knowledge of the Self which we get from the Upaniṣads is of no use at all for *karma*. And so it is not possible to prove the subsidiariness of Self-knowledge to *karma* on the score that the knowledge of the Self is necessary for one to perform the Vedic *karmas* whose fruits manifest only after death. It is utterly meaningless to cite the Upaniṣadic texts like 'what, indeed, one performs with knowledge, faith and meditation, that indeed becomes more powerful',[28] 'He, O Gārgī, who in this world, without knowing this Immutable, offers oblations in the fire ... finds all such acts but perishable',[29] 'Both his knowledge and work take hold of him',[30] etc. on the assumption that they lend support to the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma*. The first of these passages does not refer to the knowledge of the Self or Brahman (*brahma-vidyā*) but to the knowledge of the *udgītha* (*udgītha-vidyā*). This will be evident from the opening passage of the section : 'One should meditate on Om, the *udgītha*.'[31] The second passage does not reveal that the knowledge of the Self is subsidiary to *karma;* on the other hand, it praises the knowledge of the Immutable through decrying *karmas* which yield only perishable results. The last one does not show that knowledge and work begin together to manifest their results, but it shows the division (*vibhāga*) of knowledge and *karma*. It only means that knowledge takes hold of one man and *karma* another, since there is no combination of the two.[32]

IV

ELIGIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH KARMA

Some others explain the relation between *karma* and knowledge differently. They maintain that one becomes eligible for Self-knowledge only by discharging the three congenital debts (*ṛṇa-traya*) for which the performance of *karmas* is indispensable. They cite the authority of Manu in support of their contention. Manu says : 'Having discharged the three obligations, one is to set one's mind on release.'[33] The debt that one owes to the

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[23] *BS*, Part I, p. 31.
[24] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8-15-1.
[25] 3-8-8.
[26] 3-1-1.
[27] 6-19.
[28] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1-1-10.
[29] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3-8-10.
[30] *Ibid.*, 4-4-2.
[31] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1-1-1.
[32] *BS*, Part I, pp. 31-32
[33] Manu, 6-35.

sages should be paid off by the study of the Veda and the observance of celibacy (*brahmacarya*), the debt to the gods by sacrifices like *agnihotra* and the debt to the ancestors by means of progeny. So the performance of *karma* is necessary to discharge the three congenital debts, whose liquidation is an indispensable qualification for attaining the knowledge of the Self.[34]

This view is not acceptable to Maṇḍana. If every one should discharge the three congenital debts in order to acquire the necessary qualification for getting the knowledge of the Self, Scripture should have enjoined only one order of life, viz. that of the householder. On the contrary, it refers to the different orders of life and one is permitted to adopt that order of life which one desires. The *Jābāla Upaniṣad*, for example, says: 'Otherwise (if a suitable occasion arises) let one renounce from the life of studentship.'[35] It is clear from this that it is not necessary for every one to be a householder; and if one is not a householder, one cannot liquidate the debts one owes to the gods and the ancestors. The ancient sages, it is said, did not desire children thinking, 'what shall we achieve through children?'[36] In this manner the ancient sages abandoned the desire for offspring, *karma*, etc. A householder who aims at Self-knowledge without performing the duties that belong to his station cannot attain it, because the sin that results on account of his not doing what is enjoined by Scripture becomes a hindrance to the acquisition of knowledge.[37] This is the real significance of Manu's declaration: 'Having discharged the three obligations, one is to set one's mind on release'.

V

NO RELATION BETWEEN KARMA AND KNOWLEDGE WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTALLY OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER

There are those who argue that there is no relation whatsoever between *karma* and knowledge as the two are fundamentally opposed to each other. *Karma* involves duality in the form of means and end, doer and deed, while knowledge reveals the Self which is one and non-dual. It is therefore impossible, according to them, to think of any relation between *karma* and knowledge. If it can be shown that *karma* is a means to knowledge or that knowledge requires the assistance of *karma* in the discharge of its work, it is but proper to say that there is relation between them. The protagonists of this view vehemently repudiate the various possibilities that could be thought of to show the usefulness of *karma* to knowledge. Any attempt undertaken for this purpose is bound to be, according to them, a futile adventure.

There is absolutely no need of *karma* in the matter of Brahman or the Self. It is not something to be accomplished or brought into being through *karma*, for it is ever-existent. *Karma* can never be a means to what is eternal. Nor is it required for the origination of the knowledge of the Self. Knowledge is always obtained through a *pramāṇa*; and since *karma* is not a source of knowledge, there is no need of it for the purpose of getting the knowledge of the Self.

Even though it does not originate knowledge, can it not serve, it may be asked, as an auxiliary to knowledge by helping it in its work? If there is anything to be produced by knowledge, such a question will be significant. There is, however, nothing to be done by knowledge which, by its very nature and unaided, reveals the object. Neither release (*mokṣa*) nor the removal of *avidyā* (*avidyānivṛtti*) nor the destruction of *karmas* (*karmakṣaya*) can be said to be accomplished or produced by knowledge. Release is not something to be brought into being through knowledge. Since release consists in realizing the nature of the Self which is eternal, the question of cause-effect relation between knowledge and release does not arise. If release were something to be brought into being through knowl-

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[34] *BS*, Part I, p. 27.
[35] 4.
[36] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4-4-22.
[37] *BS*, Part I, p. 36.

edge, it would cease to be eternal. Removal of *avidyā* also is not something to be done by knowledge after it has come into existence, in whatever way *avidyā* is considered. There are two kinds of *avidyā*: non-apprehension (*agrahaṇa*) and mis-apprehension (*viparyaya-grahaṇa*). Non-apprehension is the *prāgabhāva* of apprehension or knowledge; and so at the rise of knowledge, it ceases to be. Since the rise of knowledge marks the disappearance of non-apprehension, the question of its removal by knowledge after coming into existence does not arise. The same thing holds good with regard to mis-apprehension, though it is positive (*bhāva-rūpa*). A person mistakes nacre for silver. But when he knows the truth subsequently, his erroneous knowledge disappears. It is wrong to think that it persists for a little while even after the rise of knowledge, and that it is removed by knowledge only subsequently. Mis-apprehension or erroneous knowledge disappears as soon as the right knowledge which is opposed to it comes into being. Since the rise of the right knowledge itself is the removal of mis-apprehension, it is wrong to say that knowledge brings about the destruction of mis-apprehension, by placing them in the cause-effect relation. Just as the removal of *avidyā* (*avidyā-nivṛtti*) is not the effect caused by knowledge, so also the destruction of *karma* which binds the individual is not the effect produced by knowledge. *Karmas* are the product of *avidyā*. They persist so long as *avidyā* continues. When *avidyā* which is their root cause disappears at the rise of knowledge they, too, follow suit. Only if they could continue even after the disappearance of *avidyā*, the question of their destruction by knowledge with the assistance of obligatory and occasional rites (*nitya-naimittika-karmas*) will arise. Scripture itself refers to the destruction of *karmas* when their root cause, viz. *avidyā* disappears at the rise of knowledge. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, for instance, says: 'The knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are dispelled and his *karmas* terminate when He is seen—the higher and the lower.'[38]

It is not to the purpose to allege, argue the advocates of this view, that Brahman which is non-dual, which is bereft of relation, cannot be made known by the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) which has a relational content (*samsṛṣṭa-viṣaya*), and that to get the direct intuition (*pratyakṣa* or *aparokṣa-jñāna*), by which alone Brahman is to be realized, *karmas*, meditation, etc. are required. When we are able to get the knowledge of the non-dual, non-relational Brahman from the Upaniṣadic texts like 'The Self is not this, not this,'[39] 'One only without a second,'[40] where is the need for the alleged intuitive cognition? If we require some cognition, it should be for the purpose of knowing something. Since the non-dual Brahman is made known by the verbal testimony itself, there is certainly no need for the cognition through intuition. What is known once through some *pramāṇa* does not require to be known again through some other source. What the other *pramāṇa* is expected to do has already been done by the verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*). The Upaniṣadic texts not merely intimate the Self or Brahman as the existent something, but they intimate it as the highest good, for they proclaim in unmistakable terms that the Self is the supreme bliss, and that it is free from evil, old age, death, and grief. Thus since we get the knowledge of the non-dual Brahman from *śabda* itself, a knowledge which is clear, definite, and free from doubt, there is nothing which is required. When the realization of Brahman or the Self does arise through the knowledge conveyed by *śabda*, there is no transmigratoriness (*saṁsāritvam*) as before; the body and the senses are no more the limiting factors and the binding forces; there is no further deception by the phantasmagoric appearances of the phenomenal world. The reason for this is obvious. Due to ignorance of the real nature of the Self, a person develops

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[38] 2-2-8.
[39] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3-9-26.
[40] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6-2-1.

the wrong notion (*abhimāna*) that his body is the Self, and all the attributes of transmigratoriness come to be superimposed upon the Self. When the real nature of the Self is realized through the knowledge conveyed by *śabda,* the false knowledge of the Self disappears and the attributes of transmigratoriness could no more be associated with the Self. Scripture says: 'He, verily, who knows the supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman himself';[41] and so a person who realizes the Self or Brahman which is free from evil, old age, death, etc. gets himself lifted from the destructive whirlpool of *samsāra*. So long as a person identifies his Self with the body, he is subject to the misery caused by the limiting adjunct, viz. body. In the absence of the knowledge that his Self is the ultimate reality and that it is non-dual, he thinks that there are objects other than the Self, which he should strive for and that there are persons for whom he should suffer in the body. He struggles desiring something for himself, something else for his son, etc. and gets involved in the cycle of births and deaths. But all this is impossible for the man who sees everything as the Self. Scripture testifies to this when it says: 'If a man knows the Self as "I am this", then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the body?'[42] Since embodiment or the association with body is the result of false knowledge, it gets removed when the false knowledge disappears at the rise of right knowledge; and so a person who has realized the Self is non-embodied or bodiless even while alive. That is why the Upaniṣad says: 'Him, verily, who is non-embodied, pleasure and pain do not touch.'[43] In short, there is no transmigratoriness as before in the case of him who has realized Brahman as the Self; he, however, who has transmigratoriness as before, has not realized Brahman as the Self. Hence the advocates of this view maintain that, since the realization of the Self takes place through the knowledge conveyed by the Upaniṣadic texts, the utility of *karma,* meditation, etc. is ruled out.[44]

To sum up: there are two points which clearly emerge from the view stated above. They are: (i) *karma* and knowledge are diametrically opposed to each other, and so there can be no relation between them; and (ii) the Upaniṣadic texts which reveal the nature of the non-dual Self directly lead to the realization of the Self, which is release, with the result that there is no need for *karma* and meditation for bringing about the final manifestation of the real nature of the Self.

(To be continued)

[41] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* 3-2-9.
[42] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* 4-4-12.
[43] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* 8-12-1.
[44] *BS,* Part I, pp. 32-34.

HASIDISM: A JEWISH UNIVERSALISM

By Mr. Asher Block

A superficial glance at Hasidic life today might lead one to believe that the Hasidim are an eccentric sect of Jews who, among other things, wear beards and earlocks, dress in a peculiar garb, dance and sing, and follow their Rebbe-leader with blind and credulous faith. To a large extent such a pre-judgment might very well prove to be true as far as many individual Hasidim are concerned. But would not a similar surface-view and conclusion apply to almost any group of active religionists one could think of?

Our purpose here is to attempt to extract from the entire Hasidic movement its deeper function and meaning; to attempt to distil from the many commonplace and esoteric

currents that compose it, some simple universal truths. Indeed, as we shall see, Hasidism itself was an earnest effort, within Jewish life, to extract the essence out of Judaism. Judaism, like every other religion, has in it various elements: theology, ritual, ethics, customs, legends, institutions, and movements. Some of these are naturally more important than others. Those who take their religion in right earnestness, question what is essential and what is not in the many religious forms that have come down to them.

Ever since the beginning of Judaism in the days of Abraham, a process of accretion and selection has been going on. The Five Books of Moses, according to Orthodox tradition, contain 613 *mitzvot* or precepts—all, theoretically, of equal importance. Yet, within the *Tradition* itself, innumerable distinctions and classifications are made. Moses at Mount Sinai announced but Ten Basic Principles, and no more. The prophet Micah stressed only three: to do justly; to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. And certain rabbis of the Talmud even ventured to compress all the commandments into one. The great Hillel, a Palestinian sage who lived just before the beginning of the Christian era, declared: 'That which is hurtful to thee, do not to thy neighbour. This is the whole doctrine. The rest is commentary.' Rabbi Nachman, a Babylonian scholar of the fourth century, urged that the spirit of the whole *Torah* may be found in one verse (*Habakkuk* 2:4): 'The righteous shall live by his faith.'

Despite such formulations of essence, which were seldom challenged as to their validity, Jewish life did tend to go off on tangents from time to time, and leaders arose to recall it to the Path. When ritualism threatened to eclipse morality, prophets cried out: 'What is the need for all the sacrifices? Cease to do evil; learn to act well.' Similarly, at a later age, when legalism and intellectualism tended to displace piety and devotion, a reaction set in, which has been given the name of Hasidism.

The root of the term 'hasid' is *hesed*, meaning kindness or love—a term integral to all Jewish thought. According to the *Book of Psalms*, where this term occurs repeatedly, a *hasid* is one who acts beyond the letter of the law, in his convictions about God and in his sympathies for fellowman. Rabbi Pinhas of Koritz once defined the difference between a *hasid* and an ordinary Jew as follows: To an ordinary Jew what is forbidden is forbidden; to a *hasid* what is forbidden is forbidden *even if it means his life*. It is that intensity, that extra zeal in preserving the essentials, that may be said to spell the distinctiveness of true Hasidism.

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

What, then, are the essentials of Judaism? In the Talmud it is said: 'If one wishes to become a *hasid*, let him carry out the teachings of the "Fathers".' We turn, therefore, to the *Ethics of the Fathers* for its classical exposition, in these words: The world stands upon three things—upon spiritual knowledge, upon worship, and upon deeds of love. Each of these basic elements calls forth important questions, and each has been subject to varying interpretations in Jewish life and thought.

Torah, or spiritual knowledge, demands of us that we know the ultimate Reality of the universe and the innermost nature of man. In *Genesis* we read that God created the heaven and the earth, and made man in His image. Just what does it mean that a finite world came from an infinite Lord, and how shall we understand an 'Image of God'?

Hasidism, in attempting to formulate its answers to these questions, followed, by and large, in the spirit of the *Kabalah*, the mystical tradition of Judaism. The main ideas of the *Kabalah* are: (a) The universe, as we know it, is the last of a series of emanations from God. The emanations—in concentric circles, as it were—though still part of God, have taken on more and more finiteness according to their 'distance' from the essence of God. Some day, it is assumed, they will be re-

absorbed into His essence, at the end of a cycle of creation. (b) Man is the apex, and in a sense a pivot, in this whole evolutionary and involutionary process. For man, through his consciousness, has been granted by God the privilege of seeing himself as part of this cosmic scheme. And he, by the grace of God, has a choice. He may identify himself with the physical creation, for *he has a body;* or he may identify himself with the spiritual Source of creation, for *he is a soul.*

The Kabalists and the Hasidim both sought *Torah*; that is to say, both were striving to know the spiritual truth about the world and man, but they differed in the areas of their preoccupation. Whereas the Kabalists directed their attention primarily to the mysteries of the universe, the Hasidim concentrated upon the knowledge of the Self. This latter interest led them more and more to the firm conviction that man is inherently divine.

Of course, this was nothing astoundingly new. Countless generations before them had affirmed that man is a creature of God. But the surprise and the fervour with which they made this same affirmation was new. It is told of Rabbi Levi Yitzhok of Berditchev that once, on an ordinary weekday, he sent word to all his townspeople that they stop their work immediately and assemble at the public square, for he had exceptional news to tell them. Many balked at this interference with their regular routines, but, even if only out of curiosity, they came and waited impatiently for the news. When all were assembled, the Rabbi solemnly announced: I want everyone to know that *there is a God, and we are His children!*

STRIVING TO REALIZE GOD

Religion truly begins when the desire is born within a human heart to *actualize* the divine potential. Until then we have only theory or theology. This next stage is known in Judaism as *Avodah,* which has the twofold meaning of work and worship, and which we may translate as spiritual practice.

Here too, strictly speaking, Hasidism made no innovations. It had long been known that most people, in the work that they do, are motivated by envy of others, by a hankering for physical enjoyment, or by worldly ambition. And, long ago, in the ethics of the *Tradition,* it had been clearly taught that 'jealousy, lust, and the seeking of personal glory destroy a man's life'. Moreover, the antidotes to these poisons had also been prescribed: ritual and prayer! By religious practices and turning to God, a person is enabled to overcome selfishness, passion, and pride. Yes, these truths were part and parcel of Jewish teaching. At the same time, it was quite obvious that, except in rare instances, the desired results were not being obtained.

The Hasidic teachers, in affirming seriously that man has within him the Spark of the Divine, began searching diligently for more effective ways of making that Spark manifest. They did not discard ritual and prayer, but rather tried to get to the root of them. (This is at once a conservative and radical approach, even as the word 'radical' itself points to the root.) What is the root of ritual? What is the root of prayer? In simplest terms, they said: Ritual is physical activity directed to God; prayer is mental activity directed to God.

Why do we work? Ordinarily we work to fulfil needs and desires. But human needs and desires exist only when we are without God. With God, all our needs and desires cease. This is the idea behind the traditional Jewish Sabbath, a day dedicated to God. On that day no 'secular' work is to be done. And what is secular work? It is defined as any deliberate effort on our part to change the natural or social environment for our own use. Since on the Sabbath—when it is conscientiously observed—we feel God's presence in a special way, we are then more disposed to accept what *is,* what God has set for us. There is no need for change, for manipulation, for control. Hence, the possibility of Sabbath rest.

But of course, as commonly observed, this is only a token, it is only symbolic, inasmuch as, on the other days of the week, we revert right back to secular work, assuming and feeling that without this work we would surely perish. That is why, even within the conventional *Tradition*, the prayer was voiced: May the All-Merciful One enable us to reach the stage of 'all Sabbath', when our entire life will reflect a genuine faith in Him.

The Hasidim, as might be expected, were especially concerned about this. They wanted all their acts to be religious acts, all their work to be 'ritual'. This inevitably led to a growing appreciation of the importance of motivation in action. It is the *intention* accompanying one's efforts (they realized) that determines the direction. Outwardly, work and ritual might look exactly alike; however, in ordinary work the intention is to achieve a personal end, whereas in ritual the intention is to come closer to God.

In this process, one can easily see how the regulation of the mind becomes all-important. The Hebrew term for 'intention', or mental direction, is *kavanah*. In Hasidic practice, *kavanah* assumes a central role, for it is recognized as the heart of all worship. Through *kavanah*, even work becomes a form of worship, and the reality of *Avodah*—in its twofold cast—comes fully into its own.

The story is told that once the Baal-Shem Tov, founder of the Hasidic movement, was taken to a certain synagogue, but he refused to enter. 'I cannot enter', he explained, 'because this synagogue is "saturated" with prayers'. His listeners were astonished at this remark, until he explained further. 'Prayers when properly directed', he told them, 'ascend to ever higher spheres. But the many prayers recited in this synagogue were without *kavanah*, without spiritual wings. They still clutter the earth, and crowd the premises in all their density'.

LIFE OF A GREAT TEACHER

Once *Torah* and *Avodah*—spiritual knowing and spiritual striving—are adequately pursued, the *third* pillar of faith—what may be termed spiritual sharing—almost invariably follows. For it is through oneness with God and our own true self, that we find our oneness with one another.

Martin Buber, in his works on Hasidism, stresses that the significant thing about the *Zadikim*, or Hasidic teachers, is that each of them was surrounded by a community that lived a brotherly life. In the tradition of Moses, of whom it is written 'and he went down from the mount (of Revelation) to the people', they too translated worship into service.

Hasidism brought about a great transformation in Jewish life—at least for a time, and at least within certain areas that had previously been arid. Simon Dubnow, the historian, asserted that Hasidism should be classed 'among the most momentous spiritual revolutions' that have influenced Jewish social life. 'The aim of Hasidism was to change not the belief, but the believer.'

At a dreary and oppressive time, after the Jews of Eastern Europe had suffered severe persecution and after much of the Jewish world had been tragically disillusioned by a false 'messianic' hope, Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem came upon the scene as a redeemer that was real. As Solomon Schechter points out in his *Studies in Judaism*: to the Hasidim, the Baal-Shem is not just a man who established a theory or set forth a system, 'he himself was the incarnation of a theory and his whole life the revelation of a system,' and in telling of his life they omitted little of what is 'proper to an *avatāra*'.

The Baal-Shem's parents, who lived in Moldavia at the end of the 17th century, were pious and God-fearing people, of spotless rectitude. Folk tradition relates that to them in their old age it was announced in a vision that they would have a son, destined to enlighten the eyes of all Israel, and that he should be so named, in accordance with the verse: 'Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom

I will be glorified'. Soon after his birth, the parents died, but the child was carefully tended in the community. From his infancy Israel seemed to be conscious of a lofty mission. The customary instruction did not satisfy him, and at school he frequently disappeared, preferring the solitude of the woods surrounding his Roumanian village. Later he became assistant to a school-master. He pursued this work in his own dedicated way, and even while taking the children to and from the synagogue, he would sing with them and teach them how to pray.

Because of his strict honesty and piety, Israel was often chosen by the townspeople to be the arbiter of disputes. In one instance, one of the parties was so pleased with his help that he offered his own daughter in marriage. Israel, who by a deeper intuition knew that she was destined for him, accepted the offer. Shortly thereafter, the bride's father died, and for a number of years the impoverished couple suffered many hardships. Despite the outward privations, however, Israel continually progressed in his spiritual life. For a long time he dwelt alone in the Carpathian mountains, giving himself wholly to devotion and contemplation. His wife was a true helpmate to him in his struggles, and he regarded her with reverence as a saint in her own right.

It was not until he had passed his fortieth year that he chose to reveal to some persons his true character and mission. His public work was carried on as rabbi at Medziboz (in Podolia), and it was here that he attracted about him an ever growing multitude of adherents. Within ten years of active work (the last ten of his life), Rabbi Israel—now known as *Baal-Shem Tov*, Kind Master of God's Name—had a following of some 10,000 Hasidim. But these were not his main strength. He had also trained a nucleus of intimate disciples, who were to carry on his mission when he was gone. Thus it became possible that ten years after his passing the movement could number 100,000. And this, too, was only a beginning.

Many events of a wondrous nature have been attributed to 'the Basht' (Baal-Shem-Tov), but as Dr. Schechter rightly states, it is not as a worker of miracles but as a religious teacher that we should view him. The Baal-Shem's special province was the higher spirituality of life—faith in God and love of men—in contradistinction to the legalism and casuistry which preoccupied the minds of so many of the Jewish leaders of his day.

In his teachings, the Baal-Shem forcefully stressed the presence of God everywhere, and the potential good in everyone. Creation was not a single act in a distant hoary past, but an unending manifestation of God's power, wisdom, and love. Similarly Revelation was not an ancient isolated event, but a continuing vivid communion between God and man. Upon such doctrines as foundation, the Baal-Shem fashioned an edifice of hope and regeneration for his people. Not sin but redemption was his theme. No one has sunk so low as to be unable to raise himself to God—was one of his favourite sayings.

It follows, therefore, (to use his own words) that 'the ideal of man is to be a Revelation himself; clearly to recognize himself as a manifestation of God.' 'The object of the whole *Torah* is that man should become a *Torah* himself.' It is to this end that our prayer-life should be directed. The wise man does not trouble the king with petitions about trifles. His one desire is to be admitted into the king's presence: that will be his highest good.

What follows also from this spirit is a wholesome, equalitarian view of man. 'Let no one think himself better than his neighbour, for each serves God in his own way.' The Baal-Shem made it a practice to minister to the poor and to the illiterate men and women of the community; yes, even to the sinners and outcasts—those whom other teachers disdained. One account tells of a woman of shameful repute whose very life was threatened by her family, whom the Baal-Shem rescued

in body and spirit. This is but one of a host of loving deeds that generation after generation delighted to tell and retell in the name of their beloved Master.

A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The rapidity in the growth of the Hasidic movement presented its pitfalls as well as opportunities, and both became evident with the passing of the years. Some of the leaders, especially in later years, drifted from the strict standards that such a movement demands. 'Dynasties' of hereditary succession came into vogue, and a veering to material interests distorted the image of the work. Some, in controversy with opponents, even resorted to political devices, which cast a heavy shadow upon all. Yet the remarkable thing is that those who earnestly and intelligently sought spiritual sustenance were replenished.

The Hasidic stream flowed with great force in the communities of Poland and Russia. The Baal-Shem Tov himself (1700-1760) at first bequeathed his undisputed spiritual leadership to Rabbi Dov Baer, Preacher of Meseritz, who was the active teacher, and to Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Polona, who through his writings established a literary tradition. It was then among the disciples of the Preacher (following his death in 1772) that varying emphases arose. One was that of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, author of the *Tanya-Teaching*. This may be characterized as the more reasoned, doctrinal, or systematic approach. Another emphasis was strongly emotional, as touched upon above through the narrative about Rabbi Levi Yitzhok. Both had strong group appeal, among the followers of corresponding temperament and background. But also there were others, like Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav, who pursued a largely personal course. Rabbi Nachman once remarked: 'Every day I am a different person'. He emphasized flexibility and solitude, individual discipline and growth.

Opposition to Hasidism within Jewish life arose from two quarters. Talmudists, who feared that the Hasidim were making inroads into established law and ritual, attacked the 'radicalism' of the new enthusiasts. Modernists, on the other hand, castigated them for their 'emotionalism' and their seeming rejection of reason. However, Hasidism possessed enough vitality to survive both battles—but not without serious inner and outer scars.

As one looks back upon the life of the Baal-Shem Tov and upon the essential quest of his early disciples, one finds a form of Judaism that is both sensible and inspiring—one that has in it warmth of heart and breadth of mind; one that, fundamentally, ought to appeal to the modernist and the traditionalist alike. Yet, today, organized Hasidism is largely isolated from almost all other movements in Jewish life. This is a great loss for everyone.

THE NEED FOR ESSENTIALS

The pristine purity and strength of Hasidism was derived from its insistence upon the primary, rather than the secondary, factors in religion. It did not negate the secondary factors, but simply declared that they were important, and could be meaningful only after first things had been taken care of first. The primary factors are: sincerity of heart and mind in affirming the presence of God and the divinity in man. The secondary factors are law and ritual.

The religious malady of putting second things first is, alas, prevalent among all religious denominations. In Jewish life, as elsewhere, it shows itself in the disproportionate amount of time and energy commonly spent on resolving ritualistic or legalistic questions. The very preoccupation with such matters, while more vital matters wait, is a diversion. And such diversion leads to division.

The true Hasid, as here conceived, is a true mystic—namely one who refuses to be content with any form of spirituality *until he has personally experienced it.* His attitude is: Better to discard the name of God completely,

than to use it perfunctorily, with no *Reality* behind it! His is the genuine scientific approach, except that, instead of searching for truth in test tubes or outer space, he searches for it within his own emotions and consciousness. And what he finds—to the degree that it is verifiable experience—is indeed irrefutable truth. With it, ordinarily, two conclusions are demonstrated: One—that his own heritage, with its spiritual disciplines of prayer and practice, is valid, for it has effectuated his discovery. Second—that there is a common ground for all the faiths, inasmuch as his own findings coincide, in a basic measure, with the findings of others who have similarly explored. Within every major religion the great souls have found the Beloved of their search. We may call them prophets or sages, saints or seers, or simply enlightened children of God. Their titles do not matter, but their recurrent appearance in every age and dedicated culture—that phenomenon of history—is of supreme significance.

(*Note*: Hasidism has here been taken, in a sociological or recent historical sense, to refer to the movement started by the Baal-Shem Tov. Ideologically, however, this term as here understood, may apply to many religiously creative periods in Jewish history. There were 'Hasidim' among the followers of Moses and the Prophets: among the Essenes and the Pharisees; among the Rabbis and Commentators of the Talmud; among the Pietists and Poets of Medieval Europe; among the Kabalists of Spain and Safed. These are the more identifiable groupings. As to individual Hasidim, there surely was no generation of Israel totally without them.)

HINDU STATES AND THEIR MUSLIM SUBJECTS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

By Sri S. N. Qanungo

During the pre-Mughal period of the Indo-Muslim history there were three belts of Hindu states: first, the Himalayan group comprising petty principalities in Kashmir, Garhwal, and Nepal valleys; the second, the central belt consisting of the Rajput states of Mewar, Marwar, Jalor, Ranthambhor, and petty states of Central India, and also the Ganga kingdom of Orissa; the third belt was that of the Vijayanagar Empire and its feudatories south of the Tuṅgabhadrā river as far as the Cape Comorin. The first belt had been raided by the Turks and Afghans; but except in Kashmir no large body of Muslim population is known to have been left behind by the invaders. The second belt of states sometimes sheltered Muslim refugees, but had no considerable body of Muslim subjects as to necessitate the formulation of a definite policy. Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah tends to give us an impression that to the people of north India, the Turk's light-borne Islam could not conceal the familiar visitor, in whom even some of the Rajputs could see a distant kinsman. 'Hindu India, therefore, contained elements whose intensity of opposition to the invaders was liable to be qualified by racial sympathies.'[1] It was scarcely so in actual practice. The Rajputs have been true to their chivalrous duty of extending protection (*śaraṇa*), even jeopardizing themselves, to those who seek it. Hamir of Ranthambhor gave refuge to the Neo-Muslim Mongol rebels against Alauddin Khilji. The Rajah of Jodhpur refused to surrender the families of Amir Khan and again Jaswant Rao Holkar to the English, though Jodhpur suffered terribly at the hands of those notorious characters

[1] Habibullah, *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 312.

of Indian history. The Rajput states during this period do not appear to have ruled over any considerable section of Muslim population. Maharana Kumbha destroyed mosques; but that was outside his own territory. Such excesses were acts of war.

In eastern India the kings of Orissa had a negligible number of Muslim subjects during the pre-Mughal period. In Bengal there was a short period of vigorous Hindu rule under Rajah Ganesh and his son for about a decade in the second quarter of the fifteenth century. This period of Hindu rule came as an interruption to the regime of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty of Bengal. Rajah Ganesh ruled over the whole of Bengal with a large and powerful Muslim population. The author of *Riyaz-us-Salātin*, relying on some Muslim legends of later origin, has depicted Ganesh as an intolerant tyrant and oppressor of Muslim subjects. But Ferishta, who flourished two hundred years before the author of *Riyaz-us-Salātin*, writes that Ganesh was a very popular ruler with his Muslim subjects and that he honoured Islam and Muslim divines. The condition of the Muslim subjects of Vijayanagar has been described as laudable by many reliable authorities. The Hindu monarchs of Vijayanagar were ideal rulers of a composite population. Barbosa writes: 'The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go, and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without enquiry whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor, or Hindu.' The Muslims in the kingdom of Vijayanagar had possibly no other grievance except that the slaughter of cow was not permitted.

During the Mughal period the most powerful Hindu state with a large Muslim population was the Maratha Kingdom founded by Shivaji, which in the eighteenth century expanded into the empire of Brāhmaṇ Peshwas. Shivaji's policy to his Muslim subjects requires no further light than what Sir. J. N. Sarkar observes about it: 'His reign brought peace and order to his country, assured the protection of women's honour and the religion of all sects without distinction, extended the royal patronage to the truly pious men of all creeds (Muslims no less than Hindus), and presented equal opportunites to all his subjects by opening the public service to talent irrespective of caste or creed.'[2] Though himself a devout Hindu, Shivaji provided subsistence at his own cost for *Pīrs*, notably Bala Yaqut of Keloshi (4 miles south of Bankot on the Ratnagiri coast) and employed a number of Muslim officers, such as Siddi Halal, Siddi Sambal, Siddi Misri, Daulat Khan, Nur Khan, and Munshi Haidar. The Muslim *gāzīs* in his dominion were given legal recognition. Shivaji's religious policy deserves admiration of all generations.

The condition of a subject community living under the government of another community professing a different religion becomes intolerable if the ruling community follows a definite policy of religious conversion, no matter whether by force, persuasion, or political bribe. Having been founded on the ruins of Aurangazeb's empire, the Maratha empire might have followed a policy of retaliation. But the Marathas had no quarrel with Islam and the Muslims in general but against Aurangazeb who carried fire and sword into their land. We do not come across any punitive legislation against the Muslims except cow slaughter, which forms no part of Islam as the sacrifice of buffalo in preference to a goat does not form a part of Hinduism. Muslims were not debarred from holding offices under the Peshwa's Government; but it must be admitted that fewer Muslims held higher appointments under Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao than Hindus either in the civil or military department under Aurangazeb. This was because the Muslims were only a handful in the south, and the abler section among them hardly sufficed even for the Muslim state of Hyderabad. But when Maratha states were founded north of the Narmadā, the proportion of Muslims in the soldiery grew apace.

[2] Sarkar, *Shivaji*, p. 386.

The position of Ibrahim Khan Gardi or Rana Khan Bhai was not inferior in the Maratha army to any Hindu commander; and no Hindu served the Peshwas or Mahadji Sindhia more loyally than their Muslim officers. This was due to the fact that in the eighteenth century our people clung to their characteristic fidelity (*namak-halāli*) and the doctrine of *swāmī-bhakti*.

The Muslim subjects in the Maratha states were not economically worse off than the Hindus. There were no discriminating tariffs imposed by the government like those which Aurangazeb had enforced in his empire. Small trades and arts and handicrafts such as embroidery, dress-making, *mīnākārī* etc. were generally in the hands of the Muslims. The services of good Muslim *hakīms* (medical practitioners) from outside were requisitioned and many Muslims were employed as army surgeons for bone-setting etc. The interior economy of the household of the Peshwa was also a replica of the imperial household of Delhi organized into departments like Jamādārkhānā, Jiratkhānā, Kabūtarkhānā, etc. Muslims were indispensable for the Peshwa's pegions, gardens, zoo, hunting establishment, and stables of horses and elephants. The Maratha rulers continued the use of the Hijri era in preference to the Hindu era Śaka or Vikram.

In the Maratha states there was no discrimination between a Muslim and a Hindu in the eye of law. Law was fair to the Muslims even though administered by a Śāstrī (Hindu pandit). Once a Brāhmaṇ woman committed adultery with one Sultana Sikalgar; the woman was thrown into prison and the Muslim, found not guilty, was released.[3] Nobody could escape punishment when accused of crime against the Muslims. One such case is reported by Panduranga Damodar in respect of a Hindu servant of one high Maratha officer. The servant had killed his fellow Muslim servant, seized his wife, and turned her out after cutting her nose.[4] For a crime of dacoity, Baba Khan and Bhikan Khan along with Lakshman Khumna were ordered to have their one leg and one arm each to be broken.[5]

The Maratha states recognized officially one Muslim festival and that was *Id-ul-Fitr*. We come across special item of expenditure entered as *Chānd-Rātri Kharch*. Guns were also fired from forts on the night previous to the *Id*. In the budget of expenditure in the Singha-garh fort, we find provision for Muslim festivities, particularly of *Chānd-Rātri*, for distributing *bīda* of betel, and volleys of musketry and guns.[6] In other respects also Muslims were allowed free exercise of their religion without the payment of any special tax. The government protected all places of worship and sanctioned money for their repairs. The revenue account of Shivaji in the year of his coronation at Rajgarh has an item—rupees fifty lakhs in assignments of land to *devasthān* and mosques.[7] Only rupees eighteen per annum was a charge on the revenue of village Kodhe for the *Urus* of *Pīr* Makhdum Shaikh Salla.[8] In the city of Poona there were two *dargāhs* (places of Muslim worship): one was of Sayyid Saadat and another of Shaikh Salla. The government sanctioned Rs. 1,400/- for their repairs in April, 1768.[9] There was a special item in the budget called *Khairāt Kharch* for charity to Muslim institutions as distinguished from the items, *dharma-dāya* and *Śrāvaṇdakṣiṇā* for the Hindus. There is an entry in the diary of the Peshwas that on the *Vijayā-daśamī* day, a sum of money as *Khairāt Kharch* was given as in previous years to the *Pīr* of Shaik Salla's *dargāh* at Poona.[10] These establishments enjoyed rent-free lands. In spite of their orthodoxy, the Peshwas also offered homage to these Muslim shrines. A

[3] *Selections from Peshwa Daftar*, Vol. 43, p. 123.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 135.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[6] *Ibid.*, Vol. 45, p. 39.
[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 31.
[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 18.
[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 117.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

vow was made to distribute *shirinī* (sacramental food) when the tusks of the elephant were cut; Rs. 25/- was paid to Muslim mahouts on that occasion in April, 1731.[11] There is an entry in Kashi Bai's charity to Muslims: a piece of cloth worth Rs. 2/8; *nazr* to the *Pīr* of Sayyid Saadat one rupee; small coins for distribution to fakirs—this was to pray for the the cure of Raghunath Sadashiv, and Janardan Pant who had attacks of small-pox.[12] When two rival institutions among the Muslims quarrelled over precedence in the annual *tāziyah* procession, the Peshwa had to settle it.[13] Two chelas of a *Kabīr Panthī* fakir, Shaha Musalman and Satnava Gosavi claimed the allowance which the deceased saint used to get; the government, after a close enquiry, made the award in favour of Shaha Musalman.[14]

The Brāhmaṇ Peshwas were, however, puritans. They put every obstacle in the way of reconversion of a Hindu who, under most pathetic circumstances, had accepted Islam to escape horrible death. The Peshwas departed from the liberal traditions of Shivaji and Jija Bai, and took to a narrow reactionary policy, and even persecuted those Hindus who admitted back to their fold such converts without an expensive *prāyascitta* (expiatory ceremony), according to the *śāstras*. Only one instance would suffice: 'One Mahadaji Narayan executes the Peshwa's order regarding the excommunication of Brāhmaṇs of Paithan who admitted back to their caste one Narhari Ranalkar who, being forcibly converted to Islam after the disaster of Panipat, became *yavana-maya* (outcaste), and as such was considered not eligible for purification in the opinion of a *sabhā* of Vaidics and Panditis.'[15] Cow slaughter within the Peshwa's territory was forbidden by law. One Keso 'Bhikaji received a sharp censure for his neglect of stopping cow-killing by the Muslims: 'The Muslims kill cows; and you have not taken any action.'[16] The government officials of Konkan were ordered to help one Antaji Naik in preventing cows being taken away by the butchers of Bombay and Salsette. But Hindus could not take law in their own hands against the Muslims for such an offence. One Keshav Rao Jagannath reports to the Peshwa how some persons were arrested for killing a cow at night and eating its flesh, and prays that they should be meted out heavy and deterrent punishment.[17] Such an offence, however, was not dealt with death sentence. One Daud Shah Fakir was fined Rs. 60/- for killing a cow.[18] Thus the general impression which the Brāhminical state of Maharashtra leaves on us is that it was much more liberal than the Muslim state of Aurangazeb; but it may be honestly said that its outlook was somewhat narrow and its policy a little reactionary in comparison with the ideal administration of Akbar.

We shall now turn to the condition of Muslim subjects of the Gaekwads of Baroda. The Gaekwads confirmed to the pious Muslim grantees all their lands, emoluments, and privileges which they used to enjoy under the previous government. One *parvana* of Damaji dated 4-11-1746 to a district official runs thus: '... Whatever *inām* (gift) land and emoluments the *Qāzī* of Dabhoi under Mahmud Shah enjoyed in the past should be confirmed to him; he is to be disturbed in no way; and no more complaint shall reach me.'[19] Another such order dated 18-4-1750 was issued in favour of another *Qāzī*, Sayyad Ghulam Husain.[20] We do not come across any document relating to the special protection of the cow and the Brāhmaṇ in Baroda. Muslim places of worship, even in close vicinity to Hindu temples, were tolerated. The rulers of Baroda made ampler provisions for

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 45.
[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. 43, p. 91.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 31
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 120.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[18] *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 131.
[19] *Historical Selections* from Baroda State Records Vol. I, p. 22.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

the celebration of Muslim festivals than the Poona government. It was customary for the ruler of Baroda to be present at the time of the *Id* prayer, and to give a *khilāt* and cash reward to the *imām* who led the prayer. The fort of Dabhoi even to this day stands as the reflex of the mind of the founder of the Baroda state. We read in the stone inscription (dated 14-2-1734) on the Burnhanpur Gate of the fort : 'Near the Baroda gate is the fiery *Pīr* Sayyad Mukhiya where the *mlecchas* offer prayers and burn lights fed with ghee; in the direction of *Īshān* (north-east) stands Shamburj. There stands the *dargāh* of *Pīr* Shad which is a source of much delight everyday. In the vicinity there is an awe-striking image of Narsimha called by the Muslims Ghaib Pir or Invincible Saint. Near the *Chabutrā* (platform) is the tomb of a great *Pīr*, Qazi Purandar.'[21] We have here a happy picture of idols and tombs of Muslim saints sharing the veneration of the Hindu master of the fort of Dabhoi. Baroda was in many respects a more enlightened and ideal Hindu state than the Brāhminical government of Poona.

Thus the contemporary writings furnish the evidence that instances are few when the Hindu states in medieval India have been guilty of crimes in the name of religion.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 132-34.

AESTHETIC APPROACH TO REALITY

By Dr. K. C. Varadachari

Experience is about the most important word in all discourse. All knowledge is based on experience and enriches it. But the term experience does not by itself help us to understand the complexity of it. Firstly because experience belongs to or rather is distinguished into several levels of human life. Ordinarily we distinguish between the sense-level experience and the experiences of other levels, such as those of art and ethics and philosophy. The basic ground of all experiences seems to rest on the sensorium which awaits interpretation and rationalization in order to make experience understandable. In fact experience is something awaiting to be interpreted or understood and is not by itself understood as such. It is the raw material for thinking about rather than thinking as such. Similarly, we find it is sometimes difficult to express what we experience sensorily; and this unverbalized and unverbalizable experience is considered to be subexpressible or inexpressible.

Of course animals and other sub-human creatures have no capacity to verbalize or express their experiences except perhaps through action or gesture or emotion or in terms of instinct, which reveals the significant fact that they know but are not even conscious of what they know except that it is revealed in the uncanny intelligent way they respond to situations. Experience in instinct is below the threshold of conscious activity and vocal expressibility. But this is not the only occasion of inexpressibility of experience. We also know that when one tries to understand through one's reason or its categories one arrives at a point when one can no longer use one's rational and relational categories. Such being the case, it has become necessary to assume that there is a level or core of the inexpressible, if not irrational, datum in experience which is sometimes taken to be the 'thing-in-itself' of experience—the reality. This inexpressible experience is sometimes identified with the experience of the ultimate Reality. We can see that this assumption in *a sense negatively asserts the irrational core*

of experience to be the ultimate Real. But it is equally likely that it is supra-rational and as such the language of logical rationality does not apply to it.

Experience thus falls within the field of expression—verbal or actional—though it is equally possible that expression is impossible in cases of experience which are either instinctive or supra-rational.

We know, however, that certain so-called irrational experiences such as becoming or change had remained as such, that is to say inexpressible, till a genius arrived to show that it is eqnally rational and expressible in terms of concrete thinking like any other concept such as causality or thing or oneness or manyness.

Thus every experience, from the most rudimentary to the most mystical, demands expression in some way and is in a state of challenge so to speak till it either evolves towards expression or helps or seeks the help of some genius to evolve to its fullest expression.

To speak about the inexpressible either in words or gesture or art is to affirm only the fact that an experience is beyond the capacity of the consciousness to express it in any one of the motor functions so to speak—speech or artistic monlding or dance and expression—which involve the motor organs (*karmendriyas*). Music, sculpture, painting and dance and love—all help the expression of the experience; in fact these may be at first self-fulfilling overflow of the emotion of experience or the aesthetic experience. Later, in the realm of communicability to others, arises the conscious and articulated expression of the spontaneous experience.

Thus spontaneous expression is the first expression of the experience which is natural and it is the basis on which the conscious and artificial expressions are erected. For there are always distinguishable two stages in expression, the spontaneous overflow of the experience and the conscious reproduction and perfecting of the expression in painting and in art, which involve several features of consummate skill and observation. The original spontaneity has always an universality of appeal, whereas the expression as art is sophisticated and demands the conscious understanding of the patterns and styles of presentation and forms of imaginative reconstruction and reproduction. This is what we may call the expression for oneself (*svārtha kalpanā*) and expression for others (*parārtha-kalpanā*). Some hold that expression for oneself is truer and more beautiful—it is something similar to the demand for art for art's sake; whereas the expression for others—a communication for other's understanding or enjoyment—is what usually goes by the name of artistic reproduction. The former is justly for the spiritual experience of oneself—what every one has himself to attain to in order to understand or enjoy or 'know' in all its full meaning; whereas the latter is what one produces for the enjoyment of others so as to induce in others a sensation or aesthesis similar to one's own. The second is the social use of art while the first is the spiritual work of the aesthetic experience. However, one thing that has to be observed in all experience is that it struggles towards either subject or individual expression or it feels itself frustrated. The second kind of expression is mainly cultivated and in this process, it loses its spontaneity and sometimes, in spite of brilliant technique and innovation, declines and becomes mechanical and finally stereotyped.

Experience and expression, however, are organic to each other and in the development or evolution of aesthetic or logical or ethical mind, expression has always tended to lag behind. Since it is well known that expression is the basis of communication whether in and through art or philosophy or ethics, it has been held that the disciplines of art, philosophy, and ethics are basically levels of expression rather than of experience. This extraordinary and suicidal divorce becomes clearer in philosophy and in ethics, and very much less in aesthetics or art.

There are some influential writers or thinkers who consider that logical truth or ethical good or pragmatic utility should not curb the expression of art or aesthetic experience. To them art is not subject to its being true or good; it can be false and immoral also. Only the claim is that it is something that is and can be imagined. The imagined is in fact the extension of the possibilities of that which is, even as in the case of those who assume that parallel lines will meet at infinity or some such conjectural projection. Thus we know that many things which we have imagined have been made actual—inventions are precisely such. Imagination (*kalpanā*) is not always false but can be such as can become true, and can be made to become true. This extraordinary function of imagination arises surely from the perception of the possibilities of the perceived and in the perceived. However, since not all have the capacity to see such possibility and some see it only when it is pointed out to them, it becomes a social necessity to have such persons who can see these possibilities in the perceived and express them also.

Thus the perceptions of the poet and the inventor are different from those of the layman. The tree does not look alike to all. This relativism apart, there is a different method of seeing or kind of seeing that distinguishes one from the other. Different kinds of consciousness exist and it is necessary to distinguish between them. However, it is possible to expect that training may help one to appreciate everything from multiple standpoints. Whether we accept that the thing so seen has really so many phases or facets or not is, of course, a question that has to be considered in any case.

Aesthetic experience itself has this essential richness of multiple expressibility also, so much so that a complete or whole experience of an object (thing or idea) involves such multiplicity of expression. There is thus, in the matter of all experiences, the dynamic possibility of multiplicities, each one of which individually or all in combination produces effects that exhibit emotional richnesses leading to aesthetic enjoyment or excellence. The sunset, or a panoroma of hills, or even the song of a bird or a note may, therefore, produce in an awakened mind an integral totality completely disproving the theory of pure sensation.

It was Coleridge who remarked about the fourfold nature of evolution of the aesthetic consciousness or awareness—from the lowest to the highest. The first is the awareness of pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in man by external impressions. It is the consciousness excited by outer impressions that occasions experience of sensuous beauty. This is about the most frequent result of so-called natural beauty—objective in the sense of external. It is the externality that causes it to be called truly objective, uncreated by the mind.

The second level of expansion of consciousness is an enlargement of consciousness which presents forms and it is the formal elements that stand prominently out. There is also the awareness of quantity alike in terms of space. This is the realm of imagination—a movement of the mind in terms of grasping the meaning; it is the area of the inner sense which is dynamically relating itself and exploring the forms. Poets are claimed to perform a 'priestlike function of imagination' and 'every poet is a monk and his imagination his monastery', said Keats. This is an 'arousing and exploration of the expanse of imagination'. Probably it is not restrained by the rationality or truth but it is also a clear awakening of sensibility to the higher work of inner meaningfulness. The poet is his own architect and his own critic.

The third level of expansion of consciousness is to add to imagination the conception or notion. This is said to be the level of intellectual experience of beauty. It is the perception of the universe as a whole. It is a transcendence of the private imagination to the level of the universal apprehension. Hence

it is one which includes all things—not only the pleasant and happy but also opens up the dark side of being. There is a gulf that separates the highest yet to be—the bliss of the Vedānta, from the world—the gulf of sorrow and agony that divides the realms of imagination and intellectual beauty. The poet has full need of deepening powers of sympathy and empathy—an extension of one's frontiers of consciousness so as to include everything. The sorrow, the agony and the suffering, which are the characteristics of life, as some philosophers put it, have to be seen in a new light. Instead of avoiding all that pain and suffering in the search for beauty or happiness, one should taste the bitter and the sweet and rejoice in their purifying properties. A deeper meaning in creation and self appears in the process and lifts man to a higher kind of awareness. The imaginations of pleasure and inward joy are overcome by the experience of their contraries that tend to enrich the inner being rather than impoverish the inner sense. A new flame is kindled within. Poetry becomes a criticism of life so to speak and reaches universal level. One begins to contemplate on the eternal value in the context of the transient.

During the experience of intellectual beauty we are almost at the threshold of wisdom—a different dimension of our knowledge, and it involves the crossing of the gulf—the world of another significance that includes the catharsis or purgatory of suffering and sympathy.

We cannot altogether think that this level of intellectual beauty is similar to what Bergson called intellectual sympathy, utilized for knowing a thing as it is in itself. It is perhaps a consciousness that passes from the subjectivity of imaginative beauty—the conversion of imagination—to the subjectivity of the objective which originally appeared as sensuous beauty. But since in aesthetics truth is not so much the aim at the earlier phases, here for the first time we become aware of the trueness of aesthetics, or what we may call the aesthetic truth of things, where the meaning that transcends form or is implicit in all form or forms begins to gleam out of all experiences. This might present a duality of experience—the light and the shade, the tragic and the comic, harmony and disharmony, sorrow and joy that almost express themselves in terms of each other; but there is co-existence and significance in each other.

But this experience of intellectual beauty is not philosophy but only philosophic insight that prehends the deep identity in all by an insight or apprehension of a higher law or the archetype. The highest experience is said to be one of *identity*—the apprehension or awareness of beauty in all things without exception.

The four dimensions or extensions of consciousness are not opposed to one another; they gradually reveal its transition and evolution or integration and assimilation. The intellectual beauty does not annul the sensuous but absorbs it, and makes it grow in significance and meaning: the intellectual beauty does not appear to be some new kind of imposition over the sensuous but to be growing out of it, maturing in it, and reaching its fullest height. The flaw in art-experience would be there where any one stage is either arrested or stagnated for reasons of enjoyment and repetition or imitation; or where it is not gradually sublimated by the fire of the intellectual understanding in and through the sensuous that reveals the seamy side of beauty.

The above analysis is essentially a method of trying to understand how aesthetically one grows into a deep and basic knowledge of a different order—in one sense superior to the other ways of knowing open to man. Once one arrives at this identity-awareness, one can see that the other ways of knowledge, are in a way indebted to this basic means of awareness.

OUR LONELINESS—CAN VEDĀNTA REMEDY IT?

By Swami Nityabodhananda

In recent times we have been successful, by the aid of science, to increase the number of our recreations and diversions and thus to create for man 'society or company' and thus to escape loneliness. Cinema, radio, television—these are not simple diversions, nor news-carriers, but agencies to which man can turn when he is alone and find 'company'. They are, I would say, solitude cures. I am sure you would have witnessed the phenomenon of the person who, in the calm and tranquillity of the heights of Saleve,[1] where all people go for peace from the noisy town, carries in his pocket or in his arms a small radio which goes on crying to the annoyance of those around him. He is the person afraid of solitude and who wants to carry with him its cure, the radio, but yet wants to be in solitude on the mountains or in the forests. We can say that he is the typical product of our civilization, one who is afraid of being alone by himself and hence who is afraid of himself.

With the increase of these material means to remedy or escape loneliness, are we better off than before, are we less lonely than before? We will have to answer 'No'. Man or woman these days is more and more lonely, more and more afraid of solitude, of being alone. He tries his best to combat this loneliness, this fear of being alone by material means, by switching on the radio, by television or by journeys by quick transport to meet dear friends. But his anguish is only increasing, he is more and more in loneliness. The fact that man's efforts to combat this solitude by material means like cinema, radio, etc. fails, shows that this loneliness is a spiritual lack or a spiritual problem and can be remedied only by spiritual means. Loneliness manifests as an anguish.

It is an anguish except for the saint, who has known its spiritual grandeur and has chosen it. The saint or the mystic is never alone in the ordinarily accepted sense of the term, whether he is in the forest or in the town. His love for the world by which he integrates the world in his heart, is the central interest of his life. Making this love efficacious for others is the field of his creativity.

The categories of lonely people fall into three, even as categories of the great fall into three. Perhaps you might have heard of this classification. Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them. So also some are born lonely, some achieve loneliness and some have loneliness thrust upon them.

The people *born* lonely are the saints and mystics. They are conscious that they are born alone with their spiritual essence whose character is uniqueness or being alone. They are conscious that in this loneliness everything is contained, for it is the Spirit that wants nothing, that lacks nothing. This vision keeps their interest in life and their love for the 'other', for the 'other' is just their reflection. For them loneliness is no anguish but joy and creativity.

Those who *achieve* loneliness are the artists, those who have consecrated themselves to a scientific ideal of research, those who have devoted to altruism; in other words, those who have chosen to be alone with their 'Muse' of whatever dress she is. They are never alone nor are they in anguish, for, in and through their consecration, they add interest to life, they find joy and creativity in their consecration.

Under the third category of 'loneliness *thrust* upon them', come those who, by circumstances are alone or by old age or by their pessimistic or isolationist temperament and attitude. Old men are not always alone.

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[1] Saleve—the mountain-ranges near Geneva.

There are many who continue to be creative in their own way, who select new vocations and interests and *milieus* and keep up their love of life. Even among those on whom loneliness is thrust upon by accident, depriving them of their dear ones, there are many who are resourceful, who begin a new life of creativity. By this process of elimination we find that only those are really lonely who have lost all interest in life, who are incapable of any creativity, of any love. They alone are in anguish. If those who by their spirit of dedication are sometimes in anguish, they have enough dynamism to get over their anguish, whereas, pessimists and isolationists have lost all dynamism to get over their anguish.

The anguish of loneliness is something comparable to the metaphysical anguish. We can not remedy or cure metaphysical anguish by argument or by psychological methods. The anguish is there because of two reasons: we do not know who we are, in reality, and secondly coupled with this ignorance and because of this ignorance is the fear, a fear that remains as an unconscious memory, of our destruction. These two produce the metaphysical anguish. The remedy to it would be to ask ourselves 'who we are' and get a proper answer.

A proper answer would be that we are both being and non-being, that we are both affirmation and negation, both life and death, both joy and grief and nostalgia. The memory of our physical destruction, death, is an unconscious or pre-Adamic memory in us. It manifests as anguish in various ways and because it is an unconscious memory, we can never find out the cause of the anguish. The way to remedy this anguish is to convince ourselves that we are in reality life and death and more than that. The other day I was talking to a friend. He told me, in the course of the conversation, that he feels an anguish when a cup or glass is broken and he assured me that it was not the sense of loss of money that causes it. I told him, without mentioning the word 'metaphysical anguish', that his anguish comes from the thought that life is short and not long. He should think that the real man in him is eternal, beyond time, break and change, and that it is the apparent man in him that gets anguished by seeing a destruction. He seemed to have heard something capital; he said he would go home and write this idea in his note-book and keep it before him. I do not say that the memory of our destruction is the only cause that produces metaphysical anguish; it is one of the many. Linked with that unconscious memory (here I make a distinction between conscious memory and unconscious memory: Memory of the Pythagoras theorem I have studied is a conscious memory—memory that I may die or that I slept well is an unconscious memory as it is not created by us, but something innate) is the anguish coming from the fear that I may fail in this or that effort of mine, fear that I have not chosen correctly in life, etc. In the same way as anguish comes from the unconscious memory of destruction innate in us, loneliness comes from the unconscious memory of our loneliness. We came all alone in this world and we shall go back also all alone. In the same way as the certitude of our true nature, namely that we are being and non-being, life and death, can chase metaphysical anguish away, so also the conviction of the true nature of our loneliness can remedy the anguish of loneliness. We came alone but with the spiritual essence that is love and creativity.

It is not a physical loneliness that is lying hidden behind our life as an unconscious memory, nor can it be remedied by material means like company of friends or the 'company' of cinema. It is a spiritual loneliness which in other words is a spiritual completeness, a spiritual self-sufficiency. We came with the Spirit which is complete and self-sufficient and which feels in Itself the whole world of friends and things that are dear, not in a material form, but in subtle form.

When we are cut off from the Spirit, our eternal companion, then we feel lonely. The

Spirit, the Atman holds in its heart the capacity to love; it is the unconscious memory to love and when we are cut off from this unconscious memory we feel lonely, isolated. And this loneliness gives us anguish. Witness for instance the saint and the mystic. He is all alone, but because he is always living in the company of the Spirit, he is never alone though far away from the crowds, his life is full of joy, love and creativity. We too have the same base, the same lonely unique Spirit who has been with us from the birth though we are not saints. It is that lonely Spirit that often shows its richness when we are alone. Are we not alone during our best and full moments, When we pray, we are alone before God who is also alone. It was Plotinus who defined mystical experience as the 'flight of the alone to the Alone'. Another mystic defined meditation as 'standing alone and naked before God, our innermost Reality'.

I said we come alone with our self-sufficient spiritual essence and this remains as our unconscious memory. It is necessary that the unconscious memory is alone with our essence, for then only the memory can be spontaneous. In the presence of a stranger we are not spontaneous. Unconscious memory, without coming to the conscious plane as memory inspires and models our actions. Then our actions are spontaneous. Evidently we are not speaking here of mechanical reflexes like typing which are also spontaneous in a mechanical way. For instance, love or the capacity to love is an unconscious memory in us. Acts of love, manifestations of love are effortless when they issue from its unconscious memory. When our actions lose contact with this source, then the very same love becomes aggressive, vindictive, both sailing under the colours of love. Love, effortless and spontaneous, is one of the faculties and the dynamism of the spiritual solitude with which we came into this world. Creativity is another faculty.

When I use the word love here, it is not to be confounded with the ordinary use of the word. I would prefer to say, the capacity to love, the power to love, the power to create, which can exist, without objectivation, without manifestation. If I am conscious that love in me is the capacity to love, then, in case I love somebody and it is not reciprocated, it comes back to me and strengthens me. On the other hand, if I am not conscious of love as the capacity to love, then in the face of a failure, I am broken. When love is understood as an inextinguishable power or capacity, then it becomes felicity or *ānanda*. *Ānanda* does not depend on external things, it does not depend on others reciprocating it. It is our inner disposition and so it depends on itself, if it depends on anything.

When we came into this world we came alone with this capacity to love. It is comparable to a camera's capacity to take photos. A camera, so long as it is conscious of its capacity to take photos, never feels lonely and is not at all anxious to keep to itself the photos it has taken in the past, nor is it nostalgic of the photos it may take in the future. All that it *knows* is that the moment anything comes before it, it makes a replica of it. Love and creativity are involved in this act of the camera that perpetuates a memory: Love because it integrates with the personal object, creativity because it is capable of perpetuating that love and giving others a specimen.

Let us not, then, forget that we came alone into this world with this 'apparatus' of love that can take photos of a million friends. If we insist on keeping to ourselves the photos we have taken, we are affirming on the material plane the capacity to take photos, and thus we are cutting ourselves away from our capacity. It is physically impossible to keep around us our friends. And even when we have all of them around us, if we do not *live* the love that has brought them to us, then again we will feel lonely in the midst of a crowd of friends. For what makes it possible for the friends to live in us, and for us to live in them is this centrifugal and centripetal

force of love, which is a spiritual exchange. When I have this force in my heart, I have all the friends—whether of New York or Delhi—in my heart. I cannot feel lonely for I know that the physical presence of friends is not a condition *sine qua non* to this force, it is a result.

From the above we can conclude that rushing to a friend when we feel lonely, is only a symptom and not the disease. The disease is deeper; it is the incapacity *to love* that manifests as a research *to be loved*. We seek a certitude in being loved. We forget that without loving, we cannot ask to be loved. It is a search for love on the aggressive plane, the vindictive plane, on the material plane which will not remedy our solitude. We should try to reform this tendency by the thought that 'my friend is in my heart: why should I rush to see him. If I commune with him through love, he will send me wave-lengths of love which my inner radio of love can catch'. But when this rushing tendency calms down and dies away, we can go and see him. Thus we have recreated him spiritually in our heart, and thus merited him and his love. The material presence then becomes secondary and not primary and at that moment meeting him will not make of us a slave of his physical presence.

When we feel lonely we switch on the radio, or television, we go to the cinema or we telephone to a friend or visit him. In short, we seek company. In witnessing the cinema or a piece of theatre, we find a company that is creative. Evidently an understanding friend with whom we can talk and discuss gives us more of the creative and loving company we need than anything else.

The recreations of our day do not awaken in us the creative element; we remain passive spectators. When witnessing a cinema, a theatrical piece or another spectacle, it must be possible for us to awaken something aesthetically 'new' in us so that this *elan* can be utilized to get over fixed ideas, even the fixed idea of our loneliness. It is only creativity inspired by love that can awaken a new interest in life and thus banish all loneliness. Even reading a book can be made creative. I remember the words of Gibbon, the great English historian of the 19th century, about how he used to read a new book. On seeing the title, before opening the book, he used to note down in a general way how he would have treated the subject and after having noted his points, he would begin to read the book and compare where the author of the book had got his plus and minus points in regard to his own estimate. Evidently such a method cannot apply to novels or romances or detective novels.

Every act of aesthetic appreciation is a new birth, not to speak of aesthetic creation which is evidently the birth of a new value. Even when we appreciate a good concert, something new is being born in us. We must be able to utilize this new birth to rejuvenate our being and to get over our loneliness *not only* of the moment, but to make it serve as the source of our fundamental love of life and creativity. To be passive spectators of art cannot give us this result of awakening love of life and love of creativity.

Man has need of love and creativity. His nature hungers for them. When he is denied this food, he loses hope in life, he becomes anguished. He thinks he is all alone to 'fight with life'. Life is not something to fight with, life is to be loved. When we lack this love of life, this interest for life, we feel lonely and naturally anguished or afraid. Diversions, recreations, artistic enjoyments can only create an atmosphere wherein this love of life can thrive and flourish. They cannot *create* it, they cannot pull it out of man's heart. Even as material conditions cannot give us happiness, but can only create a condition in which happiness can dawn, so also, recreations can prepare the stage only, they cannot be the actors on the stage.

The impersonal lives we are constrained to lead is a factor that deprives life of interest. Neighbours do not know each other; we think

we should not know each other; it is not cousidered good manners. Are we not pushing our discretion, our sense of not intruding on the privacy of others too far, are we not making a fetish of this impersonal aspect? And naturally this becomes a barrier to our instinct of love. We manifest more love to an animal that passes by or to a cat sitting on the wall than to a person whom we come across and still we say, we want to respect his individuality, to respect his moods.

Then again, the man of today is too self-sufficient. He has everything he wants. Self-snfficiency in everyway is a cult with him. This self-sufficiency which feeds pride, arrogance, and isolationism is just the caricature of the spiritual self-sufficiency we spoke of at the beginning. The self-sufficiency of the saint is a certitude of having all in him and not lacking in anything. On the contrary this self-sufficiency is retreating into ones's own shell and closing the door against all outside influence. It is self-conceit and not self-sufficiency. He closes himself up with this self-sufficiency—'I have no need of anybody' and then he feels lonely. Suppose a child quarrels with the mother and thinks it can live alone and closes itself up in its room with an angry independent face. After a few hours it will realize and begin to mourn that it is lonely. Modern man is comparable to this child who has pushed its independence to the extreme with a vengeance and then realizes that it is alone. Independence is really speaking inter-dependence. Our incapacity to accommodate with other's views, also pushes us into loneliness. If I cannot appreciate another's views, I can at least try to understand them and in this trial to understand try to keep a dynamic attitude of 'perhaps he has his own reasons for acting like this' and not close the door of understanding. When we think 'perhaps he has his own reasons', we do not feel isolated from him, we continue to keep company with him mentally and spiritually. Exaggerated ideas of our 'right' and thus pride and self-sufficiency—push us into isolation from others, push us into loneliness. In those moments we may be materially self-sufficient, but never so spiritually, as this self-sufficiency is built on a division between me and my neighbour and not on unity.

Man must love his essence, which comprises what he is and what he is not, or what appears to be he is not. Then he will know how to love his neighbour who is in a sense what he is not or holds a different view. The neighbour is not essentially hostile, he is the other pole of his essence—what for the moment he appears to be not. In emphasizing the Christian virtue 'love thy neighbour as thyself' we often lose sight of the fact that we have to love our real essence first, we have to love ourselves, before we can canalize that love to our neighbour. We have to love God in us first before we can see and love the God in others.

God is man's eternal companion and friend; man is God's other half. This idea we find celebrated in Vedānta in the concept of *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*. *Nara* means man and *Nārāyaṇa* means God. Viṣṇu, the supreme God is represented as *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*, that is half man and half God. In fact that is the idea of the divine incarnation. So God is never separated from society. To please God we have to please man. This idea is put very powerfully by Vivekananda. He says: Though God is manifest everywhere he is manifest in the fullest form in man. Man is the Taj-mahal of God whereas other constructions are lesser manifestations of God. Why go to worship God in temples and churches when he is next-door to you? This proximity of God's presence in man's form is a powerful idea by which we can chase away all our loneliness. Let us serve man seeing God in him, seeing man as God's half, seeing the other half as ourselves.

To sum up: I said that the anguish of loneliness results from the eclipse of the unique, essential spiritual loneliness, with which we came into this world and which is our treasure.

The Spirit is lonely because it is unique and the Spirit carries with it an unquenchable capacity to love and to create, to take photographs and immortalize a million friends and dear things of life. To think of this capacity is not to think of friends in their physical presence. To think of friends in physical form is to indent for the anguish of loneliness; to think of our capacity to love is to merit the loneliness of the saint and the mystic who are always in spiritual company of dear ones, the faithful. I also said that we should not make a caricature of this self-sufficiency and get drunk with pride and close ourselves in isolationism. God's manifestation as *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*, man and god in one, thus carrying society in his heart is the striking example for us to share our heart and mind with the 'other', with the neighbour, or in other words, not to feel isolated from the neighbour who is God's other half and hence our other half too.

To isolate him from us or to isolate ourselves from him is to divide ourselves and thus fall into loneliness. This is to go against nature's design. Unity is nature's design and unity is the mystic's loneliness which is Vedānta's remedy for our loneliness.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Professor P. S. Naidu, M.A., of Allahabad, is one of our oldest contributors, with whose learned articles our readers are well acquainted. In his article published this month, he has beautifully presented 'The Indian Image of the Ideal Guru', and has shown how Swami Vivekananda conformed to this ideal image. The article was actually meant for the Vivekananda Birth Centenary issue, but we are sorry it could not be included in that number as it reached us very late.

In this issue, we publish the second instalment of the article by Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian, M.A., Ph.D., of Annamalai University. Here he makes further examination of some more views about the place of *karma* in the Advaitic scheme of discipline. This learned treatise will be completed with another instalment in our next issue.

Hasidism is one of the intensely spiritual movements in Judaism. Mr. Asher Block, the Rabbi of the Synagogue at Great Neck, New York, has kindly sent us an article on the movement. We hope our readers will be happy to find the liberal principles on which this movement is based and the broad outlook that it urges its followers to develop.

Professor S. N. Qanungo, M.A., of Christian College, Lucknow, in his documented article 'Hindu States and the Muslim Subjects' shows with historical evidences what actually were the economic, political, and social conditions of the Muslim subjects under Hindu rulers, specially in Deccan, in medieval India. The article is interesting readng and provides valuable informations.

Dr. K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D., of Tirupati, while analysing the 'levels of experience with regard to art, ethics, and philosophy,' in his 'Aesthetic Approach to Reality', says that the four dimensions or extensions of consciousness gradually reveal the trueness of aesthetics, culminating in the identity-awareness—'the awareness of beauty in all things without exception'.

Swami Nityabodhananda of our Geneva centre is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

His article 'Our Loneliness—Can Vedānta Remedy It ?' is the report of a talk he gave sometime back. He says that the sense of 'loneliness' which has become a disease with many today, can be remedied if the feeling of unity is developed within oneself, and in this process the teachings of Vedānta can be of immense help.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

WHAT RELIGION IS (IN THE WORDS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA). EDITED BY JOHN YALE. *Published by Phoenix House Ltd., London. 1962. Pages xxv+ 224. Price 30 shillings.*

At present, the *Complete Works by Swami Vivekananda* comprise eight volumes of 450 pages each. Various portions of these have appeared in smaller books in different languages. A few are on specified topics and some are selections of general interest. The versatile genius of the Swami, through his innumerable lectures, letters, and dialogues has dealt with a variety of subjects related to the life and progress of people both in the East and the West. Of these subjects, some are of particular relevancy to the people of India and some to the people of Europe and America, and some again, to humanity at large. To make a compact selection, therefore, from this variegated material, which will at once be representative of the Swami's thought and also be of special interest to Western people is a job that defies complete satisfaction. And yet, this and a little more is the objective of the editor. He submits that the present volume has been designed to meet the need for 'a book of agreeable size and modest price, representative of Swami's teachings published in the West for Western people ; and, if possible, the material should be arranged so that a reader, devoid of previous knowledge of the subject, may follow the thread of Vivekananda's thought in a systematic way'.

Whether in India or elsewhere, the burden of Swami Vivekananda's thought can be summed up in his own significant words : 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion.' Everything else he had preached was to subserve this end—to remove the handicaps, of whatever type they be, and prepare man for this freedom. 'My message can be stated in a few words', says the Swami, 'to bring out the divine in man and to enable him to manifest it in every action of his.'

The divinity of the human soul, the methods and means for its manifestation, and the inspiring examples of the saints and sages in this direction cover, in short, the fundamentals of religion. If this is true—and it appears to be true according to the Swami himself—then, the present volume serves to a large extent the objective the editor has in mind, not only in the representative selection and systematic arrangement of the material but also in all other respects.

The masterly introduction by Christopher Isherwood, rich in chosen biographic details of the Swami's life as Vivekananda in America and as Narendra Nath at the feet of the divine Master, will be highly appreciated, particularly by new-comers to Vivekananda. This, undoubtedly, adds to the value of the book.

The neat printing in good paper and the beautiful cover and convenient size make the book all the more attractive. As intended by the devoted editor, it is indeed a fitting 'tribute to the memory and work of Swami Vivekananda' on the occasion of his birth centenary.

S. P.

THE INSPIRING PRECEPTS FROM THE DIVINE PEN OF SRI SRI THAKUR HARANATH. BY A. RAMAKRISHNA SASTRI. *Published by K. Ramachandra Rao, Moberlipeta, Amalapuram, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. 1962. Pages 235. Price Rs. 2.*

Thakur Haranath was a saint with country-wide following. He was no philosopher and founded no sect. But his message of Divine Love continues to grip the hearts of all with whom he came into contact directly or indirectly. The present compilation from his notes, letters and other writings classified and arranged under suitable heads by Sri Sastri, a devout follower of the Thakur, offers his teaching of Love to everyone whatever be his walk of life.

In the course of a moving Introduction, the writer gives us a glimpse into the remarkable life of the saint and describes at length the climactic experience of death and resurrection underwent by the Thakur in the midst of a journey in Kashmir. This took place in April 1896 and marked a total transformation in his life. It is believed that he was thereafter an embodiment of Śrī Caitanya emanation and, indeed, he described himself as such on several occasions.

His teaching was simple. No penance, no ritual, no

pilgrimages but only *love*. Love for God within and for God without, manifest in all the orders of creation. To awaken this love he enjoined *nāma-japa*. He describes how in the state of consciousness brought about by this Love he could see the very trees sucking sap from the earth through their roots. Divine Love brings together the whole of creation in one bosom. Each page of this book is a commentary on this truth.

SRI M. P. PANDIT

THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ. EDITED BY NATARAJA GURU. *Published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay. Pages 763+xvi. Price Rs. 32.*

This big volume, 'the culmination of over thirty years of study, reflection, and practical teaching', is a welcome addition to the vast literature on the *Gītā*. Head of the Narayana Gurukula and himself a man of letters, the editor has added a learned introduction to his commentary. His critical survey of the *Gītā* literature (Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's name is sadly missing among the galaxy of writers who enriched this literature), commencing from the orthodox commentaries dowu to the various modern interpretations of its message (for instance, Acharya Vinoba Bhave's *Gītā-Pravacana*) will give the modern Western reader, for whom the book is obviously meant, food for thought. The editor's masterly analysis of the eighteen chapters, and specially the structure of the complicated ones among the seven hundred and forty-five verses of the *Gītā*, is remarkable. In the course of his introductory dissertation he says: 'Professor O. Lacombe of Paris comes nearest to our own standpoint in the present work when he writes: "The *Bhagavad Gītā* appears to us at once as a literary expression of the most ancient form of *ekāntika dharma* and also as being the least particularized and the least sectarian; it does not intend to be a book of any determinate school but of all orthodox schools. Round the personality of Kṛṣṇa it sounds a recall of all traditional forces for a new life impetus and this is what explains its universal value in Hinduism"' (p. 11). The editor rightly observes that 'we can discover that the discussion and revaluation of the *Gītā* is round the topic of what constitutes proper renunciation'. In support, he quotes Sri Ramakrishna: 'As Ramakrishna, the saint of Bengal, is said to have put it, the *Gītā* teaches *tyāga* (relinquishment), and fast repetition of the word *Gītā* (*gītā-gītāgītā* . . .) results in the reversed syllabic formation of the word *tyāgī* or *tāgī*—as near as is natural to the pronunciation by a Bengali' (p. 29-30). He ably clears some of the misconceptions with regard to the so-called contradictions (with particular reference to *ahiṁsā*) in the *Gītā* (p. 491 ff.). The editor takes great pains to show how the *Gītā* excels in successfully employing the subtle technique of dialectics from beginning to end. He concludes his introduction, saying: 'The *Gītā* is a wisdom dialogue of a non-religious and non-obligatory, contemplative and philosophical order.'

Nataraja Guru mainly bases his commentary on Monism (Advaitavāda) advocated by the great Śaṅkarācārya, as distinguished from Qualified Monism (Viśiṣṭādvaita-vāda) and Dualism (Dvaita-vāda) advocated by Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Madhvācārya respectively. He refers to their basic differences specially over the issue of Karma (p. 184-5), *bhakti* (p. 525-6), and nature of the Absolute *vis-a-vis* Śrī Kṛṣṇa (p. 593-4), and supports Śaṅkara. Of course, he does not go the whole hog. He goes as far as he can without deviating an inch from the cult of his *guru*: One caste, one religion, one God. His views on caste are coloured accordingly (p. 229 ff. and 678 ff.). The same reason prompts him to look askance at orthodoxy, Vedic rituals or any form of worship, as well as on the personal god (p. 188, 513). And he is particularly cross with those who uphold the doctrine of *Gītā* theism. Few will agree with his criticism of Dr. Radhakishnan while dealing with Chapters XII and XVIII (p. 526, 705). It is not that he does not try to be accommodating. But his views on *brahmacarya* (p. 294) or on the spiritual life of a man of easy virtues (p. 563) do not quite conform to the view upheld by the great seers.

Surely, one should not be too rigid. But it is desirable that one should keep aloof from those prejudices which, in one's view, distort the judgement of others (cf. p. 176). Of course, the commentator does not fail to recognize the fact that 'the method of the *Gītā* is never to condemn a lower form of ritual worship or devotion in opposition to the highest form recommended, but always to treat them hand in hand'. Nevertheless, he should have been more explicit.

There is absolutely no question of bypassing the lower forms. We have to transcend them. Swami Vivekananda is very clear on this point. 'You find in the *Gītā*', he says, 'there is no torturing....Even the *karma-kāṇḍa* is taken up, and it is shown that, although it cannot give salvation direct, but only indirectly, yet that is also valid; images are valid indirectly. ... Religions and sects are not the work of hypocrites and wicked people, who invented all these to get a little money, as some of our modern men want to think. ... They are the outcome of the necessity of the human soul. They are all here to satisfy the hankering and thirst of different classes of human minds, and you need not preach against them. The day when the necessity will cease, they will vanish along with the cessation of that necessity' (*Complete Works, Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. III p. 261-62). 'Slowly and gradually the human soul rises up and up, step after step, from the gross to the fine, from the fine to the finer, until it reaches the Absolute, the goal. That is what is in the *Gītā*' (*Ibid.* p. 261). That way lies real synthesis of the warring views on the *Gītā*. However,

considering the nature of the task, the editor's endeavour in assessing and presenting the thoughts on the *Gītā* in terms acceptable to the modern mind may be said to be highly successful.

The publishers, noted for their high standard, should be congratulated for the nice printing and get-up of the book.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

ŚRĪ LALITĀ SAHASRANĀMAM. WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY. BY DR. CHAGANTY SURYANARAYANA MURTY. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. 1962. Pages 216. Price Rs. 6.*

The Divine Mother Śrī Lalitāmbikā, also called Rājarājesvarī, Tripurāsundarī, etc. is the presiding Deity of the cult of Śrī Vidyā or Brahmavidyā, which is a practical course of *sādhanā* for the realization of the highest truths of the Vedānta. The great Ācārya Śaṅkara himself established Her worship in the several monasteries started by him. *Śrī Lalitā Sahasranāma* which occurs in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* is an exquisite *stotra* in Her praise, and containing as it does the essence of the wisdom of the Āgamas, the Tantras and the Upaniṣads, presents a grand synthesis of the various paths of *sādhanā* —the *bhakti-yoga, rāja-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*. To all votaries of the Mother, the *stotra* has long been an important aid to *sādhanā*.

The book under review is a simple commentary on the *stotra*, written in English, the *stotra* itself being given in Devanāgarī script, at the end of the book. The author has explained briefly, but lucidly, the thousand names in the *stotra*, aptly quoting from the Upaniṣads and other scriptures wherever necessary. The Introduction deals with Devī-worship, its development from early times, its philosophy and modes of *sādhanā*. There is also a Preface in which the author has tried to show how modern scientific thought is approximating to Upaniṣadic philosophy.

The get-up is good, but there are quite a large number of printing mistakes not all of which have been corrected in the Errata.

SWAMI SANDHYANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA PATNA

REPORT FOR 1961-62

The Ashrama conducted the following activities during the year:

Religious Activities: Classes were regularly held inside and outside the Ashrama on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*. Regular worship was conducted in the shrine and important festivals such as the *Durgā-pūjā* etc. and the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, and other great prophets were celebrated.

Educational and Cultural Activities: (i) *The Adbhutananda U. P. School*: This school imparts free education to poor boys. At the end of the year, there were 263 students on the roll. (ii) *The Students' Home*: At the end of the year, the Students' Home had 26 students, of whom 16 were full free, four part-paying, and six paying.

The Turiyananda Library and Free Reading Room: The total number of books in the library in March 1962 was 6,360 of which seven were additions. The reading room received six dailies and 75 periodicals. The total number of books issued were 9,509.

Medical Activities: (i) The Bhuvaneshwar Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 59,422 patients, of whom 7,258 were new cases; (ii) In the Allopathic Charitable Dispensary, the total number of patients treated was 54,469, of which 8,547 were new cases.

Relief: Last year when devastating floods swept over Monghyr district in Bihar, the Ashrama organized relief at Barhaiya. The relief workers visited 40 affected villages and distributed blankets and clothing to 1,326 families.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SINGAPORE

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1961

The following were the activities of this centre for the year under review:

Library and Reading Room: The library contained 4,403 books. Number of books issued: 895; Number of persons who made use of the library and reading room: 2,190; Number of periodicals in the reading room: 62; newspapers: 6.

Cultural Activities: Weekly religious classes were held by the Swamis and the President delivered twenty-one lectures in Singapore and Malaya.

Celebrations: Birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Swami Vivekananda, and other prophets and great religious teachers were observed with due solemnity.

Education Activities: The Sarada Devi Tamil School was run in the mornings and Vivekananda Tamil School in the evenings at the same premises. In the former, the enrolment was 150 girls and in the latter, 103 boys and 25 girls. In the Secondary School Entrance examination the students secured 81% passes.

Night Class for Adults: There were two classes, one in English and the other in Tamil, with a total enrolment of 48 pupils.

Boys' Home: There were 55 inmates in the Home, their ages ranging from 6 to 17 years. A monastic member is in charge of imparting moral and religious instruction.