

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

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Our subscribers are informed that from January 1965 the subscription to Prabuddha Bharata is increased to Rs. 6/-. Owing to the mounting cost of paper and printing, we have been compelled to effect this small increase much against our wish. We hope our subscribers will appreciate our difficulties and extend their patronage as before.

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Prabuddha Bharata

Editorial Office
MAYAVATI, ALMORA
HIMALAYAS

Publication Office
5 DEHI ENTALLY ROAD
CALCUTTA 14

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By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

DECEMBER 1964

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विवेकानन्द साहित्य

जन्मशती हिन्दी संस्करण

कुल १० खंड—डबल डिमाई १६ पेजी साइज में ; अनुक्रमणिका समेत पृष्ठ संख्या प्रति खंड लगभग ४५० ; मजबूत और आकर्षक सजिल्द प्रति खंड का मूल्य ६ रु० । पूरे सेट रेल द्वारा मँगाने से रेल-खर्च नहीं लगेगा । पुस्तक विक्रेताओं के लिए विशेष कमीशन दिया जाता है ।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द की समग्र ग्रन्थावली 'विवेकानन्द साहित्य' नाम से दस खंडों में प्रकाशित हुई है, जो राष्ट्रभाषा हिन्दी में ऐसा प्रथम प्रकाशन है । इन ग्रन्थों में स्वामीजी के दर्शन, धर्म, राष्ट्र, समाज आदि विषयक ओजपूर्ण व्याख्यानों तथा गम्भीर लेखों का पूर्ण संकलन है । अनुवादकों में पं० सूर्यकान्त त्रिपाठी 'निराला', पं० सुमित्रानन्दन पंत, डा० प्रभाकर माचवे, श्री फनीश्वरनाथ रेणु, डा० नर्मदेश्वर प्रसाद आदि ख्यातिलब्ध साहित्यकारों के नाम उल्लेखनीय है ।

“निस्सन्देह किसी से स्वामी विवेकानन्द के लेखों के लिए भूमिका की अपेक्षा नहीं है । वे स्वयं ही अप्रतिहत आकर्षण हैं ।” —महात्मा गाँधी

व्यवस्थापक, अद्वैत आश्रम,

५, डिही एंटाली रोड, कलकत्ता-१४

**YOUR SAVINGS BUY
NATION'S NEEDS**

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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DECEMBER 1964

No. 12



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(51)

Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama
Luxa, Varanasi
28 November 1914

Dear —,

I am extremely happy to receive your letter. My health is not so bad here. Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) also is keeping all right, through the Master's grace. I learnt from Hari Maharaj's letter that 'Aśvān' had reached.

It is most likely that I shall take Hari Maharaj with me. Bhuvan Babu and Bhushan Babu have specially requested him to spend a few days at Mihijam. In all probability, we shall stay at Mihijam for some days, and have to go to Jamtara to make some arrangement about the plot of land there. That is, we have to arrange about making the bricks and putting up a small building.

My heartfelt blessings and love to you. Now that all of you have come under the protection of the Master and his devotees, you will certainly attain perfection in spiritual life. We are, indeed, responsible for you—bear this in mind well. What more shall I write ?

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(52)

Chilkapeta
Almora, U.P.
27 June 1915

Dear —,

I have duly received your letter and noted the contents. I heard from the Math that a few *sannyāsins* and *brahmacārins* have arrived from there. If, through the Master's grace, the Mission which bears his name, and which is his, renders some service to the famine-stricken Nārāyaṇas, that is a matter for great joy. The condition in the country is distressful. What a calamity it is—people are dying for want of food! May the Master be merciful and alleviate their suffering—this is our sincere prayer at his feet. May he keep those who have gone to render service in good health and may they work with great enthusiasm! May they not be in want of funds!

I was even more sorry to hear of your mental suffering. The Master will surely grant you his vision. Pray intensely like a child. Pray in solitude shedding profuse tears, and call on him in secret, so that the people will not know anything about it. If it becomes circulated among the people, it has a deleterious effect on one's devotion and love. Be careful to call on him in seclusion. Of course, *saṅkīrtana* (chorus singing) etc. have to be done in the company of others; also, it is quite natural for the devotees to shed tears etc. while engaged in singing his glories. But to the extent one can restrain the expression of one's emotions outside, they will correspondingly increase inside. Otherwise, if the little feeling that has been awakened inside flows out in outward expression, it cannot crystallize into shape. The Lord is within everybody, and at the present moment, He has manifested Himself in many and will still more do so. You be a witness and simply repeat: 'Blessed Lord, Blessed Ramakrishna, the indweller of all, the master, and incarnation! Lord, have mercy on me—instil love into me, devotion into me! I am absolutely worthless, absolutely wretched, am devoid of devotion, devoid of prayers, devoid of knowledge, devoid of spiritual practice, devoid of wisdom, devoid of discrimination. Be kind to me!' Pray in this way in solitude, away from the haunts of people, shedding profuse tears. Then you will attain everything. The Master will grant you his vision, will be merciful to you, and grant you love, devotion, and everything. He will not also allow the worldly troubles to continue. There is nothing to fear.

My heartfelt blessings and love to you. You live like a true devotee; the Lord will set right everything in time. The characteristic of a devotee is to feel humbler than a blade of grass, to be more forbearing than a tree, and to be respectful to even those who do not deserve it, not to speak of those who deserve it. One can become a real devotee if one behaves like this. The Master used to say that there are three *sa's*—three *sa's*, namely, the alphabets *sa*, *śa*, *ṣa* (which in Bengali are all pronounced alike); in other words, suffer (insults and misfortunes), suffer, suffer. The more the wicked torture, the more

the devotees call on Him ; and the more they call on Him the more their devotion and faith in Him will increase ; the more the devotion and faith increase, the more there is peace and bliss. Witnessing that peace and bliss of the devotees, even the minds of the adversaries will speed towards the Lord, and all enmity will cease. Man will not make any progress if there is no opposition and obstruction, and therefore it is that all great men, the high-souled ones, have considered the impediments on the way as the most benevolent friends.

What more shall I write ? The letter is getting long. You have no fears. I am extremely pained to learn that you have no cloth to wear—I am sending you a piece of cloth. I have an extra cloth. My heartfelt love and best wishes to you. Convey my blessings to all those who have come from the Math, and all of you look after them well—of course, it is needless for me to say it.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(53)

Chilkapeta
Almora, U.P.
28 June 1915

Dear —,

I have got your letter and understood everything. No doubt, I am very happy, but I am in sore affliction to learn that the people in those parts are suffering so badly because of famine and that some are dying because of want of food.

You are verily blessed, there is no doubt about it. Even if you have the vision of the Lord in a dream, the mind gets purified and you will reach Him, I assure you. Unless the mind is purified, one cannot obtain Him. Those who frequently have the vision of the Lord in a dream are possessed of good tendencies acquired from past births ; therefore, these are all auspicious signs. May the Lord make you whole by granting you devotion, love, knowledge, faith, and purity in abundance—this is my innermost prayer.

— is a very nice boy. I pray, also, from the bottom of my heart that the Lord may grant him intense love, devotion, and faith. If you feel like it, you write to Brahmananda Swami ; what is the necessity of asking me about it ? May all be well with you, may you develop intense devotion, faith, love, knowledge, and wisdom—this is my prayer. Try always to live in the company of holy people.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(54)

Chilkapeta
Almora, U.P.
28 July 1915

Dear —babu,

How shall I express in writing the joy I felt on receiving your letter? The picture of the few days I spent at Ranchi are for ever indelibly impressed in my mind and will remain so. I was, as it were, in the company of the most beloved children of the Master. I can never forget you; not only not forget, which is, of course, out of question, but you have all, as it were, taken a hold on my heart for all time to come. Through the grace of the Holy Mother, you have gained a permanent place at the feet of the Master; there is nothing more to worry about. But then, so long as you are forced to stay in the world, visitation of happiness and misery from time to time, in some form or other, is inevitable; there is nothing to be disconsolate about on that score. If a few people sit together and sing the Lord's glories, the weal and woe of the world will all be forgotten, and the heart will be filled with bliss and hope. The Holy Mother's grace is ever on you all, and that is the reason why I feel so intimate with you all. You are watering the very roots of the tree, with the result that the water will reach the boughs, branches, and twigs.

Hari Maharaj is relatively better. He is feeling much stronger than before; the general appearance also has changed a good deal. There is not, however, much improvement in his diabetic complaint, since it has become chronic. But on the whole he is much better.

I am frequently in receipt of the heartrending news of the East Bengal famine, and I see it also in newspapers. Oh! what good my conveying it in writing? The Ruler of the heart knows the secrets of the heart—He alone knows what thoughts are passing through my mind sitting in this seclusion of the Himalayas. No other thought except that of the all-round welfare of mankind crosses my mind. What use writing more? The Lord knows everything, He is dwelling within. In these hills also, there is failure of rains. If it does not rain well now, Lord alone knows what will be the condition of these areas. May He be merciful—this is my prayer.

Yourself and the other devotees there accept the heartfelt love and blessings of Turiyananda Swami and myself. Read out this letter to all, and inform me now and then about the welfare of you all. I become happy whenever I receive your letters.

The Lord has descended on the earth; in whatever form it may be, the welfare of the world is bound to come about—be sure of that.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

THE LIVING CHRIST

[EDITORIAL]

'God who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son.' (Hebrews i. 1-2) To us who find it difficult to accept the orthodox Christian view that '*his* Son' is the only begotten Son of God, this exhortation of St. Paul to the Hebrews has a special appeal and significance. Christ's is undoubtedly the voice of God, though not the only voice spoken once for all. It is the same voice that had spoken unto the prophets previously and has spoken unto many others since the memorable advent of Christ, 'the same yesterday, and today, and for ever'. (ibid., xiii. 8) That is why the words of Jesus strike a sympathetic note in the hearts of those even outside the pale of Christianity. The life and teachings of Jesus, studied in the light of the life of the mystics who followed in his footsteps, untrammelled by the theological colouring given to them by the Church dogma, only reaffirm the spiritual truths realized and preached by the sages and saints of all religions. 'In my Father's house', as Jesus said, 'are many mansions.' Jesus' is one, which is a welcome addition to the spiritual treasure-house of the world.

The transformation brought about in men by Jesus bewilders us. Jesus, in the words of the Bible, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of

Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleaned. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house.

What is this amazing power which says unto a man 'Follow me' and he then and there gives up everything he holds dear to follow him, and says unto another sick soul 'Be thou whole' and he is whole? That is the power we call the incarnation of God that manifests itself from time to time to assure us when we waver and falter with regard to the existence of a higher Reality. Here, in the Bible story, we find this power working at two levels: the spiritual and the material. How did Jesus acquire that power? What were the processes through which the son of the carpenter became the

Son of God and Son of Man? That is what is interesting to us.

Unfortunately, we have bare details of this miracle of inner conversion in the life of Jesus. Much of the childhood and youth prior to his emergence at Galilee as the preacher with a message unto mankind is shrouded in mystery. All that the Bible says about the child Jesus is that he 'grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him, and he increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man'. But the seeds of a great life are sown in childhood. Was it not Christ himself who said: 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. . . . Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven'? The first picture of the Christ in the making that we get in the Bible is when Jesus is about twelve years old. The feast of the passover is on at Jerusalem, and he has gone there with his parents. On the return journey, the parents find him missing. Thinking that he has gone in advance with others, they travel for a day, and find him not among the rest of the pilgrims. They tend their way back to Jerusalem, and find him deeply absorbed in discussion on spiritual topics with the elders—himself putting questions and in his turn answering their questions with replies which astonished them all. When the mother fondly rebukes him: 'Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing', he replies characteristically: 'How is that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' A reply indicative of his future greatness. The Bible adds: 'They understood not the saying which he spake unto them.' Naturally. Father's business? Was it

not what they, too, his loving parents wanted him to do: to take up the carpenter's profession of his father. They could not see that Jesus was cast in a different mould and was not meant for the humdrum life of this world.

When we see Jesus next, he is already a grown-up person of about thirty and in the prime of youth. He is on his way, along with others, to be baptized of John, who had been wildly proclaiming the imminent arrival of the kingdom of heaven and calling upon all to repent. He, too, instantaneously recognizes in Jesus a saint greater than himself, the latchet of whose shoes he is not fit to unloose, and refuses to baptize him, saying: 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus insists: 'Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.' And he is baptized. That is the way of all these great teachers. They never break away with the past violently. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'When the fruit is ripe, it falls off of its own accord. When devotion to the Lord develops in the heart, the rituals drop off of their own accord.' Through the church to beyond the church, through tradition to beyond tradition, is the principle on which they work and build up their life.

The baptism was an important landmark in the life of Jesus. It brings about a remarkable change in his personality. It is not, as with others, a mechanical act of sprinkling with water and uttering sacred formulas. His inner spirit is awakened. He withdraws himself to the wilderness, fasts and prays, for forty days and nights it is said, overcomes the temptations that come in his way—of worldly pomp and glory and of supernatural powers, holds on steadfastly to God, and lo, the new man is born whom the world adores and worships, the embodiment of the best that a person can aspire to—absolute renuncia-

tion, purity, and incessant God-consciousness. The rest of his life is spent in moving from place to place and giving freely of what he has received. This period of ministration reveals the grand character of his personality.

A personality like Jesus' stands in thorough contrast with that of a John the Baptist. The renunciation and austerity of John was extraordinary and great, but it was of a savage type. He lived in the wilderness on locusts and wild honey, away from all haunts of people, clothing himself with camel's hair and with a girdle of skin. We are awed by it; it never inspires the majority of us to follow in his footsteps. Even his preaching the coming of the Lord is violent: 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.' The message strikes terror in our hearts. Hundred times we would such a Lord doesn't come—a God, far away from mankind, a jealous God, angry and fearful, sitting in judgement upon the sins and misdoings of His children, over which however they have no control, and dealing with punishments and rewards, a God whom we have to appease to obtain concessions of mercy. It is the old Jewish idea of God, or for that matter, of the generality of men.

But the personality of Jesus attracts us and inspires us with hope, encouragement, and confidence. We are all children of God, children of light, it assures us, and not a generation of vipers. (Luke xx. 36; John xii. 36) 'There is no place for denouncing and condemning anyone here on earth as lost for ever. When the scribes and Pharisees bring unto him a woman of evil character and seek his permission to stone her for her evil act, as was commanded by Moses, he simply says: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her'. Hearing these words, those who accuse her take to their heels one by

one. When the woman says in reply to his query that no man has condemned her, he gently admonishes her to sin no more. 'Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.' The Bible leaves us to infer that from then on she was a changed woman.

Or, again, how touching is that incident of the Samaritan woman! Samaritans were detested of the Jews, who looked down upon them as the untouchables of the race and would not have any dealings with them. Jesus comes to Samaria once in the course of his wanderings from village to village spreading the gospel. He reaches the place where the well, called the Jacob's well, is situated. He is wearied, and sits near it. Just then, a woman comes to draw water, and he requests her to give him a drink. The woman is abashed: He, a Jew, to request her to give him water to drink, and she, a Samaritan, to give it! She tells him so. And Jesus' reply reveals the man: 'If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.' All are equally sharers of this living water. Among the claimants to the kingdom of God, there is no distinction.

The renunciation of Jesus, unlike that of John, is complete and perfect in itself, is sweet and spontaneous, and we admire it. We are charmed by it; we wish, we feel, we could imitate him in his renunciation. 'The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' Yet how happy, joyous, and merry he is always! He eats with the publicans and sinners, mixes with every class of people, heals the sick, ministers to the needs of the poor, preaches the gospel, is free with the children, and rejoices in the company of the young and old. Freely he receives, and

freely he gives. People complain: The Son of man came eating and drinking, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber. He is not bothered. His answer is: Can the children of the bridegroom mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. He is ever with the Lord, and the Lord is ever with him. What need to put on long a face in the name of religion? Anyway, such is not the religion of Jesus. 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?' His gospel was one of cheer and hope: In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.

Such a life of self-abandonment to the will of God seems incredible in an age where productive labour is the measure of the worth of man. Yet that was his message: Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 'This earthly life of sensual pleasures is not worthy of its hire. In walking with God is the abundance of life. A person walking with God transcends the trivialities of life. That is the secret of the supreme detachment and calmness of Jesus in times of crisis. Look at the presence of mind with which he handles the situation when caught in the midst of a boisterous sea or when faced with the problem of feeding a multitude, leaving aside the miracle part of it. Or, again, how he is not affected when the people of a village of

Samaritans refuse to receive him. His disciples are furious and want to bring down hellfire on the whole village and destroy it. Jesus, whose tranquillity of mind is undisturbed by the rebuff of the villagers, rebukes the disciples, saying: 'The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them', and quietly proceeds to another village. That is the strength of conviction born of the faith in the living presence of God.

The God of Jesus is not the God of terror, ever ready to rain fire and brimstone on His erring creation, over which He has lost control. He is the God of Love. For God is Love, as St. Paul says, and there is no fear in love; perfect love casteth out fear. (1 John iv. 16, 18) He is our near and dear one. He is not only the Father in heaven but the Father on earth, too, indulgent and solicitous about the spiritual welfare of his children. 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall poor heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' He judgeth not His children. 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' (Matt. v. 45) His grace is equally present on both the saint and the sinner, nay, more on the sinner than on the saint; for the saint is already saved and needs not His help. 'How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? ... Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.' (Matt. xviii. 12, 14)

And this God is not a God sitting somewhere in the heavens above the clouds. He is within ourselves. 'The kingdom of God is within you.' The God whom we are seeking here and there, in the higher spheres and the nether worlds, in the

temples and the synagogues, is within our own hearts. Our body itself is the temple of God. Nay, Jesus went even further when he said 'I and my Father are one'. We are that God. He says: 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.' (Matt. xxv. 34-40) This whole world, with all its living beings, is His manifestation. He is in all and He is all, His hands everywhere and His feet everywhere. Jesus is witness to this fact. He sees divinity in Mary Magdalene, the sinner, as much as in Peter, the saint; and his mission is to wake us to this fact that behind this mask of man and woman, saint and sinner, friend and foe, is the shining spark of God. He sees God face to face and wants us to do the same. 'Labour not for the meat which perisheth,' he says, 'but for that meat which endureth, unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.' (John vi. 27)

This seeing God face to face is not a matter of external observances, fastings and set forms of prayers, and keeping to the laws, but a rebirth into the Spirit. Good and beneficial as these observances

are, they are not the end. It is the pure in heart that shall see God. If these external practices help us in the purification of the heart, well and good; otherwise they have no value. External purity is nothing; it is the internal purity that we should strive for. It is on this ground that he fights with the priests, with the Pharisees and Sadducees, who are meticulous about 'cleaning the cup and the platter, but within were full of extortion and excess'. 'Clean first that which is within,' he admonishes them, 'that the outside of them may be clean also. Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.' (Matt. xxiii. 25-28) 'All their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments. And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.' (Matt. xxiii. 5-8)

Renunciation, absolute renunciation of all that is trash, of carnal desires and wealth, is the *sine qua non* of this realization of divinity within, according to Jesus. 'Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven' is the command to the rich man who seeks his advice on what he should do to inherit eternal life. He would not compromise on this. There could be no watering down of this ideal of renunciation if we have to transcend ourselves and reach God. To his own disciples he says: 'Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into there abide, and thence depart.'

Of course, he knew few are ready to

follow this high ideal. They had to be slowly prepared before they can attain to it. So, for them, he advocated the ordinary rules of morality and of an honourable living—'Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother'—and eternal vigilance. For we know not when the Lord will appear. Ten virgins took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise, and took oil in their vessels to light the lamps; the other five were foolish and took no oil, only the lamps. As they waited for the bridegroom, they fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all these virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise ones answered: Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy

for yourselves. And while they went to buy the oil, the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Of such is the kingdom of God. The bridegroom is the Lord, the oil is the spiritual practices. But spiritual practices by themselves are not the cause of Lord's appearance. The Lord appears out of His own grace, but we are to be ready. So Jesus said: 'Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.'

This message of Jesus is the eternal message of every religion, not merely of Christianity. It transcends history. It calls upon us to accept and practise the broad truths of the eternal religion of which he is but a mouthpiece. Let us pay heed to it.

THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

The age-old question of the responsibility for the Crucifixion has been recently reopened.

There is conclusive evidence in the authorized King James version of the New Testament that no Gentile nor Jew nor Roman was responsible for the Crucifixion. Then who was?

The crucifix alone, and none else, was responsible for the Crucifixion. The New Testament irrefutably proves that Christ alone advanced his Crucifixion, with the help of some 'outward causes'.

This well-founded conclusion, and none other, does real justice to Christ's power, glory, and ministration, and also to those individuals and people who were connected with the divine drama of Jerusalem.

The faithful must accept two facts of Christ's life as found in the Gospels:

(a) that as the only begotten and well-beloved son of God, Christ participated in God's all-knowingness and all-powerfulness; and

(b) that at every stage he fulfilled his mission on earth in the manner of his own

choosing, which was the same as his being directed by the will of the Father in Heaven.

Acceptance of these two facts means also the total acceptance of their implications in studying and interpreting the life and mission of Christ. It would be irrational to imply by any assertion that Christ was sometimes all-powerful and sometimes helpless; sometimes all-knowing and sometimes ignorant.

The saviours of the Saviour, those defenders of Christ who say others were responsible for the Crucifixion, seem not to realize how they become offenders of his divinity, his all-knowingness, his almightiness. Does the Saviour require saving? In any event, what happens to God in any of His ventures is no responsibility of man. But what happens to man is entirely His responsibility.

To see this point, however, we must keep our sense of humour alive all through. The difficulty with some religious people is that the moment they begin to discuss religion, they tend to suspend their sense of humour. Without a sense of humour, what chance is there to appreciate the votive and the sportive aspects of the Timeless gone forth into time? 'God laughs and plays', as Meister Eckhart says. Indeed he does!

When God intervenes in this terrestrial drama of not-knowing, He does so on His own initiative and responsibility. He knows that the people with whom He has come to play do not know how to play any better than they do. God has something in mind when He starts playing, which they may not fully understand.

The Incarnation of God is nothing but dramatization of the Divine in history for the fulfillment of God's purpose on earth. In the drama of not knowing what was going on in Jerusalem, the only fully knowing person was Christ himself. And Christ knew it.

To think that Christ was overpowered at any stage of the drama by any political or social force is an act of little faith. Without this initial act of little faith and non-charity to Christ, none can blame the Jew or the Gentile or the Roman for Christ's Crucifixion.

Christ stepped into history to dominate it, not to be dominated by it. If he allowed himself to be crucified, it was his manner of dominating history. And history has borne it out.

Christ, all-powerful, knew everything. The whole drama was laid and directed by him. He caused all people connected with it to think as he wanted them to think. He made people act as he wanted them to act. The son of God is not to be pushed around by mortals.

In St. Matthew's Gospel (xxvi. 1-5), we read :

'And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.

But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.'

Here is a very important clue to the drama.

The sequence of the ideas has to be carefully noted. What first occurred in the cosmic mind of Jesus later travelled to suitable minds and the drama materialized.

There is a comparable case in the

Bhagavad-Gītā which clarifies the mystery of this divine sport.

On the battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Arjuna, the general of one of the two contending armies, was overpowered by the prospect of killing relatives of his who served in the opposing army. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whom the Hindus worship as the Lord incarnate on earth, was driving his chariot. He gave Arjuna, in that unbecoming plight, the discourse which came to be known as the *Gītā*, the celebrated scripture. In the course of expounding to Arjuna the true concept of Reality and the principles of spiritual life, Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed him his own cosmic form in which all the worlds were held, and the terrifying things of the past, the present, and the future were seen happening simultaneously. Arjuna was overwhelmed by the staggering sight and cried for its withdrawal. Śrī Kṛṣṇa again assumed his benign human form and then uttered the pregnant words which explain a mystery and also the significance of the Christ drama.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, XI. 32, 33):

Time am I, laying desolate the world,
Made manifest on earth to slay mankind!
Not one of all these warriors ranged
for strife,
Even without thee, will escape from
death.
Therefore stand up! Win for thyself
renown,
Conquer thy foes, enjoy the spacious
realm.
By Me they are already overcome,
Be thou the outward cause, O Arjuna.

The words, 'Be thou the outward cause', are to be especially noted.

In Jerusalem too, some people had to be the outward cause. The drama required it. These 'outward causes' were mere

pretexts, the pegs on which to hang ideas of the ageless dramatist-actor.

At the passover supper, Christ foretold everything that would happen, and was anxious that nothing should be forestalled. Indeed he asserted: 'And truly the Son of man goeth *as it was determined. . .*' (Luke xxii. 22)

In the Gospel of St. John (xiii. 26-28), when the disciples asked who was going to betray him, we read:

'Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

And *after* the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, *That thou doest, do quickly.*

Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.'

How could they have known? This is the drama within the drama, the *bīlā*, as it is called in Sanskrit, the sport of the Lord.

After the all-powerful and all-knowing Lord, by an act of infinite grace, used mortal Judas for his immortal purpose on earth, should any man have the heartlessness to condemn even Judas, who obviously was only a 'draft'? Christ was making Judas play a very difficult role. To be sure, only Christ's grace enabled Judas to give the fatal kiss. We may be more moral even than Christ in judging Judas, but Christ would not be disloyal to his instrument. Judas hanged himself even before Christ was crucified. Such was his contrition. And if we are to believe the words of Christ, the repentance of Judas could not have gone in vain. To be repentant was to have been forgiven from God's side. Besides, could Judas have stayed Judas even after kissing the son of God?

There is something even more striking.

Christ took calculated precautions so that the drama would be enacted strictly according to his blue print, without being swayed by any chance occurrence.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew (xxvi. 52-56), we read that after the betrayal kiss, when Christ was arrested, one of his followers struck off the ear of the servant of the High Priest.

'Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.'

Christ was a spiritual revolutionary, a forward looking, progressive thinker, yet his constant concern was for the 'fulfilment of the scripture'. The Book of Isaiah of the Old Testament (chapter 53) foretells the sufferings of Christ. Thus his life indicates that Christ, the non-conformist, obeyed in his action a higher law that had its own rhythm in the spiritual history of his own people.

Great, indeed, was Christ's caution to see that nothing interfered with that fatal consummation foretold in the scriptures, the Crucifixion, the climax of the drama.

Why did Christ do it? So far as one can possibly understand, in order to give that 'adultrous generation'—for that matter, all generations—the 'sign' which

they could not but understand. Christ did it in order to endow mankind with a new instrument of liberation; and in order to bring sweet harmony and fusion between God's manward movement and man's Godward movement.

It was only when Christ was cold on the cross, destroyed it has been said, that he proved how living he was, how powerful, how loving. It was only on the cross that Christ *succeeded* in proving God's love for man. No greater proof could he give of his own great words: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' (John xv. 13)

And what a laying down of life it was! And this poignant dramatization of God's incredible love for man—how well it caught the imagination of mankind and worked in history!

Does all this prove that the Jews 'destroyed a man'? As if Christ were a mere man, as if he were ever destructible!

Even when Christ allowed himself to be flogged, or spat upon, or nailed to the cross, he did so as an almighty bending low his head—in fun, as it were—before the pranks of the fools of not-knowing, which in Sanskrit is called *māyā*. If he wore the crown of thorns without complaining, it was his supernal strategy for becoming the eternal King of millions of hearts. If those who treated Christ the way they did knew what Christ would become after he had mounted the cross, perhaps, they would have thought it safer to crown him in Rome, for thus his mortality would have been assured, like that of all kings. But they were victims of not-knowing. And God was playing!

One who could rebuke the waves of the ocean to stillness, walk over its waters, give eyesight to the blind, make cripples walk, call back to life the dead, transform sinners into saints by a look—could he not have escaped the Crucifixion if he had so desired?

How could anyone have crucified Christ had he not willed it so urgently? He definitely wanted it. He had it done. By thus getting his apparent corporeality—a limitation almost unbearable to the incarnation—detonated, Christ, the saving power, exploded in the world.

To read the Crucifixion as a doleful isolated incident of Christ's life is to miss the whole point of the Christ-drama. Resurrection and Crucifixion are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. It was not as if Christ's helplessness in Crucifixion suddenly became his all-powerfulness in Resurrection. What was not in the Crucifixion did not come to be in the Resurrection. Both are different modes of the same power-play. By one he triumphs over life, by the other over death. By Crucifixion he gave his blood, flesh, and bones for fertilizing the spiritual soil of the world; by Resurrection he gave the reassuring knowledge that he was more than flesh and bone, literally indestructible. And that is the foundation of Christianity itself. The Crucifixion is the root; the Resurrection, the flower. Those who want the flower should not strike at the root.

Instead of blaming anyone for the Crucifixion, why may we not see in it the supreme strategy of the Saviour and enjoy the drama? Today it should not be beyond anyone to see and understand why Christ became the crucifix.

If Christ had died of yellow fever—even as a suggestion how repugnant the idea appears to many, and yet they blame the Crucifixion!—after giving his Sermon on the Mount, at best he might have become a saint. That, too, is doubtful; for there is scarcely anything in the Sermon which is not traceable to anterior sources.

By dying on the cross, Christ dramatized the self-giving of God for mankind in such a telling manner, and revealed the truth of his being in such a power-

ful way, that everything he did and said before attained a new meaning, a new inspiration, and a new authenticity. All the saving power of Christ flowed to man through his manifested power of dying.

The highest law in the universe is the law of sacrifice. That is why our heart's homage spontaneously flows toward those who are utterly selfless. No-one need ask us to worship them. At any point of time, we require nothing more urgently than to love God. But we cannot love God, little things that we are, without somehow being assured that God loves us. Therefore, 'God must give Himself', as Meister Eckhart said, and also make it known that He has given Himself lest He should not be understood.

In the *Rg-Veda*, one of the most ancient scriptures of mankind, it is said that the supreme Spirit sacrificed Himself for bringing forth the creation. It was the breathing out of the Creator. And it is also implied that it is through a continuing self-sacrifice on the part of the supreme Spirit that the creation is sustained. The uniqueness of Christ consists in the utter and total manner he processed this highest law of the universe through his life into history. That is from God's side.

But Christ was not God alone somewhere; he was man here, too. He was the God-man. From man's side, the highest manifestation of spirituality is non-resistance to evil. This also Christ manifested on the Cross in a total manner, which has stayed unsurpassed in all history.

Thus we see in Christ the two movements—God's manward movement through the highest law of sacrifice and man's Godward movement through the highest spiritual law, non-resistance to evil—meet the vertical urge crossing the horizontal urge across history. And that is the Cross, the redeeming gift of Christ to mankind.

Today, the Cross is the Christ and the Christ is the Cross. They are spiritually, even conceptually, inseparable. If you do not blame anyone for receiving the crucifix, it is irrational to blame anyone for the Crucifixion.

Can anyone so much as believe that such world-encompassing civilizing force, incalculable beneficent potential, and immeasurable saving power could issue out of an act for which a handful of criminals were responsible?

The Cross, with all its power, is simply the gift of God. It is entirely Christ's. It is too holy to be a contribution of any sinner. It is not the outcome of human folly or crime. It is a dynamic act of divine grace in the heart of history, flowing like a river of fire which does not burn but purifies and liberates.

Christ entered the world-stage through immaculate conception and apparently went out of it through Crucifixion. One who is born must die. Was Christ really born? Did he really die? Christ was only apparently born—that

is the meaning of immaculate conception. Christ only apparently died—that is the meaning of Crucifixion. That Christ only apparently died was proved by Resurrection. So, when you try to fix the responsibility for Christ's death, you are trying to fix responsibility for an act which just did not happen. We valiantly carry on our quarrel down the ages. Who can really help us?

Experience of nineteen centuries should perhaps be enough to convince all thinking people everywhere that historical or legalistic polemics as to the responsibility of the Crucifixion, carried even through the end of time, will never lead us anywhere but to agony.

Instead, why may we not do honour to those whom the Lord did the singular honour of choosing as the players in his drama? Why may we not be thankful to them for the sweet fruits the world enjoys of their bitter labour? Why may we not praise only Christ for the responsibility of the Cross and so let humanity rejoice everywhere?

THE SONGS OF CHRISTMASTIME

MR. ERNEST BRIGGS

Have you ever thought how wonderful are the sounds that drift and carry far upon the clear air of a quiet night? Even the most familiar of them takes on a sense of beauty when the wind is low and the stars are bright and high. Many a sufferer has been friended by them in his wakefulness, when the hours seemed interminable: common sounds such as the low chiming of a nearby clock; the approach and the receding of an aeroplane; the far-off barking of a restless dog in whose

blood the risen moon has stirred hereditary ichor by its silver light; the calling and the whirring of a bird in flight; the chirr of insects; the croaking of frogs; and the whistle and the rumble of a distant train.

But the most wonderful of all the varied sounds that come by night are those that are musical. Not only are they for immediate delight, but they have the power to evoke a train of thought that, through the gracious gift of memory, may bring

again past joys to light the hours, or, perhaps, in a graver hour, may stir old sorrows and departed visions from long sleep—music whistled by a passer-by who lightly flings upon the night some old refrain to ease the tedium of his homeward way; the ribald singing of a midnight roisterer; the jangling of an ailing piano long past the fullest period of usefulness, which yet beats out the music for a local dance; or, perhaps, the mellow 'lin-lan-lone' of bells, such as one hears in Italy, from some old campanile—

Far away, in the lonely night I hear
Sweetest bells sadly ringing....
Yet, now I hear them with deep grief
 broken-hearted,
For they bring memories of love departed.

On a calm night, even homely music is made wonderful when it is near, but when it is sounding clearly from a distance, and rarified by the pure air where trees are still permitted to grow beyond the confines of a huddled town, it takes on sheer enchantment, so that both words and music come to the listening ear with persuasive eloquence. Never does outdoor music sound more compellingly than when it is sung by carol-singers in the western season that is Christmastime. It is then that, through the night of Christmas Eve, it is customary for groups of singers to go from street to street and send abroad, through the starlit air, carols that tell the story of the stable in the small white town of Bethlehem, where, nearly 2,000 years ago, a little Child was born while a great new star burned high above the hills where angel-visitants informed a group of shepherds that the Christ that Jewry waited for was born, to bring peace on the earth, and goodwill to all men, and to bring the exiled spirit of his people to His Spirit, home.

The western peoples who call themselves 'Christians' revere in this Child, who was man of man and at the same time God of God, an aspect of the divine Spirit, who as the Son is in unity with the Father and the Holy Ghost—the Trinity of the immortal Godhead; the Three in One, the One in Three, perfect and indivisible. This is one of the great mysteries of the Christian faith that the One who is Three is the one essential eternal Spirit that is all-knowing in all things, all-powerful and ever-present, is the sole Creator, the sole Sustainer, and the sole Destroyer of all forms of matter that are manifested by the Spirit in the universe; whose movement is as the wind that comes none knows from whence, that blows and goes, again, none can say whither; that was before all beginning, that is now, and ever shall be, immortal and unchangeable, when all that is of time and circumstance shall end.

No matter in what language the songs of Christmastime are sung, their message and their motivating spirit is the same—that all men are the children of the one God, who gave himself in love, and came in human form for each and all, to draw all men by love—as memorable lines by an English poet, George Matheson (1842-1906), have it so beautifully :

Gather us in, Thou Love that fillest all!
Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold,
Rend each man's temple-veil and bid
 it fall,
That we may know that Thou hast been
 of old :

Gather us in!

Gather us in: we worship only Thee;
In varied names we stretch a common
 hand;
In diverse forms a common soul we see;
In many ships we seek one spirit-land;
 Gather us in!

Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow-
light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it
Heaven ;

Thou art the fullness of our partial sight ;
We are not perfect till we find the Seven ;
Gather us in !

There is a great and impressive unity in the mystical apprehension of the awakened ones of all times, of all lands, and of all languages ; for, in their essentials, all great faiths are in remarkable agreement. In the beatific vision, the supreme exaltation of the mystical experience, whether encountered in the saints of the East or the West, there is an incontestable illumination of the self through the glory of conscious unity with the immortal Spirit that is the sole Creator, the Self of the self, manifested alike in the constant radiance of the farthest stars as in the temple of the human heart and the drifting dust-motes of the common earth. There is the all-transforming consciousness that the self in harmony with all within the universe takes life and meaning, wisdom and power, only from the inexhaustible vitality and the indescribable beauty of the immortal Presence that moves in simple majesty upon the storm, that broods in silences of dawns and dews, that is closer to every being than the breath he breathes ; that is as equally near to help and bless the one who lifts his spirit in a lonely prayer as to the two or three who gather in accord in some humble chapel, or to the swarming multitude that crowds a temple with its domes of gold.

How discerning was the vision of Rabindranath Tagore when he extolled the coming of the sole great Lord in everything :

Have you not heard His silent steps ?
He comes, comes, ever comes !

3

Every moment and every age, every day
and every night,
He comes, comes, ever comes !

It is the chief glory of the Christian Faith that long ago, when one great star was clear and low above a stable in the town of Bethlehem, the immortal Spirit came in human form, and dwelt as man to minister to man :

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His
sweet head ;
The stars in the bright sky looked down
where He lay ;
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the
hay. . . .

There is none who can now identify the writer of those simple and lovely words that have been lisped by many little children of the western world through successive generations, and which have also been sung, times out of mind, by groups of carol-singers, as their songs have sweetened darkened streets as they made their gracious round on Christmas Eve. How many more of such lovely songs of Christmastime there are : 'O Little Town of Bethlehem!', 'Good King Wenceslas', 'It Came upon a Midnight Clear', 'Once in Royal David's City', 'The First Noel', 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing', 'Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning', 'In Dulci Jubilo', 'Whence Is That Goodly Fragrance Blowing?', 'O Come, All Ye Faithful', 'We Three Kings of Orient Are', 'As with Gladness, Men of Old', 'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night', 'Angels from the Realms of Glory', 'Three Kings', 'Joy to the World', 'Come, Rock the Cradle for Him', 'The Cherry Tree Carol', 'The Coventry Carol', and many others !

One of the loveliest of the songs of Christmastime is the Tyrolean carol, 'Silent

Night', which in the original German was written through a fortunate accident, when the small organ of a village church was in disrepair, so that the minister Pastor Joseph M \ddot{o} hr and the organist Franz Gr \ddot{u} ber collaborated in writing a new song for the world in honour of that memorable night that miracle came down to Bethlehem. The carol was first sung by a little group of the village children, but it has since become a special favourite with children throughout Christendom :

Silent night! Holy night!
 All is calm, all is bright
 Round the Virgin Mother and Child!
 Holy Infant so tender and mild,
 Sleep in heavenly peace!

Not all the songs that are sung at Christmastime are religious, for the festival of Christmas has many secular aspects of rejoicing, such as parties and family reunions. Among the quaintest of the non-religious songs is 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', a whimsical old English carol that is a kind of 'House That Jack Built' song, to which a line is added at each repetition. It is one of the few songs that celebrate the pleasant old custom of the giving of gifts to those we love, in remembrance of the gift of the Christ-child to humankind. The twelve days referred to are the twelve days from Christmas to epiphany, on each of which a gift was received from a lover. The love-tokens were many and varied, and one wonders what the recipient did with them all. Here is a list of the order in which they came: A partridge in a pear tree; two turtle-doves; three French hens; four calling-birds; five gold rings; six geese a-laying; seven swans a-swimming; eight maids a-milking; nine ladies dancing; ten Lords a-leaping; eleven pipers piping; and twelve drummers drumming.

To return to the carols, if I may be

permitted a confidence, my own favourite of all the songs of Christmas is an exquisite one that I have never yet heard carried to me on the still night air, but I am still hopeful. It is called 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. The words were written by an English mystic, the poet Christina Rossetti, and the musical setting is by another English mystic, Gustav Holst. As are so many of the greatest musical and poetical utterances, it is all so amazingly simple, and yet so unforgettable :

In the bleak midwinter
 Frosty wind made moan;
 Earth stood hard as iron,
 Water like a stone;
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
 Snow on snow,
 In the bleak midwinter,
 Long ago.

The last stanza beautifully gives the meaning of Christmas as it is understood by the devout Christian, the giving of the self to God as a thanksgiving for His gift of the infant Jesus :

What can I give Him,
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb;
 If I were a wise man
 I would do my part;
 Yet what I have I give Him—
 Give my heart!

In thinking of the Christ-child, and the new upsurge of hope that came into the world with Him, again the wise words of Rabindranath Tagore come appositely to mind: 'Every child that comes into the world is a pledge that God does not yet despair of man!' For still in an age when man seems to be putting all his trust in material might, the pomp and pageantry of passing power, it is truest wisdom to remember that the ways of the immortal

Spirit are far above the ways of man. God can afford to wait, for the sureness of His long-range power always wins. In Bethlehem a little Child was born, when contemporary men of war were looking for a King. That Child was God's own answer to man's need. So it was, and so it is now. Now, although God's present answer will not manifest to men until thirty, forty, or even fifty years have passed. For tomorrow's need, a child is born today. F. W. Boreham has deftly stated the plain truth of this thought in a passage that I leave with you for your meditation:

'When men were following with bated breath the march of Napoleon, and waiting with feverish impatience the news of the wars, quietly and inauspiciously in various homes, babies were being born. But who could think about babies! Everybody was thinking about battles. In the year midway between Trafalgar and Waterloo, there came into the world a host of heroes. Gladstone was born in Liverpool; Tennyson was born at Somerby Rectory; Oliver Wendell Holmes was born in Massachusetts; and on the very same day of the same year, Charles Darwin made his debut in Shrewsbury, and Abraham Lincoln drew his first breath in Kentucky. Nobody thought of babies. Everybody thought of battles. Yet which of the battles of 1809 mattered more than the babies of 1809?'

The divine Spirit is no respecter of either countries or families, and it may be—a solemn thought for any parent to consider

—that a man or a woman who is to be a hero of the Spirit in the future years is playing at this moment as a child in your own household. Again I echo those wise words of Tagore: 'Every child that comes into the world is a pledge that God does not yet despair of men!'

Now, at this Christmas season when, throughout the western world, men turn in greater hope again to Bethlehem, to muse upon the gift of God as a mortal Child, and they sing again the carols of this time, may I send to you a personal gift, lines of my own to wish you peace and joy?

There lies a Baby in a manger-bed,
Watching the shifting shadows on the
wall;
With tranquil eyes, a light about His
head,
While cattle snort and snuffle in the
stall;
Where Mary watches in her robe of blue,
He sends His Love to you,
From Bethlehem.
This little Baby that your need has
brought,
Calls to your heart across the starry
miles;
You are no farther than His loving
thought,
It is for you He waits, for you He
smiles;
All through the night, the silence, and
the dew,
He sends His Love to you,
From Bethlehem.

SOME NOTES ON THE FOURTH EAST-WEST PHILOSOPHERS' CONFERENCE

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Readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* will be interested in learning that the inter-religious conference which was held as part of the Swami Vivekananda birth centenary this January was followed a few months later by a second international conference likewise dedicated to the promotion of world harmony in a basic human area. The Fourth East-West Philosophers' Conference, which met at the University of Hawaii during the six weeks between June 29th and August 8th, was held under the auspices of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Hawaii and under the directorship of Professor Charles A. Moore, who, among other things, is the editor of the scholarly journal *Philosophy East and West* and co-editor, with Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, of *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. This conference owes its existence to the growing appreciation on the part of Professor Moore and other western scholars of 'the great philosophical wisdom', which Asia has 'to offer to the total perspective of philosophy';* to their belief that provincialism is inexcusable and dangerous in the modern world; and to the generous financial support of one hundred Hawaiian citizens and institutions, both oriental and Caucasian, who were deeply interested in this effort to increase international understanding.

As the status of the individual has, in one way or another, presented problems to most cultures, 'The World and the Individual in East and West' (that is, 'the status of the individual in reality, thought, and culture in East and West') was chosen as

the topic for study by the conference. And, as officially stated, the threefold purpose of the conference was to promote: (1) 'mutual understanding between the peoples of Asia and the peoples of the West'; (2) 'the development of global or total perspective in philosophy'; and (3) 'greater enlightenment on the many-sided problem of the status of the individual in East and West', with possible 'theoretical advance and practical improvement in this area'. It was hoped in particular that the careful investigation of all aspects of this subject might contribute to the removal of 'a formidable barrier to mutual understanding and respect' between eastern and western cultures, a barrier which has its origin in the belief, 'widespread and serious, on both sides', 'that in the East (the entire East) there is no respect or dignity or even autonomy for the individual, who is lost, sometimes said to be annihilated, in the Absolute, in Nothingness, in the family, in the State, or in social tradition, whereas in the West, on the other hand, the individual is everything and the group, no matter what it is, is of relative insignificance'. 'We hear of Western democracy and "Oriental despotism".' The conference members studied this important topic in general and with specific reference, for one week each, to the areas of: (1) Metaphysics, (2) Methodology, (3) Religion, (4) Ethics, (5) Social Thought and Practices, and (6) Legal and Political Thought and Institutions. This work was guided by a panel of approximately forty distinguished scholars who were specialists in these particular areas. Each week one panel member from China,

* This and all following quotations are from official conference papers.

one from India, one from Japan, and one from the West presented a paper setting forth the viewpoints and attitudes of his group with regard to the area of the week. Then, in order that genuine comprehension might be achieved, there followed a discussion period of about an hour and a half, at which time, first, the forty panel members and, then, the sixty general members of the conference were given the opportunity to question the author of the paper about ambiguous and unclear passages. This question and answer period was continued the following afternoon at a two-hour 'coffee break', when any difficulties which had not been satisfactorily resolved the night before could be met. In this way, the status of the individual in the East and the West was thoroughly studied in all basic aspects before the close of the six-week conference period.

The membership of the conference included scholars from many eastern and western countries such as India, Japan, China (Hong Kong and Taiwan), Ceylon, Nepal, France, Germany, Switzerland, England, Brazil, and the United States. The five honorary members of the conference were: Professor William Ernest Hocking, Emeritus, Yale University; Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, President of India; Professor Gregg M. Sinclair, Emeritus, former President of the University of Hawaii; and Professor D. T. Suzuki, Emeritus, Otani University. Other outstanding scholars present were: Professor John E. Smith, Chairman, Department of Philosophy, Yale University; Professor Edward W. Strong, Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley, California; Professor Raymond Polin, the Sorbonne; Professor Constantin Regamey, Lausanne University; and Professor John N. Findlay, University of London. India was ably represented by six highly qualified panelists, the foremost of whom was Pro-

fessor Tara Chand, of the Indian School of International Studies, member of the Indian Parliament, former Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University, Secretary and Educational Adviser to the Government of India from 1948 to 1951, and Indian Ambassador to Iran from 1951 to 1956. The other Indian panel members were: Professor Kalidas Bhattacharyya, Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Visva-Bharati University; Professor Surama Dasgupta, of Lucknow University, widow of the eminent philosopher Dr. Surendranath Dasgupta; Professor T. R. V. Murti, of Banaras Hindu University, author of a fine study on *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*; Professor P. T. Raju, of the College of Wooster, author of *An Introduction to Comparative Philosophy*, of *The Idealistic Thought of India*, and, with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, of *The Concept of Man, a Study in Comparative Philosophy*; and Professor S. K. Saksena, of the University of Hawaii, formerly of Lucknow University. Although Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was unable to attend the conference because of responsibilities in India, he kindly found time to send a message congratulating the conference members for their effort to remove a basic cause of war by means of international understanding.

Highlights of the conference were lectures and papers by Professor D. T. Suzuki, the world authority on Zen Buddhism, Professor William Ernest Hocking, 'dean of American philosophers', and Professor Tara Chand. Professor Suzuki, who attended the conference in spite of the fact that he is ninety-three years old, told the enthralled crowd which assembled to hear him speak that, since ultimate truth cannot be comprehended intellectually, philosophers are not necessarily wise men. He suggested that only the person who has known the real Self can discuss philosophy and know what he is talking about; and he admonished his

audience to make every effort to realize this Self, for 'there can be no joy in the universe' for one who is restricted to the empirical ego. And Professor William Ernest Hocking, in his stimulating paper, which was read in his absence by his son, Professor Richard Hocking, observed that while the West emphasized the importance of objective knowledge, the East sought subjective knowledge, that is, the immediate experience of the Divine. He regretted the western tendency to look askance at the aspirants for spiritual realization, the mystics, and concluded with the impressive statement that 'we have a lot to learn from the East'.

Professor Tara Chand's paper on 'The Individual in the Legal and Political Thought and Institutions of India', which was applauded as one of the most thorough and informative papers of the entire conference, reiterated in modern context some of the ideas set forth by Swami Vivekananda more than sixty years ago. Like the great Swami, Professor Tara Chand was sad to observe that India's neglect of the external universe had prevented her from making the scientific progress necessary to relieve the Indian people from flood, famine, and disease. He welcomed the advance of technology in India, but observed with some misgivings 'a new social system ... which is gradually supplanting the old and a new individual ... who is emerging in succession to the traditional one'. 'In the new world ... (the new individual) finds his temporal and natural potentialities released from old bonds. Material and worldly interests besiege his mind to the progressive exclusion of traditional interests, which appear remote, unreal, and mystical. ... The *direct* intuitive vision of reality which gave him certainty, stability and finality, is receding and becoming dim, and the *second-hand* indirect knowledge based upon the

senses and subject to change both in its formal and empirical content is invading and possessing his intellect. ...' However, Professor Tara Chand joined with Swami Vivekananda in hoping that India's legitimate concern for her material well-being will not cause her to forget her spiritual heritage. 'But ... the past will not be wiped out so easily. The values cherished through the ages are too precious to be denied, especially now that the world—even the Christian world—is beginning to recognize their relevance to man's life and destiny.' During the question and answer period immediately following the reading of this inspiring paper, Professor Tara Chand explained how Gandhi developed the ancient virtues and then utilized the strength and spiritual freedom this gave him for the service of mankind and how technology may help the modern Indian achieve the freedom from want and misery he needs for the realization of his highest potentiality. In his public lecture, Professor Tara Chand also discussed the ways in which leaders of modern India like Ram Mohan Roy, Sri Ramakrishna, Tagore, and Gandhi drew on their country's cultural tradition and revitalized it. 'Ramakrishna ... saw in every man the image of God and, therefore, advocated "not mercy, but service, service, for man must be regarded as God". In communion with living, loving, suffering humanity he found the highest form of self-fulfilment.' At the close of his remarkable lecture, the audience rose spontaneously to give Professor Tara Chand a standing ovation in appreciation of his integrity, spiritual insight, and aesthetic sensitivity.

In his metaphysical survey of 'The Status of the Individual', Professor Bhattacharyya remarked that India has numerous philosophical systems, both heterodox and orthodox, and then concluded that 'the Cārvāka system apart ... if there is any-

thing common to the different Indian views of the individual, it is: (1) that every individual has a spiritual side; (2) that his spiritual side is, from the valuational point of view, more essential than his material side; (3) that its autonomy has to be fully realized; and (4) that this realization is possible through progressive detachment (*vairāgya*) from the less essential sides of our being'. Professor Bhattacharyya also demonstrated the falseness of the notion superficially held by some westerners 'that the Indian doctrine of *karma* is a direct denial of freedom of individuals'. *Karma*, he explained, cannot determine the individual's fate completely, for by performing spiritual actions, which are not determined by *kārmic* law, the individual can rise above the chain of *kārmic* cause and effect, thus preventing it from becoming a vicious cycle. Professor Bhattacharyya refuted 'the common charge against Advaita that it has left no scope for morality and religion' with the statement that 'inaction is only for those who have attained liberation'. 'Until ... liberation is attained, every man is called on to perform moral and spiritual action, and it is clearly said in Advaita that performance of such actions is a necessary prerequisite for earning the right (*adhikāra*) to inaction'. Professor Dasgupta centred her entire paper entitled 'The Individual in Indian Ethics' around the basic importance of right action in India's spiritual philosophy. 'Traditionally Hindu thinkers ... drew up a practical scheme of social life and its obligations, keeping in view the final end to be achieved. ... The Hindu systems ... all agreed that knowledge of the self was the highest good, and a moral life was essential for spiritual enlightenment.' And in his excellent paper on 'The World and the Individual in Indian Religious Thought', Professor Murti made it clear that identity

with an Absolute which is 'the original and inexhaustible source of being and power' cannot mean annihilation. Nothing would be lost but a great deal would be gained by the expansion of the empirical consciousness into the blissful consciousness of the divine source of all life.

Professor Saksena's paper on 'The Individual in Social Thought and Practice in India' cited historical facts to refute the superficial assumption 'by some observers that the Hindu social set-up is itself anti-individualistic, that in Indian social thought and structure there is too much authoritarianism, that not all men are regarded as individuals having equal rights in themselves, and that the right of underprivileged persons to improve their individual social status is denied them'. Tracing India's history from ancient to modern times, Professor Saksena proved that although 'such anti-individualistic practices have existed at times in India, the whole spirit of Indian social thought and structure originating from the most ancient times of the Vedas up to the present time has accorded due regard to individuals as individuals, and all efforts of social theorists have been directed in India, not only toward the betterment of the individual, but also toward the opportunity of every individual ultimately and finally to attain his social destination'. Professor Saksena explained that the modern Indian government's agricultural and land reforms, which were initiated 'for the betterment of the people as a whole', were primarily intended to increase 'individual opportunity', 'individual wealth', and 'individualistic economic justice', and pointed out the significant fact that 'the heroes in the Indian social mind are all individuals—sages and saints—and not schools or "isms" or ideologies'. 'The Indian mind traditionally does not bother about ideologies or "isms" as such. ... Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, the Buddha,

hundreds of medieval saints, and such reformers in recent times as Tagore, Gandhi, Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Aurobindo Ghosh, and Nehru are all prized as individuals.'

In his discussion of Indian legal and political thought, Professor Tara Chand described the family system in ancient India to illustrate the point that Indian political and social theory is not 'concerned with the question whether society exists for the individual or the individual for society . . . , (since) both are oriented towards the same end—the realization of the great objects of human endeavour'. In ancient India, he explained, all family property was held in common, and only the oldest male member of the family had the right to dispose of all or part of it to meet the needs of the various members of the group. Under this system, the individual was 'relieved . . . from any anxiety regarding his livelihood. The family dispensed with the need for orphanages, poor houses, old age pensions, and life insurance. And while, in contemporary India, 'the family, caste, village look after his creature needs and comforts', 'the individual alone and by himself traverses the path which leads to true freedom'. 'Neither the ties of the family nor the restrictions of caste, nor the regulations of village and state can obstruct him in following this path.'

The descriptions by Chinese, Japanese, and Indian panelists of harmony and security in the closely knit family groups of their respective countries provoked thoughtful comment from some western conference members. In all of these Asiatic cultures, the family is, ideally, held together by love, helpfulness, and esteem. The older members of the family exercise their greater authority with affectionate concern for the welfare of the younger members, who respond with love and respect. Specific duties which he has to

perform give the individual a real sense of belonging to the group. The younger member of the family, who is protected by the wisdom and authority of his elders and who feels needed and loved by the entire family, has a basic feeling of security, which he might not have in a country where family ties are looser. Conference members from both the East and the West expressed concern at the progressive dissolution of family ties in industrial areas and the attendant increases in juvenile delinquency, the divorce rate, and the number of mental cases. On the other hand, it was brought out that the relative success of the closely integrated oriental family is indicated by the statistically proven fact that Chinese communities in the United States ordinarily have much less juvenile delinquency than neighbouring Caucasian communities.

The idea of 'oriental despotism' vanished like a pale, unsubstantial ghost when confronted with the facts of history. In the words of Professor Tara Chand, 'the description "oriental despotism" does not apply to India'. 'The individual is hardly a citizen, for he is primarily a member of a hierarchy of associations—socially of a family, caste, *samai*, politically of village, economically of subcaste and guild.' Professor Tara Chand also pointed out the fact that the Indian 'rajās' were never the autocratic potentates the West has sometimes taken them to be; being privileged neither to administer justice nor to make laws, they functioned only in a protective capacity.

By the end of the conference meetings, it had become evident that, during the history of mankind, the individual has only very rarely been completely robbed of his human rights, although most countries have disregarded the rights of at least some individuals to some extent over a limited

period of time. Thus, in spite of her emphasis on human liberty, the United States has had slavery and a negro problem to cope with. Even the authors of her famous Declaration of Independence were slave owners. And Europe has had an Inquisition, autocratic monarchs, and Nazi and Fascist regimes, which have robbed individuals of their basic rights and in many cases of life itself. Now, all over the West and in industrialized areas of the East, machines and assembly line production deprive the individual of the right to

develop his native capacities to the fullest extent. He feels that he is in danger of becoming a mere number. However, in spite of the fact that the individual may be 'submerged' to some extent in western industry or in the oriental family, the heartening fact remains that rarely, if ever, has he been completely lost in or mistreated by any family, state, other institution, or major philosophical system for any length of time in any of the eastern or western countries represented at the conference.

THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ AND THE UPANIṢADS

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The influence of the Upaniṣads on the succeeding systems of Indian philosophy and on almost every piece of literature is profound. Even the non-orthodox schools like Lokāyata cite the Śrutis when it suits their purpose. To support their materialistic doctrine, they quote the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. 7), where it is said that the mind is made up of food, the *prāṇa* of water, and the speech of heat. (*Vide* S. Lakshminarasimha Sastri: 'Advaita and Bhakti', *Kalyana Kalpataru*, Vol. XIII, p. 400) Thus, the germs of all the later philosophical systems are clearly traceable in the Upaniṣads. To quote Professor Ranade: 'Just like a mountain, which from its various sides gives birth to rivers which run in different directions, similarly the Upaniṣads constitute that lofty eminence of philosophy which from its various sides gives birth to rivulets of thought, which as they progress onwards towards the sea of life gather strength by the inflow of innumerable tributaries of speculation, which intermittently join these rivulets, so as to

make a huge expanse of waters at the place where they meet the ocean of life.' (*Upaniṣadic Philosophy*, p. 179)

So also the influence of the Upaniṣads on the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is undeniable. In fact, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is a masterly exposition of the quintessence of the Upaniṣadic teaching and philosophic thoughts, and in many places, it serves as a commentary to the Upaniṣadic passages. Hence the *Bhagavad-Gītā* has been accepted for centuries to have equal authority with the Upaniṣads and the *Brahma-Sūtra*. The three together form the triple canon of authority (*prasthānatrayī*), on which the different preceptors of Vedānta base their doctrines, expounding them differently to suit their principles.

By its traditional designation also, the *Gītā* is called an Upaniṣad, as it derives its main inspiration from that remarkable group of scriptures, namely, the Upaniṣads. (*Vide* Colophon of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*) A popular verse from the *Vaiṣṇavīya Tantra-sāra* makes out that the *Bhagavad-Gītā*

restates the central teachings of the Upaniṣads. (B. G. Tilak: *Gītārahasya*, p. 3; S. Radhakrishnan: *The Bhagavadgita*, Introductory Essay, p. 13) There, the Upaniṣads are compared to the cows, Kṛṣṇa to the milkman, Arjuna to the calf, wise men to the drinkers, and the nectar-like *Gītā* to the excellent milk. Though the *Bhagavad-Gītā* reproduces the Upaniṣadic ideas, it gives them in an easily assimilable form.

THE ULTIMATE REALITY

The central theme of the Upaniṣads is to search for the ultimate Reality, which is beyond all the secondary causes, and which stands by itself as the uncaused Cause. This uncaused Cause, which is differently called as Brahman and Ātman in the Upaniṣads, is not to be found in any particular place or being, but all the things and beings, whichever move on the earth, is covered by the Lord. (*Īśa Upaniṣad*, 2) Just as the waves form part of the ocean, but not the ocean of the waves, so also this universe has no existence apart from Brahman, the substratum of all. (*Saptatīstotra*, 3) The Lord that is referred to in the *Īśa Upaniṣad* does not represent the personal God, so well known in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the later literature. Here it refers to the indwelling soul of all, the self of all beings, and as such, the ruler of all beings. In the long descriptive passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III. vii. 3-23), it is explained how Brahman dwells in each and every thing manifested on this earth and is within it, but is not known by those manifestations, which are controlled by It from within. Thus the immanent and all-pervasive nature of Brahman is stressed in the Upaniṣads. All the beings, all the gods, all the worlds, all the organs and all the individual souls are fixed in this self. (ibid., II. v. 15) His immanent nature is explained in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XVIII.

61) too, by saying that the Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing them to turn round by His power as if they were mounted on a machine. The all-pervasive nature of the Lord, the Supreme, is brought out in a long descriptive passage, where it is said that he is the taste in the waters, the light in the moon and the sun, the syllable *Om* in all the Vedas, the sound in the ether, manhood in men, pure fragrance in the earth, brightness in the fire, and the life in all existences. (ibid., VII. 8-9)

This supreme Truth is indescribable, beyond words and thoughts, and even beyond apprehension. (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II. iii. 12; also, *Kena Upaniṣad*, I. 3) It is that ultimate Reality from which our speech turns back along with the mind, being unable to comprehend its fulness. (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II. ix. 1) Hence it is described to be the ear of the ear, mind of the mind, etc. That is to say, it is the source of their capacity to act. The various sense organs cannot act unless they are all vitalized by that Self. (*Ke. U.*, I. 2) Thus the Self is the highest entity that exists in every manifested being in this world.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the emphasis is on the personal aspect of the Lord, namely Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But, in many places, Lord Kṛṣṇa is identified with Brahman, the supreme Spirit (Uttama Puruṣa), and is thus considered to be the highest entity. The Upaniṣadic passage merely says that everything in this world is covered by the Lord. (*I. U.*, 1) The *Bhagavad-Gītā* (VII. 7) says, as if expounding this passage, that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the highest entity and that all the manifestations are strung in Him like a row of gems upon a thread. Thus, the Lord is the connecting link of all the different individual beings in the world; without Him there will be no perfect order, as without a string the gems will get scattered all over and they can form

into a beautiful necklace only when strung together by the thread. The intimate relationship between the world of beings and the supreme Lord is further explained in another passage, where it is said that all the beings dwell in Him and by Him all is pervaded. (ibid., VIII. 22) Thus, Lord Kṛṣṇa is considered to be the origin and end of the universe. (ibid., VII. 6, XVIII. 46) But still the relationship between the universe and the Lord is not so easy to comprehend or explain, and hence we find such apparently contradictory passages as that all the beings are in Him but not He in them. (ibid., IX. 4) The very next śloka explains that the beings are not in Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself describes this as His unique divine power.

Actually, the above-quoted passages are not contradictory. The first śloka explains the lower aspect of the Supreme, where It manifests as the personal Lord. This personal Lord engages in the act of creation, and the beings are his creations. He thus stands as their cause, and they are his effects. Therefore, they are said to be in Him. He is at the same time considered not to be in them, because, as the Supreme, he has no relationship whatsoever. The next śloka, where it is said that the beings are not in Him, explains the supreme Being, who is attributeless and stands apart from all attributes. He transcends them all. He is above any entity and quality, and thus does not possess anything. In the former case, the relationship between the Lord and the beings is that of the cause and the effect. In the latter one, he is beyond any relationship whatsoever. (Vide Śaṅkara's commentary on the Gītā, IX. 4-5) It is due to His yogic power that both aspects of the Supreme are thus revealed at the same time. The connexion between the beings and the Supreme is compared here to the one existing between the air and the ether. (B. G. IX. 6)

Though Brahman, without any beginning, is indescribable and beyond attributes and definition, an attempt is made to describe It as having hands and feet, eyes, heads, mouths, and ears everywhere and as embracing everything in the universe, in order to emphasize the fact that It is the highest and above all the known and conceivable entities. (ibid., XIII. 13)

The statement that Brahman is beyond description is often found in the Upaniṣads, which therefore frequently give negative accounts of It. For example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II. iii. 6) characterizes Brahman as 'neti, neti' (not this, not this), and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (III. viii. 8) gives a long description of It in negative terms. Accounts of similar kind are found in the other Upaniṣads too. (Vide *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I. i. 6; *Ke. U.*, I. 3; *I. U.*, 8) Similar statements are found in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* also, though not so frequently. It is said in the *Gītā* (II. 25) that It is unmanifest, unthinkable, and unchanging, and in *Gītā* (XIII. 12) to be neither existent nor non-existent.

Sometimes, contradictory predicates are attributed to the Supreme, indicating thereby the twofold nature of the Supreme as transcendent (*parā*) and immanent (*aparā*), both outside and inside the world. It is thus said in the Upaniṣads that It is farther away and yet It is near at hand in this body. (*Mu. U.*, III. i. 7) 'It moves and It does not move; It is inside all and outside everybody.' (*I. U.*, 5) Further, it is said that It is subtler than the subtlest and greater than the great. (*Ka. U.*, I. ii. 20) The *Bhagavad-Gītā* also resorts to such statements while describing Brahman. It is within all beings and without all; immovable and yet moving; so far and yet so near. (B. G. XIII. 15) This Brahman is conceived of as dwelling in the secret place of the heart. (*Mu. U.*, II. ii. 9; II. i. 10; II. ii. 6) Echoing the same idea,

the *Gītā* (XIII. 17) also states that the heart is the dwelling place of Brahman.

How can this Brahman, which dwells in the heart of each and every being, be realized? Therefore, though attributeless, It is described to be the light of all lights and as beyond darkness. (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, III. 8) This Brahman is compared to the light without any smoke. (*Ka. U.*, II. i. 13) Thus Brahman, being formless, is seen as a volume of light, which is thus called as the light of all lights. (*Mu. U.*, II. ii. 9; *Br. U.*, IV. iv. 16) This light is so bright that neither the sun nor the moon and the stars shine in this light. In fact, all these shine only because of Its light. (*Mu. U.*, II. ii. 10; *Ka. U.*, II. ii. 15) The same idea is found reflected in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XIII. 17) also. The splendour, though incomparable, is compared here to the light of thousand suns, if they were all to shoot forth in the sky all at once. (*ibid.*, XI. 12) Thus it is said that neither the sun, nor the moon, nor fire, is capable of illuminating It, and that the light in the sun, in the moon, and in the fire, all belong to It only. (*ibid.*, XV. 6, 12)

TYĀGA OR RENUNCIATION

Though, according to the Upaniṣads, the highest goal or ideal of a man is the realization or becoming one with the Absolute, it also speaks of the other subsidiary goals, which finally lead one to the highest goal. Thus, the Upaniṣads ask one to live and protect oneself through detachment or through renunciation, and commands one not to covet anybody's wealth. (*I. U.*, 1) This Upaniṣadic passage, however, does not explain what kind of renunciation is referred to here. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* provides the necessary explanation. What is renunciation? Abandonment of the fruits of all actions is called *tyāga* or renunciation. (*B. G.*, XVIII. 2) The

next question arises: What are the actions that should be adhered to? For the *Īśa Upaniṣad* (2) says: 'One should wish to live for hundred years by doing action. This is the only way by which the actions do not adhere to one.' This statement also is explained in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XVIII. 5) by saying that actions for the sacrifice, charity, and austerity must be performed, for they purify the human beings. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (IV. iv. 22) also states more or less the same idea. There it is said that the seekers of Brahman wish to realize It through regular reading of the Vedas, by the sacrifices, by charity and austerity, not leading to death. Such actions, done with a spirit of detachment to their fruits, do not bind one, and hence they are classified as the highest goal of renunciation. (*B. G.*, XVIII. 9) Such actions should be performed abandoning all attachment to the fruit. (*ibid.*, XVIII. 6) The *Bhagavad-Gītā* has realized fully the implication of action and knows that no embodied one is capable of abandoning action completely. It thus holds that only the fruits of the actions are to be abandoned, and not the actions themselves. (*ibid.*, XVIII. 11)

SACRIFICES EXTOLLED

All actions, except those done for the sake of the sacrifice, bind a man, and hence only the latter class of actions is extolled. (*B. G.*, III. 9) Sacrifices are done for the sake of the whole multitude of beings and not for one's own sake, and so they come under the category of selfless action. For a man who does all actions for the sake of the sacrifice, shedding all attachment, all actions get extinguished. (*B. G.*, IV. 23) Extolling the sacrifices, the *Gītā* (III. 13) says that those who partake of the residue of the sacrifice will be relieved from all kinds of sins, while those who cook for their own sake become sinners. People living on

the residue of the sacrifices attain Brahman. (*B. G.*, IV. 31) This idea reminds us of the passage in the Vedas, where it is said that he who does not nourish the guests and eats alone eats but sin. (*R̥g-Veda*, X. cxvii. 6) A similar idea is found in the *Manusmṛti* (III. 8) also. There it is said: 'He eats but sin who cooks for himself. The food that remains after the sacrifice has been offered is ordained to be the food of the good.' The *Manusmṛti* (III. 185) calls the residue of the sacrifice as *amṛta*. So, according to the *Gītā*, *yajña* or the sacrifice is the action done without attachment to its fruits in a detached spirit. Because such actions lead to the highest goal, the *Gītā* (IV. 33), basing upon the Śruti text, enjoins such duty to be done, since all actions culminate in wisdom. Work is accessory to the acquisition of the knowledge. So it is said that a man is not freed from action just because he does not undertake any action, nor does he attain the goal by mere renunciation of action. (*B. G.*, III. 4) The right of man is only to the performance of his duty and not to its result. Neither should he remain without doing any work. (*ibid.*, II. 47) The *Gītā* thus advocates detachment from desires and not cessation from work.

The way to perform such disinterested actions is also clearly defined in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The actions are to be performed without attachment, steadfast in *yoga*. The *Gītā* further explains the term *yoga*. *Yoga*, it says, is evenmindness, a state of equilibrium in success and in failure. (*ibid.*, II. 48) The *yogin* who has cleansed himself, who has mastery over his mind, who has controlled his senses, and who has become one with the Ātman of all the beings, remains unaffected, though he acts. (*ibid.*, V. 7) Such a person escapes the fruits of good or bad deeds. Hence *yoga* is also defined as skill in action. (*ibid.*, II. 50) Such an action leads one to the highest goal.

(*ibid.*, III. 19) Even the enlightened people should continue to perform their action, but unattached, for the welfare of humanity. (*ibid.*, III. 25) In order to emphasize its teaching, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (III. 20) also gives example of such persons who have attained the Highest through action alone.

The person, who is steadfast in *yoga* looks at all the beings with equanimity. The *Īśa Upaniṣad* (6) says that a man who sees all the beings in the very self and the self in all beings feels no hatred. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* also states that a person steadfast in *yoga* has such an outlook. (*B. G.*, VI. 29; also *Manusmṛti*, II. 9; *Śve. U.*, VI. 12) He does not find any difference among a learned Brāhmaṇa endowed with humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater. (*B. G.*, V. 18) The person of knowledge, who has thus realized one's unity with all creations, will be able to see all the beings without exception in himself and consequently in the Lord. (*ibid.*, IV. 35) The person who possesses such an outlook becomes the favourite of the Lord. (*ibid.*, VI. 30)

THE WORLD, THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL, AND THE SUPREME

In this world of manifestation, the mutable and the immutable always go together. These two aspects are explained in different ways in the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā*. Thus, the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (III. i. 1) speaks of the two birds that are ever associated and have the same appellations, clinging to the same tree. Of them, one eats the tasteful fruits of that tree, while the other just looks on without eating. Here the bird that enjoys the tasty fruit represents the individual soul with its limited knowledge, enjoying the fruit consisting of happiness and misery brought about by action. Thus, it becomes entangled in the mundane life. The other represents the

Supreme, who is pure, eternal, wise, and free by nature, and does not eat the fruit. He remains undisturbed, the eternal witness of the enjoyer and the enjoyed. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (I. 10) says that he is the director of both the enjoyer and the enjoyed. It says that God rules over the perishable matter and the individual souls, being Himself imperishable and immortal. All these three—the Supreme, the individual soul, and the enjoyed, namely, the world—are manifestations of Brahman. When this fact is realized, the self becomes infinite, universal, and free from agentship. One is the conscious subject, the other is the unconscious object; one is the master and the other dependent; but both are unborn. God, who brings about the relation of the enjoyed and the enjoyer, is also unborn. (ibid., I. 9, 12) Thus we find that the Upaniṣads speak of the three entities directly or indirectly. They are the world, the individual soul, and the Lord or Brahman, the Supreme. The same idea is more clearly stated in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* speaks of the two persons in the world, the perishable and the imperishable. Explaining these terms, it says that all these existences are represented by the perishable, while the unchanging behind them stands for the imperishable. (B. G., XV. 16) It speaks of another supreme Puruṣa, called as the supreme Spirit, who enters the three worlds and sustains them, as the imperishable Lord. (ibid.,

XV. 17) The imperishable referred to in the first instance is the individual soul, and the other one refers to the Lord, who is the witness of the enjoyer and the enjoyed. But the *Gītā* does not speak of the quality-less Absolute here, but of the supreme God, who is the indwelling spirit of all. But this supreme Puruṣa referred to here is none else than the Absolute, who surpasses the perishable and the imperishable, and is celebrated as the supreme person in the world and in the Veda. (ibid., XV. 18)

The Upaniṣads are the highest science, teaching about the highest Truth and the way to Its realization. Since this Supreme is beyond sense-perception, It cannot be realized by any of the sense organs, or by reason, but by intense introspective analysis, by diving deep into oneself, into the innermost Self, and asserting about it (*anubhava*). (Ka. U., II. iii. 12) This innermost Self cannot be known by much learning, nor by scholarship, nor by sharp intelligence, nor by strong memory. It can be known only by that person to whom It reveals Its own real nature. (ibid., I. ii. 23)

Thus we find that though the *Bhagavad-Gītā* speaks of the personal Lord, it retains the Upaniṣadic tone in its central teaching of the supreme Truth and ways of realization. As such, a few verses in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* just reproduce the ideas found in the Upaniṣads in a different tone, while some stand as an exposition of the Upaniṣadic ideas.

The true nature of things is to be known *personally*, through the eye of clear illumination, and not through a sage : what the moon exactly is, is to be known with one's own eyes ; can others make him know it ?

ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE STUDY OF SANSKRIT IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

SRIMATI BANI RAY

The nineteenth century was the most formative period in the history of India. During this period, the dark clouds which were hovering on the fate of India in the eighteenth century passed away, and a new India was born. It was the period of transition from the medieval to the modern. It was, as truly remarked by Sir J. N. Sarkar, 'a renaissance wider, deeper, and more revolutionary than that of Europe after the fall of Constantinople'. One of the contributions of this renaissance was the upliftment of women and 'this had been furthered by significant changes in the outlook and education of women'. (K. K. Datto : *Dawn of Renascent India*, Ch. V, p. 73)

'Cultured womanhood in India is not a gift of modern India. We have brilliant tradition of women education in the annals of our country.' (ibid., p. 73) The writer of the article on the 'Native Female Education' in *The Calcutta Review* of 1855 justly remarked that the 'practice of close seclusion and of non-education are an innovation upon the proper Hindu system'. (*The Calcutta Review*, July-December 1855, p. 64) In fact, the Indians realized the importance of women's education from very early days. So education of women is not exotic in India. It was encouraged in ancient times. The auxiliary committee of the Indian Statutory Commission admitted, in September 1929, that there is nothing 'inherent either in the Hindu or in the Muslim religion which militates against the education of women'. 'In fact, there were in India even in early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical literature.'

In the Vedic age, women enjoyed equal opportunities for education and work. (*Great Women of India*, Calcutta 14, Advaita Ashrama, Introduction, p. xv) The authors of many of the Vedic hymns are women. In the Upaniṣads, we find some women like Maitreyī and Gārgī taking part in religious and philosophical discussion. Yājñavalkya instructs his wife Maitreyī in the highest knowledge of the Ātman. (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III. 6, 8; II. 4; IV. 5)

Names of many great women in India are also mentioned in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the Purāṇas, and Sanskrit classics. Among the Buddhist preachers, there were many women. There are some traditions regarding the existence of great women scholars like Līlāvātī, Khema, and Ubhayabhāratī. Bethune mentioned the name of Līlāvātī in his address delivered on the occasion of the opening of the Calcutta Female School, which was named after him. All these conclusively prove that the culture of the Indian women was very high. This, however, received a severe set-back with the advent of the Muslim rule, and the status of women deteriorated. Some evil customs like the *satī*, the *pardah* system, etc. gradually crept in. But even then, in the darkest period, the women of India maintained their inherent love of learning and culture. Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore, Rani Gouri Parvati Bai of Travancore, Rani Bhavani of Natore, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, and Rani Rashmani of Bengal have, by their piety, patriotism, love of learning, and invaluable services to the cause of the people, earned the love

and admiration of all. 'The women in India were not then universally steeped in the darkness of ignorance. In the distant corners of the cities, there flourished female poets and writers, who can be regarded as the worthy predecessors of their more educated sisters of later generations.' (K. K. Datto : *Dawn of Renascent India*, Ch. V, pp. 73-74)

In the nineteenth century, it was Ram Mohan Roy who first realized the importance of female education in India. He was fully aware of the fact that the men were responsible for keeping the women in the darkness of ignorance. He made a stirring appeal in a Bengali pamphlet issued in 1818 :

'As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity? How, then, can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught, we may consider them as deficient. But as you keep women generally void of education and equipments, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Līlāvati, the wife of the Prince of Karnat and that of Kālidāsa, etc. were celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Śāstras. Moreover, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* of the *Yajur-Veda*, it is clearly stated that Yājñavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyī who was also to follow it and completely attain it.'

But even then there were certain exceptions. Following the words of the scriptures, '*Kanyāpyevam pālanīyā sikṣaṇīyā-tiyatnatah*', some used to impart education to their daughters. Those were the days of *ṭols* and *catuspāthīs*. There were no schools and colleges. Some of them acquired great proficiency in Sanskrit and

surpassed their male rivals in religious discussion and established schools and *catuspāthīs* for imparting education. (Bandyopadhyaya Brajendranath : *Catuspāthār Yuga Biduṣī Baṅga Mahilā*, pp. 5-6)

At Santipur and Nadia, the two important centres of Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal, there flourished, during the early nineteenth century, some women 'known not only to possess a rudimentary knowledge of the vernacular, but some even acted as public preachers'. (Sitanath Tattvabhusan : *Social Reform in Bengal*, p. 38) Many female mendicants among the *vairāginīs* and *sannyāsinīs* had some knowledge of Sanskrit. (ibid.)

William Ward, of the Serampore Mission, wrote in 1818 : 'A few years ago, there lived at Benaras a female philosopher named Hati Vidyalankar. She was born in Bengal, her father and her husband were Kulīn Brāhmins. . . . The husband of Hati left her a widow. Her father also died, and she therefore fell into great distress. In these circumstances, like many others who became disgusted with the world, she went to reside at Benaras. Here she pursued learning afresh, and, after acquiring knowledge of the law books and other Śāstras, she began to instruct others and obtained a number of pupils, so that she was universally known by the name of Hati Vidyalankar (ornamented with learning).' (*History of the Hindus*, Vol. I, p. 399)

In *Great Women of India*, the Holy Mother Centenary Volume, we find the following account of Hati Vidyalankar : 'We have at least one woman who was not only a match for the best Sanskrit pandits of the day but also had a Sanskrit school (*catuspāthī*) of her own, where the usual subjects of Sanskrit learning were taught. Her name was Hati Vidyalankar. She belonged to the old village of Sonai in West Burdwan, which abounded in Brāhmin families of great erudition and piety.'

Nothing is known about the family of Hati. She was probably a widow from her childhood and was a devout Vaiṣṇava. At the fag end of her life she came to Benaras and taught pupils there, but after sometime she gave it up and came to Vrindaban, where she passed the rest of her life in spiritual meditation. At this stage, she wrote some devotional songs in Braja-Bhāṣā. These are among the well-known treasures of Hindi literature.' (pp. 376-7) Hati Vidyalankar died in 1810.

A Bengali newspaper of 1822 states: 'Even today, many educated ladies are to be found in Karnat Maharashtra, Brawida, Telenga, and other places; ... at Benaras, there are many of them who can talk in Sanskrit. ... The two daughters of Saran Siddhanta Bhattacharya of Benaras studied *Mugdabodha Vyākaraṇa* and attained mastery over it.' Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, one Shyama Sundari, wife of a learned Brāhmin of Katalipara in Faridpur district, East Bengal, studied grammar and logic. (Bandhyopadhyaya Brajendranath: *Sambād Patra Sekāler Kathā*, pp. 14-15; also, Sitanath Tattvabhusan: *Social Reform in Bengal*, p. 38) J. C. Bagal also, in his article on 'The History of the Bethune School and College', observes that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there were two prominent Brāhmin women pandits or Sanskrit scholars—Hati Vidyalankar, a Bengali resident in Benaras and Shyama Mohini Devi of Katalipara (Dt. Faridpur)'. (*Bethune College and School Centenary Volume*, p. 2)

Hati Vidyalankar was a Brāhmin by caste. But even among the non-Brāhmins, there were some educated women. The most renowned among them was Rupamanjari, who was popularly known as 'Hatu Vidyalankar'. (*Catuspāthir Yuṅa Viduṣi Baṅga Mahilā*, p. 9)

She was the daughter of one Narayan

Das. He was a Vaiṣṇava. Rupamanjari was born in 1181 or 1182 B.S. (A.D. 1774 or 1775). Her parents called her Hatu, but her actual name was Rupamanjari. There is no doubt that she was a brilliant girl. (ibid., 10)

Rupamanjari's mother died in her childhood. Afterwards Narayan Das played the role of her father as well as mother. She, being the only daughter, occupied the place of Narayan Das's son also. Narayan Das had little to do with his property business; so he took up the task of educating his daughter. Hatu was very intelligent and could learn her lessons quickly. Seeing his daughter intelligent and devoted to studies, the father began to teach her enthusiastically. The neighbours, too, seeing her love for learning, advised Narayan Das to impart to his daughter the knowledge of grammar. (ibid.)

When Hatu was sixteen or seventeen years old, Narayan Das took her to the house of a grammarian and left her there. That grammarian was a Vaiṣṇava by caste, and had a *ṭol* (centre of learning). Rupamanjari, who was then only sixteen years old, used to learn grammar there. This event seems to be an unnatural one. But this was possible because of the fact that she was a Vaiṣṇava. Not only in her teacher's house, but throughout her whole life, she remained unmarried and passed her life in purity and chastity. (ibid.)

When she was staying in her teacher's house, the news of the death of her father came. She went to her own village to perform the last rites of her father. After performing these, she returned to her teacher's house. Having finished her lessons in grammar, she began to study literature under the guidance of Gokulanda Tarkalankar. Having finished the course in literature, she went to Gaya and from there she went to Benaras and lived

there for some time. During her stay in Benaras, she studied various Śāstras from Daṇḍini. Her teacher, too, marking her brilliance, taught her enthusiastically. Thus, she attained perfect knowledge of various kinds of Śāstras and returned to her native land. Thereafter, she became famous as Hatu Vidyānkar.

Hatu died on the 15th of Pauṣ in 1282 B.S. (A.D. 1875). At the darkest period of our history, the story of a brilliant lady like Rupamanjari fills our heart with joy. (ibid., p. 12)

Another learned lady named Dravamayee acquired so much mastery over all the scriptures at the age of fourteen that contemporary learned pandits could not defeat her in discussion. Gouri Sankar Tarka Bagis, editor of *Sambād Bhāskar*, made the following observation on the 19th April 1851 about this Sanskrit scholar :

'Srimati Dravamayee Devi, daughter of a Vyasokta Brāhmin, Srijut Chandicharan Tarkalankar, of village Berabari, adjoining Khankul, Krishnanagar, lost her husband in childhood, and began to read in the *ṭol* of her father, and there she studied seven original volumes and seven commentaries of *San̄kṣiptasāra Vyākaraṇa* and dictionary. Seeing the proficiency of her daughter, Chandicharan Tarkalankar taught her politics and some portion of logic. Then, returning home, Dravamayee read Purāṇas along with almost all the Hindu scriptures. Dravamayee learnt more at the age of fourteen than what the men could not even learn reading twenty years.' (ibid., p. 13)

Her father had become old and could not teach his pupils in his *ṭol*. Dravamayee had been teaching grammar, *kāvya-lāṅkāra* (poetics), etc. to the pupils of her father in the latter's *ṭol*, taking her seat at a short distance from them. Coming to know of her learning, the pandits

of the neighbouring places came to test her superiority. Dravamayee did not take her seat behind the curtain like the wife of Karnat. She used to take her seat and offer seats to the pandits in her front, her head and face remaining unveiled. Though she was a beautiful young lady, she was not afraid of discussing with men, taking her seat before them. She could speak Sanskrit fluently at the time of discussion. The Brāhmin pandits could not speak Sanskrit like her and could not even match her in discussion in Gandiya language. Dravamayee appeared to be either Lakṣmī or Sarasvatī, and her sight evoked respect. In our country, no such lady noted for her chastity and learning had been born since Līlāvati. (ibid., p. 25)

In connexion with female education, Gouri Sankar Bhattacharya wrote on 31st May 1801 : 'At Calcutta, almost all girls of respectable house prosecute studies. . . . Particularly, late Hara Sundari Dasi, the daughter of Late Raja Shib Chandra Roy, son of Late Raj Sukhomay Roy Bahadur, acquired so much proficiency in Sanskrit, Bengali, and Hindi that even the pandits were afraid of her. . . . The daughter of Srijut Ashutosh Dev (Satubabu) acquired proficiency in Gandiya, Urdu, and Braja languages. She acquired so much proficiency in reading and writing Sanskrit script (Devanagari) that the pandits were thankful to her.' (Quoted by Brajendranath Bandhyopadhyaya in his article 'Sāhitya Baṅga Mahilā', *Bethune College and School Centenary Volume*, p. 195)

Nowadays, through various agencies, female education has progressed in modern India. We can now boast of female teachers, doctors, scientists, legislators, and statesmen. But in spite of all these, it must be acknowledged that the education of women is still a problem in some parts of India.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The question of the responsibility for the Crucifixion has recently been revived in the West. Swami Budhananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, answers the question from the Vedāntic point of view in his article on 'The Crucifixion and the Responsibility'.

Mr. Ernest Briggs is an internationally known poet and music critic, and has published seven books of verse. In 1954, he was admitted to The Poetry Society of America, and in 1964, he was twice awarded the Literature Diploma of the Leonardo da Vinci Academy, Rome. He is a keen student of eastern philosophy. In his article published in this number, he explains the significance of 'The Songs of Christmastime'.

Professor (Miss) Leta Jane Lewis, who has kindly sent us for publication 'Some Notes on the Fourth East-West Philosophers' Conference', which met at the University of Hawaii during the six weeks between June 29 and August 8, is an Assistant Professor in Foreign Languages at Fresno State College, Fresno, California, U.S.A. She

was a general member of the Conference, and attended it with the help of a grant-in-aid from the University of Hawaii and a grant from the State of California. She received her Ph.D. from U.C.L.A. and her B.A. and M.A. from the University of Washington in Seattle. We are grateful to her for sending us this paper bringing out some of the more important aspects of this significant event, which she characterizes as a recent attempt at international understanding.

Miss Ratnam Ganesan, Research Fellow in the Department of Sanskrit, University of Delhi, makes a comparative study of 'The Bhagavad-Gītā and the Upaniṣads' in her article, to show that the *Gītā* only reiterates and elucidates the central teachings of the Upaniṣads.

'Role of Women in the Study of Sanskrit in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', by Srimati Bani Ray, is based on the text of a paper read at the International Congress of Orientalists that met in New Delhi last January. Srimati Bani Ray is lecturer in history at the Patna Women's College.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

AN INTRODUCTION TO ŚANKARA'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE. BY PROFESSOR N. K. DEVARAJA. Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawaharnagar, Delhi 6. Pages 225. Price Rs. 12.

Professor Devaraja writes with critical ability and the book under review is a refreshing study. In the preface, the author says: 'An attempt has been made to give a rigorously objective, critical, and comprehensive account of Śaṅkara's theory of knowledge and of metaphysical doctrines related to that

theory, on the basis mainly of the *ācārya's* own writings. The usual practice of mixing up Śaṅkara's views with those of much later Vedāntic writers has been discarded, for I believe that the later writers have, in respect of some vital matters, either misunderstood or misinterpreted Śaṅkara and his immediate disciples. The Vedānta of the creative period, represented by Śaṅkara and his immediate disciples, is characterized by spiritual seriousness and empirical temper, while later Vedānta often

exhibits greater interest not only in doctrinal details but also in dialectical controversies.' This seems to be a bold view. According to the author, many of the followers of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya have not been able to interpret correctly the teachings of their wise master. And the author categorically mentions the name of Śrīharṣa. In the opinion of the author, Śrīharṣa has repeatedly used the word 'anirvacanīya' to denote the 'indefinable', and it is due to this sense that he has also regarded the word as characterless and unknowable. The author has quoted a number of passages from the *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara and the various *Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas* to prove that, according to Śaṅkara, the world has a definite character and is knowable. But, when we read *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khāḍya* of Śrīharṣa, we find that he has differentiated Advaitavāda from the Buddhist philosophy by saying: 'The Buddhists hold that everything is unreal and indefinite, but according to Vedānta, all the world excepting knowledge is indefinable either as existent or as non-existent.' This statement of Śrīharṣa does not seem to suggest that the world is unknowable like the sky-flower. Just as Śaṅkara has said that names and forms cannot be defined either as real or as unreal, in the same manner, Śrīharṣa has also stated that the world cannot be defined either as existent or as non-existent. Śrīharṣa has admitted that the world can be known through perception and inference. It is therefore not correct to say that Śrīharṣa has misinterpreted the teachings of Śaṅkara.

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

SONS OF THE GENEROUS EARTH. BY PHILIP OYLER. Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., London E.C.4. 1963. Pages 190. Price 25 shillings.

It 'is a book about rural France: about a *chateau* and its semiderelict estate some eight miles south of Fountainebleau which Philip undertook to restore'. The centuries-old *chateau* with its vast estate had a history of its own, just as big garden houses in the princely states of India have. It changed hands frequently. Thanks to the clever manoeuvre of agents, who employ the same tactics everywhere, irrespective of creed or colour, buyers would be invariably seduced by platitudes on its antiquity and, of course, by some outer tinkering, only to come to grief in a few months. However, an industrialist ultimately came to own it, and sought the help of Philip Oyler who 'would do the work of architect, builder, farmer, forester, and stock-breeder with direct labour' to restore it. The building had for a long time been left to the care of rats and mosquitoes. The fine farm lands, pasture, orchards—all were invaded by wild growth. What was worse, the few

heads of cattle still left looked more like rhinos than cows. The author was faced with many other formidable problems, too. But he was determined to succeed. Soon the *chateau* and its environs put on a smiling appearance again.

By the time the author, a born Englishman, had finished his task, he had fallen in love not with the posh centres of culture, but with the enchanting surroundings of rural France and her simple village folk. He chose to stay with them sharing their joys and sorrows. Thus grew the friendship between him and these artless creatures uninitiated in the art of telling lies or thieving. Gradually, he made friends in other spheres, too. He extols without reserve the good points in the French people as compared with the common Englishman.

The writer treats his subject like an able artist. He is never monotonous. Replete with fascinating stories from real life, the narration of the story is as absorbing as it is varied. And the string of sparkling humour running through the book makes it all the more readable. The illustrations, twenty-one in number, amply show that the author is a fine photographer. The printing and get-up are excellent, and the publishers deserve our congratulations for bringing out this book with an appeal to a wide circle of readers.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

MUNSHI INDOLOGICAL FELICITATION VOLUME: BHARATIYA VIDYA (VOLS. XX-XXI). Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 7. 1963. Pages 412. Price Rs. 30.

This special number of the *Bharatiya Vidya*, issued as the Munshi Indological Felicitation Volume on the occasion of the completion of seventy-five years by Sri K. M. Munshi, rightly includes a very wide variety of subjects reflecting the large range of Indian culture and learning that has claimed the versatile mind of Sri Munshi.

Special concepts in the Veda, etymologies in the Upaniṣads, Sanskrit drama, epics, darśanas, Purāṇas, linguistics, history, iconography, are some of the topics dealt with in special papers by western and Indian scholars. Professor Durgamohan Bhattacharyya brings out the distinguishing feature of the *Atharva-Veda* as the one scripture of that age that lends dignity to life here on earth. Professor Jhala's note on Bhāsa's *Dūtavākya* is interesting for its analysis of the unusual stage-technique employed in the play, e.g. *ākāśa-bhāṣita* (speaking in vacuo) (p. 70). Sri Bedekar's essay on *Dhyānayoga* in the *Mahābhārata* (XII. 188) drawing parallel with the *jñāna* of early Buddhism and at the same time underlining its distinction from the *yoga* of Patañjali is

scholarly. Sri Bapat's contribution on the remedy of elephantiasis (*s'lipada*) as described in a Pali commentary on *Vinaya* is very interesting. Professor A. K. Majumdar's paper on the Cripps Mission—the motive underlying it and the manner in which it was sabotaged—is revealing and should be read by every student of Indian history. Indian leadership stands vindicated at last—*satyameva jayate*.

A solid volume of research studies that should find a place in every library.

M. P. PANDIT

THE TOTALITARIAN THREAT. BY EVGENE J. ROESCH, Ph.D. Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. 1963. Pages 189. Price \$ 6.

The author of this unusual book tries very hard to show that 'the fruition of modern individualism, as seen in Hobbes and Rousseau, is, in fact, a basic threat to humanity in the guise of totalitarianism'. After a peculiar analysis of Hobbes and Rousseau, the author strangely concludes that all the ills we are heir to in the present-day anti-democratic world are the direct consequences of the social philosophy of liberalism and individualism. It is noteworthy that while the author is, more or less, clear in his mind about totalitarianism, authoritarianism, and dictatorship, which he distinguishes carefully enough (pp. 16-18, pp. 104-6), his understanding of individualism is completely lacking in clarity. Five chapters are devoted to the discussion of individualism (chapter 3 to individualism in general, and chapters 4-7 to individualism in particular). Yet, his statements are all very vague or negative. He fails to distinguish individualism and individuality. He tries to forge a stout enough stick, historically and logically, to beat individualism with. This stick is assembled out of odd lengths taken from medieval philosophy, Hobbes and Rousseau. The short bits are taken from parts of philosophers convenient for the purpose. Such a stick cannot hold together. It falls apart. What really emerges out of the discussion in the book is *not* that the philosophy of individuality is a threat to human liberty and equality, but that the pseudo-philosophies of sociality, societism, socialism, etc. are the greatest dangers to human personality. Let it be said to the credit of the author that he does have, on rare occasions, a glimpse of 'man's end transcending this life'. (p. 151) This vision, however, fades away all too soon. Had it stayed and become an integral element in his perception, the author would have risen to the level of the Vedāntic conception of individuality. What the book needs is the strong leaven of Vedāntic view of Self, human personality and individuality. In his

preface, the author quotes from Jacques Maritain, and this quotation, partly reproduced below, sums up the real value of the book under review:

A writer 'in the wrong is like a beacon on the reefs, which says to seamen, steer clear of me. He enables men ... to identify the errors ... to become clearly aware of them and to struggle against them.'

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

BENGALI

SWAMIJIR PADAPRANTE. BY SWAMI ABJAJANANDA. Ramakrishna Mission Saradapith, Belur Math, Dt. Howrah. 1964. Pages 327. Price Rs. 7.50.

This interesting and valuable work on the lives of thirteen closest co-workers and *sannyāsin* followers of Swami Vivekananda, written by a swami of the Ramakrishna Order, fulfils a longfelt need. As Swami Madhavananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, aptly points out: 'In the post-Ramakrishna-Vivekananda period, the message and work of Sri Ramakrishna was continued by these self-sacrificing saintly followers of the Swami.' The lives and contribution of Swamis Swarupananda, Suddhananda, Virajananda, Vimalananda, Prakashananda, Bodhananda, Atmananda, Sadananda, Kalyanananda, Nischayananda, Achalananda, Subhananda, and Paramananda have been dealt with in the most interesting and instructive manner. Personal anecdotes of great educative value have been recorded. These and the photographs of the thirteen *sannyāsins* discussed add much to the value and usefulness of the book.

Moreover, the book is very helpful in understanding the contemporary society and ideas. In that society, there was a spirit of independence and character, in spite of its political dependence. Unfortunately today, in spite of our political independence, the spirit of independence and character are fast disappearing. We must once again go back to the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda period as exemplified by them and these thirteen *sannyāsins* if we must retain our glorious heritage and progress further.

I heartily recommend the book to scholars and laymen alike.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. BY MANADA SANKAR DAS GUPTA. Das Gupta & Co., 54/3 College Street, Calcutta 12. 1964. Pages 527. Price Rs. 10.

This valuable Bengali work, dedicated to Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his birth centenary, is a complete record of the life of the Swami. It is the result of years of hard work and application, and

discusses in detail the life and mission of the Swami in a lucid manner. The greatest merit of this work is that, notwithstanding the fact that it is written by a devotee, it is free from that hero-worship which usually takes away much of the value of such works. Facts are neatly and impartially presented in their proper perspective, and the book makes very interesting study.

The book is equally helpful to the laymen as for those who want to make a thorough study of the life and mission of Swami Vivekananda. I recommend it to the reading public.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

LAGHU-VĀKYA-VṚTTI OF ŚRĪ ŚANKARĀ-CĀRYA, WITH AN ANONYMOUS COMMENTARY CALLED PUSPANJALI. Sri Ramakrishna Kutir, Almora. 1963. Pages 31. Price 75 P.

If Śrī Śaṅkara's *Vākyavṛtti* is an epitome of his commentary on *Brahma-Sūtra* from the standpoint of Advaita, *Laghu-vākyavṛtti* is a further condensation of the same. It mainly treats with the *mahāvākya* 'Aham Brahmasmi', and incidentally with the other *mahāvākya*, 'Tat tvam asi' also.

The book under review is the English translation of the original work and the commentary, and is the very first of its kind in English garb. It is fittingly brought out in commemoration of the late Swami Jagadanandaji, a great Advaitin of the Ramakrishna Order.

In this work, Śrī Śaṅkara examines Consciousness, differentiates its types *bodhābhāsa* and *śuddhabodha* (relating to *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa samādhis*), and establishes poetically that in its empirical and phenomenal nature, the first is but a reflection of the latter (verses 9, 10). He unequivocally declares (verse 11) that the pure and unmodified Consciousness, Saccidānanda, the Kūṭastha, which shines by Itself, is the implied meaning of the term 'thou' of the *mahāvākya* 'Thou art That'. The translation of the text and the anonymous commentary *Puspāñjali* is simple, clear, and precise. Swami Shraddhananda's Introduction is precious, and enhances the value of the work.

P. SAMA RAO

SANSKRIT-HINDI-ENGLISH

ŚRĪYOGAVĀSIṢṬHASĀRA (THE ESSENCE OF YOGAVĀSIṢṬHA). BY DR. B. L. ATREYA. Darshana

Printers, Moradabad. 1962. Pages 50. Price Re. 1.

The *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* is an Advaitic work of repute of the pre-Śaṅkara era. It is not only a treatise on philosophy, but equally a manual of *sādhana*. The text runs into more than 27,000 verses, and very few are in a position to go through the whole length of it, what with the numerous repetitions that occur every now and then. Dr. Atreya has here summarized the work in the author's own words, and arranged the subject matter under suitable headings (with references). The Sanskrit portion is followed by translations into Hindi and English. There is an informative introduction in Hindi. Altogether a very useful guide-book to the main work.

M. P. PANDIT

MALAYALAM

KUNTĪ. BY SWAMI SIDDHINATHANANDA. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trivandrum 10, Kerala. 1963. Pages 112+xii. Price Re. 1.50 P.

The *Mahābhārata* is verily an encyclopaedia of Indian culture. The cultural achievements of the nation up to the epic period find full expression in this great epic which offers solutions to almost all the problems that beset man in his daily life.

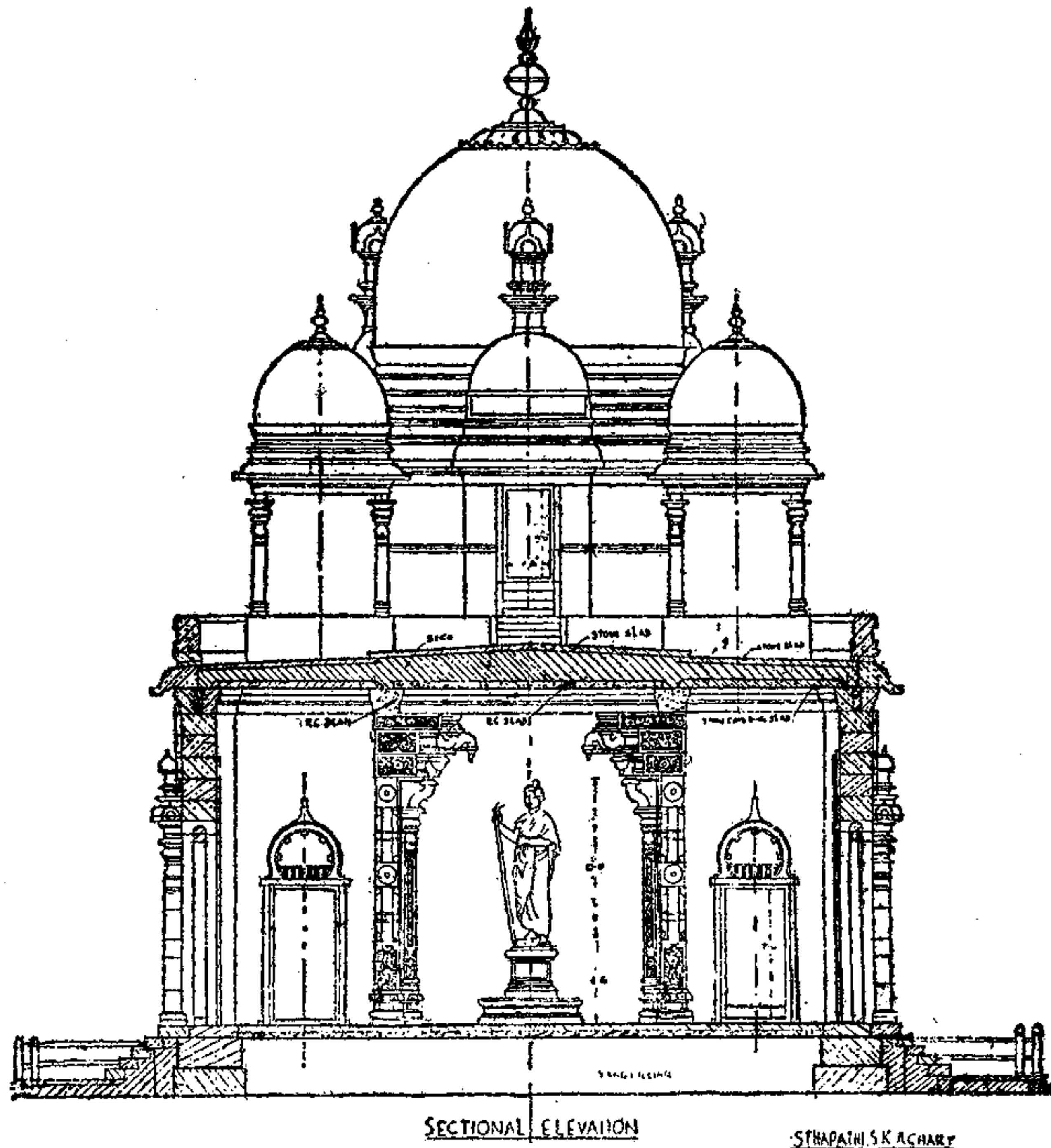
The present brochure is an attempt, the first of its kind, to collect the various incidents of Kuntī's life scattered through the different *parvans* of the *Mahābhārata* and present the same in a connected way.

Swami Siddhinathananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, deserves the gratitude of the Malayalam speaking people for bringing out this beautiful booklet depicting the character of this great woman of India, an exemplar of nobility and self-sacrifice. Her unflinching trust in God in the midst of intense sufferings, her deep and unselfish love for her children, and her emotional integration are expounded in a musical and rhythmic language. No wonder that the Kerala Sahitya Academy adjudged this piece as the best book of the year.

This monograph should be widely read by the women of Kerala so as to inspire them to emulate the great Indian traditions as exemplified in the life of Kuntī. This book is worth being translated into other Indian languages.

SWAMI GABHIRANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS



A SECTIONAL ELEVATION OF THE PROPOSED DESIGN
FOR THE VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL

VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL

We are happy to announce to our readers that a satisfactory agreement has been reached between the Government of Madras and the All India Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration and Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee, regarding the erection of a suitable memorial on the Vivekananda Rock at Kanyakumari. (*Vide* the article on the subject in *Prabuddha Bharata*, September 1963, p. 449) Announcing this at a press conference held at Madras on October 1, 1964, Sri Eknath Ranade, Organizing Secretary, All India Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration and Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee, said (according to a report appearing in the weekly *Organiser*, October 12, 1964): 'The Government of Madras had been good enough to grant permission for the erection of Swamiji's Memorial on the Vivekananda Rock, situated at the confluence of the three seas, about a thousand feet off the Kanyakumari shore. The Memorial plan-drawing submitted by the Committee had been approved by the State Government. This marks the happy ending of the negotiations that had been going on for sometime past with the Government of Madras, regarding the proposed Memorial, especially with regard to its venue and form.'

The Memorial plan that has finally emerged from mutual consultations between the Government and the Committee representatives is in the form of a *mandapam* (prayer hall), with Swamiji's statue housed within it. The *mandapam*, though not very big in size, would be about 95 feet by 38 feet in dimension. With its dome rising up to over 60 feet in the sky, it would present an impressive sight from the shore.

While the front gate of the *mandapam* is to be designed after the entrance of the Ajanta caves, its dome will be fashioned after that of the Ramakrishna Temple, Belur, near Calcutta. Underneath the dome in the *mandapam* hall will be installed a statue of Swamiji in his standing *parivrājaka* posture. The statue would be about 10 feet in height mounted on about a four-foot high pedestal. On the inside walls of the *mandapam*, a few chosen quotations from scriptures as well as from Swamiji's writings are proposed to be inscribed and, in addition, some important incidents in Swamiji's life are contemplated to be depicted in relief.

The plan has been designed by Sri S. Karuppaiah Achary, of Tiruvarur, Madras State, a well-known architect of the traditional school. The whole structure on the rock, which is to be mostly in granite, is estimated to cost about Rs. 25 lakhs.

For the convenience of the people visiting the Rock, there will be a regular ferry service between the Rock and the shore, and for that purpose, jetty platforms, both at the rock and the shore, are shortly to be constructed.

The entire building material, and even the fresh water necessary for construction, will have to be transported to the Rock in boats and floats, or by such other contrivances as may be devised for the purpose.

The Committee has appealed to the nation to donate liberally to the Memorial Fund, to enable it to execute the mighty task undertaken by it. The Committee will soon organize collection drive in the various states, through its units, or through other organizations which had been formed for celebrating Swamiji's centenary and have been associated with the Committee from the very beginning. Direct donations will also be received by the Head Office, 12 Pillaiyar Koil Street, Triplicane, Madras 5, the bank account being in the name of 'Vivekananda Rock Memorial Fund'.

CORRIGENDUM

NOVEMBER 1964 NUMBER

Page 475: Column 1: Line 3 from below: read 'The great virtues a man has are his especially' in place of '...'

THE HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

The 112th birthday of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, falls on Friday the 25 December 1964.