

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



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

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Vol. LXIX

MAY 1964

No. 5



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(16)

Khagmara Kot
Almora
23 May 1893

Dear Sir,

I am delighted to receive your letter in time. It is my earnest desire that your mind may become fit enough to ever remain immersed in the ocean of Lord's bliss. Please do not think that I express this desire only in my letters. I think of you many times and pray for you. The association of a holy person can never be forgotten. In the Sāvitrī-Satyavān story of the *Mahābhārata*, Sāvitrī tells Yama : 'O King, if once we establish contact with a holy person, that contact is treasured up for ever in our memory.' You have truly said that it is impossible to get the joy of deep meditation without the grace of the Lord. But the Lord, in His mercy, has declared in the *Gītā* (X. 10):

*Teṣāṁ satatayuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prītipūrvakam ;
Dadāmi buddhiyogaṁ taṁ yena mamupayānti te—*

'To those, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give that devotion of knowledge by which they attain to Me.'

In my opinion, the word '*satatayukta*', ever devout, used here does not mean merely sitting in meditation day and night, giving up all sense-objects. If we could experience the pure bliss of deep meditation even for once during the fixed time of meditation, its intoxicating effect lasts for the whole day.

Whatever work we may be engaged in, there will be no break in the continuity of that bliss. Maybe its intensity is slightly lessened owing to the mind's being engaged in worldly duties.

You have correctly guessed the reason for the breakdown of the health. The cold wind that blows at Haridwar during winter is unbearable for the plainsmen. So much so that many *sannyāsins* even go away to other places at that time. This time, the cold was severe everywhere, and there was heavy snow-fall in the Himalayas. The old people of the locality say that they have never seen such heavy snow-fall before. Consequently, almost every day we are having rains here. It had stopped for the last three or four days, when it was slightly warm, but yesterday's heavy rains have again brought down the temperature.

I have received the first part of *Kaśīkhaṇḍa Purāṇa* and the photo of Trailanga Swami sent by you. I don't remember why I had asked for it—for whom or when. Anyway, I am glad to receive it. After reading this part, I shall let you know if the other parts are necessary.

I have not received any letter from the Math (Alambazar Math) after my arrival here. Before that I had received one, to which I have replied.

The Englishman (E. T. Sturdy) practises *rāja-yoga*, in the night. I have no intention of going to Calcutta for the present.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(17)

Pataldevi
Almora
13 August 1893

Dear Sir,

It is a long time since I heard from you. I had been to some cool places nearby, which are calm and quiet and solitary, and spent a few days in each of them. For the present, I am staying here, and am keeping all right. I am anxious to know how you are. Please inform. Hope all the others in the family are well. Offer my countless salutations at the feet of Lord Kaśīśvara and Kaśīśvarī. How is the climate at Kasi now? It must be very hot.

I have got the news of Gangadhar Babaji (Swami Akhandananda). He is at Sikhavati in Rajasthan, and is keeping well.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

PS. Do you meet the old Swami now and then?

(18)

Pataldevi
Almora
27 August 1893

Dear Sir,

I am extremely delighted to receive your card. But I am sorry to hear that you are still feeling weak. I will be very happy to hear that you have completely recovered.

Mentally, I am feeling very fine now. Most of the time, I spend in meditation and reflection. Now and then, I do some reading, but that is very little. For, in the course of reading, if I am particularly attracted by any meaningful passage, then, I don't feel like continuing the reading. Dwelling on that particular passage, the mind gradually becomes calm, and I experience great bliss. That state when I had to visit solitary hills and forests for deriving peace of mind has passed. But the pure air of the Himalayas helps maintain good health, and that conduces to good meditation and reflection.

A *sādhu* from Bengal has arrived here ; perhaps, you also know him. He was staying with Yogananda, Sarat (Swami Saradananda), and Abhedananda at Kasi. His name is Dinanath Gupta. . . .

Here is a good news for you. A Sanskrit school has been established here by a great pandit, named Nilakantha Sastri, who is well versed in *vyākaraṇa* and the Vedas, which he studied at Kasi for a number of years. He started the school some four or five months back at the local Badarīnārāyaṇa temple. The coaching is free ; there are about seventy-five students. *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar), *kāvya* (poetry), *kośa* (lexicography), Veda, and *jyotiṣa* (astronomy) are being taught. A pandit has been brought from a long distance to teach *jyotiṣa*. Funds are needed to pay his salary. If you feel it worthy, you may render some help. I am writing to you because you are a great Sanskrit scholar, and a patron of the Hindu religion. The Hindu society very much expects such help from you. Please write for your welfare now and then. I do not know that exact address of Gangadhar Babaji, but you may write to the following address : Swami Akhandananda, c/o Raja of Khetri, Shikhavati.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(19)

Madura
13 February 1894

Dear Sir,

I got your letter after my arrival here. I cannot express the joy I experienced on reading it. It is my heartfelt desire that you ever remain immersed in the bliss of Lord Śiva. Even though the contact with the sense-objects is often a great obstacle in the way, it can never overpower a devotee of the Lord ; rather, after a moment's set-back, you will enjoy the bliss again

doublefold. I assure you, you will never become immersed in the world ; you will float like the lotus. Even though the roots and the branches of the lotus plant remain immersed in water, the flower always floats above the surface of the water. Sometimes, when a strong gust of wind raises high waves in the water, it appears as though the flower is submerged for ever in the water, but it is not actually so. If at all, it is only for a moment.

I have not heard anything about Gangadhar Babaji (Swami Akhandananda) since last December. Then he was staying with a Brāhmin at Malasisvar in Rajputana. Thereafter, there is no news about him. I have not heard anything from Narendra Babaji (Swami Vivekananda), but I have seen some of his letters to his friends at Madras, who are all college professors, or advocates, or doctors. Most of them are Brāhmins, but there are some Kāyasthas also. It is they who collected, through subscriptions, about 4,000 rupees and sent him over to America. He is full of praise for the American people. The Americans are very eager to learn about Hinduism. Their state of mind may rightly be described as that of a *jīñāsū*, the person eager for knowledge.

The people of Madras love him so much that some of them have sold away part of their belongings and kept the money in reserve to be sent over to him in case of need. But the American people, too, are very much devoted to him, and they bear all his expenses. He writes that the daily expense of an average person there comes to about a pound, but they do not mind spending it for his sake, and do so with great joy. People come in large numbers to hear about the Hindu religion. So I learn from his letters. I am sending herewith the *prasāda* of *bilva* leaves from Rameśvara.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(20)

Bangalore
c/o Anantarama Aiyangar
Chickpet
23 February 1894

Dear Sir,

I am glad to receive your letter in time. Leaving Naini Tal, I visited on the way Bareilly, Baduan, Agra, Vrindaban, Jaipur, Abu, Bombay, Madras, Kanchi, and Chidambaram, before arriving here. After a few days' stay here, I visited Rameswaram, and am back here again. On my way back from Rameswaram, I visited also Srirangam. I intend to go to Mysore from here, but I don't think it will be possible immediately. Some gentlemen of Madras, known to Swami Vivekananda and also to me, are pressing me to go over there for the birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna. It appears that they are having some function on the occasion. Sri Manmatha Nath Bhattacharya, M.A., son of Pandit Maheschandra Nyayaratna Mahamahopadhyaya of Calcutta, who is the Deputy Controller of Madras, is one of the sponsors. Most

probably I shall come back this side. There are many places worth seeing here. In these parts, Swami Rāmānujācārya is held in high esteem, and the Viśiṣṭādvaita system, promulgated by him, has a good following. I have not seen Śrī Rāmānuja's original commentary on the *Vyāsa-Sūtra* (*Śrī-Bhāṣya*), but have read the translation by Thibaut. I have a desire to read the original.

For the present, I have no intention of going to Kasi, but cannot say anything definitely now. I shall inform you if I happen to go. I am not suffering in the least for want of funds, and hope will not. Your heart is overflowing with love. I can clearly see. Blessed you are! I pray that you may ever be devoted to Lord Viśveśvara and be immersed in His love.

Vivekananda has not said so in so many words in his letter, but from what I gather, it appears that America is the most cultured of all western nations. If the American people can understand and appreciate the glory and greatness of the Hindu religion, the other western people are bound to follow suit automatically. And should the English people begin to do so, the welfare of India is well assured—there is not the least doubt about it. Many among the English have begun to appreciate the Hindu religion. Especially after the establishment of the Theosophical Society, many books have been translated and the Hindu ideals are spreading fast. After reading these translations, many, particularly in America, are attracted towards the Hindu religion, so much so that some of them have taken to vegetarianism and are engaged in the practice of *yoga*, giving up all worldly enjoyment.

I am not at all annoyed by your long letters, rather I enjoy reading them. Convey my best wishes to your sons and grandsons. I am keeping well, and trust the same of you. I did not come across any *mahātman* (great saint) in the course of my wanderings.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

PS. If you happen to meet the old Swami, please convey my greetings to him.

(21)

Alambazar
13 May 1894

Dear Sir,

It is a long time since I wrote to you. I have arrived here, but I was feeling ashamed to write, as I could not get down at Kasi. Please do not mind it. Hope I will be able to go over there shortly. Please write for your welfare. The thought of Kasi is constantly in my mind, and along with it the thought of you also.

Tomorrow, Dharmapala* will speak on 'Hinduism in America and Swami Vivekananda' at a public meeting, when he will give an eyewitness

* Anagarika Dharmapala, the Buddhist delegate to the Parliament of Religions, held at Chicago in 1893.

account of all that he has seen. All sections of the Hindu society are very eager to listen to the lecture; as a matter of fact, it is they who have arranged the meeting.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

PS. Please write for your welfare soon; I am worried about it.

(22)

Mussouri Hills
Friday, 6 July 1894

Dear Sir,

It is a fortnight since I arrived here. I halted at Kasi for only a day, but could not meet you as it was raining heavily. I was really in great difficulty because of it. I tried many times, but every time it started raining in a heavy downpour. Hope you are keeping well as before. I shall spend the rainy season in Uttar Kashi itself. I am starting from here tomorrow. Uttar Kashi is in the Himalayas, a charming place, particularly in the rainy season. A few *mahātmans* usually spend the rainy season there. My best wishes to all of you.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(23)

Kanpur
4 March 1895

Dear Sir,

I could not write to you for a long time. Hope you are keeping well and also others in the family.

I arrived here some time back. I was in Bithor (Brahmavarta) for some time. An old *sādhu*, Khanderao Baba by name, resides there. I enjoyed his company immensely. He is a Maharashtrian by birth—truly a man of self-realization. He stays on the banks of the Gaṅgā, in a slightly elevated place, outside the city. The very sight of his *āśrama* reminds one of the *āśrama* of an ancient *ṛṣi*. On all sides are the trees, and there are a few cows, whose milk forms his diet. In the year of the Mutiny, his mother passed away. After performing her obsequies, he started doing *tapasyā* in that very place. He did not stir out from there. It is now thirty-eight years since he is doing *tapasyā*, sitting in that one posture. He looks like a *ṛṣi* of olden times—long dishevelled locks of grey matted hair and beard, broad forehead, and half-closed eyes.

He speaks very little, but to me he was very gracious and discussed with me spiritual topics for a long time. He told me: 'Seeing you, words are flowing out of me spontaneously. I do not find people to speak out my heart. Those who come here are busy with the talk of the external world; nobody wants to know, nor speaks about, how to attain the inner reality.' Though a man of realization, he is full of humility. Every time he would converse on the highest spiritual knowledge, he would derive immense joy, but would again and again salute me with folded hands and say: 'Maharaj, please bless me that I may have clear vision.' Added to this, he is an erudite scholar, and occasionally speaks in Sanskrit, which he does fluently. When he would speak, it was as if he was under the spell of something. It is really worth meeting him.

My blessings and love to yourself and your family.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(24)

Alambazar Math
P.O. Baranagore
24 Parganas
13 August 1896

Dear Sir,

I have been thinking of writing to you for a long time, not having heard anything from you. But you were never out of my mind. Hove you forgotten us or what? Previously, if there was slight delay in our writing to you, you would yourself write to us giving us your news and enquiring about us. Hope you are well. I think you are living a solitary life on the banks of the Gaṅgā. How are your sons? Please inform soon about your welfare. We are keeping fairly all right. Hope you are also all right by the grace of Sri Gurudev.

We have got the news of Gangadhar Babaji from Jamnagar. He was not well, but now is all right. Our old Swami who stays at Varanasi writes that he is suffering badly from the prick of a thorn in his foot. He had to be operated upon twice, and is unable to get up. Please enquire how he is, and don't hesitate to give him all the help he needs. Do so immediately after the receipt of this letter. He stays at the back of Coochbehar Kalibari, in the house of Babu Sagarchandra Sur. He is experiencing great difficulty. Please write, after making the necessary enquiries, how he is. I shall be eagerly expecting your reply.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

INTER-RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION

[EDITORIAL]

The one thing that is strongly borne in upon us from past history is the necessity of, not merely religion, but religions. If the past is any guide in the matter, it is quite obvious that any attempt to bring together the people of various faiths under the banner of one religion is doomed to failure. Such attempts in the past have resulted in much bloodshed in the name of religion, but the success achieved is not commensurate with the effort and energy spent. They have, on the other hand, brought in their train untold misery and suffering to the people. The adventurous career of the two great world religions, viz Christianity and Mohammedanism, in this regard should serve as a warning to us. There are not many, we believe, who, in this scientific age, would sincerely consider such a thing as possible. At least, the enlightened section of humanity everywhere is feeling that religious wars and crusades, persecutions and inquisitions, are anachronisms in the present age, though, unfortunately, the world is not entirely free from them. Even the most peaceful attempts in this direction, though successful from the point of view of the numbers added to the fold, are a failure from the point of view of the acceptance of the faith. Actually, they have resulted in the breaking up of the faith into innumerable sects, far removed from the original simple teaching of the founders; so much so that the allegiance of the new converts to the original faith is one of name than of content, more of letter and form than of the spirit and essence, very often not even that.

Aldous Huxley, in his book *Beyond the*

Mexique Bay (1934, pp. 160 and 163), makes an interesting revelation of how the Christian pantheon has received the most surprising additions, and of how the Gospel story is treated to all kinds of the oddest emendations. He writes: 'There are villages, for example, where Judas, instead of being burnt on Easter Saturday, as is the case in the more orthodox cities, is worshipped as a god. At Atitlan, according to S. K. Lothrop, it is currently believed that St. John and the Virgin had a love affair on the night of the crucifixion. To prevent a repetition of this event, their images are locked up in separate cells of the town prison. The next morning, their respective confraternities come, and for a couple of hundred pesos a piece bail them out of captivity. Honour is safe for another year; the saints are taken back to their altars. ... Christianity for these people of the Guatemalan highlands is no more than an equivalent alternative to the aboriginal religions. Their catholicism is just an affair of magic, fetishism, and sociable activity.' (Quoted by S. Radhakrishnan in *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, London, Oxford University Press, 1940, p. 333n.) In the same book, Radhakrishnan quotes Julius E. Lips, as saying: 'The Indians of Guatemala really hardly know whether they are praying to their god Gucumatz or to Jesus Christ.' (*The Savage Hits Back*, 1937, p. 22) It is no longer possible to refer to a single faith by the names Buddhism, or Christianity, or Mohammedanism. When we speak of them, we are in fact referring to a multiplicity of faiths which all go under those names. On the other hand, what do we find in Hinduism itself, which never believed

in or professed such a doctrine as the universality of a single faith, nor went out of its way to get converts to its own faith? The sects into which it has proliferated in the course of its march through the centuries is simply amazing. Doctrines bordering on the lowest form of fetishism to the highest form of absolutism find an honoured place in it.

These facts only show that no single faith or religion can serve as the faith of the whole humanity. There is nothing disparaging in it. That is as can be expected and as it should be. Variation is the law of nature, and no two persons are born equal in every respect. Geography, climate, the social environment in which a person is born and grows up, the economic stability of the family and the society of his birth and association—all these make the variation sharper. Thus, by birth and upbringing, man differs from man—physically, mentally, intellectually, and morally and spiritually. Obviously, one method cannot suit everybody. Even in the matter of secular education, every child requires a different kind of treatment and a different mode of approach from that of his fellow-mates, and even from that of his own at a different stage of his growth. It is truer still in the matter of religious and spiritual education, which is but an extension of the secular education, and where secular education finds its fulfilment. The various religions, with their innumerable sects and subsects, are a psychological necessity to suit the diverse tastes and temperaments. One dish cannot satisfy all the members of the family. Nor is it desirable. This difference and variation is what constitutes life, and a death-like uniformity would be the cessation of all life. So, the more the number of sects, the better it is from the point of view of the aspirant

for higher life. Each man a sect unto himself is not an undesirable thing at all. What is deplorable is sectarianism and the quarrels between the sects.

Man is not, however, simply a bundle of differences and contradictions. Differentiation is not his essential character; it is an adventitious state of his being. Man everywhere exhibits some common characteristics which entitle him to be called man. Love, hatred, jealousy, suspicion, selfishness, the spirit of sacrifice, charity, and holiness are qualities common to man everywhere. In any corner of the globe, he shows a remarkable similarity in the play of his emotions. That is why a Shakespeare or a Goethe is as much appreciated in the East as a Kālidāsa or a Bhavabhūti in the West. Man instinctively sees his own reflection in the works of these great masters, though foreign to him in externals, and feels quite at home in their company. The kinship becomes closer and deeper when we come to the realm of spirituality. Behind the mask of variations shines the unity, the spiritual oneness of mankind, transcending all limitations of time and space, which the saints of all religions have experienced in the depths of their consciousness. This finding of unity in the midst of the variety that is manifest, this search after the common bond of kinship that binds man to man, from the most savage to the highly civilized, is the essence of all religions, whether it is clearly understood as such or not.

If this is the truth, then why all these differences amongst religions? The answer is that the difference is only one of form and not of content. Religious experience is one and the same, but the degree and extent of that experience varies from individual to individual, depending upon his own capacity and preparedness for receiv-

ing it. Also, the understanding of the experience depends upon the mental and intellectual development of the person concerned prior to his having that experience; so also, the mode and language in which that experience is conveyed to others. Truly speaking, that experience itself, as Nārada puts it in his *Bhakti-Sūtra* (51-52), defies exact and precise analysis, definition, or description, like the dumb man's experience of delightful taste, which he is unable to put in words. St. Teresa, when questioned, with regard to a vision she had of Christ, how she did know that it was Christ, replies: 'I did not know how I knew it; but I could not help knowing that He was close beside me . . . there are no words whereby to explain—at least, none for us women, who know so little; learned men can explain it better.' But few are the learned men who have the necessary mental and intellectual equipment to give correct expression to their experience. There is an intrinsic psychological limitation which forbids a correct appraisal of it in words. As soon as the person tries to express it, the experience is coloured by his preconceived notions.

That is the reason why majority prefer to keep silent. There are, however, a few exceptional souls who are impelled, in spite of themselves, to put it in words. It is said of the Christian mystic Madame Guyon that 'when she was composing her works, she would experience a sudden and irresistible inclination to take up her pen, though feeling wholly incapable of literary composition, and not even knowing the subject on which she would be impelled to write'. 'She would then begin to write with extraordinary swiftness; words, elaborate arguments, and appropriate quotations coming to her without reflection.' So, St. Teresa and many others. Even in such cases, it is inevitable that the experience, in the course of its transmission

through language, should become coloured by previous contents of the mind. No wonder, then, that the words of a Jesus or a Ramakrishna are laden with illustrations and imageries taken from out of the surroundings in which they grew up. This also explains the enigmatic language that is resorted to by mystics in describing many of their visions, and the divergence in their opinion regarding the nature of God, soul, and their relation. Take, for example, the case of the three great *ācāryas*, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva, the propounders of the three well-known systems of Vedānta, who are considered as men of the highest realization by their respective followers. If all of them had attained the highest realization, how is it that they give different versions of that realization? Either all of them did not equally have the highest realization or they should have given the same version of it. Such a line of argument would, in our opinion, be not only doing grave injustice to the high spiritual stature of the *ācāryas*, who are held in such esteem by the followers, but also erroneous in its presumptions. Any wrangling over their respective spiritual attainments is futile and not a subject to pass judgement on by men who are nowhere near them in spirituality and renunciation. All of them, brought up in the same tradition, agree on fundamentals of spiritual life. With regard to the nature of the actual spiritual experience in its highest reaches, there is a good deal of difference between them. This does not justify our jumping to the conclusion that they did not have the highest religious experience. Only when it came to a question of the logical formulation of the experience, they could do so within the bounds of their intellectual comprehension, and conceive of it within the limitations imposed by the latter. That is to say, the actual experience and its comprehen-

sion by the human mind and intellect are two different things, and the question of the higher or the lower status of the religious experience falls within the range of the intellect, and has no relevance with regard to the Reality as it is in itself. That is how the Hindu seer could say with calm assurance :

*Iti nānāprasaṅkhyānam
tattvānām ṛṣibhiḥ kṛtam ;
Sarvaṁ nyāyāṁ yuktimatvād-
viduṣāṁ kimaśobhanam—*

‘Thus the sages have made various enumerations of the categories. All of these, being reasonable, are apposite. *What, indeed, is inappropriate for the learned?*’

The *Bhāgavata*, from which the above lines are quoted (XI. xxii. 25), explains them when it says a few chapters earlier (XI. xiv. 6-9) :

*Bahvyasteṣāṁ prakṛtayo
rajaśattvatamobhavaḥ ;*

*Yābhirbhūtāni bhidyante
bhūtānām matayastathā ;
Yathāprakṛti sarveṣāṁ
citrā vācaḥ sravanti hi.*

*Evam prakṛtivaicitryād-
bhidyante matayo nṛṇām ;
Pāramparyeṇa keṣāñcit
pākhaṇḍamatayo'pare.*

*Manmāyāmohitadhīyaḥ
puruṣāḥ puruṣarṣabha ;
Sreyo vadantyanekāntam
yathākarma yathāruci—*

‘Various are the natures of beings, the outcome of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, by which they, as well as their minds, are differentiated. And according to their natures, their interpretation (of the Vedas) is various.

‘Thus, owing to the difference of natures, people differ in their ideas; some differ

owing to instructions handed down to them through a succession of teachers, and others even go against the Vedas.

‘O best of men, people, deluded by My *Māyā*, describe various things as means to the highest good, according to their occupation and taste.’

In the case of such divine-ordained teachers, who feel themselves commissioned to take up the work of teaching and conveying their experiences to others logically and systematically and do so with the full consciousness of what they are impelled to do, unlike Madame Guyon earlier quoted, the difference in the approach is often occasioned by the particular individuals to whom they are addressing themselves and also by the historical and social circumstances at the time of their preaching, which they could not have totally ignored.

Thus, fanaticism, dogmatism, and exclusive claims of religion for superiority are all out of place in the domain of the Spirit. The different religions are the different facets of the one eternal religion, which is the realization of the Divine within and without, call it Brahman, Ātman, God, Absolute, Allah, or whatever else. They are all one from the level of this transcendental experience, though as verbal expressions of that experience or Reality and as methods leading to that experience, they may be different. But the difference in the expressions of religion and the religious practices is not an absolute one; for even there, very often, we find striking correspondence in the utterances of the mystics of different religions and in the methods they themselves adopted or prescribed for others to follow. The different forms and ways in which God is worshipped or thought of by the votaries of different religions, and in which He is said to have manifested Himself to them, are the

different aspects of the same Reality, experienced by them in the various stages of their progress towards perfection. It is the same Christ who said 'Our Father which art in heaven' and 'I and my Father are one'. The two statements do not contradict each other; on the other hand, they supplement each other. They are said in two sets of circumstances, and express the Truth in its two aspects. We, each one of us, approach Reality with our own cups, and it takes the shape of the cup we carry with us. The cup is filled to the measure we empty it of its previous contents. The more we empty ourselves of our selfishness, the more that Reality fills up our heart; the more we cleanse it of the fleshly attachments and attractions, the more the effulgent light of the divine Reality is reflected in it. This revelation of God is an eternal, continuing process, and not one that has reached its limit with the revelation to a single individual, at a particular point of time.

This idea is again and again hammered into us by the scriptures of Hinduism. From the time of the *R̥g-Veda* (X. cxiv. 5), which declared '*Suparṇam viprāḥ kavayo vocobhiḥ ekam santam bahudhā kalpayanti*—The wise sages conceive of the one divine Reality in many ways and describe it variously', down to our own times, it is the same voice that is rung into our ears by all the seers. The *Śukla Yajur-Veda* (XXXII. 1) says :

*Tadevāgniḥ tadādityaḥ
tadvāyuh tadu candramāḥ ;
Tadeva śukram tad Brahma
tā āpaḥ saḥ prajāpatiḥ—*

'It is the same pure Brahman, which is the Absolute, that is manifesting itself as the Fire, the Sun, the Moon, the planets, the Water, and the God Prajāpati.'

In a similar vein, the *Bhāgavata* (I. ii. 11) says :

*Vadanti tattattvavidāḥ
tattvam yajñānamadvayam ;
Brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavāniti śabdyate—*

'The knowers of Truth declare It as the knowledge of Reality, which is non-dual and is addressed by different names such as Brahman (the Absolute), Paramātman (the supreme Spirit or Oversoul), and Bhagavān (the Lord).'

In the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan*, III. clxxxi. 22), Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna :

*Tasmin hi pūjyamāne vai
devadeve Maheśvare ;
Sampūjito bhavet Pārtha
devo Nārāyaṇo prabhuḥ—*

'If Śiva, the God of gods, is worshipped, by that very act, O Pārtha, the worship of the divine Lord Nārāyaṇa also is done.'

Some texts condemn to eternal damnation those who make distinctions between the different forms of worship, and promise hell-fire as the recompense for such sacrilegious act. As for example, the *Padma Purāna*, which says :

*Matpriyaḥ Śaṅkaradveṣī
madveṣī Śaṅkarapriyaḥ ;
Tāvubhau narakam yātaḥ
yāvaccandrādivākarau—*

'The person who is devoted to Me, but hates Śaṅkara, as also the person who hates Me, but is devoted to Śaṅkara, both of them will suffer in hell as long as the sun and moon continue their rounds in the heavens.'

He who exalts his own religion and favourite Godhead at the expense of other religions and gods is actually decrying his own religion also with it unconsciously, as the *Vāyu Purāna* (LXVI. 114) points out; for the very arguments that are directed against the other religions may equally well be applied to his own. The text referred to says :

*Ekam nindati yasteṣām
sarvāneva sa nindati;
Ekam praśamsamānastu
sarvāneva praśamsati—*

‘He who derides one amongst them (viz Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Brahmā) derides all; he who praises one praises all.’

The root of the matter is: the nearer we approach the Reality, the clearer becomes our perception of it and broader our perspective. All differences cease when we are in the centre of Its illumination. All religions are true and all stages of realization are true to the extent they help us to approach this centre. And all persons, to whatever denomination they may belong, are fellow-travellers in this pilgrimage of all pilgrimages.

Therefore, outright condemnation and forceful rejection of any form of worship, the most grotesque and idolatrous, is repugnant to the true spirit of religion and is reprehensible. That is not the way to civilize and raise humanity to a higher level of existence. It does no good to the worshipper to be told to give up all on a sudden what is practically, at his stage of advance, the only means of perfecting himself. It only breeds contempt and bitterness in his mind, and stunts his further spiritual progress. One cannot jump out of his own nature and become overnight a changed man, at somebody else’s bidding. Spiritual growth is a slow process from within, and the person is to be slowly prepared for receiving higher ideas of religion. The movement here is gradual and continuous, though there may be ups and downs. Sudden jumps and flights, where there have been, have done incalculable harm to the person concerned, and to innumerable others when the person is a zealot and bursts upon society with his newly found revelation, imperfectly understood.

Here we may take a lesson from Hinduism, whose view is very well expressed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (III. 26):

*Na buddhibhedam janayed-
ajñānām karmasaṅginām;
Joṣayet sarvakarmāṇi
vidvān yuktaḥ samācāran—*

‘No wise man should cause unsettlement in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to action; he should make them do all actions, himself fulfilling them with devotion.’

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the form or object of worship one is devoted to, but it is often so with the worshipper. A person with utter lack of understanding may characterize the image of Kālī as tāmasic, grossly crude and obnoxious. The grotesque image, which in the eyes of the primitive tribes is a blood-thirsty goddess demanding and delighting in human sacrifice, becomes in the artistic hands of a Rāmaprasāda or Ramakrishna the embodiment of divine perfection at its best. What is needed, therefore, is not the change of form but a real transformation of the worshipper. A Hindu need not become a Christian or a Mohammedan, nor vice versa. What we should strive for is the change of heart, a natural metamorphosis of the personality. That is why the Hindu pantheon has a place for every type of god and goddess—human, sub-human, animal, half human and half animal. Only the worshipper is gradually led to see in them higher and higher aspects of Reality, by gradual evolution internally, until he is able to see the highest transcendental Absolute in them.

A good deal of hatred, bitterness, and suffering among the followers of different religions can be avoided if we approach religion bearing this truth in mind. Much

of the misunderstanding, dissension, and quarrel among the religionists is because they fail to recognize the distinction between religion as an experience to be had and a way of life leading to transformation of character and religion as an institution embodying that experience in a concrete form for aiding humanity to live it tangibly. The former is the essential part of all religions; the latter is non-essential, but necessary at a particular stage in the development of the individual. The institution comprises, either singly or together, the church or the body of priests in whom is vested religious authority; the scriptures in which the original teachings of the founder or founders, together with the subsequent additions and explanations of the inheritors of the teachings, are recorded; the rituals and other concrete accessories of worship to help the unregenerate souls to put those teachings into practice; and philosophy and theology, which give them the needed logical sanction. Every religious movement starts as a protest against the iniquities of the prevailing religious practices of a time, but, in course of time, becomes the victim of those very iniquities. The new movement finds the necessity of an institution to protect the purity of its doctrines and preserve them for the future generations, but the institution has a tendency to become the breeding ground of meaningless doctrines and dogmas, which as time passes are held to be inviolable. This leads to dogmatism and a smothering up of the purity of the original teachings which it was meant to

protect, with the result that the non-essentials become inextricably mixed up with the essentials and become the source of quarrels between various religions.

Thus, the necessity arises for every religion to re-examine its doctrines and practices from time to time, separate the chaff from the grain, and set its house in order, which, in turn, create a better climate and atmosphere for comparing notes with other religions in a fruitful way. This alone can bring about lasting understanding and co-operation among the different religions. We have to do it, there is no other way. For, for good or bad, the religions of the world have been brought face to face with each other, and they cannot flee away and hide themselves in the cosy corners of their own shells. Nor can they afford to fight and destroy each other. They have to find ways and means to come together. This is the challenge of the times thrown to all the religions of the world. Hinduism, fortunately, believes, and believes firmly, in the necessity of the re-evaluation of her cherished values from time to time, so that the essential is sifted from the non-essential, the eternal from the non-eternal, the real from the unreal, and the righteous from the unrighteous; she not only believes but holds that the Divine itself is a helper in this process, which belief, however, has not proved false in her case. Could that be of some help to other religions, in joining hands with Hinduism in ushering in an era of peace and harmony? We invite them to do so for the welfare of humanity.

‘O judgement! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason.’

Julius Caesar, III. ii.

DOES INDIA WANT AN AUSTERE CIVILIZATION AND A SPIRITUAL SYSTEM?—1

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

'In this blessed land, the foundation, the backbone, the life-centre is religion and religion alone. You sacrificed everything for it. Your grandfathers underwent everything boldly, even death itself, but preserved their religion. This is the motherland of philosophy, of spirituality, and of ethics, of sweetness, of gentleness, and love. We must try to keep our historically acquired character as a people. Religion and religion alone is the life of India, and when that goes India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reform, in spite of Kubera's wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children.'

This and other extracts within quotation-marks in this article are from the lectures of Swami Vivekananda summarized in his own words. Indians were not living a hunting and gathering life for the past many millenniums. They built a civilization not only firm and vigorous, but also unfolding in time and expanding in space. The temples in India were not constructed with slave labour as the pyramids of Egypt. They arose out of the spirit of worship burning bright in the hearts of the people. Labour of generations of *sthapatis* and *śilpis* has gone into their design and execution, and the whole nation was behind their dedicated service. So these temples rose again and again when they were destroyed by ruthless invaders. Every art in India developed as an element of worship, and thus entered into the core of personal life. The vitality of the Hindu religion has been proved by the continuity of social and religious traditions meticulously preserved till recently. These are fast dis-

appearing under the impact of external influences. Characteristic India may cease to be, if this goes on without check.

INDIA TODAY: SWAMIJI'S WARNING

'For good or for evil, our vitality is concentrated in religion. You cannot change it. You cannot destroy it and put in its place another. For good or for evil, the religious ideal has been flowing into India for thousands of years; for good or for evil the Indian atmosphere has been filled with ideas of religion for shining scores of centuries; for good or for evil we have been born and brought up in the very midst of these ideals of religion till it has entered into our very blood, and tingled with every drop in our veins, and has become one with our constitution, become the very vitality of our lives. Can you give such religion up without the rousing of the same energy in reaction, without filling the channel which that mighty river has cut out of itself in the course of thousands of years? You can only work under the law of least resistance in India. This is the line of life, this is the line of growth, and this is the line of well-being in India—to follow the track of religion. Here in India, it is religion that forms the very core of the national heart. Religion and spirituality have been the one condition upon which it lived and thrived, and has got to live in future. Should love survive or hatred, should enjoyment survive or the spirit, in the struggle of life? Our solution is renunciation, give up, fearlessness, and love, these are the fittest to survive. Giving up the senses makes a nation survive.'

Let us examine these rousing words uttered sixty-seven years ago in the context of nineteen sixties. There are some who assert that the influence of western thought in general, and science and technology in particular, have, during this century, changed only the outward aspect of India and not her inner spiritual aspect. At present, this opinion can be accepted only with great reservations. Swamiji could have said in the last century with much justification that 'religion is the one and only occupation in India' and that 'if Manu came back today he would not have been bewildered and would not find himself in a foreign land'. The character and the basis of the mores that sustained the economic system which Swamiji witnessed have undergone great change. Materialistic interpretation of history has become more and more acceptable to an increasing number of educated young men. Political programmes of the State are at present directly or indirectly affected by the materialistic view of life. Those who lived in the last century could not have pictured the changing technique of production as we know it today. Our social relations are gradually altered by the changing economic relationship. Those who direct the affairs of the State are now mostly convinced that a non-stop progress of science and technology alone will ensure the material prosperity and strength of India. Our education is already science-oriented and is going to be the mother of a utilitarian technical order very soon. Discovery and application of scientific knowledge has doubled in every twenty years after Swamiji's time, and, through inter-fertilization, science has grown to dimensions unimaginable in the last century and now science has come to world prominence.

Caught up in the strong wind of political necessity and natural inclination, we as a nation are sailing off the familiar coasts.

We had, perhaps, only three universities seventy years ago; today, they are above fifty in number, many of them accelerating the tempo of fundamental and applied researches. Technical institutions and professional associations promoting national industry and commerce are springing up in all the states. Our cities are developing into vast industrial complexes absorbing thousands of people from the villages. During the quarter ending 1963, southern states of India registered seventy-three companies with an authorized capital of 1,641.09 lakhs of rupees, and the eastern states ninety-three companies with an authorized capital of 19.98 crores of rupees. There were only thirty commercial institutions in Mysore in 1940; their number has grown to one hundred and eighty this year. Similar developments in other regions and states are also registered. The strength of the scientists' pool maintained by the Scientific and Industrial Research Council was only hundred in 1958, but at present the number is two thousand. Jet aircrafts are more on schedule flights between our metropolitan cities, and all the major air routes are operated by turbo-prop or turbo-jet aircrafts. Indian airlines are the first in the East to fly jet aircrafts on internal lines. Our plan outlay and the non-plan outlay show figures that would have been staggering seventy years ago. Our defence development is gathering momentum, and it is forecasted that we will be spending a hundred crores of rupees in 1964 in armaments production. From warships and electronic computers to pens and pins, innumerable things will be produced in India before long, with increasing percentage of indigenous contents. Small scale industries are mushrooming everywhere. India has exploited her national resources in a measure unknown before. Scientifically advanced nations of the West are now willing to sell the know-how of science and

technology and we are glad and eager to purchase them at all possible terms. Over 14,000 students are currently registered in foreign universities officially, and they are a potential asset for the future development of India. Our scientists are not intellectually behind their counterpart in other countries, whether they apply themselves to atomic research or engineering technology. In film industry, India stands third in the world. These details cover only a segment of our recent achievements; but that is enough to show that our economic, cultural, and social environment is fast getting changed. All this would have gladdened the heart of Swami Vivekananda, in so far as these contribute to remove our poverty by increasing national wealth and by giving employment opportunities and some enjoyment to the poor fellow. But he might have submitted a dissenting note:

'Let the poor fellow enjoy himself a little, and then he will raise himself up and renunciation will come to him itself. Perhaps, in this line, we can be taught something by the western people, but we must be very cautious in learning these things. I am sorry to say that most of the examples one meets nowadays of men who imbibed the western ideas are more or less failure. We have, perhaps, to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organization, in the ability to handle powers, in bringing the best results out of the smallest causes. Some sort of materialism, toned down to our own requirements, would be a blessing to many of our brothers who are not yet ripe for the highest truths. This, perhaps, to a certain extent we may learn from the West. But if anyone preaches in India the ideal of eating and drinking and making merry, if anyone wants to apotheosize the material world into God, that man is a liar; he has no place in this holy land, the Indian mind does not want to listen to

him. Ay, in spite of the sparkle and glitter of western civilization, in spite of its polish and marvellous manifestation of power, I tell them to their face that it is all in vain. Spirituality alone lives; hold on to that. I do not mean to say that other things are not necessary. I do not mean to say that political or social improvements are not necessary; but what I mean is this, and I want you to bear it in mind, that they are secondary here, and that religion alone is primary. The rest are the variations in the national life-music. If you succeed in the attempt to throw off your religion and take up either politics or society or any other thing as your centre, as the vitality of your national life, the result will be that you will become extinct. To prevent this, you must make all and everything work through the vitality of your religion.'

SPIRITUALITY AS THE BASIS OF ALL REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT

This was not a prophecy of doom, but certainly a sharp warning uttered at the close of the last century. None at that time voiced the demand for national freedom and social reconstruction as thoroughly as Swamiji did. He was a patriot by necessity, and a sage by birth. It is only natural that he stressed the primacy of religion. He definitely laid down that the Mission he started was not only for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge but also for promoting secular knowledge and social amelioration. Swamiji was not a doctrinaire enthusiast, but a seer who considered the implementation of a felt truth a thousand times more important than the mere formulation of it. But he did not want in India a replica of the scientific, technical, economic, commercial society of the West, though he welcomed an intelligent assimilation of science and democracy. It is only in this light that we can understand his pleading for '*some sort of material-*

ism toned down to our own requirements'. He was not tired of speaking about the need of a change of heart brought about by the cultivation of spirituality as the basis of all reform. The same caution which was sounded by Swamiji in respect of learning from the West was repeated by Mahatma Gandhi thirty years after that, through his spoken and written words and personal programmes. National trends indicated in an earlier para do not declare that we are exactly on the trail blazed by the great Swami. This can be clarified further from his own words.

'Our life-blood is spirituality. If it flows clear, if it flows strong and pure and vigorous, everything is right; political, social, and other material defects, even poverty of the land will be cured if that blood is pure. It is when the national body is weak that all sorts of disease germs crowd into the system and produce disease. To remedy it, therefore, we must go to the root of this disease and cleanse the blood of all impurities. Strengthen the man to make the blood pure, the body vigorous, so that it will be able to resist and throw off all external poisons. We have seen that our vigour, our strength, nay, our national life is in our religion. That is the life of our race and that must be strengthened. Renunciation and spirituality are the two great ideas of India, and it is because India clings to these ideas that all her mistakes count for so little. No amount of political or social manipulation of human conditions can cure the evils of life. It is a change of the soul itself for the better, that alone will cure the evils of life. No amount of force, or government, or legislative cruelty will change the conditions of a race, but it is spiritual culture and ethical culture alone that can change wrong racial tendencies for the better. Materialism and its miseries can never be conquered by materialism.'

What are the miseries of materialism that we experience? Can we observe the symptoms of our malady? Can we isolate the viruses crowding into our blood? A quantitative analysis of the data must come from administrative and social research experts. However, press reports, when authentic and uncontradicted, serve as an index to our individual character and social trends. That is the layman's ready reference. Self-admiration and desire for other's admiration and praise will not make us better in any way. We must have the intellectual honesty to see the truth, and corrective remedies will have to be applied silently without denunciation.

POWER AND MISSION OF RELIGION

Here it is necessary to state in brief Swamiji's thesis on the power and mission of religion: God is the reality of the world. He is not the monopoly of this or that sect. Reality is one and one only, call it by any name, God or Spirit or pure Being. It appears as the world when seen through the senses and as the ocean of ideas when mentally perceived. Material unity of the world posited by modern science may be taken as a proof of the oneness of the ultimate Reality. This spiritual oneness of all that exists proves the solidarity of all life. Since all life is one, the entire humanity, past, present, and future, is one. There is only one Self or Spirit which reflects in millions of individual objects and beings, and It appears as many. Whatever makes in us for the feeling of unity is a direct or indirect recognition of the underlying oneness of Reality. This idea of oneness is the basis of morality and universal brotherhood. You love another because that another is your own Self under another mask; and in the same way, he, too, can know that you are his own Self under a different mask. The more a person feels himself in others, the less selfish and im-

moral he will be. The more a person learns to extend the frontiers of his being beyond his perishable limited body, the more he will help others and cease to design injury for them. A person who thus expands cannot be a selfish pleasure-seeker, but a lover of the largest number of people. His love will expand into an ever widening horizon. He renounces the narrow interests for the good of the many, because that is the way to realize the oneness of all in this world. Various modes of worship are necessary to raise man step by step to the realization of this oneness. 'Religions and sects', the Swami said, 'are not the work of hypocrites and wicked people who invented all these to get a little money, as some of our modern men want to think. They were not invented that way at all. They are the outcome of the necessity of the human soul.' They help man to get purity of heart, and as the heart gets purer, the man becomes truthful, harmless, un-deceiving, and unselfish. Then man does not seek special privileges and looks upon the high and the low in the same spirit. He finds happiness in loving and serving others and receiving love and service from others when that gives them benefit. He never uses society as a hunting ground for selfish pleasures. This is possible only through renunciation or giving up of selfishness, which means he becomes God-centred and not self-centred. Swami Vivekananda was a child of Vedānta, and he just echoed the voice of the national religious consciousness of India.

THE MALADY AFFECTING THE NATION

Let us now see how our national blood is affected by contamination. It has been described earlier that scientific materialism is rapidly spreading in India and changing our social behaviour. Our education is becoming lop-sided. Even the study of the humanities does not attract students—even

girl students—for they are enticed away by science and technology, which alone promise economic surplus. Social inequalities are now levelled down by the legislative and the administrative authorities, rather than by a change of heart based on the feeling I and my neighbour are one in Spirit. Cities are becoming our economic focii where pecuniary motives overrule mercy and beneficent spirit. The pre-industrial Indian society of Swamiji's times is now already a semi-industrialized society, and in our metropolitan cities, industrial and commercial influences are engulfing the individual completely. Seventy years ago, youngsters were brought up under parental authority and under strict school discipline. Even when they were employed, they received sympathetic attention from most of the employers who took them as apprentices through some known connection. Today, all authority is cried down and the principle of self-determination is evoked even before observation and collection of data is complete. Since science has come to world predominance, our education pays more attention to purely intellectual training almost with religious zeal, relegating the training of emotions to a secondary place or none. While a technologist understands the principles underlying his work, a technician knows only the working or assembling of the parts. They form the largest number of people in an industrial corpus. These youngsters and the large number of students in colleges, when their emotions are to be steadied and strengthened, receive no attention or help from a sincere spiritual source. They are emptied of their history, destiny, and inward past. They are mostly their own guides, and they have no chances of getting a better emotional satisfaction except through the contaminated recreation media purveyed by commercial agencies. As a mass publicity medium

and source of recreation, cinemas could be used for national awakening and for strengthening the common aspirations for peace, brotherhood, and national integration and inter-national accord. But this laudable ideal is left behind, and commercial success is made the chief aim now. So films which exaggerate sex charms and amorous alliances fill their mind with grossly materialist lust patterns. Stories of crime and cruelty hold the market and affect the mental health of youngsters. Obscene films, indecent acting, and bawdy songs have gained an unprecedented approbation from the unprepared rising generation. Elastic definitions of art based on scientific naturalism have made even censorial control ineffective. Heat of passion blunts conscience, and discipline is bitter to the minds nourished on frivolities. The evils of eve-teasing, for which legislative measures are contemplated, and other juvenile crimes stem from this one source more than any other. The recent World Vegetarian Conference at Bombay revealed the fact that there is an increase of vegetarianism in England reaching to five per cent of the population. But in India, non-vegetarianism is on rapid increase. A Japan news-letter report states that women leaders in that country have proposed a nation-wide campaign against cigarette smoking, which is proved to be a cause of lung cancer by recent medical researches. In India now, at times, even pre-school children are found smoking in corners. All this shows that our tastes are being formed by novel circumstances in quite a different way. Enormous proportion of student indiscipline and even criminal behaviour, frequently reported in the daily papers, can be cured only by giving a higher *direction and purpose to learning and training* and not by calling the police. In a multi-party democracy based on the frequently changing balance of interest,

steady development in one direction may not be easy.

In an interview reported in the *Indian Express* of 29 January 1964, Professor A. L. Basham, of the London University, expressed that 'Western films, literature, and erotic dance and music made the Indian youth hanker after the freedom the European youth enjoyed'. 'This freedom has not made the western youth happier, but the Indian youth seemed to think it did. The modern Indian youth will have it in a generation or two. Will he be happy? The old Indian custom of arranged marriages and segregation of sexes at least produced a stable and contented married life, while "freedom" in the West had disrupted family and left the husband not believing the wife, and the wife not believing the husband, and the children always in fear lest the parents separate. But India could not revert to the old practice, unless harmful western influence through films and literature was rooted out by a Tibetan censorship.' Burma has promulgated a law to control and supervise libraries and museums, as it was found that, since the attainment of political freedom, literature on foreign culture and arts flooded the whole country. Indian tastes are becoming universal, and so pseudo-scientific and neo-artistic publications are ubiquitous. The artificial code of conduct which India is developing naturally calls for sterilization, contraceptives, ceiling of the number of children and the acres of land owned by a person, mental clinics, the psychiatric research, cosmetic surgery, pharmaceutical plants, film industry, and so on, in an increasing measure. Not only the face of India is being changed by modernisms, but the core, too, in many respects. *Swami Vivekananda*, balancing the assets and liabilities of scientific progress, expressed with deep insight: 'When good increases in arithmetical progression,

evil increases in geometrical progression.' in the West, these changes naturally follow. When we gear ourselves to an exactly similar type of technocracy as developed

(To be continued)

ON AESTHETIC AND ETHICAL VALUES—1

DR. S. K. NANDI

Determination of the nature of aesthetic value and of ethical value entails certain problems which do not admit of easy solution. An attempt at discovering the relation between the two will not be of much use if their nature is not determined beforehand. And if one is inclined to accept the line of thinking leading to the conclusion that good was indefinable (Moore), beauty and art were *māyā* (Tagore), the question of relating the two relata could be shelved indefinitely.

THE INDEFINABILITY OF GOOD MOORE'S ANALYSIS

Moore's careful analysis raised two very important questions: (1) whether and in what degree a thing is intrinsically good and bad and (2) whether and in what degree it is capable of adding to or subtracting from the intrinsic value of a whole of which it forms a part, from a third, entirely different question, namely, (3) whether and in what degree a thing is useful and has good effects, or is harmful and has bad effects. (*Ethics*) All these three questions, according to Moore, are very liable to be confused, because in common life, we apply the name 'good' and 'bad' to things of all the three kinds indifferently. When we say that a thing is 'good', we may mean either (1) that it is intrinsically good or (2) that it adds to the value of many intrinsically good wholes or (3) that it is useful or has good effects; and similarly,

when we say that a thing is bad, we may mean any one of the three corresponding things. And such confusion is very liable to lead to mistakes, of which the following are, Moore thinks, the commonest. In the first place, we are apt to assume with regard to things which really are very good indeed in senses (1) or (2) that they are scarcely any good at all, simply because they do not seem to be of much use—that is to say, to lead to further good effects; and similarly, with regard to things which really are very bad in senses (1) or (2), it is very commonly assumed that there cannot be much, if any, harm in them, simply because they do not seem to lead to further bad results. We so often ask of a good thing, 'What use is it?', and conclude that if it is no use, it cannot be any good; or ask of a bad thing, 'What harm does it do?', and conclude that if it does no harm, there cannot be any harm in it. Or again, by a converse mistake, of things which really are very useful, but are not good at all in senses (1) and (2), we commonly assume that they must be good in one or both of these two senses. Or, again, of things which really are very good in senses (1) and (2), it is assumed that because they are good, they cannot possibly do harm. Or, finally, of things which are neither intrinsically good nor useful, it is commonly assumed that they cannot be any good at all, although, in fact, they are very good in sense (2). All these mistakes

are liable to occur, because, in fact, the degree of goodness or badness of a thing in any of these three senses is by no means always in proportion to the degree of its goodness or badness in either of the other two. Moore's careful analysis did not reveal anything but the enigmatic and unanalysable character of 'good and his inevitable conclusion was the indefinability of 'good' itself. (*Principia Ethica*)

THE SĀNKHYA-YOGA VIEW

The traditional philosophical thinking here in India also points to this indefinable character of 'good', as moral considerations did not spring out of any social necessity, but out of ontological necessity. Vedānta considered *Brahma-Vidyā* or knowledge of the Brahman as the highest good. A close analysis of the ethical conception of Sāṅkhya-Yoga shows that its fabric consists of three things :

Firstly, the concept of the good is identical with the metaphysical reality. Emancipation or *apavarga* arises from the discriminating knowledge about Puruṣa or Prakṛti, and has been termed *kalyāṇa* or good, while the opposite of it, namely, the common life, has been termed *pāpa* or that which has to be rejected. (*Sāṅkhya-Sūtra-bhāṣya*) The Yoga has enumerated and discussed in detail the ethical virtues, but they are all confined to the experiential world, and so have no intrinsic value of their own. They are termed 'virtue', because they help the individual to dissociate himself from the experiences and attain ultimate knowledge. They are thus means and not ends in themselves.

Secondly, the ideal of the good as *kaivalya* or liberation, has not been taken as something external, but as a natural culmination of the course of Prakṛti's evolution. The *bhāṣya* on *Sāṅkhya-Sūtra* (I. 12) says that the mental stream flows on in both directions : towards enjoyment as

well as liberation. Prakṛti creates bondage, but at the same time has in itself the secret of freedom. The inherent teleology of the *guṇas* creates world phenomena for the experience of the Puruṣa, and has the tendency to withdraw again within itself, setting him free. Good and bad are the offshoots of the same process.

Thirdly, the ethical goal has been approached and discussed from the point of view of feeling. In connection with the *guṇa* theory, one may contend that feeling has been taken as an independent factor pervading all planes of existence. Both subjective and objective phenomena are said to involve three kinds of feeling : pleasure, pain, and the depressing. Though the three kinds of feelings have been interpreted as corresponding to the three *guṇas* and, as such, are equally fundamental, the Sāṅkhya-Yoga emphasized the painful aspect of things, taking it to be the most dominating factor, and established the desirability of final liberation from this standpoint, namely, world experiences involve a greater amount of sorrow ; freedom from them, therefore, is the desirable, the real, and also the higher goal.

The highest end, therefore, is the absolute cessation of pain. But though avoidance of pain has been taken as the ultimate goal, pain here is not used in the ordinary hedonistic sense, but includes both joys and sorrows of mundane experiences, since these have been taken as sorrowful ; absence of pain means the total extinction of all experience. This ultimate cessation of all experience is not a mere void but is positive to the extent that it is pure consciousness and also tranquil (*śānta*). This *śānti*, or tranquillity, is the highest pleasure, but is not the same as bliss in the Vedānta. The *Yoga-vārttika* defines this *śānti* as ultimate happiness, which is nothing but the absolute cessation of all mental operations. Pleasure as the ulti-

mate end is thus the negation of all experiences, pleasurable and painful. The highest sense of pleasure is, therefore, the negation of pleasure.

THE JAINA ETHICS AND THE VEDIC CONCEPT OF VIRTUE

The Jaina ethics also refuses to accept hedonism, and the point that is emphasized is that the criterion of virtue and vice does not lie in their contribution to pleasure and pain either to one's self or to others, but on the motive or intention involved in it. If the act is accompanied by the intention of doing harm or good, then it is capable of producing merit or demerit, otherwise not. (*Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, see commentary) It is further pointed out by the Jaina thinkers that that which has pure origination, pure effect, and is of pure nature is the cause of merit and happiness and that which is of impure origination, impure effect, and impure nature is the cause of demerit and misery. We may interpret them thus: that which has sprung from good motive is good by nature and produces good result and brings merit and happiness, and reverse is the case in regard to evils. Hence, total value of an action depends on the motive, means, and consequence, and, according as one or two or all of them are good or bad, the value increases or is reduced. Different grades of value are to be attached to an action according to the variant nature of its factors. But greater emphasis is laid on the nature of the motive. The emphasis which the Jaina thinkers lay on pleasure has similarity with the Vedic tenet of thought. The Vedic people seemed to have a simple code of morals. The performance of sacrifices was regarded as the principal virtue which was rewarded by the attainment of heaven. Vedic injunctions, which were imperative, and external mandates were also not categorical, but were mostly

supplemented by eulogies (*arthavāda*) which held out promise of reward. Along with this idea of ritual virtue, there also grew the concept of social virtues and vices, such as truth and falsehood, charity and absence of generosity, and so on. (Dr. S. K. Maitra: *Ethics of the Hindus*) Virtues were eulogized, not for their own sake, as having any intrinsic value of their own, but as means to the attainment of pleasure in this or the other world. So the Vedic concept of virtue has a necessary reference to reincarnation or rebirth. (Dr. S. N. Dasgupta: *Development of Moral Philosophy in India*)

THE CONCEPT OF ANANDA AND RASA IN INDIAN THINKING

The richness of the classical Indian thinking on aesthetics may be favourably compared with that of moral thinking. (K. S. R. Sastri: *The Indian Concept of the Beautiful*) The most vital element in the concept of the Beautiful is the truth taught and reiterated in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and in the Upaniṣads that the core of being is bliss (*ānanda*). The *Gītā* is the essence of the Upaniṣads. Śrī Śaṅkara states that the essence of both of them is eternal purity and wisdom and freedom (*nitya-śuddha-buddha-mukta-svabhāva*). The concept of bliss is worked out in great detail in the Upaniṣads. In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, it is stated that Brahman is *Ānanda* (Bliss) and all things live, move, and have their being in Bliss. It is stated there: The experience of beautiful and enjoyable things is the head of the bliss-aspect of the soul; the enjoyment of beautiful and enjoyable things, its right wing; the expression of beautiful and enjoyable things, its left wing; and the element of bliss is its soul, and the Over-soul is its eternal basis and support. There it has been further pointed out that the prismatic splendour of the joy of the artist is one of

the high levels of bliss and is far higher than mere sense delights, though it is far below the plane of the white light of spiritual bliss. Aesthetic experience has been aptly described as 'a many-coloured episode in eternity'. In Indian aesthetics, the concepts of 'ānanda' and 'rasa' are both aesthetic and spiritual in character. In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, God is called *rasa* (*raso vai saḥ*). He is the supreme delectable sweetness. The word *rasa* refers also to the physical aspect of taste, the aesthetic delight, and the science of alchemy. The nature has three states of being: *sattva* (equipoise), *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (inertia). The soul has three bodies and five sheaths, viz the gross body and the subtle body and the causal body, the first comprising the gross sheath of the physical body and the subtle sheath of energy and the second comprising the mental sheath and the intellectual sheath and the last comprising the sheath of bliss. In art, we find the pure sāt̄tvic state, full of disinterested aesthetic knowledge and delight, and in it we function in the sheath of bliss (*ānandamaya-kośa*). When *rajas* and *tamas* intervene, and they intervene in all ordinary minds, the quality of the pleasure is lessened by the influx of desire, and even that lessened pleasure is chased by pain. But in the truly artistic mind, we find a pure sāt̄tvic content, and hence there is a deep and disinterested delight. Our great aestheticians taught us that in aesthetic *rasa*, as well as in spiritual *rasa*, the clamorous sense-delights are stilled and the bliss-element (*ānandāṁśa*) of the soul is liberated by the breaking down of its barriers (*āvaranabhāṅga*). In aesthetic *rasa*, the bliss of the soul is coloured by the emotional states of love (*rati*) etc., whereas in the spiritual *rasa*, it is pure and complete and infinite. This aspect is well brought out in Jagannātha's *Rasagaṅgādhara*. Thus the aesthet-

ic delight is a reflected bliss (*pratibimbānanda*). Viśvanātha characterizes this bliss as '*Brahmānanda-sahodarah*'. (*Sāhityadarpaṇa*) We may find similar ideas in Dhanañjaya's *Daśarūpaka*; his characterization of aesthetic delight as *ātmānanda-samudbhava* comes close to Viśvanātha's position. Ānandavardhana, in his famous work *Dhvanyāloka*, says that familiar things have a new manifestation of glory in the light of *rasa*, just as in the spring trees put on fresh, fair, and fragrant flowers. In the enjoyment of the beautiful, we find freedom, disinterested delight, perfect harmony and peace, and a setting free of the real nature of the soul owing to its vision of a glimpse of God. Thus, our traditional aesthetic thinking taught us that the bliss of the soul shines as beauty in nature and in art. Beauty is thus the self-expression of bliss in the realm of the senses. It was taken to be one of the imperishable values of life. Infinite beauty and goodness and truth are absolute values, and belong to the supra-temporal, and hence eternal, plane of being. Madhusūdana Sarasvati describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as '*Saundarya-sārasarvasva*' the supreme treasure of quintessential beauty. It has been rightly pointed out that while the Indian aestheticians were quite aware of the importance of rhythm, harmony, proportion, order, symmetry, balance, unity in variety, colour, form, brightness, and grace, they were careful enough to affirm that the most vital elements were intensive *yoga*, *ānanda*, and *rasa*, which in turn implied creativeness, suggestiveness, and spirituality.

KANT'S DOCTRINE OF SYMBOLISM

Let us now turn once again to western philosophy with a reference to Immanuel Kant's concept of aesthetic value vis-à-vis ethical value. The author of the Third critique presents a theory of aesthetic value

which is consistently and undeviatingly formal. A moral quality, grand and fervent, has been sometimes attributed to it. In order to explain the analogy between beauty and morals, Kant resorts to a doctrine of symbolism. All intuitions are either schemata or symbols. The schemata contain direct, the symbols indirect, representations of the concept. A symbol is thus opposed to the discursive, but not to the intuitive. It is a presentation of a concept neither as a sign nor as abstract schemata, but obliquely through the application of the rules 'of the reflection made upon that intuition to a quite different object of which the first is only the symbol'. 'The analogy is in the rules determining the reflections in both cases, that is, in the thing or intuition or idea and in the symbol.' Kant elucidates his point by comparing a monarchical state to a living body, if it is rationally governed, and to a machine (a hand-mill), if it is governed by an arbitrary, absolute, individual will, and by saying that 'between a despotic state and a hand-mill there is, to be sure, no similarity; but there is a similarity in the rules according to which we reflect upon these two things and their causality'. It is in this sense that beauty is a symbol of the good and that the judgement of taste has a reference to the supersensible.

SCHLEGEL'S THEORY OF UGLINESS

The Kantian tradition stimulated a 'move-up', and Schlegel's *Essays on the Study of Greek Poetry* appeared in 1797. In this volume, for the first time in the theory of aesthetic, mention is made of the 'Theory of Ugliness'. Beauty has been defined there as the 'pleasant manifestation of the good' and ugliness as the 'unpleasant manifestation of the bad'. We must suppose that an unpleasant manifestation of the good and a pleasant manifestation

of the bad are taken to be impossible. Things give pleasure, sometimes, because they are beautiful and, sometimes, for other reasons. They are not beautiful simply because they give pleasure, but only in so far as they give aesthetic pleasure. This aesthetic pleasure finds its causative root in the conception of the characteristic or the significant. Thus, the seemingly aesthetic hedonism has been abjured unwittingly in favour of an aesthetic eudæmonism and an approximation to Platonic position has been achieved.

SCHELLING: ART INDEPENDENT OF MORALITY

Solger, Schelling, and other post-Kantians placed beauty in the region of the Idea, inaccessible to common consciousness; they considered artistic thought to be practical and not theoretical. Though practical, it is distinct from the idea of goodness, with which at first sight it would seem to be closely related, because, in the case of goodness, the union of ideal with real, of the simple with the multiple, of the infinite with the finite, is not real and complete but remains ideal, a mere ought-to-be. It is related more closely to religion, which thinks the Idea as the abyss of life where our individual conscience must lose itself in order to become 'essential', while in beauty and art the Idea manifests itself by gathering into itself the world of distinctions between universal and particular and placing itself in their place. Artistic activity is more than theoretical, it is of a practical nature, but realized and perfected; art, therefore, belongs not to a theoretical philosophy but to practical. Critics like Danzel tell us unequivocally that the aesthetic movement from Schelling to Hegel is a revived Baumgartenism on the ground that this movement regarded art as a mediator of philosophical concepts. They cite Ast (*System der Kunst lehre*) as an

instance in point. Ast was a follower of Schelling, and he was moved by the trend of his system to substitute didactic poetry for drama as the highest form of art. The claim of this school of thought overshoots the mark. There is hardly much truth in the affirmation of these critics. These philosophers from Schelling to Hegel are more or less hostile to intellectualistic and moralistic views, frequently entering upon definite and explicit polemic against them. Let us remember what Schelling wrote in point: 'Aesthetic production is in its origin an absolutely free production. . . . This independence on any extraneous purpose constitutes the sanctity and purity of art, enabling it to repel all connexion with mere pleasure, a connexion which is a mark of barbarism, or with utility, which cannot be demanded of art, save at times when the loftiest form of the human spirit is found in utilitarian discoveries. The same reasons forbid an alliance with morality and hold even science at arm's length, although nearest by reason of her disinterestedness.' (*System des transcendentalen Idealismus*, part VI. 2; *In Werke*, § 1, Vol. III)

When Schelling forbids an alliance with morality, Hegel declares the aim of art to be in itself, in presentation of truth in a sensible form; any other aim is altogether extraneous. (*Vorles. ub. d. Asth*, i)

CROCE AND THE PEDAGOGIC THEORY OF ART

Croce, the Adams Leverier of modern philosophy, considered this problem of aesthetic and ethical values, and his considerations merit repetition. He, at the outset, discusses the rigoristic negation and

the pedagogic justification of art. The first, viz the rigoristic, appears several times in the history of ideas. It looks upon art as the inebriation of the senses, and therefore as not only useless but harmful. The other, viz the pedagogic or moralistic-utilitarian, admits art only in so far as it cooperates with the end of morality, in so far as it assists with innocent pleasure the work of him who points the way to the true and the good, in so far as it anoints the edge of the cup of wisdom and morality with sweet honey. We will do well to observe that it would be an error to divide this second view into intellectualistic and moralistic-utilitarian, according as whether we assign to art the end of leading to the true or to what is practically good. The educational task which is imposed upon it, precisely because it is an end which is sought after and advised, is no longer merely a theoretical fact, but a theoretical fact already become the ground for practical action. We describe it (as Croce did) as pedagogism and practicism and not as intellectualism. We would be exact if we do not further subdivide the pedagogic view into pure utilitarian and moralistic-utilitarian, because those who admit only the satisfaction of the individual (the desire of the individual), precisely because they are absolute hedonists, have no motive for seeking an ulterior justification for art. I prefer to restrict myself to observing that in the pedagogic theory of art is to be found another of the reasons why the claim has erroneously been made that the content of art should be chosen with a view to certain practical effects.

(To be continued)

EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF GIFTS IN HINDUISM

SWAMI HARSHANANDA

Gifts and charities occupy a very high place in the Hindu scheme of life. Manu (I. 28) as well as the *Mahābhārata* (*Śānti-parvan*, CCXXXII. 28) say that *dāna* or gifts form the principal aspect of religious life in the age of Kali. The reason given is that gifts and charities liberate the giver from sins. (*Mahābhārata*, *Anuśāsana-parvan*, LIX. 6)

The principle underlying a ritualistic sacrifice and a gift is essentially the same, viz giving up one's ownership over an object willingly and donating it to someone else. In a sacrifice, it is done in fire with respect to a deity, whereas a gift is given to a human being who is in need of it. Hence a gift is also a sacrifice in the broadest sense.

REFERENCES IN THE VEDAS, THE UPANIṢADS, AND THE GĪTĀ

The earliest reference to the concept of gifts is found in the *Ṛg-Veda* (I. cxxv. 6), which says :

Dakṣiṇāvātāmidimāni citrā
dakṣiṇāvātām divi sūryāsah ;
Dakṣiṇāvanto amṛtam bhajante
dakṣiṇāvantaḥ pra tiranta āyuh—

'These various objects of enjoyment belong to those who give *dakṣiṇā* (gifts to Brāhmanas at the termination of a religious rite or sacrifice). The solar worlds in the heavenly regions (belong to them). Those who give *dakṣiṇā* attain immortality and increase their life-span.'

In another place (X. cxvii. 6), the necessity of donating food has been stressed :

Moghamannam vindate apracetāḥ
satyam bravīmi vadha itsa tasya ;

Nāryamanam puṣyati no sakhāyam
kevalāgho bhavati kevalādī—

'The foolish man (who does not share with others) obtains food to no purpose ; I say the truth that it is really his destruction ; he does not offer food to Aryamān (i.e. to the gods) nor to his friend (or guest) ; one who takes food alone (without giving to others) partakes simply of sin.'

This statement seems to form the basis for the later teachings contained in Manu (III. 118) and the *Gītā* (III. 13).

We, thus, see the concept of gifts only in a seed form in the earliest Veda, but in the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā*, we find it in a more developed form. In the Upaniṣads, the word '*dāna*' is clearly mentioned. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (Ch. V) contains the story of Prajāpati's instructions to the gods, the demons, and the human beings. The same sound *da* uttered by Prajāpati was understood by the three groups in three different ways. Human beings understood it to signify *dāna*, since they knew that their chief defect was greed and that they had to counteract it in order to evolve higher.

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (II. xxiii. 1), we find *dāna* classified as a *dharmaskandha*, a division of *dharmā*—*Trayo dharmaskandhā yajño'dhyayanam dānamiti prathamah*. *Dāna* here refers to the charity given outside the sacrificial hall. In the fourth chapter of the same Upaniṣad, we find a eulogy of the gift of food, as also a reference to the donation of a large number of cows, gold ornaments, villages, etc. to the sage Raikva by the king Jānaśruti.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives us a whole philosophy concerning gifts through the few brief

references he makes in the *Gītā*. In *Gītā* (XVI. 1), he classifies charity as *daiṁ-sampat* or a characteristic of a person endowed with divine qualities. In XVII. 20-22, he enunciates three types of gifts, viz *sāttvika*, *rājasika*, and *tāmasika*, and describes them. In the last chapter, he declares *dāna* to be sacred, and exhorts us not to give it up.

IN THE DHARMA ŚĀSTRAS

But it is in the *Dharma Śāstras* that we find a detailed treatment of the subject of gifts. *Dharma Śāstras* comprise of works like *Dharma-sūtras*, Smṛtis of Manu, Yājñavalkya, and others, the epics and the Purāṇas, as also the various works based upon these. The *Anuśāsanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* devotes one complete section to the subject of gifts. Some of the Purāṇas have devoted several chapters to this subject, whereas some authors like Nīlakaṇṭha and Govindānanda have deemed it necessary to write learned treatises on the same.

The manifold material on gifts made available to us by the *Dharma Śāstras* can be grouped under the following convenient headings: (1) Varieties of Gifts; (2) The Six Branches of Gifts; (3) The Method of Giving; (4) Irrevocability of Gifts; (5) Invalid Gifts; (6) Some Special Gifts.

(1) *Varieties of Gifts*: Gifts can be classified as *nitya* (daily), *naimittika* (occasional), *kāmya* (motivated), and *vimala* (pure). Gifts which have to be given every day, like the cooked food to be given after the *vaiśvadeva* sacrifice, come under the first group. Gifts which have to be given on special occasions like eclipses or special penances and festivals come under the second group. Gifts motivated by desire for progeny, health, wealth, etc. come under the third group. Gifts made with devotion to knowers of Brahman in order to please the supreme Lord are the

purest, and hence are called *vimala*. They form the last group.

As already indicated, the *Gītā* (XVII. 20-22) classifies gifts into three groups, viz *sāttvika*, *rājasika*, and *tāmasika*, described as follows: 'Charity given as a matter of duty, without expectation of any return, at the right time and place, and to the right person, is said to be *sāttvika*. Charity which is given either in the hope of receiving a reward or with a view to winning merit, or grudgingly, is declared to be *rājasika*. Charity given at the wrong place and time, and to the undeserving recipient (and that too) with contempt is designated as *tāmasika*.'

Yogī Yājñavalkya eulogizes gifts given without publicity. He says:

Pracchannāni ca dānāni
jñānam ca nirahaṅkṛtam;
Japyāni ca suguptāni
eṣāṁ phalamanantakam—

'The result of the following is limitless: secret gifts, knowledge without pride, and secretly muttering the name of God.'

This reminds us of the statement in the Bible: 'But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret.' (Matthew vi. 3-4)

(2) *The Six Branches of Gifts*: The giver, the recipient, faith, the object given, time, and place—these constitute the six branches of gifts.

The giver is expected to have the following qualifications: capacity and willingness to give, freedom from sins, freedom from incurable diseases and evil habits, and practice of a taintless profession.

The greatest qualification of the recipient is that he should be badly in need. Gifts given to such people as also to destitutes, those excelling in some art or science, the teacher, parents, friends, and those who have helped the giver, will be fruitful. On

the other hand, gifts made to evil persons, thieves and dacoits, hypocrites, gamblers, etc. will not only be fruitless but may even bestow upon the donor a part of their sins. A story told by Sri Ramakrishna brings out this point clearly. The donor of food to an exhausted butcher, who subsequently recovered and killed the cow he had with him, had to partake of a part of the sin of that butcher.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the *Dharma Śāstras* have prohibited gifts of any kind to persons who do not at all practise the duties of a Brāhmaṇa though born in the Brāhmaṇa family.

As regards the gift of food, clothing, and other necessities of life to persons in dire need of the same, no rules apply except that they be given as quickly as possible.

When a donor sees a needy person approaching him for charity, he should put on a kindly smile, receive him properly, and render him whatever help he can ungrudgingly. It is this attitude of mind that has been termed as 'faith' (*śraddhā*) in the above-mentioned list.

Certain rules have been laid down regarding the objects to be given as gifts. The *Mahābhārata* (*Anuśāsanaparvan*, CIX. 7) says that those objects which we like most, which we desire to keep with us, are the fittest to be given away :

*Yadyadiṣṭatamam loke
yaccāpi dayitam grhe ;
Tattadgunavate deyam
tadevākṣayamicchatā.*

What is obviously meant here is that one should be prepared to sacrifice even his dearest object for the sake of others.

Another point that is often stressed is that the object to be donated must not have been acquired through unlawful means. It should have been acquired by one's own labours in accordance with *dharma*, without depriving others of their

rightful share. This clearly shows that, according to the *Dharma Śāstras*, wealth accumulated through unrighteous means is unfit to be donated.

A limit is also set to the quantity that can be given away. The donor is forbidden to give more than he can comfortably give. He will be going against *dharma* if he brings misery and destitution to his family and other dependents by giving away everything. This is a general rule and there may be exceptions, as in the case of persons performing the *sarvajit* sacrifice.

If what the donor offers is against the *svadharma* (i.e., one's own religious duties and customs) of the recipient, he should flatly reject it. For instance, a good Brāhmin should never accept weapons or detestable objects like liquor.

As regards the time suitable for making gifts, the *Dharma Śāstras* hold the following days to be more fruitful than ordinary days : the first day of each *ayana* (i.e. the sun's passage to the north or south), new moon and full moon days, eclipses, day of any sacred festival, days of marriage or *upanayana*, etc.

Like the time of making gifts, the place is also of importance. What is given in a sacred place of pilgrimage or a temple fetches far superior merit than that given in one's own house.

(3) *Method of Giving* : Making gifts is a sacred act. Hence there is a way of doing it, if one is desirous of acquiring the greatest merit out of it. The donor is expected to take bath, don pure white clothes, wear the sacred ring of *kuśa* grass, perform *ācamana*, and pour water into the hands of the donee uttering suitable *mantras* to signify the act of giving.

(4) *Irrevocability of Gifts* : A gift once made by the donor and accepted by the donee is irrevocable. If a person gives word regarding the gift of an object, he

becomes a debtor to that person and the latter may sue him before the king, if the promise is not kept.

(5) *Invalid Gifts*: Gifts made under duress or when a person is not in a proper state of mind are invalid. So also the ones made by children, or doting old people, or those suffering from serious diseases, are invalid for the simple reason that the givers have no control over their minds at the time of giving.

(6) *Some Special Gifts*: The *Dharma Śāstras* have taken great pains to eulogize the gifts of certain objects as very special. Gift of land, of cows, and of gold have always been held far superior to other gifts. Certain gifts like the *tulāpuruṣa* (i.e., weighing a person in silver or gold) are termed as *mahādāna*, and special results are mentioned for them. Gift of land, of building, of religious books, etc. to religious institutions like temples or monasteries, as also arranging for religious discourses at sacred public places are also considered to be capable of conferring high merit upon the donor.

THE WAY SHOWN BY SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

All that the *Dharma Śāstras* have to say on the subject of gifts boils down to this: Donating unobjectional objects which have been earned through rightful means by a good man to a needy person, in accordance with the latter's need and his own capacity to give, with grace and willingness, at the right time and place, and in the right manner, constitutes *dāna*.

But most of these rules laid down by the *Dharma Śāstras* regarding gifts are impracticable in this modern age. The reasons are many. The wealth accumulated in the hands of the rich is, in most cases, acquired by unrighteous means, and not of 'the right type, fit to be donated'. Many of those who receive charity are

found unfit, if the standards of the *Dharma Śāstras* are applied strictly. Even the rules regarding time, place, and procedure are not easy to follow in this busy age. However, most of our people are still devoted to the ancient religious customs, and their zeal for acquiring merit through gifts and charities continues unabated. For such, the way shown by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda is the most suitable, for it is in tune with the changed modern conditions and, at the same time, is completely in consonance with the spirit of the ancient *Dharma Śāstras*.

One day, at Dakshineswar, while explaining the tenets of Vaiṣṇavism, Sri Ramakrishna remarked in an exalted spiritual mood that we are not to show compassion to *jīvas*, the ordinary mortals, but serve them, in a spirit of worship, regarding them as the very embodiment of Śiva. Swami Vivekananda, who was nearby, took up the hint given by Sri Ramakrishna and built a sublime philosophy round it. There can be no greater comment on those words of the Master than the following sayings of the Swami culled from his well-known utterances: 'Do not stand on a high pedestal and take five cents in your hands and say "Here, my poor man!", but be grateful that the poor man is there, so that by making a gift to him you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed but it is the giver.'

'In this world, take always the position of the giver. Give everything and look for no return. Give love, give help, give service, give any little thing you can, but keep out barter!'

'You cannot help anyone, you can only serve; serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help any one of his children, blessed you are. Do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that the privilege

was given to you, when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner.'

In another place, Swami Vivekananda enumerates four kinds of gifts: 'The highest of gifts is the giving of spiritual knowledge, the next is the giving of secular knowledge and the next is the saving of life; the last is giving food and drink.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 133,

8th edition) It is clear from this that he gives the lowest place to ordinary charity which is very high in the esteem of many a philanthropist. The reason is obvious: this help is very temporary, whereas the gift of spiritual knowledge removes man's wants for ever.

It is thus seen that the concept of gifts, which has evolved by stages, finds its highest expression in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, who have raised the principle behind gifts to the status of a philosophy and a practical religion in one.

THE CONCEPT OF SAMJNĀNA (CONCORD) IN THE VEDAS

DR. A. C. BOSE

Swami Vivekananda spoke enthusiastically of the Vedic ideal of *samjñāna* in his lecture on the 'Future of India'. Emphasizing the need of 'co-ordination of will', the Swami said: 'Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the *Atharva-Veda Samhitā* which says: "Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods, being of one mind, were enabled to receive oblations. . . ." Being of one mind is the secret of society.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 299, 8th edition)

The stanza referred to by the Swami is this:

*Sam janidhvam sam prciyadhvam
sam vo manāmsi jānatām;
Devā bhāgam yathā pūrve
samjñānā upāsate—*

'Be in harmony with each other, mingle with each other, let your minds be of one accord, as the *devas* of old, being of one mind, receive their share (of oblation).'

This stanza in the *Atharva-Veda* (VI.

lxiv. 1) is a reproduction, with a slight change, of the second stanza of the closing hymn of the *Rg-Veda*, which has been given the title '*Samjñānam*', concord. The *Rg-Vedic* stanza begins with '*Sam gacchadhvam sam vadadhvam*', meaning 'Meet together, speak together'.

The Vedic prefix '*sam*' corresponds to the Greek '*sum*' ('*sym*' in the English form, as in 'symphony', union of sounds) and the Latin '*cum*' ('*com*') and its variants in English like 'compassion', 'concert', etc. As 'symphony' means not only a combination of sounds but a harmony produced by the combination, so *samjñāna* means not only the knowledge (*jñāna*) of each other among people, but the loving unity, the concord, produced by such knowledge. In another hymn (X. lxxii. 6), the *Rg-Veda* gives the idea of *samjñāna* through the analogy of group dancers (*nrtyatāmiva*) who were in each other's clasp (*susam-rabdha*). In group dancing, each member performs his own part and at the same time

contributes to a grand harmony by joint action. It is unity in diversity at its best, in which the diversity, while preserving the distinctiveness of individuals, accentuates and does not disturb the unity of the group. Such unity differs from uniformity by affording the individual the opportunity for free, and at the same time co-operative, self-expression.

The *devas* can have *samjñāna*, concord, among themselves because they have a fundamental point of unity, viz their divinity. They are manifestations on the relative plane, in terms of attribute and value, of the attributeless Absolute, spoken of in the Veda, in the neuter gender and singular number, as *ekam*, the One, *akṣaram*, the Eternal, etc. They are beings of light (*sva*) possessing glory (*bhargas*, *bhaga*), and embody the essential Vedic values. These include *rta*, universal order, cosmic, aesthetic, moral; and *satya*, truth both as integrity and as reality (*sat*), relative and absolute. 'The *devas*, attached to *rta* and being *satya* (true), are full of light and holy.' (*Rg-Veda*, VI. i. 2) They are the numerous visions of the Absolute on the relative plane perceived by the seers (*rṣis*), in which the Divinity appears as a person, loving and being loved, worshipped and receiving the worshippers' offerings. The *Rg-Veda* (III. iv. 1) speaks of this manifestation of the Absolute. It says: 'When the earliest of the mornings dawned, the great Eternal (*mahad akṣaram*) was manifested in the path of light. Now the statues of the *devas* shall be revered. Great is the single divinity of the *devas*.' (ibid., I. clxiv. 46) In the following, the idea is stated with particulars: 'They speak of Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, and Agni, and there is the divine fine-winged Garutmat; the one ultimate Reality, the wise call by many names.'

The common divinity of the *devas* that forms the basis of *samjñāna* expresses itself

through their perfect purity, their benevolence, and their love. 'The *devas* are always spotless', says the *Sāma-Veda*; 'All is good that the *devas* favour', 'In love thou madest the dawn glow, in love thou madest the sun shine', says the *Rg-Veda*, addressing Indra.

There are certain techniques used by the Veda to affirm that the *deva* is only a personified form of the attributeless (*nirupādhi*) Absolute. One technique is to speak of a *deva* or *devī* as if he or she were the all-pervading, unqualified Eternal, the creator and sustainer of the universe, as illustrated by the following:

'This one God (Indra), the lord of men, looks forth exceeding far and wide; and we, for our well-being, observe his holy laws.' (*Rg-Veda*, VIII. xxv. 16)

'Varuṇa, the *deva*, the Emperor sublime ... illumines both the worlds with his majesty and power.' (*Rg-Veda*, VI. lxviii. 9)

'We invoke Pūṣan, the supreme Ruler, the Lord of the moving and the still world.' (*Rg-Veda*, I. lxxxix. 5; *Yajur-Veda*, XXIX. 18)

'Come together, you all, to the Lord of heaven (Indra), the only One ... to him all pathways turn, he is the One.' (*Sāma-Veda*, 372; *Atharva-Veda*, VII. xxi. 1)

Another way in which each *deva* is shown to be the supreme Being, is to describe him in superlative terms. For example, Agni is called *kavitama*, the supreme sage, and so also Varuṇa and Savitr. Similarly, Agni as well as Indra are described as *nṛtama*, the most heroic, and more than one *deva* is called 'the most beloved' (*preṣṭha*, *priyatama*).

Another way to indicate that the many *devas* are really one is to identify with one *deva* all other *devas*, as in the following:

'That, wise ones, is your great and

lovely trait that all you *devas* exist in Indra.' (*Rg-Veda*, III. liv. 17)

'Agni, thou art Indra, ... thou art Viṣṇu, ... thou art Brahmaṇaspati, ... thou art Varuṇa, ... thou art Mitra, Aryamān, ... thou art Aditi, ... Bhārati, Ilā, ... Sarasvatī.' (ibid., II. i. 3-11)

'He (Savitr) is Aryamān, he is Varuṇa, he is Rudra, he is Mahādeva. He is Agni and Sūrya. He is the One, the One and the Sole; ... not second, ... not third, ... not fourth, ... In him, all the *devas* become the One and Sole.' (*Atharva-Veda*, XIII. iv. 4, 5)

'Aditi is the sky, Aditi the mid region, Aditi is mother, is father, is son. Aditi is all the *devas*, Aditi is the five-clasped men; Aditi is all that is born and all that will be born.' (*Rg-Veda*, I. lxxxix. 10; *Yajur-Veda*, XXIX. 23; *Atharva-Veda*, VIII. vi. 1)

The *Atharva-Veda* (XIII. vii. 45) says that the Deity can have a billion forms (i.e., the Absolute can be contemplated as a divine Person in innumerable ways). 'Such is thy greatness, liberal Lord! Countless bodily forms are Thine. Millions are in Thy million, or Thou art a billion in Thyself.'

Each *deva* described above has the characteristics of the God of monotheistic faith. But while monotheism insists upon its own particular vision of the manifested Divinity as the only vision of God, to the exclusion of all other visions, the Veda entertains all available visions, retaining the special features of each. In other words, the Veda recognizes the diversity as well as the unity of the manifested Divine. The *Rg-Veda* (X. lxiii. 2) says in emphatic language: 'All your names, Devas, are venerable (*namasya*), laudable (*vandya*), and adorable (*yajñīya*).'

With this attitude towards the *devas*, it is but natural that in ritualistic worship, they should not be separated and pinned down

to particular houses of prayer, but invoked in a common place of worship, and, quite often, several or all of them together (*visve devāḥ*) should be offered the oblation. In the context of *samjñāna*, the Veda brings in the analogy of the *devas*' sharing the common oblation in perfect accord with each other.

The example of the *devas* has been cited again in another hymn of the *Atharva-Veda* (III. 30), which exhorts members of a family to practise *samjñāna*. 'I will offer a prayer', a sage says to them, 'for that *samjñāna* (concord) among people at home by virtue of which the *devas* do not separate, nor ever hate each other.' He presents the *samjñāna* in its different aspects. First, there has to be the emotional relationship. He uses an analogy which has a ready appeal to the common man: 'The union of hearts and minds and freedom from hate I will bring you. Love each other as the cow loves the calf born of her.'

With love, he enjoins loyalty and courtesy: 'Let son be loyal to father and of one mind with his mother. Let wife speak sweet and gentle words to husband. Let not brother hate brother or sister hate sister. Being of one mind and united in aims, speak you words with grace. ... Come speaking sweetly to each other.'

Unity must have concrete expression in terms of common share of food and co-operative living, under common leadership, freely chosen: 'Common be your water-store, common your share of food. ... With your common desire, I will make you all have one aim, be of one mind, following one leader, like *devas* who preserve their immortality. Morn and eve may there be the loving heart in you.'

The following exhortation in *Rg-Veda* (X. 191) is meant for the members of a state. It desires them to have, among other aspects of *samjñāna*, common delib-

eration (*mantra*) and a common political assembly (*samiti*): 'Meet together, speak together, let your minds be of one accord. . . . May your counsel be common, your assembly common; common the mind and the thoughts united. A common purpose do I lay before you. . . . Let your aims be common, and your hearts of one accord. Be all of you of one mind, so that you may live happily together.' It is these lines that the *Atharva-Veda* (VI. 64) quotes with some changes.

The Veda wants *samjñāna*, concord, not only with members of one's own state, but also with foreigners living in other states. The basis of unity here is found in 'the divine spirit' (*daivyaṃ manaḥ*) within man, which is repudiated when man fails to unite with man. Here is a hymn in the *Atharva-Veda* (VII. 52), expressing this idea :

'May there be *samjñāna*, concord, with our own people and concord with foreigners. *Devas* create between us and foreigners a unity of hearts.

'May we unite in our purposes, and not fight against the divine spirit within us.'

The Veda points out that to establish *samjñāna* with foreigners will mean the

elimination of war and prevention of great loss of life: 'Let not the battle-cry rise over many lying slain, nor the arrows of Indra fall with the break of day.'

The Veda describes mythologically how Indra, the divine champion of *ṛta* (cosmic and moral law), defends his *svārājya*, own dominion based on it, against the aggression of *Vṛtra*, the demon embodying *anṛta*, chaos, and lawlessness. Men defending their *svārājya* (own state) against an invader, invoke the aid of Indra for victory. But such aid is not necessary, if the people of different states establish *samjñāna* among themselves.

Thus, more than three thousand years ago, the Veda discovered the way to prevent war and the loss of life caused by it. In the divine spirit (*daivyaṃ manaḥ*) in man, according to the *Atharva-Veda*, is the rallying point for the unity of men. It is this innate divinity of man that the Vedānta philosophy preaches and which Swami Vivekananda proclaimed to the whole world in our times. The Swami strove to establish unity and concord (*samjñāna*) across the barriers of race, colour, creed, and state, by rousing in man an abiding sense of this innate divinity.

'Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature.'

Hamlet, III. ii.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Swami Vimalananda, a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, has occasionally contributed to *Prabuddha Bharata*. His article on 'Does India Want an Austere Civilization and a Spiritual System?—1' is timely and useful. The article, which we are publishing in two instalments, was completed and sent to us about two months back, and so health measures taken in India since then are not noticed. The second instalment of the article will appear in our next issue.

'On Aesthetics and Ethical Values-1' forms the first section of the presidential address by Dr. S. K. Nandi, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil. (Cal.), of Presidency College, Calcutta, to the Ethics and Social Philosophy Section of the Indian Philosophical Congress, at its last session held in

December 1963 at Chandigarh. The rest of the address will be published in our next issue.

Swami Harshananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, traces the 'Evolution of the Concept of Gifts in Hinduism' as found in the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā*, and the *Dharma Śāstras*, and points out how the concept finds its highest expression in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Dr. A. C. Bose, M.A., Ph.D., of the Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, is a Vedic scholar, with many books on the Vedas to his credit. His latest book, *Hymns from the Vedas*, is in the press. As such, his article on 'The Concept of Samjñāna (Concord) in the Vedas' will be read with some interest.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

METAPHYSICS, MAN, AND FREEDOM. BY PROF. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTHY, ANDHRA UNIVERSITY. Foreword by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Asia Publishing House, Bombay. Pages 84. Price Rs. 6.

The book contains the lectures on metaphysics, man, and freedom, delivered by the learned author, mostly at the Annamalai University, during 1960. The professor, in these lectures, seeks to make out a case for faith and belief in the vanguard of human progress from finitude to infinitude, and establish and exemplify the statement of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that man is the conscious link between the earth and heaven, but not with much success. Attitudinarianism, of which the book is full, does not conduce to a true and comprehensive understanding of Vedānta, especially the Advaita Vedānta, from which standpoint the author appears to make out his case. The book is, however, a wit-sharpener, and

is welcome to all serious students of metaphysics. The brief, synoptic foreword by Dr. Radhakrishnan adds to the value of the book. But the price is rather high.

P. SAMA RAO

THE TECHNIQUE OF MAHĀ-YOGA. BY SRI N. R. NARAYANA IYER. Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai, Madras State. Pages 66. Price Re. 1.

Though there are many books on the teaching of Sri Ramana Maharshi, this is the first work which gives a systematic treatment of the practical discipline that is to be followed to realize the Truth of his path. Sri Narayana Iyer has drawn upon all the published treatises on the Maharshi and relied upon his own experiences in the line during the last two decades, to give a simple and graded system of *yoga*, which he terms the *mahā-yoga*.

The central truth in this teaching is to recover the true nature of one's self which is none other than the Ātman. The process is through self-enquiry—by withdrawal of the mind from its customary preoccupations outside and directing it within in search of the root of the 'I'. Aspiration, purification, *virakti*, control of breath, the grace of the *guru* are the main factors that speed up the progress. The author cites profusely from various scriptures in support of his thesis, and the book makes a most useful and elevating reading.

M. P. PANDIT

THE MAIN PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY: AN ADVAITA APPROACH, PART II. BY S. K. MAITRA, M.A., Ph.D., P.R.S. Calcutta Progressive Publishers, 32, College Street, Calcutta. Rs. 6.50 nP.

The author was the B. N. Seal Professor of Philosophy of the Calcutta University, and is an ex-Director of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Vrindavan. He has made valuable contributions to philosophical studies. The present work deals with the basic problems of philosophy, such as the problems of truth and error, space and time, substance, causality, universals, etc. These problems have been very lucidly dealt with, mainly from the Advaita point of view. Comparison with similar views of the West has enhanced the value of the book.

Although the book is intended for undergraduate and post-graduate students, it will be found useful by teachers and research scholars.

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

ARISTOTLE DICTIONARY. EDITED BY THOMAS P. KIERNAN, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THEODORE E. JAMES. Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16. 1962. Pages 524. Price \$ 7.50.

Aristotle's influence pervades the whole of Western philosophy even today, after nearly twenty-four centuries after his birth. It is with Aristotle that empiricism took deep roots in Western thinking. Earlier, Plato had no doubt contributed greatly to Greek thinking, but his disciple was not satisfied with the poetical flights of his master and turned into an empirical scientist. The editor of the volume under review is correct when he says: 'The method and spirit of intensely incisive research into the phenomena of nature and history, which Aristotle fathered, represented something completely new in Greek culture, and of course, it still has its ramifications in the contemporary world.' Therefore, the present volume is valuable as it has listed the basic terms in Aristotle's philosophy and explained them in his own words.

The lengthy Introduction by Theodore E. James

presents an analysis of the major works of Aristotle in a simple style. This will be of great help in providing an overall grasp of Aristotle's thought to the reader, before he can go into the 'dictionary', where particular terms are explained.

The book is a useful addition to the philosophical collection of every library.

S. S.

THE LIGHT THAT LEADS US. BY SWAMI PRABHANANDA. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Karwar (Maharashtra). 1963. Pages 148. Price Rs. 2.

In the first section of this small book, the author, a fervent follower of Sri Ramakrishna, seeks to demonstrate, through dialectics, how God, the unchanging divine Reality, incarnates Himself for the good of the world. In the second section, he briefly recounts Sri Ramakrishna's life and points out how in Sri Ramakrishna we find the highest expression of divinity ever manifested in a human form. The third and the last section gives some of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings and parables which turn the mind of the reader away from worldly pursuits and instil in him an ardour for God-realization.

SWAMI EKATMANANDA

THE UPANISHADS. TRANSLATED BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA. ABRIDGED EDITION. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, London, W.C.1. 1963. Pages 392. Price 45 shillings.

PAPERBACK EDITION: Harper & Row, Publishers, 49 East 33rd Street, New York 16, N.Y. Price \$ 1.95.

The Upanishads are a fascinating study of undying inspiration. They are the culmination of a sincere search for Reality or Truth by the ancient Aryans, thousands of years ago, and their sublime thoughts awe men even today, after so many centuries. With all his scientific learning and technical advancement, modern man is full of tension and unhappy within himself. He drifts along, totally unaware of the ends and aims of his strivings. To such a man ridden with conflicts and boredom, the Upanishads bring in the comforting message of the divinity of the soul and the oneness of Being, realizing which man attains peace and tranquillity.

Swami Nikhilananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, translated into English some time back the eleven major Upanishads, which were published, in four volumes, by Harper & Brothers in New York and Phoenix House in London. The book under review is an abridged edition of the same in one handy volume. The erudite Swami rightly says in his preface: 'The vast Vedic literature of the early Indo-Aryans is like a trackless tropical forest, full of

lush underbush, weeds, thorns, and stately trees. Travellers in it often become dismayed, bewildered, and lost; yet, if they courageously and patiently push on, they are rewarded by the discovery of blossoms of rare beauty and fragrance. The present volume contains these blossoms.'

This abridged edition is a welcome publication, especially for those who have not the time or the patience to go through the bigger volumes. The learned translator has selected the passages with great discretion, and added copious notes to explain difficult and technical terms. The translation is markedly lucid. The general introduction at the beginning, the chapter on 'Discussion of Brahman in the Upanishads', and the brief introductions to each of the Upanishads are highly illuminating. They, together with the glossary and the index, enhance the value of the edition. The printing and get-up leave nothing to be desired. The book deserves an important place in the shelf of every library worth the name.

SWAMI EKATMANANDA

COLONISTS AND FOREIGN MISSIONARIES OF ANCIENT INDIA (ILLUSTRATED). BY SRI P. THOMAS. Messrs Joseph Thomasons & Co., 7 Anand Bazar, Ernakulam. Pages 83. Price Rs. 5.

This slender volume is neither too learned nor too elementary, nor pedantic in exposition. It deals with the Hindu cultural colonization across lands and seas: to the west, as far as Greece; to the north, as far as Turkestan, Tibet, Nepal, and China; to the east, as far as Korea, Japan, Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Indonesia, etc.; and to the south, as far as Ceylon. Since Buddhism, an offshoot of Hinduism, believed, like Islam and Christianity, more in evangelism and proselytism, this book is mostly concerned with the Buddhist spiritual leaders of the Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna, Zen, and Lamaistic cults, like Aśoka, Vijaya, Mahendra, Saṅghamitra, Kaunḍinya, Kaśyapa Mātāṅga, Kumārajīva, Guṇavarman, Buddhaghosa, Bodhidharma, Padmasambhava, Atiśa, Hieun-Tsang, I'Tsing, etc. But there are some noteworthy omissions in the list. A few words about Vijaya Sambhava, Kamalaśīla, Maitreya, Asaṅga and his brother Vasubandhu, Dharmapāla, Dharmadeva, Chandrakīrti, Naropa, the *guru* of the Tibetan Lama Mar-Pa, King Menander, his preceptor Nāgasena, Buddhadatta, etc. would have made the book fairly complete in itself.

The book, however, makes interesting reading. The exposition is easy and direct, and it appeals to both the novice and the cultured. The text is beautifully illustrated with the rare portraits of Kaśyapa Mātāṅga, Bodhidharma, Padmasambhava,

and Atiśa. But the cost is beyond the reach of the ordinary Indian reader.

P. SAMA RAO

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BENEDETTO CROCE: AN INTRODUCTION. BY ANGELO A DE GENNARO. Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. Pages 103. Price \$ 3.

Mr. Angelo A De Gennaro, Professor and Chairman of the Modern Language Department, Loyola University, Los Angeles, had already written four books on Benedetto Croce—*The Drama of the Aesthetics of Benedetto Croce*, *Benedetto Croce E Charles Austin Beard*, *The Concept of Art in Adriano Tilger*, and *An Approach to Benedetto Croce*—all searching analyses, before he wrote the present work under review. Its main purpose is to 'make American scholars more aware of the thought of a man whose genius is multifaceted and deserves universal regard for his synthetic thoughts on aesthetics, literary criticism, logic, historiography, economics, politics, and morality'. For Croce's is the most comprehensive and significant contribution to them, though not the latest. It throws searching light on the statements of many western philosophers, ancient and modern. Croce is an idealist of the extreme type who sees only identity in the conception, preparation, execution, expression, and the achievement that relate to the artefact, for each is a reflection of the others, and all objectified in the achievement is the overall reflection in essence of the divine spirit. Or, rather, there is no regimentation of the subject and the object, of the knower, the knowledge, and the known. This Vedāntic Advaitism is the essence of Croce's genius, although in dialectics and reasoning he may differ from others.

It is very rare that one lights upon such a true, lucid, and learned exposition of a rather complex philosophy like Benedetto Croce's. While explaining some of Croce's mystical positions, the author reconciles many apparent contradictions in his statements. But for this, many passages of Croce's would have remained dark and impervious. The book is a precious interpretation of Croce's philosophy and a must for every student of philosophy, especially of Croce's.

P. SAMA RAO

ADVAITA AND NEOPLATONISM (A CRITICAL STUDY IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY). BY J. F. STALL. The University of Madras, Madras 5. 1961. Pages 262. Price Rs. 7.

Among all European philosophers, Plotinus, the philosopher and mystic of the third century B.C., comes closest to Advaita system of thought. This

has been noticed by various scholars of the East and the West, but no one ever took up a detailed comparative study of the thought of the neo-Platonic philosopher with Advaita. Therefore, this volume by Dr. J. F. Stall is a welcome addition to the growing literature on comparative philosophy, and we can confidently say that Dr. Stall has met with great success in his attempt. His comparative study of the two systems of thought is deep, thorough, and interesting.

The book, originally presented as a thesis for the doctorate degree in philosophy of the University of Madras in 1957, is divided into three parts: Part I deals with the character and methodology of comparative philosophy; Part II presents a brief but scholarly analysis of the metaphysics of Advaita; and Part III contains the actual comparison between Advaita and neo-Platonism. The author, brought up in the tradition of existentialism and phenomenology, looks at Advaita from these standpoints. And his object in comparing the two philosophies is not a synthesis of the two, but 'the better understanding of the compared terms and of one's own "standard consciousness"'.

In dealing with the Advaita, Dr. Stall confines himself mostly to Śaṅkara and the Upaniṣads, and more or less ignores post-Śaṅkara Advaita, which he regards as having an 'epistemological bias'.

The author's approach to Advaita is a departure from the usual method of Indian scholars. He takes up the basis of *śabdapramāṇa* and the concept of *karma* (sacrifice) as it obtained during Vedic times, and explains the Advaitic trend of the Upaniṣads as a revolt against *karma* in Vedic civilization. This, he explains, is a culmination of a gradual process of change, in which symbolic identifications (*upāsanās*) formed a prominent landmark. The author uses the words 'magic' or 'magical' in referring to the esoteric nature of *vidyās* of the Upaniṣads, and refers to Lacombe to state that 'magic plays an important part in Śaṅkara's doctrine' (p. 60), while in later Advaita, 'rational approach becomes increasingly predominant'. Here, the author has, perhaps, forgotten the main criterion of philosophy in India. Philosophy in India is not an intellectual pastime, but the method for arriving at conclusions which are to be realized in one's own life as *aparokṣa-jñāna*, for which certain amount of esoteric practice is indispensable. It would be hardly doing any justice to refer to this practical character of Indian philosophy as 'magic'. In later Advaita, the purpose of the writers was mainly to refute the various opposing schools that had arisen after Śaṅkara; hence their predominantly intellectual approach. Nevertheless, Śaṅkara's rationalism formed the basis and pattern for all the later philosophers in India.

In the third part, the author has undertaken the comparison of the two systems with admirable clarity, bringing out the points of similarity very clearly. His principal aim in comparing is to study Advaita. Therefore, he does not go into a detailed analysis of the thought of Plotinus. However, quotations from the *Enneads* are profusely provided wherever necessary. One conclusion the author comes to, which may seem strange to some, is that neo-Platonism is more world-negating than Advaita, which accepts the *vyāvahārika* reality of the world, while the former relegates the world etc. to a lower realm, which has to be renounced to ascend to the highest plane of the One (p. 231).

The Appendix dealing with the Indian influence on Plotinus summarizes the opinions of scholars on the point. Historically, nothing can be proved in this regard, though the author is right in saying that Plotinus had all the necessary basis for his philosophy in his Greek background. The bibliography is quite exhaustive but for a glaring omission. Ralph Inge's *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, in two volumes, does not find a place in it. A list of existing translations of *Enneads* might have also been included. The volume has a useful index.

SWAMI SMARANANANDA

A TALE OF ANCIENT EGYPT. BY FREDERICK C. HECKEL. The Philosophical Library, 15 East 40 Street, New York 16, N.Y. 1963. Pages 126. Price \$ 3.75.

The imaginary story of a modern man who visits the old kingdom of Egypt and becomes intimate with king Menkare (Mycerinus of the Greeks), a great pyramid builder, forms the subject matter of the book under review. When, more than two thousand years later, Herodotus visits Egypt, he is told many wonderful tales about this king.

The story as told is entertaining, being based upon the scientific idea that the mysteries of the inscrutable past can be unravelled. Finding himself in ancient Egypt, the modern man is struck by the greatness of the soul of Egypt, personified in the ruler, its regard for peace (*hotep*), truth (*maat*), the laws of cosmic harmony, the cosmic wisdom brought by Isis, the warmth of Divine Power (*nebtet*), whom we 'do not see', and the unsophisticated simplicity of ancient Egypt. Joseph, the modern traveller to ancient Egypt, discovers how those men 'saw their life as a kind of partnership with the Divine', possessed that 'inner quiet', the want of which is the most disturbing nightmare with us, and how they enjoyed that 'true Freedom, born of love', unknown to us.

Although it reads like a novel, the book is deeply philosophical. At places, it is too philosophical for

the average man. It had to be so, for the subject is very deep. The positive values of ancient East are brought out in bold relief here. The modern traveller to ancient Egypt realizes the futility and meaninglessness of our so-called modern civilization in comparison with the deep spiritual values of the ancient East, and is convinced that something of that value must once again be accepted, if our twentieth century civilization has to survive.

The author, a reputed New York journalist of long experience, is a first rate Egyptologist. He has combined his knowledge of history with a fertile imagination and presented a rather difficult theme in a very lucid manner to the lay reader. We whole-heartedly recommend the book to the students of history and the general readers alike.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

THE COILED SERPENT. Pages 439. Price Rs. 6.

CONQUEST OF THE SERPENT. Pages 179. Price Rs. 3.

By C. J. VAN VILET. Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad 14.

The serpent is a symbol of energy in all mystic and spiritual traditions. By usage, however, the serpent has come to signify, in some popular religions, the sex-energy which stands in the way of the treasure of the Spirit. *The Coiled Serpent* is an exhaustive work elaborating upon the need for the conservation of sex-energy by all right-thinking people for the betterment of their own selves as well as for the elevation of the general soul-level of the humanity. Citing profusely from authorities all over the world and of all times, the author explains the function of sex in nature, the extent to which it influences the operations of the various faculties and organs of the human system, the precise manner in which wastage of sexual substance undermines the physiological apparatus, and also the process in which continence adds to the store of material energy and nerve-power and promotes the subtilization of the thought faculties leading to the manifestation of latent powers like intuition etc. *Inter alia*, he touches upon a wide variety of interesting subjects like dreams, virgin births, ancient mysteries, immortality, etc.

The other book, which may be called a companion volume, deals with the practical steps to be taken for the subjugation of the sex-force. Methods of purification of body, of life-energy, and of mind are discussed in a popular style. Distinctions are made between negative continence and positive continence

(p. 177), suppression and sublimation of sex-distinctions which are very much necessary in the present state of confused thinking among the psychologists, particularly from the West, who have formed totally erroneous ideas about the ancient Indian ideal of *brahmacarya*, which envisages the transformation of *retas* into *ojas* and *ojas* into *tejas*, uplifting man to the heights of spiritual glory.

Both the books are permeated by a commendable spirit of idealism.

M. P. PANDIT

BENGALI

PUNYATIRTHA BHARAT. BY SWAMI DIVYATMANANDA. Mitra & Ghosh, 10 Shyamacharan De Street, Calcutta 12. 1963. Pages 344. Price Rs. 10.

The book under review is a travel book as the title denotes. The author has travelled extensively in India and has visited almost all the important places of pilgrimage. In this book, he gives an account of about seventy-five such places—their historical or mythological associations, their present-day importance, the shrines and objects worth visiting therein, and also the routes. The mode of writing is simple, and one feels very much at home while going through these descriptions. But since these travels were undertaken at different times, some of them as long as twenty years back or more, some of the routes as given in the book and some of the descriptions of the places differ from what they are today. For example, the visit to Amarnath in Kashmir was made before the partition of India. The route was not what it is today, and the places on the way have also changed. Lahore, Delhi, and many places have undergone vast changes during these recent years. These may read rather outdated, but the author knows it, as he says in his Preface, and has tried to make his accounts up to date as far as possible, telling at the same time all that he actually saw when he visited the places. This also may be an interesting aspect of the book inasmuch as it makes us familiar with the scenes and conditions of some important places as they were about twenty years ago and as we may not see them again. But in most cases, our holy places and shrines remain almost the same, and as such, the book will serve as a very good guide to those who wish to know about these places associated with Hindu religious life. The book, if gone through, will no doubt awaken in the mind of the reader a strong desire to visit these places himself and may help him in the way. Numerous illustrations enrich the value of the book.

PRABHAT K. BANERJI

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CEYLON BRANCH

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1960 TO MARCH 1962

The Colombo Centre: The Colombo Centre, which is the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, Ceylon Branch, carried on, during the period under review, varied cultural and religious activities, in addition to the administrative activities of the Mission. Besides the regular *pūjā* at the Ashrama shrine, weekly Sunday classes were conducted in English and Tamil, and special lectures by eminent persons on various cultural and religious subjects were arranged. The Sunday religious classes for children, which started with 15 children on the roll in August 1952, has now on the roll 275 children. The children of the Sunday classes staged the following dramas during the anniversary celebrations in 1960 and 1961: *Karṇan* (scenes from the *Mahābhārata*) and *Bhakta Mirā* (life of Mirā Bāī); and *Prahlāda*, *Bhartrhariyin Thuravu* (scenes from Bhartrhari) and *Thuravum Amaranilaiyum* (scenes from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*). As an extension of the activities of the Sunday school, religious classes are conducted every Sunday for the juvenile delinquents of the Training School at Watupitiwela, a distance of thirty miles from Colombo. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, the Mahā Śivarātri, Wesak Day (Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā), Śrī Kṛṣṇa Jayantī, Vijayā Daśamī, and Christmas Eve were celebrated, with special *pūjā*, *homa*, lectures, *bhajanas*, music recitals, and the exhibition of educational documentary film shows.

Library and Reading Room: At the end of the period under review, the total number of books in the library was 2,200, and 25 monthly and 4 weekly magazines and five daily and two bi-weekly newspapers were being received in the Reading Room.

International Cultural Centre: A students' home, an auditorium for holding religious and cultural meetings, and a guest house, are the main features of this centre. The construction of the building to house this Centre, whose foundation-stone was laid on 17 June 1959 by the late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India, was completed in April 1962. The building was formally opened by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, on 15 October 1962. Sri Nehru, in the course of his speech on the occasion, said: 'I am happy to be

associated with this ceremony of the opening of the new centre of the Ramakrishna Mission. In many places that I have visited in India and in other countries, I have always found the Ramakrishna Mission doing quiet and unostentatious service, without any fuss and without any shouting. I have admired their work, educational, medical, and other kinds of work, and I think that it is a peculiarly suitable organization for an international centre where people can meet in the quiet of the centre of the Ashrama and study, do research work, meet each other and discuss, and thus promote real understanding. We live very hurried lives nowadays rushing about from place to place and hardly have any time to think. It is a good thing to have places where you can sit down and think a little, and the Ramakrishna Mission provides such places as the rest, too, do. So, I am glad of this opportunity, and I am grateful for having been invited to open this new building. ... I congratulate the members of the Ramakrishna Mission here and this lovely spot where they have built this Centre. I am sure it will do good work, as it always does good work wherever it establishes itself, and would serve the people of Ceylon as well as the visitors who come here. I wish it all success.'

Publication and Book Sales Department: The Ashrama maintains a small book sales department, where the publications of the Ramakrishna Mission are sold. During the period under review, it published two books: *Bhajanāvālī* in Tamil and a life of Sri Ramakrishna in Sinhalese.

Kataragama Madam: This is a pilgrims' rest house, situated at Kataragama, a holy place of pilgrimage, about 175 miles from Colombo, held sacred by all communities in Ceylon. It provides board and lodging facilities to pilgrims visiting the place. On an average, 200 persons on week days and 600 persons on week-end days visited the place and stayed at the Madam. During the annual Esala festival, held in July-August, the Madam supplied, daily for sixteen days, free meals to about 8,000 persons and buttermilk and lime-juice to about 30,000 persons.

Centre at Batticaloa: This centre runs two orphanages for girls, one at Karativu and another at Anaipanthi, Batticaloa, and an orphanage for boys at Kalladiuppodai, Batticaloa. The schools run by the Mission were all taken over by the Government of Ceylon with effect from 1 December 1960, under the National Education Bill.