

VOL. LXIX

AUGUST 1964

# 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

AUGUST 1964

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXIX

AUGUST 1964

No. 8



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:o:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

( 36 )

Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama  
Luxa, Banaras City  
Uttar Pradesh  
23 April 1913

Dear —,

I am extremely delighted to get your letter after a long time. You have written that I haven't written any letters to you because of anger. That is not true. There is no cause for being angry ; I have written what I thought best, don't take it to heart. We are still here. We were all here during the period of the celebration. Today, Swami Brahmanandaji is leaving for Math (Belur Math). Myself and Turiyananda Swamiji will stay on here for the present : later on, we may probably return to Kankhal.

The more you are afflicted with the troubles of the world, the more you will be reminded of the Lord ; the more you think of and meditate on the Lord, the more He will snap your worldly ties and draw you nearer to Himself—know this for certain. The miseries of the world are the springs of love for the Lord ; that is the way the devotees progress towards Him. In the case of those who renounce the world (hastily) hardly has a little spirit of renunciation, love, and faith awakened in them, that little devotion of theirs dries up within a few days, and they become again engrossed in the world with double or treble the attachment than before, or just sink or swim. You don't become like that, but live in the world performing all your duties and resign yourself

completely to Him. Thus, your love and faith will be strengthened in course of time, and your spiritual life becomes firmly established like the strong structure of bricks and mortar, which will not be shaken in any state and at any time; be sure of this.

What more shall I write? My love and blessings to you. Write now and then for your welfare. My health is of a sort—neither good nor bad. It is getting terribly hot here. It is somewhat colder now at Kankhal.

Your well-wisher,  
Shivananda

( 37 )

Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama  
P.O. Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur  
Uttar Pradesh  
2 June 1913

Dear —,

I duly received your letter. Carry on the worship of the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) daily as you are doing now; there is no need for any other method. *Rāgabhakti* (the spontaneous love of the Lord, characterized by intense attachment and longing to see Him) is better than *vaidhi-bhakti* (the formal and momentary feeling of devotion induced by external aids and accessories of worship). It will do if, after arranging the materials of worship in front of the image of the Master in a pure spirit, you just pray earnestly and with devotion for their acceptance. In the Math also, we follow the same procedure. The repetition of his name, meditation, the reading of the *Kathāmṛta*, the singing of his name and *bhajan*s, conversing about him with the devotees—if you do all these, you will attain peace, and the Lord will shower His mercy on you. It is, indeed, good to be restless because His mercy is not forthcoming; otherwise, how will a person advance towards Him? It is to be understood that the time to enter into the realm of the Lord's love, devotion, and faith has not yet come for him who is not worried because he has not received the mercy of the Lord, because he is not able to become pure, and whose mind craves for worldly happiness and becomes satisfied with a little of it. The disquietude of the devotee at separation from Him is the means of his advancing into the Kingdom of God.

You have seen Swami Premananda there itself—you are, indeed, very fortunate. He is really saturated with Ramakrishna. You have been the recipient of his love—this is proof positive of the Lord's grace on you.

I cannot definitely say when we will return to Bengal from here. Lord's will be done! Write now and then for your welfare. My body is sometimes well, sometimes ill—somehow carrying on. My heartfelt love and best wishes to you. It appears I will have to leave for Almora within a few days.

Your well-wisher,  
Shivananda

( 38 )

Chilkapeta House  
Almora  
Uttar Pradesh  
19 July 1913

Dear —,

I have received your letter here. I had to come here all on a sudden; there was no intention at all. Everything is as He wishes. You have, perhaps, read about Paltu in *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāṃṛta*. His only son, aged about nineteen and a brilliant student, has unfortunately fallen seriously sick, and so he has come here last April with his son and a few other members of his family—his wife, sister, sister's son, etc.—on the expert advice of the doctors at Calcutta. He is alone here, and has no other engagement. He was passing his days in great distress. So he wrote to me at Kankhal to come over here. The idea was to allay his fears through conversations on Sri Ramakrishna and discussions on the scriptures and to try to increase his love and faith. I arrived here on 16 June with this purpose. Through the grace of the Lord, they are slightly better; the boy also is showing some improvement. He, too, is very much devoted.

I am very happy to learn that you are well. Could it be otherwise? Know you not whose refuge you have taken? In the living incarnation of the age, radiant and awakened; in the Lord Himself, who, in this Kali Yuga, has assumed the human form to raise up humanity, and the impact of whose uplifting power is clearly visible in the four corners of the globe—and there is no knowing how long it will last yet. You have taken refuge in him, and you cannot but be all right. This is just the beginning, and you will know later on how well you will still be. Surely, if you can but depend on him entirely, there is real joy. 'I have surrendered myself to him, I am his servant, his child, what is there for me to worry about? I am already saved; when I have taken shelter under him, what fear is there for me?' Keep this thought burning bright in your mind. Also, reflect thus: 'His direct disciple and disciples love me, are instructing me, and blessing me from the bottom of their heart—what fear is there for me?' Let your mind be constantly occupied with such thoughts. Specially when you feel that your faith, devotion, and love are slackening in the least, if you just recollect these thoughts, then they will again be revived with hundredfold intensity, and your heart will be filled with bliss, peace, and hope. I bless you from the bottom of my heart that the Lord may fulfil your cherished desire.

It is no doubt good to observe the festival once a year, but I feel it would be better still if a few of you who are of like mind could meet together, according to convenience, at least once in two or three days, if not daily, and discuss amongst yourselves about the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) or study some holy texts, think about them, conduct *bhajan*s and *lārtan*s, sing songs, and

sometimes offer something to the Master and partake of the *prasāda* (the sacramental offering) together.

What shall I want from you? I want only this—that you should call on the Lord more and more and be intoxicated with ecstatic love for Him. Once again my blessings and love to you.

Your well-wisher,  
Shivananda

PS. This place is in Uttarakhanda, and is the only path to and from Badarikashrama. You have also to pass through this to go to Kailasa. Here you get a fine view of the Badarikashrama, Kedarnath, and Kailasnath snow ranges.

( 39 )

Chilkapeta House  
P.O. Kumaon  
Dt. Almora  
20 August 1913

My dear Master Mahashaya,

I am extremely happy to receive your letter after a long interval. I can very well guess how happy you are at Vrindaban, specially this being the time of the *Jhūlanyātrā* festival. Hope you will stay there for some time more: surely you should, the *Janmāṣṭamī* being very near. The *Nandotsava* festival in Vrindaban is, indeed, an occasion of great joy; the whole of Vrindaban will be reverberating with the song:

Today there is no end to Nanda's joy, no end to Nanda's joy;  
The cowherds dance in Gokula having obtained Govinda.

The progress that was noticeable a month back in Vijan's health is not at all seen now. According to the opinion of the doctors and the local people, the present climate here is unsuitable for the improvement of the health; from the middle of September, just after the rainy season, his health will again steadily improve. By the grace of Sri Guru Maharajji, it appears Paltu Babu's mental restlessness has partially lessened. Nowadays, he meditates and prays to the Lord (Sri Ramakrishna) a good deal.

Yes, —ananda has returned safely from his pilgrimage to Kailasa, Manas-sarovara, and many other notable places.

I am greatly delighted to learn that the Governor has gone through the report of the work of the Sevashrama with much interest. The workers will certainly be inspired by this.

Hope you have immensely enjoyed the drama *Bilvamāngala*, particularly when it has been enacted in the very place of its original occurrence. Girish

of hallowed memory! Blessed you are! How much the inhabitants of this earth will benefit by the ever undimmed brilliance of your intellect! May Sri Ramakrishna vouchsafe unto us the same firm faith with which he had blessed Girish and make our life also blessed! This is my sincere prayer.

If you find that you are not keeping good health at Vrindaban, please go to Kasi soon. At Vrindaban, the health will not at all be all right in the month of Bhādra. And at that time, a severe type of malaria is also seen to prevail. Please accept my love, *pranāmas*, etc.

Yours,  
Shivananda

PS. Please convey my best wishes to Nanda and other workers and give my greetings to Hem Babu.

( 40 )

Chilkapeta House  
Almora, Kumaon  
Uttar Pradesh  
17 September 1913

Dear —,

I have duly received your letter of the 9th inst. and am very happy to go through the contents.

To tell the truth, it is to break your attachment to the world that the Lord has kept you in this state. By the Lord's grace, you will never forget Him in the midst of the world; rather, your devotion and faith will all the more increase.

I am pleased to learn that you had got up a small function on the *Janmāṣṭamī* day; He makes everything convenient. You have asked: 'What shall I desire—the Lord or salvation?' The answer is: 'The Lord.' You shall desire only the Lord; if you get Him, salvation is assured, like the fruit in the palm of your hand. The Lord is with form, without form, and, again, beyond both form and formless; He is beyond everything we can conceive of. Think of Him in any particular way you want to at a particular time; do not entertain any doubts about it. In whatever state the Lord keeps you, that alone is auspicious. If He keeps you in the mansion of His consciousness and allows you to attend on Him constantly, that is the best. If He takes you to the sphere of His formless illumination, that is also good. Do not in the least worry over it. Whatever mood He puts you into, that is the best.

I am very happy to learn that you are keeping well. I am not so bad here, but Thakur's (Sri Ramakrishna's) devotee Paltu Babu—with whom I am staying—his son is still suffering. Of course, he is slightly better than before. It takes a long time for this illness to cure. I shall write to you either before or after going to Bengal. I don't think it will be possible for me to go after the *Jagaddhātri-pūjā*. Anyway, whatever is the Lord's wish will happen. My heartfelt blessings and love to you. Know it for certain that, through the Lord's will, you will not suffer from pecuniary wants in the world; whatever is



necessary will be supplied. Go on practising intensely meditation, remembrance of the Lord, reflection, repetition of His name, singing *kīrtanas*, study of the scriptures, etc.; you will never feel the want of anything. If the heart is filled with the love of the Lord, the wants of the world do not affect us; the heart will always be brimming with joy, and the Lord Himself will supply whatever is lacking in the devotee.

Your well-wisher,  
Shivananda

( 41 )

Chilkapeta House  
Kumaon  
Almora  
27 October 1913

My dear Master Mahashaya,

I am extremely delighted to receive your letter and, particularly, to learn that you have decided to reside in the Math itself. How shall I express the joy we shall all feel if we can get a favourite child of the Lord (Sri Ramakrishna) like yourself as a member of the Math? This will conduce to the welfare of the inmates of the Math as well as yourself and, inspired by your living example, your family people, the student community of Calcutta, and the educated section of the society will try to mould their lives on the pattern set by you. It is impossible to express, in a short letter like this, my joy at the news of your intention to stay at the Math. What a big responsibility weighs on your shoulders and what an important part you have to play in the management of the Math, you will come to know when you stay for some time at the Math.

I am happy to hear that our Holy Mother (Sri Sarada Devi) and all the others at the Udbodhan and the Math are keeping well. For some time past, Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) was not well, and I was anxious to get his news. I am glad to learn that he has gradually recovered and is now engaged in the service and worship of the Lord (Sri Ramakrishna) as before.

It is not yet definite whether Paltu Babu will stay on here during the winter or not; everything depends on the health of Vijan. If his health is all right and he is able to stand the cold of this place, then they will spend the winter here itself. The doctor, of course, is saying that it would be better for him to spend the winter here. It is already sufficiently cold here; in the nights, we have to use the quilt, and during daytime warm clothing.

Hope everything is going on all right at the Math. Please accept my heartfelt love and *pranāmas*, and convey the same to Baburam Maharaj and Khoka Maharaj (Swami Subodhananda). My sincere love and best wishes to all the other *sannyāsins* and *brahmacārins*.

Ever yours in love,  
Shivananda

PS. My love and best wishes to Frank. Paltu asked me to convey his love and *pranāmas* to you, Baburam Maharaj, and Khoka Maharaj.

## REASON, FAITH, AND THE HOLY WRIT

[ EDITORIAL ]

Every religion insists on a faithful adherence to the injunctions of its scriptures for the achievement of the ends it promises. There is nothing unreasonable or objectionable in this, but for the fact that religions often insist on an uncritical acceptance of everything found in the scriptures. Such insistence is as much against the true spirit of religion as against that of science, and modern man particularly finds it difficult to accept the verdict of the scriptures on many matters. The difficulty arises with regard to two things. One is with regard to the end itself: How do we know that the ends promised by the religions are true and correct? Secondly, with regard to the means and the many statements in the scriptures of the different religions which are not corroborated by our direct observation and experience and are contrary to the views and conclusions of modern science, we find even the believing nowadays obsessed with innumerable doubts—not to speak of the ultra-rationalist who refuses to have any truck with religion. Specially when they try to adjust their conduct in the light of the scriptural injunctions, they run their heads against a big wall of confusion. Granting that we have to act by the directions of the scriptures, the first question that arises is: which scriptures are we to follow?

Every religion regards its own scripture as containing the whole truth, as opposed to the partial revelation presented to us by the scriptures of other religions. The Hindu looks askance at anything beyond the pale of the Vedas, which he believes has all the wisdom of God vouchsafed to humanity at any time, and the Christian and the Mohammedan are even less considerate to those who do not see eye to eye with their

respective scriptures, viz the Bible and the Koran. Even with regard to the scriptures of one's own religion, there is no unanimity of opinion as to their exact import. Then, again, there is the case of the illiterate who has no capacity to study the scriptures, and of the educated who has no aptitude for it. What are they to do? How can they act in conformity with the scriptures? And then, the extant scriptures, having been written at a particular point of time, could not have envisaged and provided for all specific situations and moments of moral and spiritual crises of every age and clime; as for example, of our own times, whose needs and problems are so much different and complicated from what confronted our ancestors. Are there no general principles which are universally applicable? If there are, what are they? These and many other questions can be answered only by a rational approach to them, and reasoning is our main guide in finding out proper and suitable answers to the questions.

Further, success in an undertaking depends, first, on our having a clear conception of the ends and the means, and, secondly, on our having faith in the possibility of achieving the end, in the efficacy of those means, and in our own capacity to achieve it. But such implicit faith does not come to us before we have satisfied ourselves, through the process of reasoning, of the truth of the ends as well as the means. Thus, reasoning comes to have a rightful place in the scheme of spiritual discipline. And Hinduism fully recognizes this. All the great teachers beginning from Kṛṣṇa down to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda of our own times have emphasized this fact. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* (XVI. 34): 'Knowing what is declared by the rules of

the scriptures, you should do thy work in the world.' The emphasis is there on 'knowing'. Manu, the ancient law-giver, says :

*Ārṣam dharmopadeśam tu vedaśāstrā-  
virodhinā ;*

*Yastarkeṇānusandhatte sa dharmam  
veda netarah—*

'Know that portion of the teachings of the sages alone to be true *dharmā* which stands the test of logical reasoning that is not opposed to the Vedas.'

So also, another law-giver, Bṛhaspati, says :

*Kevalam śāstramāśritya na kartavyo  
vidhinirṇayah ;*

*Yuktihīne vicāre tu dharmalopaḥ pra-  
jāyate—*

'Our course of conduct should not be decided solely on the basis of the injunctions of the scriptures. By blindly following them without using our sense of discretion and power of reasoning, there is likelihood of a lapse of *dharmā*, righteous conduct.'

A verse in the *Mahābhārata* (II.Iv.1) reads :

*Yasya nāsti nijā prajñā kevalam tu  
bahusrutah ;*

*Na sa jānāti śāstrārtham darvī sūpa-  
rasāniva—*

'He who is well versed in the scriptures, but has not brought to bear upon them his own power of independent judgement, cannot understand their essence, even as a ladle is quite unaware of the taste of the soup it serves.'

On being told by somebody that he had read a few books but found them to be mere words, the late Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, the Abbot of the Sringeri Math replies : 'What more can you expect in a

book? You must supplement it by your own thinking.' Śrī Śaṅkara, in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* (I.i.1), while explaining the import of the word '*jijñāsā*' (inquiry) in *Athāto Brahmajijñāsā*, very significantly remarks : 'Thus there are many who follow opposite views by depending on logic, scriptural texts, and their semblances. If one accepts any one of these views without examination, one is liable to be deflected from emancipation and come to grief. For this reason, the first *Sūtra* proposes, under the designation of an inquiry into Brahman, a disquisition of the Vedānta texts, to be carried on with the help of *conformable* arguments, and having for its aim the highest beatitude.' Yāmunācārya, the *guru* of Śrī Rāmānuja, says in his *Siddhitraya* : 'All this teaching may carry weight with believers. We are not credulous, and so we require logic to convince us.' Sri Ramakrishna admonishes one of his disciples not to become a fool because he has taken to religious life, and gives full scope for the free play of reason in his spiritual ministration of his chief and foremost disciple, Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda himself says : 'Mere book testimony is rather shaky. We have to take what appeals to the inner spirit. . . . Personally I take as much of the Vedas as agrees with reason.' Thus the Hindu teachers accord a due place for the exercise of reason in spiritual matters and for deciding what is true in the scriptures and what is not.

In Christianity also, the necessity of reasoning as a method of arriving at correct decisions is accepted in a manner, when St. Thomas Aquinas says : 'My purpose is to declare the truth which the Catholic Faith professes. But here I must have recourse to natural reason, since the gentiles do not accept the authority of Scripture. . . . Accordingly, of the four books into which the *Summa* is divided, the first three

make no appeal to revelation, except to show that it is in accordance with conclusions reached by reason.' (Quoted in abstract by Bertrand Russell in *History of Western Philosophy*, London, 1957, p. 476) And reason, as Thomas Aquinas points out in the very same abstract, has its own limitations and cannot be the final arbiter in all matters. He says: 'Natural reason, however, is deficient in the things of God.' Reason works within the province of the intellect, but intellect covers only a part of man's being. The conclusions drawn from pure reason depend on the intellectual capacity of the individual, and the same facts may lead two different individuals to two exactly opposite conclusions. Also, no view based on reasoning can be considered as true for all time; for there is always the possibility of its being disproved by a person of superior intelligence and superseded by another. The theories of science are a case in point: those theories whose validity was unquestioned or unquestionable a few centuries back, or even a few decades back, are no longer held equally valid by modern science today. Particularly, in matters of religion and spirituality, there is always the element of the supernatural, and reason based entirely on the data supplied by the senses, mind, and the intellect is vitiated to that extent and cannot lead us to absolute truth. All that reason can do is to indicate the probable reality of the higher spiritual truths and help us to acquire the necessary preliminary faith to follow the precepts for gaining a first-hand knowledge of those truths. That is why all religions discourage vain argumentation and disputation for their own sake, and say that reasoning should be in conformity with the revelation of the scriptures. That is to say, we have to make use of reason, not for merely proving or disproving the statements in the scriptures about the spiritual realities, but for ascertaining the truth

about them. As the *Imitation of Christ* (I.v.1) puts it: 'Truth is to be sought in the scriptures, not eloquence. All holy Scripture should be read in the spirit in which it was written.' The *Bhāgavata* (XI.xviii.30) says that one interested in getting at the spiritual truth should not be given to barren argument. 'In disputes arising out of empty discussions, he should take neither side (*śuṣkavādavivāde na kañcitpakṣam samāśrayet*).' The same verse warns us against running into these two extremes: either decrying everything contained in the scriptures, as the heretic does, or believing anything and everything in them and sticking on to all sorts of meaningless practices prescribed by them, as the conservative religionist would do.

If reason is to lead us to truth, we must be free from all prejudices and unbiased by preconceived notions. For this, along with reasoning, practice for the purification of the heart and intellect is absolutely necessary. Among the qualifications of the aspirant fit for the highest knowledge listed by Śaṅkara in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (16 and 17), we find the following mentioned side by side: he must be intelligent (*medhāvī*), learned (*vidvān*), and skilled in arguing in favour of the scriptures and refuting counter-arguments against them (*ūhāpohavicaṣṇaḥ*), on the one hand, and endowed with the power of discrimination (*vivekī*), and calmness and allied virtues (*śama*, calmness, *dama*, self-control, etc.), on the other. When, through reasoning, we have obtained a working faith, we must forthwith proceed to test the truth of the scriptures by actual experiment, so that this faith may turn into a conviction, and not rest content with an intellectual assent or dissent. Then only reason becomes valuable. Reason, when exercised in the proper spirit, leads to faith, and faith gets confirmation by greater reason, until at last reason and faith coalesce in inspiration and

realization of the highest truth. And for this final consummation, reason and faith must be combined with works, that is, with the spiritual discipline mentioned in the scriptures. In the terminology of the Bible : 'Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone ; by works was faith made perfect.' (James ii. 17 and 22) Or as the Hindu would say, intellect, emotion, and will must work in unison ; *śravaṇa* (hearing the words of the scriptures), *manana* (reflecting on them), and *nididhyāsana* (perseverance in following the injunctions until realization) must be carried on together and at each stage of spiritual evolution. And at each stage, they acquire greater and greater significance and meaning when continually exercised.

Thus, reason and faith are not two things running parallel to each other or in opposite directions, but interdependent and coextensive. They appear to be opposed to each other only when they are employed independently of each other and not followed up by action or the corresponding discipline of the mind. Reason, faith, and action are the three phases of a single discipline, inasmuch as the sources from which they spring, viz intellect, emotion, and will, are the three aspects of the same mind. And their true import in the field of religion will remain obscure to us so long as we make use of only one of them at the expense of the other in arriving at conclusions in regard to things spiritual. The conflict between science, religion, and the 'modern substitutes for religion' such as atheism, agnosticism, scepticism, humanism, etc. has its roots in this tendency of the human mind to exalt one aspect above the other. The sciences, and to a large extent the 'modern substitutes of religion' build up their philosophy on the single foundation of pure reasoning, based on observation and sense data. While the principle works fairly well in the domain of science, which

is not directly connected with the conduct and behaviour of men as such, when over-emphasized and stretched beyond its own limited field, it is likely to miss many other facts of life.

As against the scientific view, the dogmatic view of religion mistakes faith with blind belief and vehemently discourages all reasoning and questioning of its authority, with the result that it makes a mockery of religion and all sorts of superstitious beliefs and meaningless customs and outworn local practices pass off as the highest expressions of religion. On the other hand, the 'substitutes of religion' referred to above feel no need for God or the speculations about the ultimate realities of life ; not only that, many of them positively distrust the intimations of religion. Their concern is the life on this earth. But life on earth is not a drifting along aimlessly driven by human impulses. Man as he is is a creature of his impulse, and without the restrictive influence of his moral conscience, he would be no better than a savage animal. Civilization and culture imply the curbing of these natural impulses and utilizing them for a higher purpose, for the common good and the betterment of humanity as a whole. And in this endeavour, the state, the society, and religion are the three important factors. But, while the former two aim at or are successful only in checking the outward expression of the impulses or at best in changing the external behaviour of man to meet the limited ends of building up a stable society and a welfare state, it is religion alone that gives a lasting direction to these impulses, changes their very nature and with it the whole personality of man himself, by rousing up his moral conscience. A naive sort of realism grounded in a materialistic view of life and man, or a comfortable philosophy of social action and morality such as is advocated by humanism, fail to

face boldly the real problems of life; they fail to look at them in a broader perspective. Society and its concomitants—politics, economic well-being, and a good life of social etiquette and morals—are but a passing phase in the onward march of human progress and do not touch the deeper levels of humanity. Conventional morality obtaining in a society may be all right as a convenient arrangement for the smooth working of a society, but is not proof against the shocks of life. In times of danger and crisis, man wants a stronger support than the consolations a scientific culture and civilization or a stable welfare state can provide. This stronger support is found in the inner depths of his own conscience, in his own spiritual nature, and not in an outward conformity to the social standards of a society. Man must be helped to find this strong support and to find his moorings in an ever fluctuating world beset with evil, sorrow, suffering, and death and their opposites; then only can he feel safe in all circumstances. And the holy scriptures are our greatest guide in this respect, and it behoves us to listen to their voice. Therefore it is that the *Gītā* (XVI. 24) declares: 'Let the scripture be thy authority in ascertaining what should be done and what should not be done. Knowing what is ordained in the scriptures, thou shouldst act in the world'; and this is what Manu (II.6 and 13) means when he says: 'Vedas are the roots of *dharma*, righteousness (*Vedo'khilo dharmamūlam*); in the matter of deciding what is *dharma*, scriptures are the supreme authority (*dharmañijñāsāyām pramāṇam paramam śrutih*).'

Now, what are these scriptures or *sāstras*? As we generally understand, they are a body of texts in which are treasured the spiritual struggles and experiences of the whole human race. The spiritual experience itself being incapable of being put

into words, we may say that they are the imperfect attempts of the seers themselves or their immediate disciples to record their experience for the benefit of the future generations. The records are naturally affected by the intellectual capacity of not only the seers themselves, but also of the disciples to whom the experiences were communicated, and also by the needs of the particular disciples and the necessities of the times in which they lived. In many cases, the inexpressible nature of the experience has forced the seers to use highly enigmatic language in describing it. Though the immediate disciples understood it, it is incomprehensible to us. To make it intelligible to the ordinary people and to meet the demands of a subsequent age, the later teachers have added their own commentaries and glosses in explanation of the original teachings in the light of their own observations and experience and according to their understanding. So much so a bewildering mass of literature, very much different in content and form, has grown round the original teachings. Not all of them are equally authoritative and equally useful to everybody. Some of them are of a purely temporal character and deal with things which are of no value at all to our times. We are not bound to accept unquestioningly every word in them as gospel truth, specially in matters of this world that are within easy reach of scientific observation and experiment. As Śaṅkara says in his commentary on the *Gītā* (XVIII.66): '*Śruti* is an authority in transcendental matters, beyond the range of the ordinary means of knowledge, such as *pratyakṣa* or immediate perception. . . . A hundred *śruti* texts do not gain authority, if they describe fire as cold or dark'. Even in matters of spirituality, we are to be wary in accepting anything which goes against reason, for religious experience is not irrational but trans-rational. That

does not mean that we should reject anything because it is not within our ordinary range of experience. And in thus ascertaining the real and the true and in selecting from amongst them what is particularly useful to us in our stage of growth, we may take the aid of reason as much as possible. 'The scriptures contain', in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, 'a mixture of sand and sugar.' We must take only the sugar and reject the sand.

Hinduism makes a distinction between two types of scriptures: the Śrutis and the Smṛtis, the former embodying the eternal truths of religion and the latter their application in the lives of the ordinary masses in keeping with the needs of a particular time. The former, by their very connotation, are naturally more important and universal; the latter are secondary and variable according to the needs of the time, place, and the individual. The essence of the scriptures is that which is true for all times and in all places. Truth is truth irrespective of time, place, and personalities; it does not decrease or increase by the performance of work, as the *Itihāsopaniṣad* (20) puts it (*na karmaṇā vardhate na kaṇṭhyān*), and is capable of being discovered by everyone here and now. But for this we must be prepared to undergo the necessary discipline, and conduct for ourselves, preferably with the help of a spiritual guide, the experiments which the earlier teachers and seers have conducted. Again and again, we come back to this idea of practice and experiment in finding out the truth and essence of the scriptures. Experience and testing for ourselves is the final proof of the spiritual truth, as of the scientific truth. Scriptures, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, are like a letter written by a relative requesting for some articles to be sent. When the contents of the letter are known, one proceeds to carry out its directions, and one is no more in need

of the letter. Similarly, 'one should learn the contents of the scriptures and then act according to their injunctions. . . . In the scriptures you will find the way to realize God. But after getting all the information about the path, you must begin to work. Only then can you attain your goal.' The authority of the scriptures, in the ultimate analysis, lies in the experience of the earlier teachers as also of our own. And thus far is their usefulness: they provide us with a guide map into the unknown tracts of the spiritual world; but only a serious exploration will lead us to the inner secrets and beauties of those regions. As Śaṅkara puts it graphically in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (65): 'As a treasure hidden underground requires (for its extraction) competent instruction, excavation, the removal of stones and such other things lying above it and (finally) grasping, but never comes out by being (merely) called out by name, so the transparent Truth of the Self, which is hidden by Māyā and its effects, is to be attained through the instructions of a knower of Brahman, followed by reflection, meditation, and so forth, but not through vain argumentation.'

This practice of the scriptural precepts with faith is the real key to the understanding of the scriptures, not mere reasoning. The work of reason ends when it gives us faith. Thereafter also, in the stage of practice, we have to use it, but for a different purpose: to assert the truth we have discovered in the scriptures in every movement of our life and to reject the spurious. This is what is known in Sanskrit as the *nityānityavastuviveka*, discrimination between the real and the unreal. When Pratap, a devotee, asks Sri Ramakrishna: 'Shouldn't we reason any more then?', the latter replies: 'I am asking you not to indulge in futile reasoning. But reason, by all means, about the real and the unreal, about what is permanent and

what is transitory. You must reason when you are overcome by lust, anger, or grief.' This practice, coupled with faith and discrimination, opens up new avenues of approach to the scriptures and throws a flood of light on them at every stage of our progress, which cannot otherwise be got by dry reasoning. Not only so: by continuous practice, we develop a new insight into things. When we reach this stage, we are no longer in need of the external scripture to guide us. Our own purified inner conscience speaks to us, as no book can do, with an authoritative voice and reveals to us directly the truths hidden in the body of texts. This inner conscience is the real scripture. This idea is beautifully expressed in the following supplication of Thomas à Kempis in the *Imitation of Christ* (III. ii. 1-2):

'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth, I am Thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of Thy mouth; let Thy speech distil as the dew. . . . Let not Moses, nor any of the Prophets, speak to

me; but speak Thou rather, O Lord God, the Inspirer and Enlightener of all of the Prophets; for Thou alone, without them, canst perfectly instruct me; but they, without Thee, will avail me nothing. They may, indeed, sound forth words, but they give not the spirit. Most beautifully do they speak; but if Thou be silent, they inflame not the heart. They give the letter, but Thou disclovest the sense. They publish the mysteries, but Thou unlockest the meaning of the things signified. They declare the commandments, but Thou enablest us to fulfil them. They show the way, but Thou givest strength to walk in it. What they can do is only from without, but Thou instructest and enlightenest the heart. They water outwardly, but Thou givest the increase. They cry aloud in words, but Thou impartest understanding to the hearing.'

When the scriptures, reason, and faith bring us to this state when we are able to hear this inner voice eternally speaking to us, then they would have fulfilled their purpose.

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## THE UNCHANGING

MR. ERNEST BRIGGS

'One thing is changeless, near or far;  
Beyond all reasoning and all reckoning;  
Within, without, beneath, around, above,  
It shines more pure and constant than a star;  
As it is, so it is, as it is!'

'Will you not tell me of this changeless thing?'

'Yes, I will tell you; it is simply this—

The Power of Love'

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# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S SYNTHESIS OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION—1

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

The subjects of science and religion are getting more and more important to man in the modern age. They are two great disciplines, which, when combined harmoniously, can bring about an all-round expression of human genius. But, unfortunately, for the last few centuries, the relationship between the two has not been quite happy. In the twentieth century, however, a new approach is becoming evident, and the representative thinkers among scientists and religious people are beginning to discern a close interrelation between these two branches of human knowledge. They are slowly veering round to the point of view that science and religion can heartily embrace each other, without detriment to the cause for which each stands, and work for the good of humanity. It is being realized more and more by both that there are elements in science that religion can adopt in order to fortify itself, and elements in religion that can deepen and strengthen science. I shall here touch upon some of these points of contact, and discuss the methods and results of both the disciplines, against the background of the unity and totality of knowledge and in the light of the synthetic approach and vision of Swami Vivekananda, who was an outstanding spiritual and intellectual luminary of the modern age and worked successfully to bring about this great consummation. Writes Romain Rolland about him :

'In the two words equilibrium and synthesis, Vivekananda's constructive genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit : the four *yogas* in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and

science, religion and action, from the most spiritual to the most practical. ... He was the personification of the harmony of all human energy.' (Romain Rolland : *Life of Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta 14, Third Impression, p. 310)

## THE SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE

The civilization in which we live today is the product of the discipline of the human mind known as science. When we study science at close quarters, in the way the great scientists have applied themselves to this pursuit, we find two aspects in its discipline. The first is *pure science*, science which tries earnestly to understand the truth of experience through a dispassionate inquiry ; and the second is *applied science*, in which the truths discovered by pure science flow as inventions for the technical enrichment of human life. These two, science as *lucifera* and science as *fructifera*, science as *light* and science as *fruit*, always go together. Knowledge leads to power, and power leads to control and manipulation of the forces of nature, enabling man to condition his life and environment with deliberation. Every new discovery in pure science, at some stage or other, becomes converted into applied science, into control and manipulation of the forces of nature. And the result, as revealed in recent history, is the great saga of scientific discovery and invention resulting in the world-wide technological civilization of today. It is a most fascinating study how the human mind, disciplined in this pursuit of science, develops the capacity to wrest from nature truth after truth, hidden and jealously guarded by her, leading to

our extraordinary age of nuclear science and space travel.

#### LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE

But, when we go deeper into this subject of science, its limitations become apparent. To illustrate: two branches of science, viz physics, including astronomy, and biology, have given us a vast body of insights regarding the nature of the universe and man. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, physics was warped in its final judgements. It saw materialism and mechanism reigning supreme in the universe. There was then a cock-sureness in its pronouncement; but, in the twentieth century, an element of humility is discernible in the attitude of the great physicists of the age. In the nineteenth century, knowledge was not deep enough, and scientists looked only at the surface of things. But, along with the discovery of such facts as radio-activity and insight into the nucleus of the atom, the realization has come that there is a severe limitation placed on our knowledge regarding the truth of the external world. Science owns today that it deals only with the *appearances* of things and not with the *reality* behind these appearances. Some of the greatest of modern physicists tell us that what science has revealed of the world around us is only the outer aspect of things. Behind this *observable* universe, there is an *unobservable* universe. This is a great confession of the limitations of science and its methods. Science is dealing with phenomena revealed by the senses or by apparatuses helpful to the senses. But these senses reveal so little, and what they reveal only tell us that there are realities behind the sense world determining it and controlling it. Science restricts itself to the understanding of the observable part of the universe and to controlling its energies for the uses of man.

A similar situation obtains in the science

of biology. In the last century, it was cock-sure about its pronouncements. By a study of the different aspects of the phenomena of life it arrived at the great theory of evolution, from which it drew certain conclusions which directly led to a form of materialism that equated man with the animal, and both to a machine. Today, scientists tell us that they were not happy titles that Darwin chose for his famous books *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*. Sir Julian Huxley suggests that these could have been more appropriately titled *The Evolution of Organisms* and *The Ascent of Man*. (Sir Julian Huxley: *Evolution After Darwin*, Vol. I, The University of Chicago Press, p. 17) But then, these books appeared at a time when a fierce controversy was going on between emerging science and the entrenched Christian dogma, and this had its impact even on the choosing of the titles of great scientific books. The science of physics with its thoroughgoing materialism and mechanistic determinism, and the science of biology with its newly discovered evolutionary theory and its domination by the general materialistic outlook of science and scientists of the age, helped to shatter nineteenth century man's faith in religion and spiritual values.

#### LIMITATIONS OF DOGMA-BOUND RELIGION

Added to this was the attack on religion from the great social idealists and revolutionary social thinkers like Karl Marx. It was the period of the industrial revolution. These idealists asked: If God is there in an extra-cosmic heaven, why is there so much suffering in this world, why are millions starving, and why are thousands of little children made to slave in factories and workshops for the gain of a few capitalist exploiters? This kind of inequality, this kind of oppression of man by man in the presence of an all-powerful

God, is something we cannot understand or bear. Marx, accordingly, characterized religion as the 'soul of soulless conditions, the heart of a heartless world, the opium of the people'.

The result was that, by the end of the nineteenth century, religion and faith in God and eternal verities ceased to be the ruling ideas of modern civilization; the power of religion to influence human thinking and conduct disappeared; man lost the fear of God, and more especially the fear of the devil! Religious dogma had upheld the latter more than the former as conducive to moral control of human action and belief. But the scientific spirit shattered faith in the devil and, along with it, faith in God as well. These were treated as primitive superstitions unworthy of modern civilized man. Modern science treated religion as a dangerous error in the beginning and as a harmless illusion in the end.

But the two great world wars, and the various crises—economic and political—that followed the one and preceded the other in this twentieth century, brought about a certain chastening of the spirit of western thinkers, especially of those in the scientifically advanced countries of the West. Social thinkers became less and less cock-sure of their remedies for human ills. Even great scientists began to feel and express that science, as understood and pursued by them, was not enough. Einstein said: 'Science can denature plutonium; but it cannot denature the evil in the heart of man.' That is not its function. Most scientists agree today that science alone cannot ensure human happiness; it can only create *conditions* for his happiness; but it cannot ensure that man *shall be* happy or man *shall be* really fulfilled. That is not the function of science as understood in the positive sciences of physics, biology, etc; it is the province of

another discipline, the science of the inner nature of man, which is the true meaning of religion as understood in Indian thought.

#### RELIGION AND SCIENCE IN THE VEDANTIC PERSPECTIVE

Modern civilization has overrated science and technology, just as the older civilizations had underrated it. There is need today to view science in its proper perspective—the perspective of total human knowledge and welfare. This is one of the several vital contributions of Swami Vivekananda to modern thought. Dealing with the complementary character of eastern contributions to religion and western contributions to science, he said in his lecture on 'My Master' delivered in New York in 1896:

'Each of these types has its grandeur, each has its glory. The present adjustment will be the harmonizing, the mingling of these two ideals. To the oriental, the world of spirit is as real as to the occidental is the world of senses. In the spiritual, the oriental finds everything he wants or hopes for; in it he finds all that makes life real to him. To the occidental, he is a dreamer; to the oriental, the occidental is a dreamer playing with ephemeral toys, and he laughs to think that grown-up men and women should make so much of a handful of matter which they will have to leave sooner or later. Each calls the other a dreamer. But the oriental ideal is as necessary for the progress of the human race as is the occidental, and I think it is more necessary. Machines never made mankind happy and never will make. He who is trying to make us believe this will claim that happiness is in the machine; but it is always in the mind. That man alone who is the lord of his mind can become happy, and none else. And what, after all, is this power of machinery? Why should a man who can send a current of

electricity through a wire be called a very great man and a very intelligent man? Does not nature do a million times more than that every moment? Why not then fall down and worship nature?' (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. IV, p. 155, 8th edition)

#### THE SPIRITUAL URGES IN MODERN SCIENCE

The universe was a mystery to man in the primitive stage; it has not ceased to be so for civilized man even in this twentieth century. We find scientists like the late Sir James Jeans writing books on the scientific view of the universe with such titles as *The Mysterious Universe*. Even after all these marvellous scientific discoveries and inventions, the scientist still treats nature as profoundly mysterious. In spite of all the knowledge that he has gained, the scientist feels that he has only scratched the surface of nature, that he is yet far far away from the heart of the problem of the universe. Says Sir James Jeans in his *The New Background of Science* (p. 68):

'Physical science set out to study a world of matter and radiation, and finds that it cannot describe or picture the nature of either, even to itself. Photons, electrons, and protons have become about as meaningless to the physicist as  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $z$  are to a child on its first day of learning algebra. The most we hope for at the moment is to discover ways of manipulating  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $z$  without knowing what they are, with the result that the advance of knowledge is at present reduced to what Einstein has described as extracting one incomprehensible from another incomprehensible.'

If the mystery of the universe has eluded the scientist so much, the mystery of man has eluded him even more. The late Sir Arthur Eddington, the famous mathematician and physicist, concludes his book,

*Space, Time and Gravitation* (pp. 200-1), with a pointed reference to this predicament:

'The theory of relativity has passed in review the whole subject-matter of physics. It has unified the great laws, which by the precision of their formulation and the exactness of their application have won the proud place in human knowledge which physical science holds today. And yet, in regard to the nature of things, this knowledge is only an empty shell—a form of symbols. It is knowledge of structural form, and not knowledge of content. All through the physical world runs that unknown content which must surely be the stuff of our consciousness. Here is a hint of aspects deep within the world of physics, and yet unattainable by the methods of physics. And, moreover, we have found that where science has progressed the farthest, the mind has but regained from nature that which the mind has put into nature.'

'We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last, we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the footprint. And lo! it is our own.'

Man as thinker, man as observer, man as the self has left his 'footprints on the shores of the unknown', on the shores of the 'not-self' aspects of the universe. It is time that science tried to unravel this remarkable mystery of man. There seems to be a profounder mystery hidden within it than in the depths of outer space or of the atom. It is time that science turned its attention to tackling this mystery. All other mysteries pale into insignificance by the side of this one; it holds the key to all other mysteries.

In a talk over the B.B.C. a few decades ago, Eddington posed this great question,

'What is the truth about ourselves?', and proceeded to answer: 'We may incline to various answers: We are a bit of star gone wrong. We are complicated physical machinery—puppets that strut and talk and laugh and die as the hand of time turns the handle beneath. But let us remember that there is one elementary inescapable answer: We are that which asks the question.'

*We are that which asks the question.* Man is primarily a subject; man cannot be reduced to objective dimensions. He is essentially the seer, the knower, the observer; he is the *dr̥k* or *sākṣin* or *kṣetrajñā*, in the language of Vedānta. Here Eddington throws a hint at 'aspects deep in the world of physics, but unattainable by the methods of physics', but containing tremendous philosophical possibilities for advancing man's knowledge of himself and of the universe; this is obviously outside the pale of investigation by the positive sciences and their methods.

Another scientist, the late Prince Louis de Broglie, an authority on quantum theory and wave mechanics, dealt with the same subject in an article on 'The Poetry of Science', contributed some years ago to the international monthly *Mirror*. Starting with a famous quotation from Blaise Pascal: 'In space, the universe engulfs me and reduces me to a pin-point; through thought I understand the universe', de Broglie concludes: 'In that sublime pun lies the beauty, the poetry of pure science, and its high intellectual worth.'

'What am I?' Physically, I am a speck of microscopic dust in the vast immensity of the universe. But *through thought I comprehend this universe*. Man as scientist comprehends, in a small formula given by his thought, the vast phenomena of nature, with its immensity and variety. What must be the profound mystery of man who, in one aspect, is only a pin-point

engulfed by the spacial immensity of the universe, but yet, in another aspect, is able to compress the whole of that immensity into a few formulae given by the power and penetration of his thought?

#### THE MYSTERY THAT IS MAN

So man has dimensions that cannot be reduced to the merely physical, the merely material. These latter are his 'not-self' aspects which enter into the constitution of his body, which obviously is just a speck of dust in that vast world of the not-self; but there is in him also something transcendental, which cannot be so reduced. He is the self; that is his primary, inalienable aspect. And if science is to progress further, it has to choose for investigation this field of the mystery of man which towers over its erstwhile study, namely, the mystery of the external universe. This is a vast field of study—the field of man's awareness, the field of his consciousness, his ego, his being the *subject* and not the *object*; science will find here a vaster and more fascinating and rewarding field of study than in external nature. Already scientists in the West are slowly turning their attention to this great mystery, the mystery of 'Man the Unknown' in the words of Alexis Carrel, apart from that of 'Man the Known', which is the subject of the positive sciences like physics, chemistry, and biology, and behaviouristic psychology.

Man is the creator of science and technology, culture and civilization; he is also today the only possible destroyer of his civilization. Everything about him is a mystery. As Lincoln Barnett says in his study of Einstein's contributions to modern scientific thought:

'In the evolution of scientific thought, one fact has become impressively clear: there is no mystery of the physical world which does not point to a mystery beyond itself. All highroads of the intellect, all

byways of theory and conjecture, lead ultimately to an abyss that human ingenuity can never span. For man is enchained by the very condition of his being, his finiteness and involvement in nature. The further he extends his horizons, the more vividly he recognizes the fact that, as the physicist Niels Bohr puts it, "We are both spectators and actors in the great drama of existence". Man is thus his own greatest mystery. He does not understand the vast veiled universe into which he has been cast for the reason that he does not understand himself. He comprehends but little of his organic processes and even less of his unique capacity to perceive the world around him, to reason and to dream. Least of all does he understand his noblest and most mysterious faculty: the ability to transcend himself and perceive himself in the act of perception.' (*The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, pp. 126-7, Mentor edition)

#### THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF RELIGION

Here is the meeting-point of science and religion, as revealed by Indian thought; for religion, as expounded in Vedānta, takes up the investigation of the mystery of experience where the positive sciences leave off. This 'Man the Unknown', man as the *subject* of experience, is its special field of investigation. Says Swami Vivekananda:

'Beyond consciousness is where the bold search. Consciousness is bound by the senses. Beyond that, beyond the senses, men must go, in order to arrive at truths of the spiritual world, and there are even now persons who succeed in going beyond the bounds of the senses.' These are called *rsis* (seers of thought), because they come face to face with spiritual truths.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 253, 8th edition)

Indian thought upholds both religion

and science as valid disciplines in the pursuit of truth. India endorses the view expressed by Eddington about the spiritual kinship of science and religion: 'You will understand the true spirit neither of science nor of religion unless seeking is placed in the forefront.' (*Science and the Unseen World*, p. 54)

India's thinkers never saw any contradiction between the two, unlike the scientists and theologians of the West. Such contradiction and conflict are the result of a narrow view of both science and religion which, however, the modern West is struggling to discard. Many students of science, not to speak of laymen, have vague and rather confused notions about what science means. The same is true about religion. To the ordinary man, science means no more than the gadgets like radio or television or other material benefits conferred on mankind by scientific technology. Students of science generally identify it with the several departments of science such as physics, chemistry, etc., which they study in schools and colleges. But we have to turn to the great scientists themselves to learn what science is; and from them we learn that it is the pursuit of truth—of truth hidden in the facts of nature, in the data revealed by the senses and the data revealed by experiments. It is a sincere, critical, detached study of experience, by which confused data are reduced to meaning and orderliness and brought under control. Says Karl Pearson:

'The classification of facts, the recognition of their sequence and relative significance, is the function of science, and the habit of forming a judgement upon these facts, unbiased by personal feeling is characteristic of what may be termed the scientific frame of mind.' (*Grammar of Science*, 1900, p. 6)

Science so understood is not tied up with any particular body of facts. In the words of one of the great biologists, J. Arthur Thomson :

'Science is not wrapped up with any particular body of facts ; it is characterized as an intellectual attitude. It is not tied down to any particular methods of inquiry ; it is simply sincere critical thought, which admits conclusions only when these are based on evidence. We may get a good lesson in scientific method from a businessman meeting some new practical problem, from a lawyer sifting evidence, or from a statesman framing a constructive bill.' (*Introduction to Science*, Home University Library, p. 58)

Objectivity and precision, both as to thought and verbal formulation, are the two important characteristics of the scientific method. Any study possessing

these characteristics will be science, whatever be the field of that study. Science as such is therefore not tied down to any particular order of facts, though the various departments of science like physics or chemistry, biology or sociology, are tied down to particular orders of facts. These departments have limited scope, but science itself is *unlimited* in scope ; and these various departments starting with the study of separate fields tend, in their advanced stages, to overstep their particular boundaries and merge into one converging scientific search, the search for the meaning of total experience. In this expansive context, the idea of a science of religion, the science of the facts of the inner world of man, as upheld in ancient Indian thought, and as expounded in the modern age by Swami Vivekananda, becomes a study of far-reaching significance.

(*To be continued*)

## VINOBA BHAVE: THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF HIS SOCIAL REFORMS—1

DR. JACQUES-ALBERT CUTTAT

The object of this article is to describe the work of this eminent Indian educator and reformer while describing what has inspired it, what its methods are, the results it has achieved, and what its future prospects are.

Before undertaking to broach these four points, an introductory global approach seems to me to be called for. Any observer, howsoever slight be the extent of his objectivity and correct his information, will admit that the personality of Vinoba Bhave, as it is reflected in his life, his writings, and his achievements, commands a deep respect and an ardent

admiration. As the Prime Minister of India said a few weeks ago,\* 'his presence is fortifying and ennobling'. 'I have met many great personalities,' added Mr. Nehru, 'but rarely a man of the stature of Acharya Vinoba : he has changed the mental climate of the country and communicated to the people the virtues of tolerance and compassion . . . by means, principally, of his simplicity, his moral and physical courage, and his inner strength.'

Vinoba has been compared to the great Christian saints who have brought about a

\* The article was prepared in October 1963.

reform in morality and have deepened social conscience (St. Francis of Assisi, St. Vincent de Paul, Don Bosco) as well as to Pestalozzi and to Tolstoy. A rapid survey of the similarities and the differences that are suggested by this comparison will perhaps help in assigning to Acharya Vinoba Bhave his proper place. This Indian apostle resembles the former in his love for poverty and the poor, in his heroic renunciation of his social, intellectual, and material prerogatives, and in his ardent desire to serve the humble on the three levels: the material, the social, and the spiritual, and he does so by laying stress on 'the presence of God within all beings', the rich as well as the poor. (*Bhoodan-Yajna*, collection of speeches, Ahmedabad, Navjivan Publishing House, 1957, p. 8) This faith in the vocation of the most despised of men towards moral purity brings to mind also Pestalozzi with whom he shares a confidence without reservation in the educating power of collective work. Lastly, he reminds us of Tolstoy by his proclaiming a return towards simplicity with the help of agrarian reforms and of the sharing together of cultural values, by his distrust of political and religious institutions, by his conviction that private ownership of property is a theft, and lastly and above all, by his ideal of non-violence which Gandhi inculcated in him, the latter having himself been inspired among others by Tolstoy. These resemblances also make us aware of certain differences. Vinoba is different from the saints we have mentioned in the more radical and the more exalted manner in which he hopes to transform the social structure of India and of the world by means of the 'total supplantation of the "I" by the human "we" and the divine "Thee"'. (Vinoba: *Science and Self Knowledge*, Rajghat, Koshi, 1959, p. 66) Indeed, several Europeans who have seen him carrying out his mission

have taken umbrage—without doubt mistakenly, as we shall see—at the quasi-religious cult which those who surround him bestow on him. In addition, what distinguishes him from these Christian reformers, as well as from a person like Pestalozzi, is his less acute sense of organization. Vinoba travels across the country like a meteor, converts and transforms numerous souls through his spoken word and his pen in the course of his journeys, but, to a larger extent than his western counterparts, he leaves to Providence the task of rooting his work in a more permanent manner and of evaluating its consequences and its limits, being more desirous, as he has himself said, of founding a movement than of creating an organization. Lastly, whilst the stupendous radiance of Pestalozzi, and even more so of Tolstoy, is inseparable from the exceptional literary quality of their masterpieces, the writings of Vinoba show indications of the improvisations of the wandering preacher-philosopher, who is not afraid of repetition. Lucid, penetrating, and profound, while maintaining at the same time a freshness which carries away the crowds of rustic India, his thought is capable of inspiring a Nehru and a Jayaprakash Narayan, and it is widely propagated in India; but its sententious nature, the typically Indian ambivalence of its style, with its sketchy outlines, has not yet gained him a hearing with the public at large nor with the intelligentsia of the West.

Nevertheless, over and above these differences, the spiritual heir of the apostle of non-violence shares with the reformers mentioned above, an essential feature; it is by setting consciences on fire that he hopes to attain results. Hoping against hope, he refuses to flatter the mediocre zones of the soul and to capitulate in the face of the utilitarian, egoistic, and materialistic behaviour of men. He has suc-



ceeded in drawing out and moving his fellow-men's more or less dormant dimensions of the soul which, under the layer of egoism, apathy, greed for riches, resentment, and envy, which conceal them, nevertheless exist and subsist, like a deep, underlying vigour capable of revealing unsuspected depth of generosity, devotion, unselfishness, benevolence, and social fraternity.

### I. THE INSPIRATION

What distinguishes Vinoba most clearly from the social and spiritual reformers of the West is that he is, before all else, the most faithful disciple of Gandhi; he is the second great protagonist of 'non-violence' (*ahimsā*) conceived as a virtue that is at the same time contemplative, political, and social. Towards the end of this essay, when evaluating the scope of Vinobaism in its historical and international context, I shall clarify further this notion which is the principal source of Vinoba's inspiration.

Let us restrict ourselves here to examining his 'vision' in its distant origin and in the incident that occasioned it.

1. Vinoba has taken part, albeit inconspicuously, in all the civil disobedience campaigns of the Mahatma. The latter paid him the fine homage that follows:

'He feared no sort of work in the Ashram, he swept and he cooked. He would never refuse to serve. He used to spend a large part of his time in spinning, although he was by nature a scholar and was endowed with a marvellous memory. There is almost no other of my companions who surpasses him in his dexterity at the spinning wheel. He has understood that the movement in favour of spinning can deeply contribute to lightening the burden of poverty of our villages. He can count on innumerable helpers and disciples who are ready at any moment, at a single sign from him, to sacrifice themselves. For

example, he has trained a young man in the treatment of leprosy, and this man is managing at present numerous lazarettos. He has himself published in Marathi a manual on the treatment of lepers.' (Quoted by Girija Mookerjee in his article 'Homage to Vinoba Bhave' which was published, in German, in the magazine *Kairos*, Salzburg, 1963, fasc. 4. I am indebted to this author and friend for some of the information contained in the present chapter.)

It is a known fact that it was Gandhi's wish to dissolve the Congress as a political party and to transform it into an apolitical organization, devoted to public welfare. It is known also that the successors of Gandhi, far from respecting this wish, have transformed the Congress into the political apparatus that they needed in order to take over the reins of government from the British rulers. Now, Vinoba Bhave is one of the very rare disciples and companions of Gandhi who has resisted the temptation of allowing himself to be carried away by the political scramble of which he could have been one of the leaders. Thus, he is today almost the only one to assure the survival of Gandhism, which, sceptics predict, will soon be extinguished. Defying the sceptics and the torrent of political passions, placing all his confidence in the ardent strength of the agricultural masses, Vinoba feels that he has been chosen to perpetuate the initial impetus of independent India in the novel form that he has given it, namely, that of Bhoodan-Yajna: 'sacrifice by means of land gifts', that is to say, that of the appeal made to large and small landowners to give their lands to those who do not possess any. This is how he describes the predominantly 'non-violent' inspiration which motivates his movement:

'1. We do not mind it, if one does not give land even after understanding. Because we believe that one who does not

give today will give tomorrow. The seed of thought sown in his heart is bound to bear fruit some day.

'2. If one gives with understanding, we feel happy, because it creates deep and far-reaching goodwill.

'3. If someone gives without grasping the idea behind it and under pressure, we do not feel happy, because we do not want to grab land anyhow but to create the sentiment of Sarvodaya (welfare of all) and Samya Yoga (universal union) in the world.' (*Bhoodan-Yajna*, op. cit., p. vii)

The political character of Bhoodan-Yajna is based on the statement of the fact that political liberty had brought no improvement in the social conditions of the Indian masses. Landless peasants continued to number almost half of the population, and the Indian Government, concentrating its energies on industrial reform either did not wish to or did not dare to devote its attention to the urgently needed agrarian reforms. This leads us to the incident that gave rise to the inspiration of Vinoba Bhave.

2. Ever since India acquired independence, Indian communists had sought to take advantage of the first ordeals that the country suffered. A great uneasiness had taken hold of public opinion following the massacres between Hindus and Muslims which took place following the partition of India and Pakistan. Gandhi's death had bewildered the masses. In the countryside, disorder and hunger rampaged to such a point that the disinherited began to believe that only if the present social structure collapsed, could their lot improve. The communists took advantage of all these factors to incite the peasants to break away from Gandhism and the prevailing system of government and to take justice into their own hands through violent revolt. One of these re-

volts took place in the region of Telengana in the State of Hyderabad (the present Andhra Pradesh). Communes were formed and a large number of important landowners took to flight. Moved, Vinoba set out on foot for Telengana, where the Harijans ('sons of God', name given by Gandhi to casteless persons) welcomed him as if he were a second Gandhi and begged him, in the course of a public meeting organized on the 18th of April 1951, to give them a few strips of land so that they could feed themselves. Acharya Vinoba, whose only fortune consisted in his modest clothes, was then inspired by an intuition, and he addressed the crowd in these terms: 'Is there really no-one among you who can give some land to these unfortunate people?' 'I undertake to give you one hundred acres ( $\frac{2}{5}$  km<sup>2</sup>)', replied one listener. It is as a result of this unexpected gesture that Bhoodan-Yajna was born. Within the period of two months, the gifts in land reached the figure of 12,000 acres (48 km<sup>2</sup>). Today, at the end of twelve years, they have gone up to 4.2 million acres, that is to say, about 40 per cent of Switzerland, not to mention the 5,500 'gifts of villages' of which I shall speak further on.

One can imagine the enthusiasm and the unlimited hopes that did not fail to be raised at this unexpected success. Vinoba and his friends began to wonder and to ask themselves if this country of castes and of the wooden plough was not in the process of teaching the modern world how to put an end to class struggles and to economic and social inequalities.

## II. THE METHOD

This is made up of two aspects.

1. The first is a straightforward appeal made to the conscience of large landowners. To this end, reviving the age-old tradition which enjoins on recluses and spiritual leaders to travel over the sacred land of

Bharat from north to south and from east to west before retiring into the solitude of the Himalayas, Vinoba arises at daylight and followed by his disciples, friends, and admirers of all sorts, goes from one village to another, preaching Bhoodan-Yajna. The tangible objective, as we have seen, is economic: to give some acres of arable land to the hundreds of millions of underfed peasants. But this objective, in the eyes of Vinoba, is inseparable from a more far-reaching purpose which should not be lost sight of if one wishes to grasp the originality of his movement.

Here is how he evokes this ultimate purpose: 'The time has come when we should open our hearts wider and share our belongings with others. To give is a divine arm—*daivi sampatti*—against which vulgar arms—*āsuri sampatti*—cannot resist.' (*Bhoodan-Yajña*, op. cit., p. 10) For Vinoba, the act of giving is not only the means, it is also the end of his reform, the beginning and the limit of his 'method'. The act of giving, *by itself*, generates 'purity of spirit, fraternity, goodwill, and love of the poor. When one cares for the fate of someone else, a feeling of equality is born by itself, hate and hostility disappear, for hostility has no absolute existence ...' (ibid.) Vinoba frequently varies these exhortations, not without supporting them by means of the most popular sacred scripture of India, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, on which he comments, for example, in the following manner: 'If someone jokes, do not laugh immediately. If someone strikes you, do not cry out, think that it may have been the hand of God that you have felt. If, later on, tears well up, let them flow in peace. If someone brings you the news that your mother is dead, master yourself, do not give vent to your sorrow. Do not allow your poise of mind to be ever disturbed. *If you master your heart and your spirit, all the rest will follow of itself.*'

(‘The Steadfast Wisdom’, *Gandhi Marg*, April 1961, quoted by Mookerjee) One sees that the ‘gift of land’ is the stay and the expression of what Vinoba also calls the ‘gift of the self’, but one also sees that, in its traditional acceptance of the term, this gift of the self or ‘sacrifice of the self’ (*ātma-yajña*), unlike its Christian counterpart, does not turn to the other in his capacity as the other, but turns to the freeing of the Self (*Ātman*) by means of the detachment from the I and from objects, a supreme virtue of Hinduism; it does not terminate in the fellow-being as such, but in the ‘Divine Self’ of which the fellow-being is only a provisional reflection, in the same way as myself. That is the way in which classic India sees things. Is this, in Vinoba, what the French orientalist Olivier Lacombe calls ‘love for the self, but disinterested’? We shall consider again in our conclusion as to whether Vinoba has perfected this view by adding to it certain forms of charity, such as the West conceives of.

For the time being, it is necessary to place oneself in the traditional Hindu perspective, if one wishes to understand the conviction of Vinoba and his followers. According to this, the simple fact of giving in a genuine spirit of non-violence is enough to produce *ipso facto* a transformation of the soul that is capable of changing the structure of society. Enigmatical for a westerner, the success of Vinobaism can be explained by this conviction rooted in India for four thousand years, namely, that a spiritual, interior transformation, accompanied by an exterior gesture of detachment, sets in motion, from one person to another, a state of things that is ideal for the individual as well as for society. (For the Hindu, earthly existence is only a mirage—*māyā*—transitory and contingent to a transcendental Super-Existence which *alone is real*.) Now, this perspective could

satisfy the spirit and comply, in a certain measure, with the economic and social needs of people, at a time when, a few centuries back, India was inhabited by a hundred million people and when its climate had not yet deteriorated on account of massive deforestation; however, in spite of the Indian ethos, such an attitude can no longer suffice by itself alone today, in a country where 450 million people live, of whom more than 70 per cent are villagers living often on arid land. And this, where there are available modern technical means which alone could better the lot of the peasants.

In any case, at the end of some years, Vinoba was obliged to admit that even the strongest and the most disinterested faith in man and in God—in Brahman conceived as the Divine Magician (*māyīn*) calling forth, preserving, and transforming this ultimately illusory universe (*māyā*)—does not generate by itself the capacity and the will to dig wells and irrigation canals, to produce and use fertilizers, tractors and the electrical energy necessary for making agriculture healthier, to carry on the registration of the lands and to organize the financing of their functioning. He noticed that his example and his preaching did not prevent large landowners from falling prey to the temptation of only giving away those portions of their lands that were the most barren, nor did it prevent the disinherited from falling a prey to apathy or sickness. In addition, he was disappointed to note that many of the receivers of gifts only associated themselves with his movement in the hope of getting rid of their debts, without so much as binding themselves to the donors with ties of real human sympathy.

2. But Vinoba, instead of allowing himself to be discouraged by these defeats, which will be clarified presently, draws inspiration from them in order to start, in

the second phase of his reform, the second aspect of his method: the Gramdan or 'gift of' entire 'villages'.

Whilst Bhoodan consists in distributing the lands in question amongst the poor of the region in order that they may divide them according to their will, the Gramdan—inaugurated in the village of Mangrod (Uttar Pradesh)—implies a putting together of lands based on an organization responsible for their collective development. Originally, the 'villagization' of the lands meant the passing over of the whole of these lands to the representatives of the village. This task, proving to be too heavy for a mentality that was in noway prepared for the idea of co-operatives, it was necessary to 'liberalize' this collective organism. The present working of Gramdan can be summarized as follows. If 65 per cent of the villagers, representing 50 per cent of the landed property, consent to gift their village, the whole village is considered capable of making up a Gramdan. Each landowner undertakes in writing to share one-tenth of the cultivable land with his neighbours who have no land, and to transfer the rest of his land to the community (the gram panchayat), whilst continuing still to occupy it and to collect the revenue coming from it. This means that with regard to nine-tenths of his land, he hands over to the collective community his right to mortgage or sell it, which shields it from the clutches of future possible speculators. This is a clever and revolutionary step destined to ward off the scourge of absentee landlordism which was responsible for leaving in a state of unproductivity immense stretches of land. In addition, the landowner contributes to the community a certain portion of his revenues, which become the source of capital formed with the objective of establishing in the village certain indispensable technical installations.

According to a supporter of the movement, the method of Gramdan can be reduced to the following points :

Needy peasants receive land.

Private landed property is transformed into landed property for society, duly controlled.

The running into debt through mortgages is stopped.

Cultivation through scientific methods is started.

All the inhabitants become conscious of the injustice that lies in the absolute possession by an individual of landed property, to the detriment of his neighbours, that is to say, of the earth that God gave for all to share.

Fundamentally, the country forms itself into an integrated society, the base of true democracy. 'We construct a new society starting from the villages. The republic of villages is our ideal. ...' (Vinoba Bhave, quoted by G. Mookerjee, loc. cit., chap. VII. In his recent reform aiming at reconstituting Nepal 'from bottom to top', King Mahendra has drawn his inspiration at the same time from Vinobaism ... and from the Swiss example.)

As may well be imagined, Vinoba, in order to give a start to the putting into practice of his aspirations, needed an army of volunteers. He recruited these principally from among the Sarvodaya centres formed by Gandhi. After the death of the Mahatma, all the institutions that he had intended for the benefit of peasant society, notably the 'All India Village Industries Association' and the 'All India Spinners Association', have been united to form the Sarvodaya Samaj, a movement of which Vinoba Bhave has himself become nothing less than the soul and the symbol. In the beginning of October 1963, on the occasion of the birthday of Gandhi, Vinoba did not hide from the present rep-

resentatives of Gandhism the fact that they had allowed it to become torpid, to stiffen and become bureaucratized. It was necessary to revive it by inspiring it with a spirit in conformity with certain exigencies of the modern world which the Mahatma had not sufficiently taken note of. The following fact deserves to be brought out at this point. Were it not for the untiring efforts of Vinoba, the Gandhist movement (Sarvodaya) would have become a prey to separatist and particularist tendencies, very Indian tendency in which one can discern the repercussion of the Indian bent of mind of conceiving of unity as an undifferentiated state which absorbs and abolishes diversity. Among the various Gandhian groups undertaking certain tasks—basic education, village industries, bringing together of castes—rivalries threaten to turn into open war. There is no doubt that Vinoba has reconstituted unity among them, thanks to his quality of uncontested leader of the movement.

Vinoba constantly shifts his headquarters, which are at the moment (October 1963) in Orissa.

It will not be astonishing to know that the collectivist and, at the same time, spiritual structure of this method has become the target of criticism from the right as well as from the left. 'You reproach me', he retorted in this connexion, 'of favouring the communists. Others accuse me of being the friend of the capitalists. That shows that I am on the right path'—reasoning that is eminently Indian. But, on the other hand, to those who reproach him for having thoughtlessly given over lands to peasants incapable of cultivating them, he retorts with irritation: 'If that is so, whose fault is it? Our own, of those of us of the higher castes who have egoistically refused to give to our brothers belonging to the lower castes, the education

necessary if one is to become a clever and responsible worker.' (Fritz Wartenweiler: *Vinoba Bhave*, Zurich, Diana Verlag, p. 24.) One can summarize in this way the most widespread objection: the only way, Vinoba is told, of attaining the objective that he pursues—the material and spiritual rehabilitation of the peasants—is not by this method which is too simple and in reality chimerical. Rather, it is by modernizing as quickly as possible, if necessary, even by means of pressure, our ancestral methods of cultivation and farming, and in this way increasing production and yield and the export of our agricultural products. All these will automatically result in benefit to the poor as is proved by the experience of Europe. To that, Vinoba replies more or less in the following manner: In order to arrive at that stage, Europe had to go through centuries of agricultural misery and agrarian revolutions, and that, too, at a time when she was scantily populated. Unbelievably overpopulated, India has no time to wait, she must immediately do something

for the poor wretches, even if it means at the cost provisionally of a higher output. What is good for Europe—whose economic and social system I consider to be far from ideal—is not necessarily good for India. Your objection shows to what extent you have become westernized, un-Indianized. I hope to spare India not only from the unadmitted materialism of the individualistic democracies of the West but also from the explicit materialism of the 'popular democracies'. These are collectivist but totalitarian, and their efficacy has been disproved in Russia and China. The experience of Gramdan will show itself one day as being far superior, even on the question of output, to that of the Chinese communes. Besides, Bhoodan and Gramdan do not in any way exclude the possibility that Indian agriculture may simultaneously use other methods and take inspiration from western solutions, on condition that these are Indianized in such a way that the peasant rids himself of his feeling of frustration.

*(To be continued)*

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## INDIA'S NEED AND THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT

DR. CYRUS R. PANGBORN

Many a time last year, I said to the friends I made in India: 'Who is helping the young Indian intellectual to find a faith?' It was to some a startling question. Faith seems so prevalent in India, and time has moved so slowly there, that permanence and tradition are marks of religion as of most aspects of culture. But in asking what future religious faith will have among the steadily growing class of college-educated Indians, I was thinking of the social changes which

are already accruing from the increase in scientific and technological studies. Those whom I surprised by my question were thinking more in terms of how slowly the changes seem to be coming—at least for the moment.

I can see why permanence still seems more obvious than change. Population growth continues largely unchecked, with the result that it tends to nullify other kinds of growth. Shortage of capital, overuse of land, diversion of national effort

into defence against China, political immaturity—these are just some of the problems that slow the effort to create a strong, economically and politically mature, independent nation, composed of equally mature and literate citizens. So I can also see that if the conditions of life seem to remain the same for most people, the structures of faith are likely to remain much the same, too.

#### THE TWO MENTALITIES OF EAST AND WEST

These structures of faith are deserving of some description and evaluation, even for those who know them best. But before proceeding to that task, it is necessary to suggest that differing outlooks on permanence and change are not products of different habits of vision alone, but are explained in part by differences of mind or mentality. It is neither fault nor virtue that the East has one mind and the West another—not exclusively one *or* the other, of course, but as a dominant trait. Actually, each mind has been elicited by the emergencies of unique events in the histories of the respective areas. I would call the eastern mentality the *believing* mind, and the western one the *critical* mind.

The traits of the believing mind are readiness to accept experiences of all kinds—visionary, intuitive, intellectual, rational, empirical, sensate—as significant sources of insight into reality, with no marked desire to distinguish sharply between these types of experiences or their comparative validity. Anything experiential may thus be meaningful. The critical mind, a virtually necessary tool wherever modern science is emphasized, is analytical, sceptical, insistent upon empirical verification of external things, and cautious about affirming or defining the precise meaning of non-empirical types of experience. On the whole, the believing mind, with its affirmative nature, embraces new notions

and absorbs them into old structures of belief and life in such a way that conservation is more apparent than novelty or revolution. The critical mind, by contrast, is more sharply selective and exclusive. What it finds objectionable, it rejects; what is conjectural, it debates; what is regarded as a new, defensible truth it adopts in place of contradictory claims. Obviously, continuity and conservation are bound to be less visible than change where this kind of mind is at work.

An example of the believing mind may be found in accounts treating the birth of Ramakrishna, the famed Bengali priest of Kālī, in the nineteenth century. The birth was foreshadowed by visions in which Khudiram Chatterjee, a devotee of Viṣṇu, is said to have been given foreknowledge that he would be the father of a son who would be an incarnation of the Lord. Biographers consistently grant the visions of the father as much evidential value for the doctrine of incarnation as they do the testimonies derived from the teaching of the adult Ramakrishna or his disciples. The critical mind may not be wholly inoperative. Thus authors may confess that the visions are extraordinary or inexplicable. But in refraining from the attempt to explain them, while at the same time attesting to the authenticity of the sources of the stories (though no hint is given as to what criteria govern the notion of authenticity), they clearly work mainly with believing rather than critical minds.

The critical mind would not find in the visions any direct support for a doctrine of incarnation. That mind would be inclined, rather, to seek evidence of how the *alleged* visions might have influenced the father in his attitude and conduct toward the son, how knowledge of them might have functioned in the development of the son's own self-estimate, and how they may have been generally effectual in regulat-

ing the quality of the lives of the people involved. These matters are capable of some evaluation, if observation has yielded any data at all. In any case, the critical mind would direct its attention to the effects of believing in the visions and would not regard the visions as of themselves instructive about the nature of truth or reality.

Let it be understood that neither the illustration nor the definition of minds is intended as an invidious comparison. Both minds have their virtues, and both have their faults. What is needful is that men know which mind to exercise in a given instance. Vivekananda was a 'believer'. All the same, he could be the critic too, as when losing patience with those enthusiastic devotees of spirituality who overlooked the daily physical realities of India. 'No dogmas', he noted with characteristic bluntness, 'will satisfy the cravings of hunger. . . .' (Lecture on 'The Vedanta' (1897), *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III, Advaita Ashrama, 1960, p. 432, 8th edition) His well-known concern for 'strength' is another case in point. His believing mind gave priority in value to spiritual strength, while his critical mind analysed with care the necessity of providing the foundations of bodily strength (health) and intellectual strength (knowledge) for the superstructure of spirituality. The Ramakrishna Mission is of course impressive testimony to the fact that he brought both minds into play in the formulation of his goals and his methods.

#### INDIA'S NEED FOR BOTH MINDS

So much for my seeming detour into 'mind-analysis'. Turning to the situation of the present day, we can say that India's leaders know well the importance of the critical mind to their efforts in behalf of the nation's independence and eco-

nomie security. They know that 'believing' is vital, but not enough. They are labouring to bring the critical mind to bear upon problems of the physical and social environment. Yet, there are two formidable difficulties, one of which is clear enough to them, I am sure, but the other of which I am not sure is being faced much at all. The one is that India, after all, is hardly the India of the cities, where much of the best leadership is congregated. On the contrary, India is still very much the land of the village. The other difficulty is that the leadership seems content to exercise the critical mind in relation only to the objective, external matters of life, without utilizing it in conjunction with and as constructive critic of religion. The results can be imagined, if not infallibly predicted. Young people coming from the villages, where the believing mind has governed both religious and physical existence, migrate to the more urban educational centres. Here they are taught to apply critical mentality to the problems of physical existence and social organization and nothing at all about how they might revise their religious views in order to make them a vital counterpart or ally of their other learning. The first result for such students is likely to be a kind of schizophrenia consisting of living in two worlds at once. The next stage in their development, however, is likely to be that of sloughing off the world of traditional belief in religion for the shiny new world of science, technology, and social democracy.

#### POPULAR THEISM

This is the background against which I understand and evaluate the religion of dominantly rural India. It is unnecessary to describe in detail for Indian readers the daily and holiday practices associated with religion. Who isn't familiar with the multiplicity of temples, large and small,



the deities in the two major Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite 'families' and the symbols associated with each, the times and artifacts of worship, and the permeation of home life and its routines with religious duties? What may be more pertinent to evaluation is the meanings behind the familiar details. Clearly, when we are dealing with popular theism, we have to do with deities conceived as personifications of vitalities in the natural and social orders. As personifications, they are imagined as having forms essentially human and as having human needs for homes, food, water, air, sleep, even vacations. Their functions reveal the vitalities with which they are identified. They *are* the powers of reproduction, growth; rain, sun, and storm; sickness and healing; mind, learning, skills, the arts. They are as orderly or disorderly, or both, as these powers are in nature and life. Worship is designed to foster the 'will' of such forces to operate benevolently and with orderliness; but when they 'will' not to act so, worship is directed to the end of resigning the disappointed to obedience, however unfavourable the gods' decrees.

Thus we may note that the deities of popular theism lack transcendence. They do not really *wield* the powers they represent; they *are* the powers. To deal with them as though they are 'wills', then, is to misunderstand them and to trust in faulty tools for influencing them. In other words, a scientific approach to farming, for example, has not merely to demonstrate its own efficacy, but must displace or rout religious practices long nurtured by believing minds. This is not easy when those to be persuaded are those whose continuing environment is the traditional village. The curious way in which the believing mind can simply rob a scientific proposition of any real meaning is seen in the confusion with which traditionalists can

treat the idea of purity, mingling, quite uncritically, notions of spiritual purity with those of material purity. Holy rivers and cities, famed for the effects of spiritual renewal experienced there by pilgrims, have often had claims of their efficacy for material well-being made for them—not in blatant but only in naive disregard of epidemics, poverty, mishaps, and catastrophes thriving in the same places. I remember how this phenomenon was underlined for me by a monk of the Ramakrishna Order of the opposite persuasion. His Mission is in one of India's holiest cities, and I went to visit it carrying my own flask of boiled drinking water. Feeling somewhat self-consciously the need to explain my protective measure, I was relieved and delighted to see the responsive twinkle in the monk's eyes as he said, 'But all the water here is pure—as pure as the Ganges!' His hearty chuckle added the final evidence of his having brought the critical mentality into a relation both corrective of and correlative with the true piety engendered by sound religious belief.

#### BEYOND POPULAR THEISM—WHAT?

But, the question remained then, and still does, as to who is helping the young Indian intellectual to find a faith that is a new or at least a sensibly revised one by which to live, when he has found the one of his rural childhood at odds with his new learning. Here, let it be understood, concern arises not from any fault in the *people* whose beliefs and practices are found wanting. There is no question of their personal integrity, their evident sincerity, their joy in service and devotion. The concern is rather with the effects of letting religion go unreformed so that it comes to be set over against and under judgement from modern views adopted by Indians themselves. Thousands of Indian young people are coming from the towns and villages to

the colleges and universities, there to be thrust at once into an intellectual atmosphere which grants no place for trusting in the gods to give health, prosperity, deliverance from pestilence or tragedy. So the ways of worship designed to sway the gods and secure these specific objectives also seem out-dated.

Were popular religion not the majority religion, the question would not be so pressing. As a few western students know, along with a minority of Indians, there is a spiritual heritage of enlightened belief and devotion to one God, or one divine Principle, knowledge of which is gained by profound meditation. It is a level of religion far removed from the more common and simple forms and competent in every respect to support spirituality in the modern age. Yet, the great majority of Indian students today are hardly even aware of, much less acquainted with, this aspect or treasure of their heritage. Nor, given the present educational system, are they likely to become acquainted with it. The early choice which students are required to make between the humanities and the newly introduced scientific and technological studies, coupled with pressures to accelerate their degree programmes, is resulting in the exclusion of courses in history, philosophy, religion, and literature from the curricula followed by perhaps the great majority of students.

One effect of the one-sidedness of education will surely be that of creating a shortage of philosophers and theologians prepared to reflect thoughtfully, daringly, and re-creatingly about the values of life and 'where it is all going anyway'. Another expected effect can be a growing rift between leaders in scientific and social fields and the village poor whose piety will seem unreconstructed and worthy of little better than contempt. The final result may, conceivably, be the spiritual impoverish-

ment of a nation struggling for technological advance without knowing what more human, personal, and truly spiritual values that advance should serve.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT AS GROUND FOR HOPE

Where I found encouragement to qualify my concern, it was always the Ramakrishna Movement that offered it. Here is an effort, on the one hand, to transmit India's best insights and traditions to new generations, and on the other, to relate religion responsibly to life in the world and all its material problems. The Mission hospitals bear testimony that nature-type gods are not regarded as instrumental in the cure of illness and disease. Instead, God is understood and worshipped as a divine source of inspiration to men that they may go forth in service to other men with the means of healing now available in the modern world. Similarly, men thus divinely inspired are engaged in an impressive school development programme, in organizing rural extension services for the improvement of agriculture, in relief activity, in publishing and the building up of libraries, and lecture programmes. Of particular interest is the Movement's capacity to meet people 'where they are'; that is, at whatever level of spiritual development they are found. A Mission centre may celebrate *pūjās* on the established holidays in relatively traditional fashion. Daily worship, with Ramakrishna as the focus for worshippers' attention, is usually no less understood by the simple; yet—in contrast to the popular *pūjās*—is purged of crude appeals for materialistic benefits and is conducted uniformly in surroundings noticeably decorous and spotlessly clean. Strengthening the meaning of such worship are the programmes of lectures on Indian philosophy and religion—not to mention other subject fields of emerging impor-

tance to Indians—which almost all centres of the Mission conduct. And one must not forget the retreat centre at Mayavati for both eastern and western aspirants to spirituality, where worship, reflection, and meditation are practised without the presence of any limiting image of the Absolute. There is the danger, never wholly imaginary, that India's age-long tolerance for people's worshipping at their chosen level may persist in the centres of the Mission, even when such tolerance has become less virtuous than formerly because it does not press naïveté in the direction of a religion more relevant to contemporary culture. Nevertheless, the danger is largely averted by the diversity of nurture provided by each Mission centre (as noted above), so that the aspirants find available, and urged upon them, introductions to ever higher levels of religious understanding as they exhaust the resources of a present one for nourishing their spiritual growth. Here is healthy antidote to pessimism, although discouragement is not altogether unwarranted by other observations. The Ramakrishna Mission, vigorous as it is, influences but a small percentage of India's vast population. Other contemporary movements are in numerous cases hardly movements at all, but only single *āśramas* with very local influence. And most of

the other once-dynamic developments antedating or contemporaneous with Ramakrishna have, by all accounts, passed their zenith and come to a stage of retrenchment and decline. The Mission, by contrast, is enjoying an era of expansion in both services and vitality. Yet they, too, suffer handicap—one stemming from the reluctance of able young men to exchange the ordinary life of the world for life in a monastic, world-serving Order.

It is apparent by now, I trust, that I crave for India the religious awakening which her prophets have often thought they might bring to the West. For I think the new intelligentsia of India is already tempted to think of old forms as discredited and of religion itself as therefore discredited. Now is the time to make the profound wisdom of the East both critic and purifier of an overtly naïve, popular religion which will not be credible to an independent, literate, and prosperous people. The wisdom is there, and I rejoice in the knowledge that there is a Ramakrishna Movement, and that it is doing so much to define in religious and philosophical terms the proper ends for a culture clearly in rapid transition for all the appearance it may give of changeless permanence.

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Master (to Vidyasagar): The activities that you are engaged in are good. It is very good if you can perform them in a selfless spirit, renouncing egotism. By these philanthropic activities you are really doing good to yourself. If you can do them disinterestedly, your mind will become pure and you will develop love of God. Man cannot really help the world. God alone does that—He who has created the sun and the moon, who has put love for their children in parents' hearts, endowed noble souls with compassion, and holy men and devotees with divine love. The man who works for others, without any selfish motive, really does good to himself.

*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 35

# KATHA UPANIṢAD: SĀṆKHYA POINT OF VIEW—1

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

Recently, I have published a book entitled 'Chāndogya Upaniṣad: Sāṅkhya Point of View'. In this book, I have tried to show how the Upaniṣads can be interpreted from the Sāṅkhya point of view. Besides favourable reviews in several journals, I have received letters of appreciation from eminent scholars, asking me to continue my study of the other Upaniṣads also with a similar approach, so that we can enrich our knowledge of the Upaniṣadic lore. The *Weekly Mail* of Madras, while reviewing the work, writes: 'The attempt has been worth while, and if the author follows up the effort with studies in the other Upaniṣads, it will be a work of lasting value.'

Against the above background, I propose to write a series of articles in this journal on the interpretation of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* from the Sāṅkhya point of view.

I shall be dealing with chapter II of part I of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*:

*Tam durdarśam gūḍhamanupraviṣṭam  
Guhāhitam gahvareṣṭham purāṇam;  
Adhyātmayogādhiḡamena devam  
Matvā dhāro harṣaśokau jahāti—*

'The wise man relinquishes both joy and sorrow having realized, by means of meditation on the inner self, that ancient effulgent one, hard to be seen, subtle, immanent, seated in the heart and residing within the body.'

Notes: *durdarśam*: can be known with difficulty; *gūḍham*: non-manifested; *anupraviṣṭam*: residing in the hearts of all creatures in a subtle form; *guhāhitam*: hidden in *buddhivṛtti*; *gahvareṣṭham*: associated with pleasurable and painful *vṛttis*; *purāṇam*: always of the same

nature; *adhyātmayoga*: *samādhi-yoga*.

*Exposition*: The soul which is of the nature of consciousness is not revealed in its pure form to a person who is engrossed in worldly affairs. Hence it has been described as *gūḍham* or hidden. Pure consciousness illuminates particular *buddhis* of all the individual souls by reflecting its own light through them. As such, it resides within the body of a *jīva*. Pleasures and pains, anger and hatred, arise in the mind-body system, and also remain confined to it. The mind-body system, however, acquires the potency of generating volitions and emotions of various kinds only when the physical apparatus is intelligized by consciousness. For that reason, Puruṣa may be accepted as the support (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of Prakṛti. (This has been accepted in the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*.) Matter by itself is of no use unless it is revealed by consciousness. Pure potentiality, devoid of any character, is of no advantage to anyone. Prakṛti assumes a definite character through its connexion with the spirit, and so, in and through the whole process of its manifestation, the meaning of Prakṛti is being constantly revealed through its connexion with the Puruṣa. Puruṣa, however, is not, on that account, becoming an agent. It is vitalizing Prakṛti by its mere existence, and not by any active influence. Naciketas is very eager to know the true nature of the Self or Puruṣa. It is only when one knows Puruṣa as different from Prakṛti and also as the inner essence of his own being that one attains the state of *kaivalya*, which is completely free from the threefold misery of natural life. Liberation means realization of the true form of Ātman. In other words, this is the state

in which the Self is revealed merely as *prakāśātma- Caitanya* (illuminating consciousness), which is wholly distinct from *vṛttātma- buddhi*. The *Yoga-Sūtra* (I. 3) has described this state of *kaivalya* thus: '*Tadā draṣṭuḥ svarupe'vasthānam*—At that time, the Seer (Puruṣa) rests in his own (unmodified) state.' When the individual soul realizes itself as being distinct and different from Prakṛti, it ceases to be affected by sorrows and sufferings which belong to this worldly life.

The true nature of the Self can be realized through *adhyātma-yoga*. In other words, with a view to attaining knowledge, the *mumukṣu* should practise yogic discipline. By means of *yoga*, he will be able to purify his intellect so as to make it fit for revealing the true form of the spirit. Through a long course of spiritual training, *rajas* and *tamas* of *buddhi* will be wholly subdued and made practically ineffective. In the calm state of *sāttvika buddhi* (resulting thus from the subdued condition of *rajas* and *tamas*), the true nature of the Self is revealed. One has, therefore, to go beyond Prakṛti, with the help of the intellect born of Prakṛti. *Yoga* is solely confined to the task of purifying *buddhi*. It is through yogic discipline alone that *buddhi* becomes *sāttvika* in nature, and the *sāttvika buddhi* is the only mirror that reveals the self in its true form. Through *samādhi-yoga*, the Self is differentiated completely from *buddhi* and reveals itself merely as illuminating consciousness (*prakāśātma- Caitanya*) which is by nature indifferent or *udāsīna*. (It will be admitted that consciousness, as mere revelation of objects, cannot be regarded as anything but neutral.) There is no longer any false *abhedagrahaṇa* between Puruṣa and *buddhi*. As there is no *vṛttisārūpya*, there is no feeling of pleasure and pain to disturb the liberated Puruṣa. Here the soul has been

referred to as *tam*, which is in singular number. This, however, does not imply non-dualism of the Advaita Vedānta. It is to be remembered that the realistic Sāṅkhya has admitted multiplicity in respect of Puruṣa owing to its admission of the reality of the individual *buddhis*. Even then, according to Sāṅkhya, one Puruṣa only is revealing itself to a particular *buddhi* to which it is related from beginningless time owing to *aviveka*. So a particular *buddhi* is getting the impression of a single principle of consciousness, and not of many. The use of the singular number, therefore, in this *śloka* is not unjustifiable from the Sāṅkhya point of view. In the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, too, the singular number has been used in respect of Puruṣa: '*Tadvi- parītastathā ca pumān*' (11); '*Puruṣasya darśanārtham*' (21). While commenting on *Kārikā* (11), *Gauḍapāda* has said: '*Anekam vyaktamekamavyaktam tathā ca pumānapyekaḥ*.' While describing the points of similarities between *vyakta* and *avyakta*, Īśvarakṛṣṇa has said: '*Sakriya- manekamāśritam liṅgam*.' (*Kārikā*, 10)

*Gauḍapāda* has joined *anekam* of *Kārikā* (10) with *vyakta*, contrasting *vyakta* with *avyakta* and Puruṣa. Thus, in the opinion of *Gauḍapāda*, Puruṣa is to be regarded as one (*ekātmavāda* in the Sāṅkhya system).

Now, if we think of the realistic position of the Sāṅkhya school, we sincerely feel that non-dualistic *Ātmavāda* cannot be the keynote of this philosophical system. Sāṅkhya admits real differences in the experiences of pleasures and pains of different *jīvas*. Real difference in experience cannot be caused by mere difference in the limiting adjuncts. According to Sāṅkhya, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, etc. are not false. What is false is the relation of these things with Puruṣa. Differences which are noticed in different reflections of different *buddhis* are all real. Since the images (*prati- bimbās*) are different, the *bimbās* also must

be different; because real distinction in effects can be produced by really distinct causes. Hence Gaudapāda's position cannot be logically justified.

In view of what has been stated above, we can say reasonably that there is no illogicality in the use of singular number in respect of the Puruṣa, although, ontologically speaking, the Puruṣa is many in number. This is because a single Puruṣa is reflected in a single *buddhi*. The *Ātmabodha* is always of a single principle of consciousness, and this seems to be the reason why the author of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* has preferred to use singular number while referring to Puruṣa. Hence the mere use of the word *tam* does not prove that only a non-dualist interpretation of this *śloka* is logically justifiable.

*Etacchrutvā samparigrhya martyaḥ*

*Pravṛhya dharmyamānumetamāpya ;*

*Sa modate modanīyam hi labdhvā*

*Vivṛtam sadma Naciketasam manye—*

'The mortal one who has heard this and comprehended well that subtle principle, the soul of *dharma*, after discriminating it (properly), attains it; he verily rejoices having obtained the enjoyable. Methinks the house is open for Naciketas.' (II. i. 13)

*Exposition:* The aspirant who is very eager to attain liberation should receive instructions about the Ātman from his respected teacher and should keep himself engaged in continuous meditation with single-minded devotion. As a result of this, *sattvaguna* of the intellect will increase in abundance and *rajas* and *tamas* will remain in a completely subdued condition. In other words, the intellect of the aspirant will be purified by the excessive flow of *sattvaguna*, and he will be in a position to discriminate his subtle self from the products of unconscious Nature.

Now, *sattvaguna* is of the nature of knowledge as well as of pleasure. So, increase in *sattvaguna* naturally results in an increase of both knowledge and happiness. Hence, when a man acquires knowledge, he also acquires happiness; having acquired happiness, he himself becomes delighted.

Śāṅkara has interpreted *modanīya* in the sense of the bliss of the soul (*caitanyānanda*). According to Sāṅkhya also, the soul or consciousness is superior to Prakṛti, since it is the essence of the *jīva*. As such, to an aspirant, the soul is the only object of adoration, desire, and love. That which is the object of love is also the object of happiness and bliss (*yaḥ paramānanda rūpa na bhavati, sa niratiśaya-prema- viṣaya na bhavati*). Keeping this teaching of the *Pañcadaśī* in mind, we can say with rational justification that according to Sāṅkhya also, Self-realization is realization of *ānanda* which is not identical with happiness springing from *sattvaguna*.

Further, in this *śloka*, the word *dharmyam* has been used to mean that which is connected with the soul (*Dharmādanapetam*). In other words, in my opinion, this word is to be understood in the sense of spiritual *sādhana*. In the following *śloka* (II. i. 14), it has been stated that the soul is not associated with *dharma* (*anyatra dharmādanyatrādharmādanyatrāsmāt kṛtakṛtāt* etc.) These two statements can be harmonized logically, if by *dharmyam* (in the present *śloka*) we refer to *sādhana-mārga* which is to be followed by the aspirant and which is permeated with happiness due to excessive effusion of *sattvaguna*. *Yoga-sādhana* (practice of *dharma*) leading to the realization of the true nature of the soul is nothing but a ceaseless endeavour to make the *buddhi sāttvika* and *sukhada* (pleasure-giving) in nature.

According to Śaṅkara's interpretation, bliss is to be realized at the end of *sādhana*; but according to Sāṅkhya, the goal as well as the path can be regarded as pleasant. In the path, the aspirant experiences more and more pleasure owing to more and more increase of *sattvaguna*, whereas in the

final stage, he enjoys bliss that arises from the attainment of his most desired goal, i.e. from the realization of his true form as pure consciousness only. Liberation is just one step beyond the state of *sāttvika buddhi*, which is to be obtained by *yoga-sādhana*.

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

Mr. Ernest Briggs is an internationally known poet and music critic, and has published seven books of verse. 'The Unchanging' is from his collection of poems *Tranquil Waters*.

'Swami Vivekananda's Synthesis of Science and Religion', by Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, is the text of a paper contributed by him to the session of the Parliament of Religions held at Calcutta on 4 January 1964, in connexion with the birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda. We are publishing the article in three instalments, the first of which appears in this number. The other two instalments will appear in the subsequent numbers.

Dr. Jacques-Albert Cuttat, the Swiss Ambassador in India, is not new to our readers. A few years back, we had the privilege of publishing two articles of his—'The Spiritual Encounter of East and West' in the September, October, and November '61 issues of *Prabuddha Bharata* and 'Sri Ramakrishna (A Birth Anniversary Tribute)' in the June '62 issue; and we are sure his scholarly treatment of both the subjects from a new angle of vision is still

fresh in our readers' memory. We have great pleasure in presenting to our readers another of his penetrative studies: 'Vinoba Bhave: The Nature and Scope of His Social Reforms', which we are publishing in three instalments. We express our deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Cuttat for sending us this paper, which was written at the request of the Balzan Foundation Prize—Peace, Humanity, and Fraternity. The prize was awarded to Pope XXIII in 1962, and Vinobaji was one of the candidates for the prize in 1963.

The article on 'India's Need and the Ramakrishna Movement', by Professor Cyrus R. Pangborn, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., Chairman of the Department of Religion, Douglass College, Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey, U.S.A., is prepared from notes for an address he delivered at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, in January 1964. Professor Pangborn was in India during 1962-63 as a Fulbright Research Scholar, and living in Calcutta, where he could readily observe the work of many of the centres of the Ramakrishna Mission, he travelled extensively, visiting as many as half of the Mission institutions outside Bengal. And the present article sets forth the principal convictions he came to hold after a study of the Ramakrishna Move-

ment. We are grateful to him for sending us the article for publication. His observations on the present trends of thought and events in India and his friendly suggestions for providing a corrective to the unhealthy tendencies are worth paying a heed to by us in India, though we may not agree with all his views—as for example, his surmise about the political immaturity of India is belied by the recent developments in India after the passing away of Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, and his characterization of the East as dominantly 'believing' and the West as 'critical' and the subsequent reflections on the vision of Khudiram Chatterjee, Sri Ramakrishna's father, about the latter's birth are rather untenable. Professor Pangborn, in a letter to us, gratefully acknowledges the many courtesies he received at the hands of members of the Ramakrishna Order, and hopes that those members whom he met will consider the article as a letter of thanks for their many courtesies to him.

In the February 61, June 61, and

August 62 issues of *Prabuddha Bharata*, we published three articles by Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of Patna University, dealing with the Sāṅkhya interpretation of a few sections of the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. And Dr. Anima Sen Gupta has recently published a book *Chāndogya Upaniṣad: Sāṅkhya Point of View*, which has been reviewed in our columns in our July 64 number. We are glad to present to our readers now a new series of articles by her on 'Kāṭha Upaniṣad: Sāṅkhya Point of View'. The first of the series appears in this number. The rest will appear in due course. We are happy to inform our readers that Dr. Sen Gupta has been conferred the title 'Vidyā Viśārādā' by His Holiness Swami Venkateswarananda, Head of the Arogya Ashramam (Bala Bhawan), Madras, in recognition of her two pioneering works *The Evolution of Sāṅkhya School of Thought* and *Chāndogya Upaniṣad: Sāṅkhya Point of View*. Her forthcoming book *A critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja* is in the press.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**PRESUPPOSITIONS OF INDIA'S PHILOSOPHIES.** BY KARL H. POTTER. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., (U.S.A.). 1963. Pages 276. Price not mentioned.

That the traditional Indian philosophical systems are not mere subjects of antiquarian study and research, but have a value in the present day both in the East and in the West, and that the problems raised and solutions offered by them are dependent on the basic presuppositions about 'freedom to' and 'freedom from'—these are the important conclusions of Professor Potter's interesting volume. Professor Potter does not examine one system after another, but the specific views of different schools of thought on the various problems. Freedom or *mokṣa* is taken to be the basic preoccupation of each thinker. The twelve chapters cover the problems of freedom,

renunciation, causation, relations, negation, error, and knowledge.

The *puruṣārthas* are treated as attitudes. Professor Hirianna termed them values. We welcome Potter's distinction between renunciation and resignation; and this is illustrated from the *Gītā* in a highly instructive manner. Yet, Potter refuses to consider that *mokṣa* is bound up with transmigration. The different systems offer different paths to freedom, and the choice of the path depends upon one's self-knowing. This enquiry is followed by an examination of the *pramāṇas* or good reasons. In the light of the attitude to *mokṣa*, the systems are classified into path philosophy and speculative philosophy, progress philosophy and leap philosophy. This leads Potter to consider the problem of relations in three stimulating chapters.



A large part of the enquiry is devoted to Buddhism and Advaita. Professor Potter erroneously takes Maṇḍana to be a predecessor of Śaṅkara (p. 159). Maṇḍana may be a contemporary or a successor of Śaṅkara. The *Bhāmatī* view of the plurality of souls is read into Maṇḍana (p. 161). The term '*anirvacanīya*' did not originate with Maṇḍana (p. 163). The treatment of Śaṅkara (pp. 164 ff.) is sketchy, prejudiced, and faulty. The verses quoted by Śaṅkara at the end of the fourth *sūtra* do reveal that he accepted a multi-valued logic. We cannot allow to go unchallenged the view that Śaṅkara failed to give a clear account of the problems like the number of selves, the locus of ignorance, and the status of the empirical world (p. 165). The dialectical method of Advaita goes back to Yājñavalkya and to Śaṅkara, and not to Maṇḍana (p. 165). In the great commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, Śaṅkara does not speak anywhere of three levels of reality (pp. 166, 223), and we do not know how Potter foists it on Śaṅkara. When Śaṅkara is read in the light of the remarks made by his direct disciple Padmapāda, and when the *bhāṣya* on the second *sūtra* is correlated with that on the other *sūtras*, no one can say that Brahman is defined in essence in the second *sūtra*, according to Śaṅkara. It is easy to find apparent contradictions in Śaṅkara. Professor Potter somehow misses Śaṅkara's remarks in the second chapter; otherwise he would have made Śaṅkara a pure realist.

*Bhāmatī* employs the language of reflection and of limitation (p. 173), only because Śaṅkara has used these and other analogical terms. Likewise, the hasty criticism of the reflection view given by Potter takes the analogy literally. But both Padmapāda and Prakāśātman have warned us against taking analogies and illustrations too literally.

Professor Potter takes the Brahman of Advaitin to be a universal (pp. 230 ff.). But the classical Advaita refuses to take it as a universal, or as a particular. At best, we can say that it is a universal which does not need repetition.

In spite of these remarks, Professor Potter's book is a valuable addition. It is directed to the philosophers in the East as well as in the West and it presents Indian philosophy as a living entity.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

**RULE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.** BY P. M. VERMA, M.A., B.Sc., LL.B. The Indian National Renaissance Society, 'Anoop Bhawan', Mumfordgunj, Allahabad. 1962. Pages 162. Price Rs. 2.

The book with Preface and four chapters treats allied questions like civilization, religion, socialism, *Rāmarājya*, and spiritual democracy. It is intended for wide circulation so as to combat the virulent infection of rank materialism and atheism corrupt-

ing the masses and misleading the future generation, under a false 'glamour of scientific intellectualism'. The inevitable concomitants of a soulless, materialistic, secular education and civilization are: crimes, moral turpitudes, wrecking of families, and disappearance of peace from the world. It will not do to dethrone God and religion if our civilization has to thrive.

In this country, the rule of righteousness was ever emphasized. This great truth is very well established by the author with consummate skill and vast study. Hindu, Muslim, and Christian saints, scriptures, and writers, as well as the writings of famous men in contemporary journals, have been copiously cited to bring home the point that righteousness is of supreme importance in our life and culture.

We recommend this valuable book to all, but most of all to the youth of the country who have the greatest need for such a morally uplifting and inspiring guide. We are confident that Mr. Verma's book provides the right approach and will go a long way in establishing the rule of righteousness.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

**THE THIRTY-TWO VIDYĀS.** BY K. NARAYANASWAMI AIYAR. INTRODUCTION BY DR. V. RAGHAVAN. The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Madras 20. 1962. Pages 147. Price not mentioned.

Though the Upaniṣads teach the highest non-dual Brahman as the only Reality, they contain instructions on various meditations, which are called '*upāsanās*' or '*vidyās*'. These are interiorizations where the various parts of the astral body (*kāraṇaśarīra*) are approximated to different aspects of the cosmos, and thus the aspirant gradually progresses towards unity, by seeing the whole universe in himself. Many of these meditations mainly aim at a realization of Saguna Brahman, though some aim directly at the realization of Nirguna Brahman.

The book under review is a reprint of the work originally published by the author in 1916, and gives a brief description of thirty-two of these *vidyās* found in the principal Upaniṣads. As Dr. Raghavan says in the Introduction, these *vidyās* deserve a closer and detailed study, and the reprint of this book is done with the intention of arousing such interest among scholars.

Some of these *upāsanās* are closely related to Vedic ritual, while others, particularly the *ahamgraha-upāsanās*, mainly centre round the realization of one's true nature. The author rightly considers the *Gāyatrī-vidyā*, as found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, as the most important of them all. But he reads something occult in every *vidyā* and regrets that an advanced occultist does not take up these to explain their occult significance. This is rather strange, he-

cause all the passages containing these *vidyās* have been commented upon in detail by so great an authority as Śaṅkara who was a *yogin* and a philosopher in one. Śaṅkara considers that many of these deal with meditation on Saguna Brahman, but he also admits that some of these directly deal with the *nirguṇa* aspect of Godhead. To the latter class belong the *vidyās* such as Sad, Īśa, Maitreyī, etc.

This minor defect apart, the book is a valuable addition to the Upaniṣadic literature, though it does not go into an elaborate analysis of the *vidyās*. The interesting Introduction by the reputed scholar, Dr. V. Raghavan, enhances the value of the book. He points out the intermediary position occupied by these *upāsanās*, which act as a stepping-stone from *karma* to *jñāna*, and explains the Vedāntic position regarding these *upāsanās*. The printing is excellent.

SWAMI SMARANANANDA

**INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY.** BY P. T. RAJU. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 8, Nebraska, U.S.A. 1962. Pages 364. Price \$ 7.50.

Dr. Raju strikes a fresh note in approaching philosophy from the standpoint of man. 'A philosophy based upon matter alone, or of life alone, or of spirit alone, cannot be adequate. It must be based upon man, in whom all the three are found to meet.' (p. 5) Studied in this context all the philosophical traditions fall in their proper proportion as complementary contributions to the sum total of human progress.

Dr. Raju gives us in this solid work a rapid survey of the main lines of thought in the western, the Chinese, and the Indian philosophical movements along with their religious overtones, and points out how 'Western philosophy, on the whole, is first and primarily rationalistic and intellectualistic ... scientific and outward looking. ... The Chinese tradition is primarily humanistic; the hard fact for philosophy are man and society ... it exhibits a pragmatic immediatism. ... The main contribution of the Indian tradition is the explication of the inwardness of man, the freedom of his spirit'.

After giving a general account of the three traditions, the author goes on to give his own comparisons and reflections in a section which will be found most useful by students of comparative philosophy. And this is his considered conclusion: 'What India wants is a revival of its elemental activism of the early Vedas and the Mīmāṃsā, a reinterpretation and reconciliation of the Mīmāṃsā and the Vedānta ... (and) a metaphysical foundation for the social sense; the West needs a more adequate recognition of the

inward reaches of man's being. ... China needs a persistent effort to think out systematically to the extreme both the inward and the outward in order to discover the root of man's being in both directions.'

The book is a notable addition to current philosophical literature.

M. P. PANDIT

**THE PROPHET OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS.** BY UPTON CLARY EWING. 1963. Pages 148. Price \$ 3.75.

**PHARISAISM AND JESUS.** BY SAMUEL UMEN 1963. Pages 145. Price \$ 3.75.

**THE GREAT PROMISE.** BY KARL BARTH. 1963. Pages 70. Price \$ 2.75.

The Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y.

Historical research on the subject of the life and age of Jesus Christ, the background against which his teaching is best evaluated, and the developments that followed the Crucifixion, has been continually on the move, and fresh data continue to come in every now and then. The discovery of old manuscripts in a cave on a cliff over the Dead Sea in 1947 threw the world of Biblical scholars in a ferment. Dr. Ewing examines in his treatise many of the theories advanced by scholars in the wake of this discovery. He weighs the pros and cons of the historicity of Jesus Christ versus the Qumran Messiah as also the identity of the sect called 'Essenes'.

Few subjects are as misunderstood as the relation of the Jews and Jesus. Dr. Umen writes learnedly in his book *Pharisaism and Jesus* on the role of the Jewish people and their Law, *Torah*, in the progress of humanity, and shows the truth of Jesus' remark that he came to fulfil and not to destroy the Law or the Prophets. He points out that while the Jews cannot accept the divinity of Jesus, they regard him, nevertheless, as a devout Jew 'who disregarded the material life, for a life of the spirit'.

The birth of Jesus Christ was preceded by the 'Advent', the birth of John the Baptist, which is detailed in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke. *The Great Promise* by Dr. Barth contains four lectures on the significance of that event. Giving an interesting exegesis of the chapter, the author gives a spiritual interpretation of the birth of John the Baptist and seeks to prove that it really represents the spiritual birth story of every seeker favoured of God.

M. P. PANDIT

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1963-64

The Home comprises of the following three institutions: (1) a residential high school; (2) a residential technical institute; and (3) a students' home, with a junior section for the boys studying at the high school (145), in the pre-university class (11), and the Savitri Ammal Oriental School (2), and a senior section for the boys studying at the technical institute (103) and for the degree courses (15). Admissions to the Home are made on grounds of poverty and merit, preference being given to orphans. Seva Praveena Samithi, an organization of students residing in the Home, looks after the day-to-day management of the institution, such as the allocation and supervision of domestic duties of the Home, purchase and distribution of provisions and vegetables, serving food, nursing the sick, care of property, keeping the building neat and clean, and conducting the daily *pūjā* in the shrine; it also acts as a connecting link between the management and the students. Special care is taken about the health of the students, and an attempt is also made to inculcate in them moral and religious ideals. The course of moral and religious instruction includes the study of the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and other saints and sages; classes on the Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Bhāgavata*, and *Tirukkural*; *bhājanas* and *prayers* daily and on special occasions like *Mārgalī*; and observance of festivals like *Navarātri* and birth-days of saints and sages. There is also provision for special tutorial guidance and the teaching of music. The general library attached to the Home contained at the end of the year 4,300 books, and the reading room received more than a dozen periodicals.

*The High School*: The total strength of the school during the period under review, in its four classes from standard VIII to standard XI, was 145 students. The school has a library with 7,074 books, and a well-equipped laboratory. The curriculum includes drawing and painting; and spinning, weaving, and gardening are taught as hobbies. There is

provision for indoor as well outdoor games, and all the boys took part, during the year under review, in regular *sūryanamaskāra* exercises and attended *yogāsana* classes. The school has an auxiliary cadet corps, with a strength of 60 cadets, and a scout troop, with a strength of 33 boys. The extra-curricular activities of the boys were: Manuscript magazines containing articles in Tamil, Sanskrit, and English and drawings and paintings; the staging of a Tamil drama 'Swami Vivekananda' by the dramatic troupe of the school; participation in various competitions conducted by different institutions in Madras as well as outside; pupils' literary union and the school parliament; and excursions to important places in and outside the State.

*The Technical Institute*: The institute provides training to students appearing for the L.M.E. and L.A.E. diploma examinations. Training in automobile engineering (L.A.E.) is a post-diploma course extending to 18 months, for those who have obtained the diploma in mechanical engineering (L.M.E.). The institute has a well-equipped workshop and a library and reading room. There is provision for indoor and outdoor games. The students' association of the institute carried on, during the year under review, its usual literary and cultural activities. The total strength of the institute: 102 students.

*The Collegiate Section*: Total number of students: 26 (pre-university: 11; B.Sc.: 13; B.Com.: 2). All the students were in receipt of scholarships in one form or other.

*Elementary Schools*: In addition to the institutions mentioned above, there are two elementary schools run under the management of the Home Committee, but they do not form part of the Home. These are: The Ramakrishna Centenary Elementary School, Mylapore, with a strength of 439 students (252 boys and 187 girls) in its twelve sections from standard I to standard V; and the Ramakrishna Mission Higher Elementary School, Malliankaranai, with a strength of 169 students (145 boys and 24 girls). In the latter, agriculture is taught as a pre-vocational subject; in the hostel attached to the school, there were 45 boarders, belonging to scheduled castes and backward classes.