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OCTOBER 1968

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



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

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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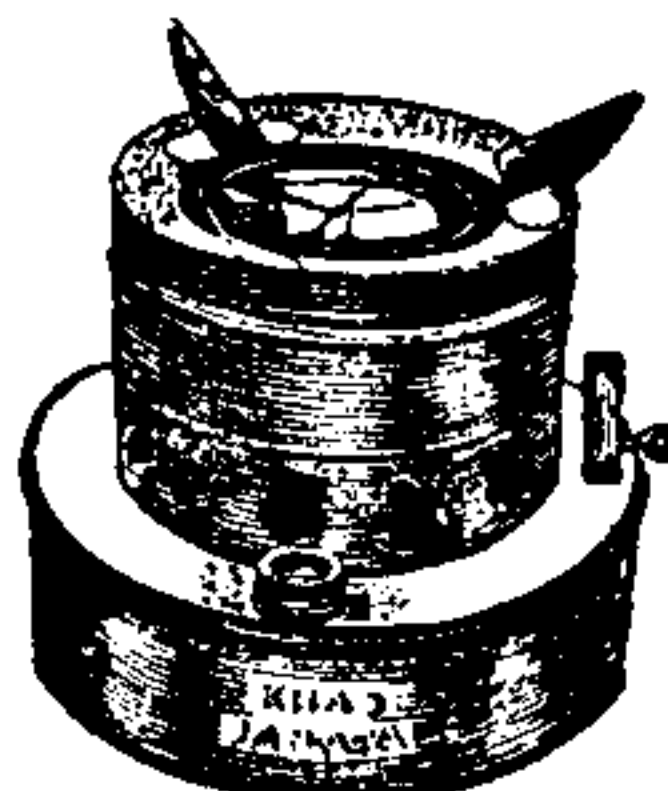
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Vol. LXXIII

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No. 10



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

A LETTER OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Gadmukteswar

Dear . . .

I received your letter yesterday and noted its contents. I am sorry to learn that Swami Shivananda has been suffering a great deal due to illness. May he regain his health soon by the grace of the Lord, is my prayer. He has done well to have gone to the Math. I hope he is doing better there. When you write him again please convey my loving greetings.

I heard about you previously from Swami Shivananda and was much pleased to learn that you had decided to sever all worldly ties and devote yourself entirely to the seeking of God.

It is very good to have yearning for God and very much needed too for spiritual life. But it is not good to be distressed and despondent because the modifications of the mind have not yet been quietened. One should think oneself blessed on being simply given to stay along with one's attention fixed on God. To have been dragged out of the worldly entanglements and to be given to practise spiritual disciplines: is this a small grace? Now it all depends on Him to quieten the mind or not. It is enough that He is getting done the practice of spiritual disciplines. Pray to the Lord that He may keep you engaged in His adoration. Why should you pray for peace of mind?

Sri Ramakrishna used to speak of the hereditary farmer. The hereditary farmer desires that he be permitted to go on cultivating his land; he does not wait for rains nor is deterred by droughts. He does not do anything else but farming. Go on practising spiritual disciplines in the same

spirit; and if you are able to do that, learn to consider yourself blessed. Resign everything at His feet, happiness and misery, peace and its opposite. Accept what the Lord ordains. Learn to pray only for this one thing, that He may get done the practice of devotions. Then peace will come of itself. You will not have to pray for peace. Prayer should be only for being enabled to practise devotions.

Is God something like spinach or fish that you will buy Him at a price? Is there any end to His worship that by doing this or that you will attain Him? With the vision fixed on Him stay lying at His door. To be able to do this will be enough. His grace flows of itself. No one realized Him by pressing his nose hard or by any other means. He who has realized God, has done so through His grace. His grace should be deemed boundless if He permits us to stay lying at His door. What else is practice of devotions but going on calling on Him with single-minded sincerity? Do not permit any theft in the chamber of your attitude. That's enough. The Lord will get practised other spiritual disciplines, if necessary.

Please give my good wishes to the Brahmacarins. I could not exactly recollect who was Vasanta. Please convey my greetings to the three young men. I shall stay on here through the winter. Afterwards it will be as the Lord wills.

With my best wishes,

Sri Turiyananda

“There are certain signs of God-realization. The man in whom longing for God manifests its glories is not far from attaining Him. What are the glories of that longing? They are discrimination, dispassion, compassion for living beings, serving holy men, loving their company, chanting the name and glories of God, telling the Truth, and the like. When you see those signs of longing in an aspirant, you can rightly say that for him the vision of God is not far to seek.”

—Sri Ramakrishna

PERSPECTIVE NEEDS OF MODERN INDIAN PLANNING

[EDITORIAL]

I

Planning, the pivotal concept behind all corporate undertakings on official level, has come to stay in good many countries of the world. In India and some other developing countries planning is regarded almost as a sophisticated saviour.

In India of today, the very destiny of the nation is said to depend on the success of planning. The performances of the nation is judged by the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the plan targets.

Planning has been influencing not only our politics and economics, commerce and industry, but also our science and society, our philosophy and education, our religion and human relationship, including even the relationship between husband and wife. Planning is trying to have its say not only on all our collective or corporate efforts but also on what has hitherto been considered a very private or personal concern, with far reaching prospective effects.

Such being the case, it would be worthwhile to once in a while examine the movements of motivations which motor the plan activities. Has Indian planning been staying in perspective in reference to the nation's history and genius, needs and capabilities, experiential knowledge and ideational horizon?

II

Modern planning harnesses the material and mental resources of a nation in such a comprehensive manner, that it enforces the life-current of the nation to flow in certain directions in a definitive way without leaving things to chance though no guarantee is available from any quarter to the effect that there could be no mistakes in planning. Hence it is of supreme im-

portance especially in a nascent democracy to now and then scrutinize whither we are carrying our planning, or being carried by our planning.

In the examination of planning as far as terms of reference are concerned we should never forget that we live in a world of facts and forces which can neither be ignored nor by-passed. Every fool-proof forward-looking planning besides getting in grip and terms with the prevailing facts and forces, must also create other lubricating facts and propelling forces, for succeeding.

Second, both ideals and realities must equally weigh with us in judging issues concerned, for realities can never be understood as value-situation unless we have goals to achieve. Any road is a good road if you have nowhere to go. But if we intend to reach somewhere some roads are to be accepted; others to be abandoned.

Third, growth of a nation is possible only on its own cultural roots and in its own milieu. Cutting the roots or allowing them to atrophy is not conducive to growth or development, much less self-fulfilment.

III

It is well-known that the U.S.S.R. was the first country in the world to adopt centralized planning, as an instrument of economic development in the twenties of this century. To be precise 1927-1932 was the first plan period of Russia.

Ten years of intensive economic planning rendered the Soviet Union so powerful economically and militarily that it was able to face and repulse one of the biggest invasions of history.¹

¹ Vide: Dr. M. L. Seth: *Theory and Practice of Economic Planning*, S. Chand & Co., Delhi, 1967, p. viii, ix.

The spectacular Russian experiment, example and success caught the imagination of the developing nations. The newly free nations coming out of the spell of colonial rule found in the creed of the economic planning the only hope for speedy improvement of their standard of living from sub-human conditions.

In the post second world war period there has been a powerful swing to planning in most of the developing nations. It is well realized that unless these nations collectively harness all their resources and make planned efforts to improve their conditions they will never see the day of their expectations. So the *laissez-faire* creed has lost all respectability and acceptability among developing nations.

History of Modern Indian Planning² is briefly this:

- (a) Undoubtedly the inspiration for Indian planning came from Russia.
- (b) Even under British rule there has been a good deal of thinking in India on this subject.
- (c) The first to advocate Planning for India was Sir Visveswarayya, who published in 1934 the first book on planning entitled, *Planned Economy for India*.
- (d) In 1937 Indian National Congress set up National Planning Committee. But owing to political vicissitudes the work of the Committee remained suspended from 1942 to 1946. The Committee was able to submit its plan only in 1949.
- (e) In March 1950 the Government of India appointed the Planning Commission with Prime Minister as the Chairman.
- (f) The First Five Year Plan was published in 1952.

The First Five Year Plan ended on March 31, 1956.

The Second Plan came into force from April 1, 1956.

The Third Five Year Plan came into force in April 1, 1961.

Then there was the ad hoc plan for 1966-67.

In regard to the Fourth Plan a news item, New Delhi, November 10, 1967 said:

'The Planning Commission, today decided to begin the Fourth Plan only from April 1969.

'The new Plan will be for 1969-70 to 1974-75. Next year there will be only an annual plan. The years between the end of the Third Plan and next Plan will be treated as annual Plan periods.'

The variety of difficulties Indian Planning has been going through and now facing are well-known and also its achievements. Notwithstanding all criticism, what has been achieved by planning in India is considerable and what is yet to be achieved is also ponderable.

Indian Planning has exposed to Indians themselves and the world at large the strength and weakness of Indian economy, causing hope and despair on statistical basis. Planning has created a climate and psychology of modernity in this ancient land. There are targets before the nation. It has also given basis for calculated foreign generosity as well as equally calculated alien intrigues. There is enough to be thankful for, and not less to be wary about.

Undoubtedly there are inherent difficulties in Planning by consent of the people in a democracy, which an authoritarian economy, in a dictatorship has not to go through. But if only India cared to learn one great and fundamental lesson from Russian Planning experience, the nation could have escaped some agonizing experiences of her planning career. The lesson is: do not order for slabs of marble stones for building a palace while the money is in somebody else's pocket!

² Vide : op. cit.

India's foreign debt, we are told, now amounts to Rs. 4,633 crores. And total public debt within the country is more than Rs. 13,000 crores. These figures in a way show whither we are being carried by planning.

Expectations of help from without have impeded the harnessing and development of inner resources, which are incalculable in India, when we take into account not only material resources but also human resources. Help from without has powerfully influenced the architectural design of Indian Planning to turn out to be that of a house which was being attempted to be built from the roof downwards. The unemployment of 37,500 trained engineers and the necessity of importing food grains to a country of agricultural economy from countries of industrial economy after fifteen years of planning are symptomatic of this fact.

If India were forced to fall back more on internal resources, then the man and the soil would have come closer; more water would have flowed to lands which lay arid today in expectations of the blessings flowing through sluice gates; and people would have more intensively realized and much earlier that 'the destiny of the people was in their own soil, and destiny of the soil was no less in its people.'³

³ These words of Sister Nivedita are quoted from her lecture 'Swami Vivekananda as a Patriot'. The passage occurs as follows:

'His great cry—"We are under a hypnotism! We think we are weak and this makes us weak! Let us think ourselves strong and we are invincible", had a national and spiritual meaning. He never dreamt of failure for his people, any more than he tolerated the superficial criticism of exuberant fools. In him India was young in all her parts. To him the ancient civilization meant the inbreeding of energy through many a millennium. To him the destiny of the people was in their own soil, and the destiny of the soil was no less in its own people.' (*The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita* Vol. I, Sister Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta 3, 1967, p. 384)

Above all, India needs to learn today this great lesson of life and history that it is hopeless to have hopes and fears from without.

The sagacity of Russian Planning was here: that they planned entirely on their own resources, as far as we know. Whereas India planned considerably on expectations of foreign help. This made Indian Planning nervous, uncertain and unrealistic.

No doubt wars burst forth, droughts

In her lecture entitled 'The National Significance of the Swami Vivekananda's Life and Work', referring to her Master Sister Nivedita says:

'Let others blunder as they might. To him, the country was young, the Indian vernaculars still unformed, flexible, the national energy unexploited. The India of his dreams was in the future. The new phase of consciousness initiated today through pain and suffering was to be but first step in a long evolution. To him his country's hope was in herself. Never in the alien. True, his great heart embraced the alien's need, sounding a universal promise to the world. But he never sought for help, or begged for assistance. He never leaned on any. What might be done, it was the doer's privilege to do, not the recipient's to accept. He had neither fears nor hopes from without. To reassert that which was India's essential self, and leave the great stream of the national life, strong in a fresh self-confidence and vigour, to find its own way to the ocean, this was the meaning of his sannyāsa. For his was pre-eminently the sannyāsa of the greater service.

'Buddha had preached renunciation, and in two centuries India had become an Empire. Let her but once more feel the great pulse through all her veins, and no power on earth would stand before her newly awakened energy. Only, it would be in her own life that she would find life, not in imitation; from her own proper past and environment that she would draw inspiration, not from the foreigner. For he who thinks himself weak is weak: he who believes that he is strong is already invincible. And so for his nation, as for every individual, Vivekananda had but one word, one constantly reiterated message:

"Awake! Arise! Struggle on,
And stop not till the

Goal is reached!"' (*The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita*, Vol. I, 1967, pp. 380-81)

blazed along, population exploded and all that—but these contingent situations need not have been unforeseeables, if only realism were allowed to have its full say and required hearing.

We are afraid, neither realism, nor idealism have had its proper and full say in regard to Indian Planning. On this point there is scope for open-minded, deep thinking.

Ever since independence, two main aims have guided India's Planned development:

(1) 'First, to build by democratic means a rapidly expanding and technologically progressive economy and a social order based on justice and offering equal opportunity to every citizen.'⁴

(2) 'Second, to change a traditional society into a dynamic one, in a country with a vast population rooted in the past, was a tremendous task. To do this through peaceful and democratic means, by the consent of the people, made this task even more difficult.'⁵

'It is a basic premise in India's Five Year Plans that through democracy and widespread public participation, development along socialist lines will secure rapid economic growth and expansion of employment, reduction of disparities in income and wealth, prevention of concentration of economic power and creation of values and attitudes of a free and equal society. ...'⁶

'The basic objective of Indian development', as the Third Five Year Plan puts it, 'must necessarily be to provide the masses of Indian people the opportunity to lead a good life. ...'⁷

IV

But what is 'good life'?

⁴ Vide: Third Five Year Plan, Govt. of India, Planning Commission, 1961, p. 3.

⁵ Ibid., p. 4, 9.

⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

The central motivation behind such planning is material well-being, understood in terms of higher standard of living.

India has fully accepted this basic concept of planning, but with this fundamental difference from the Russian situation: in Russia it is their adopted philosophy which influenced their planning, whereas in India it is the adopted planning which is influencing her philosophy of life, the implications of which need be carefully and dispassionately studied.

Planning does not accept imponderables; it only accepts facts, statistics, and possibilities of some unpredictable situations.

But what is fact? What is the ultimate fact of existence? Russians officially adopted a philosophy which accept matter as the ultimate fact of existence. And they base their planning squarely on this philosophy of materialism.

Whereas in India by and large people do not believe that there is nothing more than matter to existence. Yet for all practical purposes they too have based their planning on the assumption that matter alone mattered.

This has created a dichotomy in the heart of Indian people, the effects of which are yet to be fully and widely apprehended.

And this has made Planning in India nervous, half-hearted, unrelated to certain discovered facts of existence, hence paradoxically enough, unscientific. It is unlike the Russian Planning, without a firm faith, and without a well-defined philosophy. Intriguing though it may appear, Indian planning is also without a sense of enlightened economics, and what is worse, without a comprehensive sense of values.

One may or may not agree with the Russian faith, philosophy and economics, but this must be acknowledged that whatever their faith, philosophy and economics, they have pervasively integrated them to their planning and produced social results.

Whether or not you like these results is not the question here.

If planning, by its exigencies, has to provide a philosophy of life by which a nation has to go, then neither the plan nor the philosophy, nor the future of the nation can be wonderful. And this exactly has been happening in India.

What is the philosophy of life Planning in effect has been trying to thrust upon the people of India?

It is that very one which Sri Kṛṣṇa condemns as demoniac in the sixteenth Chapter of the *Gītā*. The Lord says :

‘The persons of demoniac nature know not what to do, and what to refrain from ; neither is purity found in them, nor good conduct, nor truth.

‘They say “The universe is without Truth, without a moral basis, without a God, brought about by mutual union, with lust for its cause ; what else?”’

The way Planning Commission is handling the first fact of life, which is ‘birth’, evinces that it has adopted for itself the demoniac view of life. Birth is accepted as simply a biological consequence of union between man and woman, for prevention of which chemical and other methods are advocated and adopted.

What the seers of the nation have taught down the ages to the effect that in every birth a metaphysical issue is involved,—for every birth is the manifestation of the pilgrimage of a soul to its ultimate destiny,—is given a short shrift to.

Let us make it clear that we are not disputing the need of having lesser birth rates. What we are questioning is the problematical approach to the phenomenon of population explosion.

When we accept the first fact of life which is birth, purely as a fact of matter, we cannot on the way anywhere change the philosophy of life till death.

The dialectical implications of adopting

such a view of life are obvious, though not adequately noticed. Materialism, is inseparable from hedonism, hedonism from sensate values. When we adopt such a way of life, search for pleasure becomes the dominant and domineering pursuit of life. When we seek pleasure through everything we do, above everything else, we are doing everything possible under the sun to throw gun powder on the explosion which we seek so earnestly to blow out.

Population explosion has not been created by economic or political forces, or by a combination of them ; it is the direct outcome of the adoption of the down-to-earth pleasure-seeking way of life by a vast majority of mankind.

If we want to do anything radically effective in regard to controlling the explosion, we require to do something about the modern man’s pleasure-seeking way of life. Whatever else we have been doing, however energetically, has not only not affected the root of the problem, but has helped its growth in complexities.

There is this revealing passage in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* (II. iv. 11).

‘As the ocean is the goal of all waters, so the skin is the one goal of all kinds of touch, the nostrils are the goal of all smells, the tongue is the goal of all savours, ... the ear is the goal of sounds, the intellect is the goal of (forms of) knowledge, the hands are the goal of actions, the organ of generation is the goal of all (kinds of) enjoyment. ...’

So, when we in effect sponsor and propagate a pleasure-seeking view and way of life, we have done everything necessary for causing and augmenting population explosion, which does such a havoc on our project planning.

This is only one vital point.

V

By and large modern planning in India has somehow managed to stay unguided

and uninspired by the accumulated wisdom of this ancient civilization, presumably because our planners of today took little cognizance of the fact that Indians were the one ancient people who carried planning of life to perfection and that long before the birth of Christ.

Unlike modern Indians, the ancient Indians planned more daringly, comprehensively, in greater depth, wider freedom and without any hopes and fears from without. In their planning were embraced the time and timeless, here and hereafter, body, mind and soul, sociology, values, religion and above all, significantly, the ultimate economics of life, *mokṣa* or freedom of the soul.

They not only cared to cultivate the natural resources, but also human and supranatural resources. They devised means for producing not only visible wealth, but also of invisible wealth which they signified by the term, Dharma.

What is truly marvellous, they planned for the total man, the entire man, in all his dimensions in a fool-proof manner. Whereas today, in effect, we have been planning more or less for the lower-half of men, for only two lower *puruṣārthas*, viz., *artha* and *kāma*, wealth and pleasure, caring little, not even daring to talk about *dharma* and *mokṣa*, righteousness and liberation of the spirit, as far as planning is concerned.

What could be the possible result of such downward-looking planning trying to bulldoze all the resources of the nation in almost a deterministic manner?

By working on purely materialistic basis and emphasizing mostly the sensate values, even if we succeed in augmenting the visible wealth of the nation, giving people a higher standard of living, in the process we will have destroyed the possibilities of earning the invisible wealth and prospects of the ultimate economics of life.

Suppose we give the nation say an in-

crease of 50% more per capita income it is certainly good work. But if along with that visible increase in wealth, we again create in the people desires worth five times that value, then what really have we achieved? The man who has Rs. 5000/- yearly income plus a contentment worth ten lakhs of rupees, and the man who has Rs. 50,000/- income plus discontentment worth ten crores of rupees—between these two persons who is better off, whose standard of living is higher, even only economically speaking?

It is not 'high living' as they do in posh society that makes life truly meaningful unless it can be combined with higher standard of being.

If we have to mean by standard of living only the capacity to purchase more consumers goods, the higher standard of living can only consume us—for we never get away from the grip of the law of diminishing returns. We are then simply eaten up by what we want to swallow. We have only to look around to see how atrociously this has been happening in the world. Must we burn ourselves in order to learn?

It is crucially important to realize that Dharma is of supreme economic importance and value for it creates invisible wealth. It gives value, meaning, power and sanity to our visible wealth. A hundred rupees then gives us value of a lakh of rupees. Even poverty can co-exists with dignity and meaning, when it is voluntary. The planning which does not augment dharma is the devourer of its own children. That prosperity which fails to inspire the soul is so much ash in the mouth.

Then, what is the purpose for higher standard of living? What is the ceiling of this standard? What if we have all the wealth of the world? Will that satisfy our lucre-lust? Will it not only be like throwing gasoline on leaping flames? Yet no-one advocates perpetuation of involuntary poverty for any one in the country.

Therefore, the ancient planners of India gave us the unique theory of the ultimate economics of life—the doctrine of *mokṣa*, or the liberation of the spirit of men from the very necessity of being born and getting into this thing, called life. How much more radical and braver is this planning—not to have to plan at all by not having to be born!

The man who has attained *mokṣa* he alone has made operative in his life the rare economic law of ever increasing returns. Others are mostly captives of economics.

VI

The instruments of ancient Indian planning were : *varṇāśrama dharma* and four *puruṣārthas*. Dharma was the pivot and *mokṣa* was the destiny. To be sure, not all the postulates of the ancient Indian sociology and planning are relevant to today's Indian situation.

But there is a great scope of carefully thinking out and integrating in our modern plan the wisdom, sanity, farsight, insight and the boldness of the ancient Indian planning for the augmentation of the total man in a modern society.

The four main points that we can integrate at least in our thinking are:

1. Śankara's exposition of twofold ideal of *pravṛtti-lakṣaṇa dharma* and *nivṛtti-lakṣaṇa dharma*, outwardization and inwardization of life-force for attaining well being and illumination.

This will make of a man a greater value than money and practised voluntary poverty by a section of the people will increase the invisible wealth, thus raising the nation's standard of being and living simultaneously.

2. Purposive cultivation of the human resources in the light of the teaching of *āśrama-dharma*.

Modern planners tend to forget that the greatest wealth of every nation is the human wealth. Man is more precious than all the natural resources of the country. We are

busy with dam-making with the hope of getting power and what goes with it. We do not seem to remember that man-making or power-projecting the man is equally a rewarding work.

Ancient planners in India divided human life in four periods for so power-projecting man, that when he reached the final stage, he knew how to participate in God's power and wealth.

Paul Deussen says about the *āśrama* scheme of life:

'The entire history of mankind does not produce much that approaches in grandeur to this thought.'⁸

3. The four *puruṣārthas*, values are *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*.

Individuals and nations who give themselves to only *artha* and *kāma*, wealth and pleasure, are bound to be destroyed by the combined forces of lust and lucre.

But when *kāma* and *artha* are guided by *dharma*, and directed by the urge for *mokṣa*, man discovers an increasing purpose of existence in every succeeding stage of life. And finally he becomes *azad*, free, by realizing the true nature of his Self.

4. Higher standard of living and higher standard of being must be worked for simultaneously. Then even our poverty will be richness, our brewing affluence will not then intoxicate us, and our mounting riches will not make us increasingly poor.

VII

We are perfectly aware that the Government cannot easily develop the machinery to attend to these perspective needs of the modern planning.

But the people can, should and must, if they do not want to be consumed by the leaping flames of their desires stoked mad.

⁸ Vide : *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣad*, English translation by Rev. A. S. Gaden, Dover Publications Inc., New York, 1966, p. 367.

We as individuals urgently need to remember and study the fact that in this country we the scions of the God-seeing sages, have good reasons to look within and without, before we go about as though God does not exist, as though without search for

God in the process of living, life could be meaningful notwithstanding all our planning, or planning could make sense notwithstanding our high living.

If we have dared to make mistakes let us also be courageous to learn.

QUESTIONS OF SPIRITUAL SEEKERS ANSWERED

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Q. What is realization?

A. Realization is direct perception of the final truth—call it God, call it Brahman, call it by any other name. But the word *perception* is not used because perception generally takes place through the senses. Direct perception means that. But the realization of God cannot take place through the senses, and at the same time it is direct perception. So, that is what is difficult. The word has been coined, as it were—we *realize* Him. It is the same thing as direct perception but on a supersensuous plane. There the senses cannot work, even the mind at its lowest cannot work. Only the highest side of the mind can work, and that is called Realization, i.e. coming in touch with God by the higher part of our mind.

Q. What is discrimination?

A. Discrimination is a simple thing: discerning what is real and what is unreal. That is the sense in which the word has been used in the Vedānta Philosophy. God alone is real, meaning permanent, never losing His identity or existence either in the past, present or future and the world is unreal, meaning it doesn't last during all these three times. It may last for a short time, the present, but it will not last eternally, as God does. So to know that in our mind, not actually realizing it, but to know through our intellect that God only is real

and the world unreal, meaning temporary, ephemeral, that is called discrimination. That is one of the necessary things for an aspirant of God realization, according to Vedānta.

Q. How can we practise discrimination?

A. By always having this idea in our mind because things on which we dwell mentally, they gain uppermost footing in our mind, they take root in our minds. We have admitted this world, this tangible world of ours, its value to us, as it were. We have attributed value to it, not that in itself it has value. But because we have conceived, because we have thought, that the world is important in certain respects, therefore it has value to us. So, if we bring this idea to our mind all the time or at least as much of the time as possible—God alone is real, all else is temporary, non-permanent, ephemeral,—this idea itself, brings in us a sense of awareness and that is practising discrimination. And there is no how to it—simply you just wish to do it and not in theory alone but in practice. You have to set about it, you have to go about it, just as you do for other things. When you are thirsty, what do you do? You drink some water—you are restless till you secure water. So, this thought must be kept before the mind as far as we can, in the best way possible. That is the

way—there is no particular way how we can practise discrimination.

If we keep our eyes open, ears open and see what things are happening in the world, this permanence is altogether absent from the world. Even in our lifetime, so many people, so many near and dear ones pass away from us—so many things that we try to cling to, slip away through our fingers. Our body changes quite fast sometimes. And this is the way. If we bring to our mind these salient facts that are taking place every day before our eyes and ears, that will be practising discrimination, not to shut our eyes to that. In our attachment to the world, let us not forget this fact that the world is always changing, changing, and changing—our bodies are changing; youth, wealth, position, everything will change. Only God alone will remain permanent. So this fact—if we try to remember, try to hammer it into our minds—that will be the best way to discriminate.

Q. How can we develop self-surrender?

A. Self-surrender really can come after our faculty for self-exertion has been exhausted. Before actually proceeding to do certain things on our own account, we cannot expect self-surrender. And complete self-surrender that is the last thing that we can expect to get. That is, after having tried our very best and seeing all the time that there is some force, call it Divine or some other force, that helps us and then only we can succeed, and that we do not succeed when that help is lacking, we gradually come to the idea of self-surrender. But one leads to the other—self-exertion leads to self-surrender. True self-surrender can come only to the person who has struggled his very best.

You remember Sri Ramakrishna's illustration of that bird that sat on the mast of a ship that was going out to the sea. In its ignorance the bird did not notice that the ship had heaved anchor and was going

out to the sea. And when it wanted to go back to land, first of all it went in one direction. It did not find land. In another direction also the same thing. So in every direction it tried but failed. Then what did it do? It left off struggling any more and sat on the mast. Then, when the ship came back, the bird also found land once more. So that is the illustration between self-exertion and self-surrender. Only by having perfectly attained self-endeavour, self-effort, self-struggle can we expect to attain self-surrender. Then only we know that, well, our efforts go only a little way; only when God helps can we succeed completely.

Q. If a person utters the name of the Lord at the time of death will he have to be born again?

A. Well, our scriptures say uttering, even the mechanical uttering, of God's name has great effect. If a person will actually be born after that or not it is difficult to say. If there are desires, strong desires, of the person, of the mind uttering it, then there is a possibility that he will come back, but it makes a great difference between a person who dies with the name of the Lord on his lips and a person who does not. Even though he is born again, he will be born in surroundings that will entail his future success, spiritual success, very easily. So, this is not a thing to puzzle about. Supposing he is born, no harm; but still we must always try to fix our mind upon naming the Lord constantly, as far as we can, so that even at the moment of death, by sheer force of habit, that remembrance will come to us. We shall remember the name of the Lord because the body is not in our control then; the senses, also, are beyond our control. Sometimes there is struggle, agony and all that, pain, and there is stupor in many cases. Anyway, we must make a practice of remembering God all the time, so that

His name may be remembered; at least there will be a chance, a possibility, of remembering God's name at the point of death, time of death, and that will have its great effect whether it takes us to Brahmaloaka, whether it takes us to some superior world, or it brings us back to the earth again. It makes a tremendous difference that, even if we come back to the world, we will have a better situation to find Him.

Q. Human beings have been endowed with various senses. Why must we avoid the free use of these senses to obtain spiritual realization?

A. Well, the thing is, we have been given, of course, various senses, but not we alone; the animals, they also are being endowed with various senses. So, if we think it is something praisable to give free rein to all the senses, then we are just on the par with all the other animals. So what is the special dignity attaching to man? Animals, they are guided more or less by instinct; there is no such thing as regulated thought or free purposeful activity directing all their energies to a superior end, especially when the end in question is the realization of God or the realization of our own Self. They are just doing things that animals also do. Keeping on the same level will not do. We must try to control some of them: that is the teaching of our scriptures and great masters.

Sri Ramakrishna gave the illustration of the flute player. In a flute there are several holes, and a man can simply blow into the flute and produce a kind of note without touching any of those particular stops at particular times. But notice the effect, the difference in effect that is produced by a man who can control those stops. Similarly, we have got several energies. Of course, several of them are carried out through the senses, but beyond the senses there is the mind also, and the mind sometimes is of a very

high order. Through the mind we can get a glimpse of the Supreme Divinity. When the mind is pure, just as in a limpid, clear lake if you drop a coin it will remain at the bottom, and you can see through the body of water and watch that the coin is lying there. Similarly, when the mind is very clear, through control of the senses, through concentration (these two are the main things in every religion—self-control and concentration), then we actually have a glimpse of the thing that is inside. Not that we have to get things from outside, but things that are already inside become visible to us, come within our ken, and it helps our Realization. So it will not do merely to live an animal existence and give free rein to our senses. The more we control ourselves, the better it is for us.

Q. What are the means of attaining devotion?

A. This is a large question, and there is not a single means; there are innumerable means. In the first place, devotion means some kind of love for God, for the highest ideal. Not love for ordinary things,—things that have bearings with our senses or even our lower intellect and so on, but love for God, that is devotion. And the means of attaining that love, the means of attaining that devotion, are described in the scriptures in various ways.

Repeating the Lord's name, for instance, is one of the means. To begin with this is probably mechanical, but that does not take us very far. Theoretically it has its effect, but it will require an infinite number of times repetition of the Lord's name to be really effective to us. On a gramophone you can put the Lord's name, and it can go on repeating, but that will not produce any effect whatsoever. But, in proportion as we attach our minds to the Lord's name, certainly there is great benefit to us. And they say, according to the intensity with which we utter the name, the

results come quicker and quicker. Even by uttering the name a single time we may get sufficient purity into the mind, that will give us the realization of God.

Similarly, meditation is another means. Worship, ritualistic worship is another means of attaining devotion. Association with sadhus, with saints, with men who have actually realized the Lord, that is one of the best things and easiest things to begin with. In their company we are constantly reminded of God. What we want to attain they have already attained, so by being in their company we also are induced to follow in their path, to attain their serenity which we see beaming out from the face of these great men.

Besides holy association, reading good scriptures, and reflecting on their meaning is helpful. Those who cannot actually meditate, they can do otherwise. I mean, instead of doing it inwardly, if they cannot, they can keep helpful pictures and meditate upon them. If they believe in forms of God, even the immanence of God can be meditated upon. Meditation is a great help. In this way, this form of karma, work without attachment, service to others, service to God in man, that is also one of the great ways of attaining devotion. So through all these means, and any number of means, one can attain devotion.

Actually, if we want to be exact, I may say that the very fact that the questioner has put to me this question, that means already he or she has got devotion; otherwise, he would not have framed this question. So creating devotion, actually initiating devotion for the first time, that is extremely difficult but when once it has been stimulated through the grace of the Lord or through our own past karma, whatever you call it, then you can add to it and increase it, and finally, through the help of that devotion, you can attain God Himself. So, as I said about the means

of attaining devotion, that is, increasing devotion in any measure, there are very many means. One or more of them one can take.

Q. How can you reconcile self-effort and self-surrender?

A. This has already been answered. We begin with self-effort, because the absence of self-effort is inertia, dullness, *tamas*; that does not come to anything. And self-effort, when perfected, will at once lead us to self-surrender.

Q. What is the difference between an extraordinarily great saint and an Incarnation?

A. The difference is in the tremendous difference of power. A great saint becomes a saint through self-exertion, and an Incarnation is born an Incarnation. That is, Incarnation is God having assumed flesh, God in a human body or any other body. Swami Vivekananda said: any other animal, a cat for instance, if it tries to conceive of God, it will imagine God as a big cat and so on. Anyway, as human beings, let us confine Incarnations to God in the human form. And a God in human form is born a God, born an Incarnation. So, there is an ocean of difference in power between a man who has become a saint, and an Incarnation who is really accepted as such. The difference is as between the poles, or like that between the glow worm and the sun. Even that will be powerless to describe the immense difference between the powers and capacities of a saint and an Incarnation.

Q. Whom will you call an Incarnation?

A. By the amount of spiritual power that a person will radiate, we will know whether he is an Incarnation or not. In the first place, there will be no realm of the spiritual field which will be unknown to him and secondly, he will know a way how to communicate that to others, because Incarnations come for the sake of others.

For their own sake they need not have come at all. God is always in His own imperial land, wherever that may be, whether inside our heart or beyond, probably in both places. He need not have incarnated, but it is for the sake of others, devotees, that He is born. And to remove iniquity also, to show mankind the path to realization an Incarnation is born.

So when we see a manifest expression of spiritual power of an infinite degree there we can take for granted that an Incarnation has been born. Also, by the amount of love, by the amount of patience, by the amount of sacrifice undergone to ameliorate the conditions, to help others, there we know that an Incarnation is present. An Incarnation is not subject to the evils, to the temptations and other things, to which we poor human beings are subject. Things where even mighty saints fail or cannot live up to the highest standard, Incarnations will automatically, spontaneously go through those phases.

Of course, Incarnations that, we read of in our books do not always appear to us to have shown the same amount of manifestation, spiritual manifestation. Anyway, there may be gradation among them or not, but even the least among them will be much greater, as I said, than an ordinary saint. So there we see the tremendous manifestation of spiritual power along with that purity, unselfishness, love, and all those blessed qualities which we aspire after and do not attain. There again, rest assured that there is God Himself manifest.

Q. How to know and believe in God?

A. Seeing those signs, which we have already mentioned, we know, we can understand that there is God present. He is an Incarnation and believing in Him, meaning actually, we find that these are facts; they are not stories only. We have not heard of

these things from somebody else, but we have verified them with our own ears, with our own eyes or mind. There is a reason to believe, because such power cannot come from an ordinary person. And history shows that by having faith in such an Incarnation, having come within the orbit of his power, many people have been supremely blessed. We can also believe in Him.

How do we believe in ordinary things? We believe in electric light when we see its efficacy. This effect of power to give light, power to give energy, power to do many other things: it is in that way that we believe in the ordinary things of the world. Similarly, in the case of the Incarnation of God, also, by seeing His power manifested before our very eyes, seeing His soul-saving qualities, seeing how He removes the veils of ignorance from peoples' mind we believe. Even the sinners at their touch become saints. Then, of course we know, there is an Incarnation, and belief naturally follows in such cases, because human mind, after all, cannot go against such evidence of actual manifestation.

Q. Why is not Holy Mother considered an Incarnation?

A. Holy Mother is considered an Incarnation, so it is not a correct question. Of course, she chose to hide her identity in that of Sri Ramakrishna. She did not declare herself an Incarnation at that time, but many times, before her devotees, she has said so. It is a fact in our spiritual literature, that wherever God is manifest, if his Shakti comes, if he is married, then that Shakti cannot be other than the Supreme Being also. An ordinary woman can never become the consort of a divine being, so we call her an Incarnation. In the case of Holy Mother, she was an Incarnation, though she did not blazen it out—that is all.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

DYNAMIC SPIRITUALITY

It is this transformation of man in India that will fill our politics and administration with a sense of urgency, with a sense of purpose and direction. With this imaginative sympathy, things will move faster and faster in the administration, and the nation will march faster and faster towards its destined goal of general welfare. It is the greatest asset for the administration of a state such as ours where the most glaring fact is its centuries-long arrested development, and the mounting urge, since independence, for the minimum of human happiness and welfare gushing out of the hearts of millions and millions of its people, who have been, in the pungent words of Vivekananda, 'living the life of next-door neighbours to brutes'. The grasping of this fact and an adequate response to it by an administrator provides the finest, and the only scope for the development of his character and efficiency, and for the retention of his youthful zest and joy in his life and work.

This is the type of glory and greatness that should descend upon men and women in India in general, and the members of the administrative services of the centre and the states, in particular. It will make for the liberation of the spirit of service as a pervasive principle, lighting up the dark and dismal horizon of our nation today, and raising the spiritual quality of the life of its citizens. To go here and there to be spiritual is like going here and there to breathe. It is all *here* and *now*. We have to realize that spirituality is not magic or cheap mysticism, that it is not to be sought merely in caves and forests, but that it is the birthright of one and all, and is to be cultivated in the fields of one's life and

work, in the midst of its ups and downs.

Our people need to be inspired by this practical and realizable ideal which Vivekananda has put before us in the modern age. He exhorts us that it is far better to live for an ideal for an instant than to lead for years the life of jelly-fish existence. The words uttered by queen Vidulā in the *Mahabharata* for the benefit for her son, king Sañjaya, breathes a heroic message for all our youths (*Udyogaparva*, 120, 15):

Muhūrtam jvalitam śreyo na tu dhūmayitam ciram—'It is better to flame forth for an instant than to smoke away for an age.'

Some of the great men of India like Śaṅkara and Vivekananda lived short but intense lives. Theirs was an intense dedication to God and man, to God *in* man; and it changed the course of human history. It is better to live intensely for an ideal and vision than to vegetate for long years in a humdrum existence. *This is a powerful sentiment that can drive away the clouds of cynicism and frustration from the sky of India.* Every educated citizen has to teach himself or herself that he or she not only is *in* India but is also *of* India, and is responsible for the nation's well-being. We have to inspire ourselves with the conviction that we have been called upon to be an instrument of our nation's purposes. What can be a greater glory for man in India today than this, that he is living in the most creative period of his nation's history and that he is privileged to contribute to it, big or small. When cynicism and frustration lay their cold hand of death on a person, he or she is unable to respond to any higher value, and becomes suspicious

of all values except his own self-interest. Bernard Shaw refers to this type in a famous passage:

'This is the joy in life, to be used for a purpose which you consider mighty; to be a force of nature, and not a clod of ailments and grievances ever complaining that the world does not devote itself to making *you* happy.'

These are the two alternatives before us in India today. Here is the great current of Indian national life; I am a part of it, shaping its course and being shaped by its current, losing my smallness and meanness in that great national participation. But if I cut myself away from that current, I become a stagnant pool, swampy and malarious, a clod of ailments and grievances, ever complaining that the nation has not done this or that good to me. 'All expansion is life, all contraction is death', says Vivekananda. More people have taken the path of spiritual contraction, bringing the nation to the verge of despair and disintegration. From now on, let more and more people take the path of expansion, expansion of social awareness and sympathy, and the capacity for calm, silent, hard work inspired by team-spirit, and we shall arrest this downward trend and turn the nation to progress and prosperity, unity and strength.

BHARTRHARI'S SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION

We can better understand the anatomy of our society today by listening to what poet-king Bhartrhari says about the human types in a society. Bhartrhari hailed from the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh and lived over a thousand years ago. Says he in his *Nīṭisataka* (Verse 64):

*Ete satpuruṣāḥ parārthagatākāḥ
svārthān parityajya ye,
sāmānyāstu parārthamudyamabhṛtaḥ
svārthāvirodhena ye;*

*Te'mī mānavarākṣasāḥ parahitam
svārthāya nighnanti ye,
ye tu ghnanti nirarthakam parahitam
te ke na jānīmahe*

'There are some *satpuruṣās*, good people, who engage themselves in the good of others sacrificing their own self-interest; the *sāmānyās*, the generality of people, on the other hand, are those who engage themselves in the good of others so long as it does not involve the sacrifice of their own self-interest. There are those others, the *mānavarākṣasās*, devilish men, who sacrifice the good of others to gain their own selfish ends; but alas, what am I to say of those who sacrifice the good of others without gaining thereby any good to themselves or to any one else!'

The first category is that of the *satpuruṣa*, the good man. What does his goodness consist in? It is an overflowing goodness uncontaminated by any selfish motive. Such people always work to ensure the welfare of other people without caring for their own self-interest. This is the most glorious type in any society; they form its spiritual elite; they are, as the New Testament puts it, the salt of the earth.

Apart from those whom the world looks upon as divine incarnations, the *satpuruṣa* category includes men like Gandhiji. He might have remained a barrister and could have led a comfortable life. But he discovered himself in others and, dying to himself, lived for others. He dedicated himself to the work of rescuing from slavery and fear millions of his fellowmen, and making them realize the dignity and worth of their manhood and womanhood.

The poet then speaks of the second category—the *sāmānyās*, the generality of people—the majority in every society. What is their mental make-up? They serve the interest of other people so long as it does not collide with their own self-interest. That is what British ethical and political philos-

ophy calls 'enlightened self-interest'. And the majority in any society will be of this type. And what India needs today is an intelligent appreciation and application of this philosophy on the part, especially, of her industrialists and businessmen.

They have to realize that it is in their own self-interest to see that the nation prospers and grows. Industry and business have to realize that a flourishing economy demands the widest diffusion of purchasing power among the people. Foolish ways of getting wealth by which the rich become richer and the poor poorer are destructive of the process of wealth-getting itself in a *laissez-faire* state. The difference lies precisely in this that, in the latter, the motivation is *mere* self-interest, in the former, it is *enlightened* self-interest.

Ethics does not demand of this category of people that they sacrifice their self-interest to do good to others. It permits them to seek their self-interest; but it tells them to widen their concept of 'self' by fully grasping the truth of the interdependence of men and groups in society. If I keep my premises scrupulously clean, but do not care to see that the town or village in which I live is also kept clean, I cannot escape the consequences of an epidemic breaking out from that insanitation in my environment. It is therefore in my own interest to see that my environment is sanitary. As societies become larger in territories and population, the concept of 'self' in man's view of his self-interest needs to be correspondingly broadened. A narrow idea of self-interest is based on utter ignorance of the social mechanism, with its subtle interdepending processes. Hence it is *unenlightened* self-interest. This becomes more glaring as a society becomes more complex with not only national but also international inter-connections. Hence the need for raising self-interest to the level of the *enlightened* variety. This philosophy of

enlightened self-interest is today inspiring international relations in such fields as the sharing of economic prosperity and technical know-how through trade and aid extended by advanced countries to developing countries. But it needs to be implemented much more within the national societies themselves, where all self-interest needs to be purified by the touch of *enlightenment*.

The poet then goes on to describe a third category which he characterizes as *mānava-rākṣasās*, devilish men. What is devilish about them? They destroy other people's welfare to gain more profit and pleasure for themselves. This is the *rākṣasa* type; and I am sorry to say that, since independence, we have been manufacturing this type in large numbers in our country. Every conceivable form of food and drug adulteration and corruption afflicts our nation today. What is the source of this affliction? Men and women are out to gain profit and pleasure for themselves at the cost of misery and unhappiness to millions. Why do they do so? Because they have failed to grow beyond their physical, biological selves. They have sharpened their intelligence and will by education, but failed to give a moral orientation to them. By putting this great powers in the service of their lower selves, they have become efficient instruments of social evil and suffering; and this is what *mānava-rākṣasa* means. At this end, one of these people adulterates drugs to gain extra profit to himself; at the other end, the drug is administered to hundreds of children with no effect; the children suffer and die. But what does he care about the social consequences of his action! He cares only for the profit from his business, and is callous about its consequences to his fellow-men.

This is the *rākṣasa* type, a low type of humanity; but many of them are capable of being corrected by social and state action,

and transformed into the second type, the enlightened self-interest category.

The poet can understand the ways and motivations of these three types of people; but he is at a loss to deal with the next, or the fourth, category, and exclaims: *te ke na jānīmahe*—‘I am not able to understand them’! Why? Because they believe in wanton destruction; they destroy other people’s welfare even though they do not gain any benefit to themselves thereby. Every society contains a few such morally demented people. Our nation has a more than healthy share of this type today.

CONCLUSION

This is the picture of human society everywhere. These four types are there in Russia, America, Japan, China and in all the countries of the world, as we have them here in India. The only difference is in the ratio of the four types. And this difference in ratio makes the difference between society and society.

As for the first type, the *satpuruṣa*, every society does have a small minority of this group, unselfish, compassionate, morally alert, and spiritually sensitive. Every society must zealously create and nourish this small minority. Every society will have a majority of its population belonging to the second type—the *sāmānyās*, motivated by self-interest, but of the enlightened variety. But every society should take steps—educational and preventive—to see that the ranks of the third category are thinned, if not entirely eliminated. And the fourth should be completely eliminated, it should never be allowed to rise again. As to the second category, there is great need for vigilance so that it does not slide down to swell the ranks of the third category by too much preoccupation with self-interest and too little with enlightenment. This group has to be specially alert to see that its self-interest is illumined by its

being subjected to the larger interest of society. The moral health of the nation entirely depends upon this immense group steadying itself by drawing inspiration from the small minority of the *satpuruṣa* group above it.

I do hope that, as remarked by me earlier, the self-criticism which is evident in our nation today, and which is a sure sign of the basic health of our society will slowly generate the necessary moral forces to cure the nation of its present ailments. The ailment is a moral ailment and the remedy has to be a moral remedy. We all desire that our nation should be healthy, physically as well as mentally. We have achieved some notable successes in tackling our physical diseases. We have practically conquered malaria which was such a scourge even two decades ago. We are on the way to conquer the scourge of tuberculosis, with leprosy next on the list. As a result of these measures, we have considerably raised the nation’s life expectancy from about 29 to about 50 years since our independence, besides improving the general health of the nation. But the greatest challenge to the nation today is the malady that afflicts its mind and heart. Cynicism, self-centredness, and utter unconcern for others are more deadly than the most deadly physical diseases and the viruses that cause them; for they corrode the nation’s resolve to stay free, to be united, and to march onward to progress. We cannot be blind to the fact that this disease has already invaded our body-politic, including our youths. We have to take energetic measures to arrest the further progress of this disease and to eliminate it from the body-politic. And the nation has to be alert thereafter to see that these deadly mental viruses do not invade our society again. This is the responsibility of every patriotic citizen. We have no king or emperor ruling over us today as in the medieval and other periods. We live under

a democratic set-up which derives its strength from its free, disciplined, responsible, and responsive citizens to whom service of the nation is politics and religion in one, and in whom the nation has its guarantee of unity, strength, and continued progress.

The subject of the philosophy of service, therefore, is not meant for academic discussion in the dull philosophy courses of our universities; it should stir the minds and hearts of every section of the population. It is thus that the nation will get the necessary strength to meet the recurring challenges

this age of revolutionary transition will throw at it. If India succeeds in responding to these challenges adequately, she will become a beacon of hope not only to herself but also to the whole of humanity. We have responded successfully to many a challenges to our national existence and integrity in our long history. And we shall face and overcome this challenge as well. With this faith in ourselves and in our national destiny, let us, from this day onwards, enter our respective fields of life and activity with hope and courage.

(Concluded)

AN UNKNOWN YOUNGMAN'S PIONEERING WORK IN THE HILLS OF ASSAM

SWAMI LOKESWARANANDA

In the heyday of the Non-co-operation Movement of India in 1920-21, two young men, both still undergraduate students, rented a small house in Dacca, now in East Pakistan, with a view to holding secret party meetings to plan and direct subversive activities against the British. Lest the police suspect their real intentions, they used to ply the spinning-wheel (which in those days was regarded as a sure sign of one's allegiance to the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence) and one of them used to spend long hours practising vocal music also. As always happens in cities, the neighbours scarcely took any notice of the young men until the singing became so loud and so persistent that they felt that they had had enough of it and they must protest. At first, they called individually and then in groups, to impress on the young men how at least on humanitarian grounds, the singing should stop at night, when, after a day's hard work, they badly

needed some sleep. When nothing availed, they began to throw stones at the house whenever the singing started at an inconvenient hour.

There was an Anglo-Indian gentleman among the neighbours who objected not only to the music but also to the sound of the spinning-wheel, though others thought it did not cause much disturbance to them and even if it did, they were prepared to ignore it in the interests of the country. The Anglo-Indian gentleman at first sent word through his servants that the spinning too must stop. This, coming from an Anglo-Indian, was only a signal for intensifying the spinning activity, if possible, with a louder noise. When repeated warnings did not serve any purpose, the Anglo-Indian gentleman one day rushed into the house with a pistol in hand and aiming it at the young men, threatened them with shooting if they did not stop the spinning immediately. The

older of the two young men whose name was K—* sprang to his feet and baring his chest, said, 'Shoot me, if you dare, but I am not going to stop spinning.' The Anglo-Indian gentleman realized that he had before him two desperate men who would stop at nothing if they were provoked further. Cursing them, he quietly withdrew. K— felt that it was time that they left the place, for the Anglo-Indian gentleman was sure to report them to the police who, already on their trail in connection with their political activities elsewhere, would soon appear and take them in custody under some pretext or other.

For some time after this, they began to drift, having no fixed aim and no fixed address, for the police were constantly after them. They had always been great admirers of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and it was in fact from their speeches and writings that they had derived inspiration to work for the country. At this point, they began to visit the local branch of the Ramakrishna Mission oftener than they did before and as a result, the conviction slowly grew on them that while patriotism was good, a greater ideal was to serve the whole of mankind which was what the Mission was trying to do. K— who was the older of the two forthwith joined the Mission, withdrawing completely from political activities and turning his whole attention to study and spiritual discipline such as the Mission prescribed for its monastic members.

While K— was undergoing training at the Mission branch of Dacca, word was received that there were many belonging to the Khasi tribe of the K. & J. Hills of Assam who were anxious to have some

* K—, a monk, never allowed, while he was alive, public mention of his name. Although he is no more, there seems no reason why his wish should not be all the more respected.

society, start schools in their hills to which they could safely send their children without any danger of their being exposed to the propaganda of any sectarian religion such as happened in the case of children attending the existing schools in their hills, schools which, though financed by the State, were managed by the Christian Church. The suggestion was made from several quarters that the Ramakrishna Mission undertake this work, for then the work would enjoy the support of all sections of people irrespective of their religious persuasion. Since it was not possible for the Mission to start an activity of the kind without first being sure that there was enough justification for it, it was decided that a junior monk should first visit the area to study the situation there, and provided the conditions warranted it, then start some kind of educational activity on a very modest scale so that if necessary, it could easily be wound up later without any inconvenience to anybody. The choice fell on K— who had by then struck everybody as being an extraordinary young man—tough, yet sensitive, generous to the point of being self-effacing, intelligent, daring, with a will of his own and also, having many plans about what ought to be done to help the common man. He, too, accepted this call with alacrity, seeing in this an opportunity to serve a section of people who had been neglected by society for centuries.

IN THE KHASI HILLS

So, it was that sometime in September, 1924, K—arrived at a small village called Shella in the Khasi Hills, a stranger, almost penniless and without knowing a word of the language of the people among whom he was going to work or anything about their history, religious beliefs and ways of life. Going round the village he came upon a Bengali—one Mathuranath Deb Nath—

who was working as medical assistant in the Government dispensary there. On hearing of the object of K—'s visit, this gentleman welcomed him to his house offering him his hospitality for as long as he needed it. The monk accepted but stayed with him only for a couple of days. He argued that since the purpose of his visit was to serve the Khasis, it was desirable that he should identify himself completely with them, living with them, sharing their food, speaking their language, and sympathising with their hopes and aspirations, so that they, too, in their turn might accept him as one of their own. One special reason why he accepted Mathuranath's hospitality for the first two days was that he noticed that he spoke the language of the people and being a member of the medical profession serving in a Government dispensary, knew all the top men in the village and had also some influence over them. He wanted, through him, to explain to the leaders of the village the object of his visit and ask them in what way he was to begin his work and what help, if any, they might be able to give him to carry out his mission of service.

Mathuranath took him round the village the next day to give him an idea about the place and also to introduce him to its leaders. The village, as it turned out, was already very much Hinduised, for Vaishnava preachers from the plains came to the village once or twice a year in answer to the invitation of the local leaders and organised singing parties with the help of local talents to teach the Khasi public devotional songs. The songs were all in Bengali and in archaic Bengali, at that, but the Khasis, with their almost incredible gifts for music, learnt to sing them with the least effort, though they had no idea of what they were singing about since they did not know Bengali, not at least the kind of Bengali in which the songs were composed.

The songs nevertheless roused in them much religious fervour, partly because they created an atmosphere in which the mind involuntarily turned Godward, and partly because the songs were sung with such gusto and with such feelings that it was impossible for anyone not to be touched. Another factor which had helped the Khasis to have some idea about the broad principles of Hinduism was the work some preachers of the Brahmo Mission had done among them prior to K—'s arrival. The Brahmo Mission had started a school too for their children, but, for some reason or other, it had since become defunct.

Among those K— met during his tour round the village were two persons who were later to play an important role in his work—Gouri Charan and Yogidhan Wadadar. Men of great vision and courage and possessing considerable experience of life in the plains, they welcomed the idea that the Ramakrishna Mission should work among the Khasis. They assured him that they would give him every possible support, individually as well as collectively.

REASON FOR WELCOMING THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

It is necessary to understand at this stage the reason why these two gentlemen, or for that matter, many others of the village, wanted the Ramakrishna Mission to work among them in preference to the Christian Missions who were already working there. They had observed that as a result of the work of the Christian Missions, many of their children had been converted to Christianity and a larger number of them, though nominally still loyal to their own religious traditions, were being influenced by Christian dogmas. This happened because, they observed, the text-books, used in the Missionary schools were all books of Christian theology—'I am a sinner, you are a sinner, we all are sinners and we can

save ourselves only through Christ', and so on; also, because the teachers, who, apart from the fact that they invariably were Christians, often played the dual role of teacher and clergyman. They showed more enthusiasm for preaching Christianity among the students than for teaching them the three R's. The Khasi leaders felt resentful that this should happen in schools which were maintained chiefly, if not entirely, out of the tax-payers' money. They were, however, helpless to do anything about it, since it suited the interests of the alien power then ruling in India to utilize the Christian Missionaries to spread education and with it also Christianity among the tribal people of Assam. There was already much erosion of their ancient customs and traditions going on as a result of the various unhealthy influences to which they had become exposed following the British conquest of their territory, but there was now real danger of their entire tribal life being completely swamped by the well-calculated and systematic attacks which the missionaries were carrying on against their religious beliefs and traditions, social habits and customs, against in fact everything they held dear and sacred as an inheritance from their ancestors. Not being able to resist them because of absence of any organization of their own, they welcomed the Ramakrishna Mission, which though an organization having its roots in the plains and to that extent, suspect in their eye, would at least not interfere with their way of life or try to impose on them an alien culture. Some of them who considered themselves Hindus, were particularly happy that they would have a Hindu organization of the stature of the Ramakrishna Mission working among them, but even others who preferred to regard themselves as a separate community from the Hindus for reasons of the latter's irritating caste prejudices, welcomed the Mission because they did not

like the way the Christian Missionaries were trying to undermine their own cultural life.

A SMALL BEGINNING IS MADE

It was decided, after a brief parley that, in the first instance, a night school should be started for adults and later, if this proved a success, a day school for children might also be started. It is interesting to note that from the very beginning, K— left it entirely in the hands of the village elders to decide in what form they would have his services, and he also made it clear to them that, while he did not want any remuneration from them for any services he gave them, they were not to expect, either, that he would bring money from outside, as the Christian Missionaries did, for the work they wanted him to do. He explained to them the conditions on which the Ramakrishna Mission insisted before agreeing to work in a particular area. He pointed out that it never started work in any place unless the local people wanted it and assured it of their continued moral and financial support. What is remarkable is that the Khasis of Shella, though themselves rather poor depending as they did upon their very uncertain income from primitive agriculture, gladly agreed to bear the entire financial responsibility so far as this project was concerned. What is more, when they discovered that K—, after enjoying Mathuranath's hospitality for two or three days, had left his house and was in fact living in the open, sometimes going without food and sometimes eating whatever chance brought him, they offered him accommodation in their houses.

They did not invite him to have his meals with them, for they thought that, like most Hindus of the plains, he might not eat with them; instead, they gave him rice, vegetables, etc. which K—cooked for himself twice daily. When, however, they dis-

covered that he had not the least objection to eating cooked meals provided by them, that is to say, he was not a person who had any faith in the prevailing caste rules, they invited him to have meals with them, which K— gladly accepted. This marked the beginning of a relationship full of love, goodwill and trust which grew stronger every year and lasted till the end.

The Night School which K— was running proved a great success. It was meant primarily for those adults, who wanted to learn Bengali so that they could communicate with Bengalis with whom they had much business connections. When the school had gone on for some months, the elders of the village felt that it was time that they started an elementary school for children to be held at day time. This was accordingly started, at first experimentally, and with K— as its sole teacher, but soon this too became very popular and its roll-strength began to swell rapidly with children who came not only from Hindu families but also from Christian families, for K— proved to be an excellent teacher. He had to work very hard, for apart from the fact that he ran now two schools, he spent whatever time he could save from his other duties, learning the language of the people and studying their manners and customs, their social habits, religious beliefs, etc. He also visited every house in the village irrespective of whether it was Christian or Hindu, rich or poor.

THE MOTIVATION OF HIS WORK

He let everybody know that he had come there without any ulterior motive, without even the motive of trying to Hinduise them, though it was true that if anybody having already been under Hindu influence, wanted to study Hinduism further, he was ready to help him. It pained him to see that conversions often took place because the people were poor and ignorant. It pained him

more when he saw that those who embraced Christianity became thoroughly denationalised. But what could he, one single individual, do against this? Also, he felt that if he was to make any impact on their minds, it was imperative that he win their trust and affection. They had a deeply ingrained suspicion about all plains people who often exploited them, taking advantage of their simplicity and ignorance. He had, therefore, to convince them first that he was different from the kind of plains people that they had so far known. He had to prove that he had come there not for any material gain, but to serve, which was only another form of prayer with him. In other words, he needed to explain to them the purpose of his life and how as a monk of the Ramakrishna Mission, he viewed selfless service as a way of realising the ultimate truth which is in religion.

HIS COMMAND OF THE KHASI LANGUAGE

K— knew he could never discuss these matters with the Khasis or reach their hearts unless he could communicate with them freely in their language. He, therefore, concentrated all his efforts on mastering Khasi. The quick progress he made in this was incredible: within three months, he was able to speak Khasi fluently and correctly to the amazement of everybody. Soon he began to hold talks and discourses in Khasi on subjects of wide interest, specially on subjects of immediate concern to the Khasis. Those who attended his talks and discourses testify to his great command of the language and his clear and logical way of putting things without being in the least dogmatic.

HIS CAUTION TO THE KHASIS

He made no attempt through his talks and discourses, to influence their thinking in any particular direction, except that he cautioned them against losing their identity

as a race while they were trying, as they must try, to take advantage of the many opportunities which the present age had brought them; in other words, he wanted them to be progressive, but they must see that the progress they were going to make was not at the expense of the fine traditions they had inherited from the past. He also pointed out to them that it would be futile for them to try to live in isolation as they did in the past, but that they must come forward to share with the rest of the Indian people the burden of shaping destiny of their common motherland. They often expressed their doubts and misgivings about what might be their fate if they did not try to keep away from the maelstrom of life which was going on in the plains. He explained to them that the solution did not lie in physical isolation—and that was not possible either in the present age, but in assimilating what was good, no matter where it came from, and rejecting what, in spite of its deceptive looks, was in fact detrimental to their ultimate interests. As they listened to him they felt they were getting a whiff of fresh air from a new world and even though not all of what he said was clear to them they hung on his words because of the soundness of his views and the great concern he expressed for their welfare. Slowly they came to recognize that he was different not only from other plains people but also, from the missionaries some of whom certainly cared for them, but cared for them without showing the least concern whether they retained their separate identity as a race or not.

HIS IMAGE

Even today, 44 years after his first arrival in the Khasi Hills, people remember his talks and the enthusiasm and racial pride that he was able to infuse into the people through them. They also speak of his humility, his capacity to make the humblest

man feel at ease in his company, and above everything else, his smile, a smile that earned the reputation of having won many friends. A Deputy Director of Education says that even when he was suffering from his last fatal illness, he was never without his smile on his face. K— was a small figure even for a Bengali, but he was well-proportioned; not muscular but wiry and very tough, light-complexioned, with lustrous eyes, a broad forehead and a firm chin. He was, by no stretch of imagination, a handsome man, but his dignified bearing and sense of self-assurance which marked his dealings with others left no one in doubt that he came of a good family. As a matter of fact, his parents belonged to an upper caste of the Hindu hierarchy and enjoyed an assured measure of affluence with the income they derived from their landed property. Being a monk he was careful never to disclose his family background to others, but later enquiries showed that he was from Sylhet, the eldest boy in a joint family of several brothers and cousins—eldest as well as brightest.

WORK EXPANDING

Soon word spread to other villages that a strange young man had arrived at Shella who was running schools without any attempt to convert the pupils to a particular religious belief and what was more, was anxious, like the Khasi themselves, that they should preserve their ancient traditions while adapting themselves to the altered circumstances in which they found themselves now as a result of the British conquest of their territory. Leaders of those villages soon approached him to start similar schools in their villages. K— visited those villages, and agreed to start schools in those villages only when he found that the villages sincerely felt the need for separate schools and were also prepared to make necessary sacrifices in

order to run them. Soon he had a net-work of schools, covering many villages with Shella as their centre. Although he was the moving spirit of this work, he had local committees appointed which shouldered the responsibility of running those schools. Meanwhile, the school at Shella had been raised to the status of an M. E. School and when this was done, the Durbar of the Shella Confederation, a Council of village elders elected through adult franchise, sanctioned an annual grant of Rs. 500/- for the school.

SEARCH FOR WORKERS

As K — had to travel around constantly, it was no longer possible for him to spare much time for teaching. He, therefore, set about looking for competent assistants who would work not for money, but out of love for the people. He first wrote to his friend in Dacca who had once been his partner in political activities, urging him to come at once to help him in his work. The friend—S — was his name—had by then left Dacca and was working in a commercial house in Calcutta. He immediately resigned and left for the Khasi Hills. He was a great help, but K — needed more workers as his work was growing by leaps and bounds. He wrote to many friends and was, after a protracted correspondence, able to get a few young men to come to work in his village centres. They came not so much for love for the work as for high adventure which they thought they would have. Some of them turned out to be altogether unsuitable for this kind of work, but some proved quite good. A brother-monk too had meanwhile arrived to assist him. He, with his musical talents and knowledge of Homeopathy, was a pillar of strength to him. Other monks also came, but not all of them were able to stay for long, either because their services were needed elsewhere or their health gave way.

WRITING TEXT-BOOKS

K — had observed that the text-books which the Khasi students used taught only theology—Christian theology. He rightly argued that his attempt to give liberal education to the Khasis would not succeed unless he had appropriate text-books which might be used not only in the schools he had started but also elsewhere. As such books were not available at the time, he set about writing the books himself and in spite of the heavy burdens he bore, was able to publish some books within an incredibly short time—a fact he was able to accomplish only because he never spared himself. Though several decades have passed since those books first appeared, some of them are still in use, a testimony to the skill and care he brought to bear on the task of writing those books. A brother-monk too wrote a few books of songs which have not known their peers since they first appeared. Those songs became an immediate hit because of the fine sentiments they expressed and their charming notes and some of them are sung over the radio even today.

HIGH SCHOOL

It was at this time that K — felt that his efforts would be fruitless unless he had a high school which the students could join after they had finished their primary and middle standards in schools set up by him. He had noticed how the children who went to the high school in Shillong often came back with such exotic habits and tastes that they became complete misfits in their rural society. The people of Shella begged him to start the high school in their village to enable their children and the children of neighbouring villages to receive higher education in a congenial environment. K — however, felt that the best place where the school could be located was Cherrapunjee, for it was easily accessible from different points of the Khasi Hills and it was also

the seat of ancient Khasi culture. Though his Shella friends were disappointed that he did not select their village, they readily conceded that Cherrapunji was a far better place for the proposed school.

K — soon visited Cherrapunjee to explore what help and co-operation he might get from the local people to start a high school there. He found that while the Christians in a body opposed the idea of a Hindu organization starting any school there, the non-Christians were either lukewarm or just did not care what happened. When K — had almost given up hope of being able to start a school at Cherrapunjee, one Khasi gentleman offered him a piece of land, saying it was his, should he at any time decide to start a high school there. A small table-land atop a hill higher than those which constituted the village and commanding an enchanting view of surrounding forests, fountains and the distant plains of Sylhet, it was, judged by any standard, the best possible site for a school. Encouraged by this sudden stroke of good luck, K — quickly formed a committee consisting of the prominent men of the village, both Christian and non-Christian, to whom he entrusted the work of organising the school, himself remaining in the background as far as possible. How wise this course was, was proved by what followed shortly: No sooner had word spread that someone in the village had offered a gift of land to the Hindu monk almost free of conditions than the Syiem (i.e., Raja) of the local State, probably under the pressure of some interested parties, took a hand in thwarting the move. He had a notice served on both K — and the intending donor of land saying that they were not to proceed further in the matter. This proved to be a blessing in disguise, for the members of the Committee *felt insulted that the Syiem should try to put a spanner across the project that they had by now come to regard as their own*

and they took up the cudgels on behalf of K — and fought the Syiem till they were able to wrest from him his consent to the proposed gift of land and the starting of the school.

The problem of land having been thus happily settled, he now set about collecting funds to construct the school building. He had by now made important contacts in Shillong and through them was able to raise enough money to construct a school building with C. I. sheet roofing.

He was also able to enlist the services of a few educated young Bengalis who agreed to work on a bare subsistence allowance. He distributed them to his various schools, but most of them were not suitable for work in a tribal area and some were so bad that he had to ask them to leave forthwith. This resulted in the collapse of some of his newly started schools, but he did not mind it in the long-term interest of his work.

K — now spent more time at Cherrapunjee than elsewhere, for he knew his presence was needed to boost the morale of his workers as well as the guardians of the students who naturally enough often wondered how the school was going to have a stable footing without a semblance of a guarantee about money and man-power. He himself wondered about it no less, but he was determined to make the school a success and if necessary to sacrifice some of his feeder schools (which he did) for this purpose lest the Khasis lose confidence in him. As it is, the Khasis had noted how handicapped he was as compared with the Christian missionaries in point of resources and man-power, but he had taught them to think that the venture he was making was their own and that they themselves were responsible for its success or failure. K —'s *main headache being about men and money*, he often visited Shillong, the capital of Assam, where he had by now been able to

rouse much public sympathy for his work. A small committee had been formed there with influential men who began to take much interest in the work started by him in the Khasi Hills and who also held themselves responsible for its good management.

OPPOSITION

This policy of associating the public with his venture proved wise and ultimately paid rich dividends. In the first place, it secured for him an increased measure of public support and co-operation, it also ensured that if there was ever any organised opposition to his work, it was not that he alone would have to stand up in its defence, but that there would be others also to do so. It is perhaps not known to many that the hills of Assam in those days were treated by the British as 'excluded' areas, that is to say, as places where people from the plains could come and work only under duress. For instance, if the local authorities at any time felt that K—'s presence was not in public interest, he might then be expelled from the Khasi Hills at short notice without showing any reason whatsoever. K— could not even appeal to a higher authority against this. That he ran this risk soon proved true, for a few Christian leaders wrote to the district authorities complaining that under the pretext of giving education to the Khasi children, K— was in fact preaching hatred against the British. This was in the days when anti-British feelings ran very high in the country. The district authorities naturally took alarm and the Deputy Commissioner, an Englishman, ran post-haste to Shella where K— was then staying, to make enquiries on the spot. He questioned people of all shades of opinion in an attempt to get a true picture of the man that K— was, his activities, the source of his income, who were his supporters and so on. It was quite a surprise to him to find that except for a

handful of diehard Christians, the Khasis to a man praised K—. It was their unanimous opinion that his only concern was to promote the all-round welfare of the Khasis irrespective of their religious beliefs. He was not interested in politics—at least, he had never tried to preach any particular political viewpoint which might even remotely be construed as anti-British or anti-Government. The Deputy Commissioner then sent for K— and had a long talk with him. He was so impressed by K—'s straightforward and intelligent answers that he declared that, regardless of what others might say about him, he, as head of the District, would be glad to have him continue his labours and was prepared to help him in any way he could. K—soon came to know who were the people who had sent the clandestine report against him, but he never bore any ill-will against them.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Ever since K—came to work in the Khasi Hills, he was struck by the fact that the Khasis, otherwise a charming people, suffered from the peculiar complex that they regarded every non-Khasi as a wicked person. He realized that this happened because they had for centuries lived in isolation and also because if they ever came in contact with people from the outside world, it was often the wrong kind of people. To remove this misconception, he arranged for small groups of Khasi leaders to tour different parts of the country, often under his own personal care. These leaders had no idea that India was a vast country inhabited by a multitude of races. This kind of tour enabled them to know the country and its people. He also picked up some intelligent boys and girls and sent them to Dacca and Calcutta for their education. His idea was that some of them, after they had spent a few years under the influence of progressive societies, would come back home to provide an intelligent

and broad-minded leadership to their people.

CENTRE IN SHILLONG

It slowly occurred to K—that he needed to have a centre in Shillong in order that he might keep alive public interest in his work. He accordingly purchased a piece of land on which he sowed the seeds of what later developed into a magnificent institution embracing a wide range of activities. The centre in Shillong served as the headquarters of the work in the Khasi Hills, though K—himself seldom stayed in Shillong as he spent most of his time overseeing the work in the hills.

Thus, in the course of ten years or so, K—, single-handed and in face of great opposition from many quarters, succeeded in creating a number of schools of various grades situated in important areas of the hills in which the Khasi children could have their education without any danger of their religious beliefs and traditions being undermined.

BREAK-DOWN OF HEALTH

But since 1934, K— had been feeling weak and tired for no apparent reason. He had previously walked twice between Cherrapunjee and Shella in a single day covering twenty-six miles of much hard climbing, a feat few local hillmen had attempted successfully, but now it was difficult for him to walk even a few steps. He saw doctors in Shillong, but they could not tell him what was wrong with him. It was true that he had never had enough nutrition ever since he came to work in the Khasi Hills, but he had great faith in his physique which was as hard as steel and he could not bring himself to believe that there was really anything wrong with him. Since he began to get worse everyday, he had no alternative but to agree, at the insistence of his friends, to go to Calcutta for examination

by Dr. B. C. Roy. That medical wizard, after a series of tests, announced that K— was suffering from a kind of virus attack.

He added that the chief symptom of the disease was muscular atrophy and that there was no cure for this that he knew of. Though this was like a death-sentence, K— received the news with complete unconcern. He was taken back to Shillong where he had nothing to do but await slow death. Soon a time came when he was not able even to use his limbs. Once he was alone in his room when a fly harassed him by trying to dig into the pupils of his eyes, but he was not able to do anything until an attendant came. Smiling, he remarked. 'I used to be proud of my strong body. This is why I am in this state now.'

SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY

It was K—'s ambition to publish a book in Khasi containing the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna on the occasion of his birth-centenary which fell in 1936. He had now and then talked to his Khasi friends about Sri Ramakrishna, but since the time was now fast approaching when he would be no more, he wanted to leave behind a book in Khasi which would tell the people all about the source from which he derived inspiration for what he had done for the Khasis. He now spent most of his time writing the book with the help of some volunteers. As there was not much time left, he often worked far into the night, but, despite the physical strain that this involved, he was in high spirits because he was going to see his last task accomplished before death called him. Happily, the book appeared, just as he had wished, on the day the Centenary celebration began in Shillong.

FINALE

Since K— was no longer able to look after the work, he requested the Committee in Shillong to relieve him of all his respon-

sibilities and manage the work without him. They agreed to do their best, but begged that he continue to guide them so long as that was possible. From the time K— ceased to be actively involved in the work, he refused to allow the Committee to spend any money on him. He even began to live outside the Centre, for he did not wish that in looking after him it should divert its attention from its more important tasks. At first, he occupied a room which somebody lent to him. Here he lived depending upon a few young men who took it upon themselves to look after him. They took turns in nursing him while a friend supplied his food. It was hard life, but K— had never cared about comforts. His only concern was that the work should not suffer because of his inability to supervise it. He had many visitors coming to see him every day—men and women of every age-group. His last and only appeal to them was that they try to understand the tribal problem and help solve it as best they could in the larger interests of the nation. Among his callers were many Khasis too, some who had known him and had reasons to be grateful to him and some who had never met him but had simply heard about him. To them too K— appealed that they learn to look upon the schools started by their leaders with his help as their own and love and serve them in any way they could. Although he was now a complete invalid, he never tired of meeting people, specially those who were comparatively young and urging them to dedicate themselves to the service of the poor and the backward.

Meanwhile, his relations at home, specially the young people of his village who had heard about his colourful life were pressing him to come back to the village to spend his last days there. Seeing that he was too much of a burden on the people who were looking after him in Shillong, he returned to his village after more than a

decade. The whole village began to look upon him as if he was their most prized possession. Although life was fast ebbing out and he knew that the end might come any day, he did not rest but kept himself busy encouraging the young men of the village to spend their free time in the service of the community. It was at his instance that an organization soon came into being through which the young men of the village began to care for the weaker sections of the village population. It was at this time that the village people woke up one day to see a crowd of strange people wending their way to K—'s house. It was the Khasis who had come to pay their last homage to their benefactor. No eye was dry when they arrived at his house or when, some days later, they took leave of him. As if he was waiting for this last meeting with the people he had come to regard as his own, for K—, not long after this, quietly slipped into death on a cold morning in 1938. He was barely thirtyseven then!

It must have given much comfort to K— to hear before his death that the Ramakrishna Mission had taken over his work among the Khasis. Besides giving him moral support and some broad guidance, the Mission had so long had no direct involvement in what he was doing, but from now on the work was to be entirely its responsibility. The work has since then grown much, there being now more than forty schools spread over the Khasi Hills with Cherrapunjee as their headquarters (Shillong is now a separate centre). The Mission's high school at Cherrapunjee is now reckoned as one of the best in Assam. There are also other activities started by the Mission at Cherrapunjee which have brought it closer to the Khasis.

A long time has passed now since K— first arrived in the Khasi Hills and although the people who knew him personally are now few, it is impossible to visit the Khasi

Hills without being conscious of K—'s inspiring, supervising and directing. His influence. One feels as if he is still there spirit seems to be everywhere.

MUSINGS OF THE MUSAFIR

THE TOURIST AND THE PILGRIM

By travelling you know. By knowing you travel further. Also, there is a kind of travelling, said to be the best, without moving. Says our ancient friend, Laotse, in *Tao Te Ching*:

'Not to go out of the house is to know the world of men,
Not to look out of the window is to know the ways of the heavens;
For the further a man travels
The less he knows.

This is how the sages know without going anywhere,

Can name things without seeing them,
Can bring them to completion without doing anything.'

After much travelling great travellers declared that there was indeed no going anywhere, or coming from anywhere, for what was not here, was not there too; what was not there was not here too. They alone are truly travelled persons who have gone beyond the bounds of geography or for the matter of that, cosmography.

* * * *

Lesser travellers, however, easily fall into two groups: tourists and pilgrim. And you can tell one from the other by their very looks: the one looking *at* everything, the other looking *for* something. One chasing shadows, the other gleaning the substance. One endlessly clicking his camera, the other tirelessly seeking to go beyond the chimera.

* * * *

In many developing countries tourism has become a flourishing industry and trade. They make no bones about letting it be known that short of picking your pockets,

they are going to extract out of you as much money as possible. So they flatter, pamper and exploit you in as many ways as they can invent, sometimes through your exquisite co-operation, of course, and not unoften through trickery and other degrading ways. In pursuit of money some countries have reduced some of their glorious national institutions into trinket-selling counters. Even worse things are done.

* * * *

Indians, late starters in the trade, have been rushing hard to catch up. The other day some one brightly thought that it would dignify and magnify India's tourist trade if they had a 'patron saint' of tourism in India. And Śrī Śankarāchārya was declared to be that saint. Of course in finding such patrons you do not consult the opinion of the victim of your choice. Again, in this philosophers' country you are nobody if you do not differ from another, especially on such metaphysical issues. So another no less bright person promptly suggested that the patron saint of tourism in India should be Nārada and not Śaṅkara. What will be the heavenly wanderer's personal reaction in this matter is anybody's guess. Meanwhile modern man is satisfied with his sanctimonious condescension!

If the Musafir might join the issue, he would tell you, for good luck in tourist trade what you need is not a patron-saint but patrons only! Saints are better kept out of this business for they are apt to create difficulties by raising inconvenient issues or by

questioning questionable things. For example, Śaṅkara roundly questions tourism itself in his verse 'Anātma-Śrī-Vigarhanam' in these words:

Dr̥ṣṭvā nānācārudeśāḥ ... tataḥ kim yena svātmā naiva sākṣātkṛto'bhūt.—'You may have visited beautiful places in various countries, but what does it avail you, if you have not realized your own Self?'

Obviously, this is no cash crop. So leave saints out. You want to earn some money. Try simple honesty. Try clear common sense. Learn selectively some sound business principles from other people in other countries who have made a success of this business. Avoid pitfalls of greed and cheap-selling out of dignity and decorum.

* * * *

All in the Indian tourist industry, however, are not at all concerned with lofty ideas. They have started putting up things for sale not excluding even the honour and future of the country. Musafir has seen in an affluent metropolis of India a big bill-board asking people to honour the tourists (foreign tourists, to be sure!) for they are 'your bread and butter'.

Is national dignity no value any more with Indians? Must they sell themselves out and that so cheap?

It will do good to everyone in India to understand these two simple facts : (1) That your bread and butter are in your corn fields, dairy farms, in the vast expanses of your 'waste' lands and swift flowing rivers, in your forests and valleys, in the mines lying hidden in your backyard, in your ocean beds which you have hardly dared to peep into, in your factories, research laboratories ; in the unharnessed energy of your muscles and in the untapped resources of your own mind.

(2) That as long as you regard foreign tourists as the source of your bread and

butter you will never cease to be a beggars' nation. You have yourself seen how in response to a little better tilling your soil can yield so much that you do not know where to store the harvest. And if you feed your cattle a little better, have lush pastures for them as they have in America and Australia, instead of worshipping them with excited words, you will not have to flatter others for bread and butter.

* * * *

Again, what is more, in order to make the trade boom, they have started one of the most degrading imitation of some decadent practices of the West, namely, parading so called beauties of their daughters, little knowing that it is a psychological cancer of Western civilization that they are gleefully trying to induct home. This attempted socialization of sensuality, is one of the ultra vulgar developments in modern Indian life, the consequences of which do not at all appear to be obvious to many. Remember, if you start parading the beauties of your daughters for making money, before you are awake, you will have turned a nation of uglies and like some other countries, India too will become a heaven of psychiatrists before fifty tourist seasons come and go. Why not open your eyes, see and learn? What has happened somewhere may happen elsewhere too. Not all of you may be aware that in the star-spangled Beverly Hills area of Hollywood, practise the largest number of psychiatrists in the world some roaring business indeed.

* * * *

Musafir wants to assure you, however, that he is not out to ruin your business. He surely means to help it. So he says: do your business as it behoves you, the scions of the hoariest living civilization in world. Act as a great civilizing power, that you truly are. Do not reduce diamonds into

glass beads to get buzzing around you a buying spree. Neither do you cheat, nor rob. Do not make a merchandise of the modesty of your women. Honour the visiting people, for your scripture says, they are to be treated like gods. If you cannot go that far, treat them at least as your dear ones, for are they not from the other 'mansion' of your 'father's house'?

When they arrive receive them well. Not that you have to wait for them with garlands. Streamline the air ports. If you go round the world you will see India has some of the darkest airports of the world at night, and clumsiest during the day. After a jet flight from the nearest foreign country you nearly have to wait as much time to get your luggage, what to speak of that exacting ordeal called customs clearance. Then you are at the mercy of the unknown many who are only too avid and willing to exploit you to the maximum. Receiving well means making the entry of the tourist in the country pleasant by minimizing his avoidable hardships and saving him from unscrupulous people through proper servicing.

When the foreign tourist is in India let him be looked after well and when he leaves do not forget to smile and say, 'Come again to this country of yours'. No amount of designed smiling and sentimental words, however, will make any business if you were a bad host when he was a willing guest, if you did not sincerely look after him well and safe-guard his welfare.

In tourist business it is paying to remember one simple fact of human psychology that nobody wants to spend money from his pocket for buying psychological pain and aesthetic torture. The sights of abject poverty and those of dirt and filth more than anything else tend to undercut the effect of good measures and thwart the business in India. The former causes tourists, especially those from affluent

countries, psychological discomfort, if not pain and the latter inflicts on them aesthetic torture. Having once walked into them, they go through the ordeals as well as they can. But they would not be going to buy them again unless they had some other compelling interests, like business, political or spiritual.

So to make a success of the business on hand, some thing need be specially done to remove these two maladies. As to the removal of the sights of abject poverty, there is no easy way. When we are poor we cannot easily help looking it. General economic leveling up through energetic production of wealth and proper distribution are the long term answers, to which we have already addressed ourselves. There is no short term solution of the problem. But Musafir does not see why we should wait to be rich before we would keep our houses and streets clean. Need we necessarily keep homes, thoroughfares, and public places filthy until our standard of living is higher? What we really need are changing our habits of thinking, developing some aesthetic sense, shedding the awful lethargy from out of our national bones, and developing a passion for cleanliness. We must get rid of the superstition that without a battalian of servants homes cannot be kept clean. In America not perhaps one in a thousand has a servant at home, yet they maintain a high standard of cleanliness. The secret is: 'housewife, "do it yourself." Husband, help her. Children, join parents.' And do not throw your garbage on the street, throw them in the garbage can. Your doing this will increase national income through tourist business.

No one, however, can really be tidy for business for any length of time, unless he learns to be so for himself!

See that the tourists get clean places (with proper sanitary arrangements) to stay in, good wholesome food and drink, and

not that over-spiced flaming stuff which will remind them of the much-heard-of hell fire. Give them correct information and helpful guidance. Adopt measures to protect them from beggars and swindlers.

Do not try to degrade their taste to earn money, neither allow them to degrade you. Save them from harm. Do not exploit their ignorance. Learn from their knowledge. If you want them to visit your country again extend to them genuine courtesy and make them feel they have come home. And let them be treated with sincere good manners. Do them in decency the best turn which you would have done to you when you visit their country.

Tell him about this vast fascinating land and the people, its snowy peaks, oceans, peacocks, lakes, lions, tajmahals, fabrics, science laboratories, caves where art meditates, wonderful handiworks, silks, foot-wears, and carpets.

Tell him about this country's intimacy with God and His various ways ; of temples, churches, mosques, and places of pilgrimage. Do not also forget to tell him of those places where Jawaharlal preferred to worship—the dams and river-valley projects.

In fine, expose him to the greatness, goodness and uniqueness of this old-new country. The rest you may leave to his descretion.

When you are asked about untouchability do not lash out: what about your Negroes or forced labour camps? Tell facts, for facts tell. Say politely: we have been trying to overcome this national sin of ours. Perhaps with your good will we shall succeed before long. If they ask you sceptically about holy Ganga, smile sweetly and say smartly: next sure comes the sacred cow! The tourist will also join you in laughter.

* * * *

When will dawn that day in India when Musafir's soul will be refreshed to read on road side edicts the inscription: 'Honour

the pilgrims for they are more than your bread and butter'!

This is no clap-trap, if you have the way of seeing the heart of things. Pilgrims in this country are treated as if they were the scum of society, whereas they are indeed the cream of society. Going by the rule of a strange economics you seem to think that tourists are producers of wealth, but pilgrims are a liability. Even by any standard of temporal economics, pilgrims also produce wealth. Every place of pilgrimage knows that. What is more, pilgrims produce a superior kind of wealth in the country, which cannot be shown in misleading statistics. But, unfortunately, this is not sufficiently understood in India of today. If it were, pilgrims of this country would not have to stake their all, take risk of life and limb for going on pilgrimage. Helping the pilgrims—by way making their journey less hazardous, providing hygienic rest houses, proper sanitary arrangements, wholesome food and drink at reasonable prices, dependable transport arrangements, and saving them from exploitation, harrassment and torture at the hands of unscrupulous people—is not less important than starting heavy industries for a sound economic base or holding conferences on national integration. What is a sounder economic basis than to keep the whole life in perspective; than to keep in view that life is after all a pilgrimage to the Divine? And who started earlier,—and kept it on all the time—working for national integration than the pilgrims?

Make no mistake: grim will be your future, all your dreams of peace, progress and prosperity will be frustrated if you ignore the pilgrim, and turn this country into a tourists heaven complete with all exotic, exciting and intoxicating bizarreria; and pilgrims' nightmare, bristling with all inconveniences, fears and tortures.

This land has been a land of pilgrims

down millennia. Let this land advance in manner of pilgrims. Then alone it will be able to assuage the blisters of this burning world.

'Blessed one move on ... by moving on one gets honey', said the Vedic sage addressing homo-sapiens as children of immortality. There is an ever increasing meaning to these great words with the advancing pace of a person; the tourist getting transformed into a pilgrim almost unawares while moving on the high way of life. The tourist has set his foot on the way.

Why may he not have his run of looking around? It is but proper that he be helped. The pilgrim has made some head-way. He longs to be '*āvṛttacakṣuḥ amṛtatvamicchān*', —'to be turning his gaze inward desiring immortality.' It is but meet that we facilitate his journey too.

Honour the tourists by all means, not because they are your bread and butter, but because they are potential pilgrims. And honour the pilgrims even more for they are demonstrating that man will not live by bread alone.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Swami Turiyananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, did not leave any written work. But his letters have proved themselves to an abiding source of spiritual inspiration and guidance. The letter published in this issue is translated from original Bengali.

The editorial addresses itself to examining the movement of motivations which motor the planning activities in India, and the vision that guides them.

Swami Madhavananda, at that time General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, went to America in 1956 accompanied by Swami Nirvanananda, the then Treasurer of the Mission. During their visit to the Vedānta Society of New York, Swami Madhavananda met on the evening of March 30, the members and the devotees in the chapel and there were questions and answers which are reported here. In the meet Swami Nirvanananda and

Swami Prabhavananda, Head of the Vedānta Society of Southern California, also were present. This report of the illuminating conversazione came to this Journal through the kind courtesy of Swami Pavitrananda, Head of the Vedānta Society of New York. 'The Questions of Spiritual Seekers Answered' by the ninth President of the Ramakrishna Order, will continue in two more issues to come.

'The Philosophy of Service' by Swami Ranganathananda of the Ramakrishna Order appeared in the August 1968 issue of the Journal. The article was continued in the following issue and is being concluded in this issue.

'Gems of purest ray serene', when brought to our wondering attention enhances our respect for man. Today's man urgently needs this tonic for his soul.

Swami Lokeswarananda, of the Ramakrishna Mission, in his article, 'An Unknown Young Man's Pioneering Work in the Hills of Assam' presents to us the pen-

portrait of such a gem, an unknown worshipper of God in man, whose life cannot fail to inspire and guide.

The Musafir comes, unexpectedly though, a long way with us to look into our business of tourism and our pilgrims' plight. His musings are no music, but could be helpful for making both profit and headway.

SHOULD INDIANS IMITATE AMERICANS AT ALL?

Plato, it would appear, was a crooked-shouldered man. He had an admiring following of scholars who assiduously tried to imitate their hero by bolstering out their garments on that side so that they might also look crooked-shouldered like their master, and so wise! Of course, they found it much easier to imitate his physical deformity than his mental superiority.

All imitators more or less run this risk.

Imitation is said to be the sincerest flattery. Imitators easily leave aside the natural ways of self-development, enter into artificial or devious one, and soon become servile, and often, ridiculous creatures.

The other day a well-meaning intellectual, an American professor, wrote (in *Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta, June 30, 1968) an intimate article entitled 'Indians should not imitate Americans blindly'. He was spurred to writing this article by an ecstatic remark of an Indian journalist, an 'Americaphile', who wrote that he admired everything that was 'intensely American'. The journalist did not make it clear what was being 'intensely American'. Neither did the Professor exactly know what among these was intensely American: 'Ice cream soda? Hamburgers? The Empire State Building? Go-getting ambition? Progressiveness in

the arts? Sports ability? Mechanical inventiveness?' However, in the course of his interesting article the writer furnishes an engaging list of 'don'ts' in regard to imitation of America and in conclusion instructs:

'Naturally, there are Indian habits we Americans should not imitate in return, but most of these are not the kind we are likely to copy, because of climate for one, or tradition, for another. It is a two way street to be sure, but there is need to reciprocate. Just copy our best, not our worst practices.'

The question, therefore, arises what are Americans' best practices, and what are the worst ones? The answer will not be easy to give for the simple reason that the nation's life flows on like the East river with everything in it, together and unsorted. What could be considered Americans' best,—and on this ten competent Americans are likely to give ten different answers—, are inextricably messed up with what some Americans would consider as Americans' worst. One cannot be separated from the other for imitating.

You either imitate the Americans as they are in toto, or you do not imitate them, for Americans are not themselves when abstracted from their worst. Without their baffling heterogeneity, paradoxes and contradictions,—strength and weakness, excellences and frailties, nobilities and vanities, subtleties and oddities, generousities and cruelties, going together, which make them a singular people, you do not have living, natural Americans. Once dead and sepulchred they probably could not be distinguished, say from, Russians, for imitating.

There is simply no way of imitating Americans' best without taking their worst along with it. Life is *not* like that.

The only safe object of imitation in the world is a perfect man. Then, who really

can imitate a perfect man, even if he were available for the purpose? Only a near-perfect man. Though 'imitation of Christ' are familiar words, the act of imitation is not as familiar an experience for the simple reason that only a Christ-like man can imitate Christ. Again, a truly Christ-like man would not really imitate Christ, he would be a differently great man, an original efflorescence of the Spirit. Christ did not imitate the Buddha, he became the Christ. It was perfectly natural that he so became, and how wonderful for mankind that he did not become an imitation Buddha.

So the question of imitation arises only regard to those who are not superior persons. Such common people normally lack the power of discrimination. They have not developed the capacity to foresee what would be the end-point of a particular course of imitation. So it could not be safe or wholesome for such people to try to imitate persons about whose perfection no indubitable proofs are available.

Great Americans had great hopes that after the civil war (1861-65) America would rise to the pinnacles of true greatness. But they were disillusioned. Sorrowfully wrote Emerson that he had hoped 'that in the peace after such a war, a great expansion would follow in the mind of the country, grand views in every direction—true freedom in politics, in religion, in social science, in thought. But the energy of the nation seems to have expended in the war.' [Quoted in *Vivekananda* by Swami Nikhilananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1964, p. 136.]

Walt Whitman, frustrated in his dream about his country wrote bitterly:

'Society in the States is cramped, crude, superstitious, and rotten. ...Never was there, perhaps, more hollowness of heart than at present, and here in the United States. Genuine belief seems to have left us. ...The great cities reek with respect-

able, as much as non-respectable, robbery and scoundrelism. In fashionable life, flippancy, tepid amours, weak infidelism, small aims, or no aims, at all, only to kill time.... I say that our New World Democracy, however great a success in uplifting the masses out of their sloughs in materialistic development, and in a certain highly deceptive superficial popular intellectuality, is so far an almost complete failure in its social aspects. In vain do we march with unprecedented strides to empire so colossal, outvying the antique, beyond Alexander's, beyond the proudest sway of Rome. In vain we annexed Texas, California, Alaska, and reach north for Canada or south for Cuba. It is as if we were somehow being endowed with a vast and thoroughly appointed body, and left with little or no soul. [Vide: op. cit.]

What would Emerson or Whitman write about the state of America after nearly a century today? Would they be able factually to write something so glowing as to morally imply that by virtue of their ascendancy on the ladder of civilization, Americans' abstracted best deserved to be imitated by others? We are not sure that any discerning thinker who knows enough about America and who has the welfare of humanity at heart will answer this question in the affirmative.

Today the moot question before thinking Americans is not how much Americans should be imitated but how long American civilization constituted as it was, could endure in the historical process.

How then does another civilization, say India, show respect to America's achievement or profit from America's experiential knowledge gained in the process of living? The answer to this question comes from the way great men of India lived their lives, during the times when America was progressing and prospering, and also from their teachings. As far as we know, not one of them imitated Americans or admonished others, to imitate them, though they evinced genuine appreciation of what America

had achieved. What is more significant, they asked their countrymen to learn from Americans but not copy them. The method taught was: not imitation, but assimilation of root-ideas for self-application.

The general principle emphasized was that one should learn from others but grow according to one's law of growth to the consummation of the self-fulfilment. The ideal is to regain the lost individuality, by which is philosophically meant the indivisibility. In the whole you meet all and become all. You cannot become the other without destroying yourself for the simple reason that there is no other in reality. And it does not help to become the other in relatively, too.

According to the teachings of Venānta, imitation of others, particularly those, who are not spiritually illumined, that is to say who are themselves struggling souls, creatures of ignorance, would only amount to further involvement in *ajñāna* or not-knowing. How would that help the imitator?

The difference between copying and learning can be made clear by saying that by copying one becomes the replica of the person copied and by learning one manifests better his own potential, which is incalculable, spiritually speaking.

Swami Vivekananda, was one of the most authentic and dependable interpreter of the East to the West and West to East. He pointedly drew attention of the Indian people to the excellences of the Westerners, especially of Americans where they existed. But in no uncertain terms he pointed out the pitfalls of imitation:

'We cannot become Westerners, therefore imitating the Westerner is useless. Suppose you can imitate the Westerners, that moment you will die, you will have no more life in you. A stream is taking its rise, away beyond where time began, flowing through millions of ages of human history; do you mean to hold of that stream, and push it back to its source, to

a Himalayan glacier? Even if that were practicable it would not be possible for you to be Europeanised (or for the matter of that Americanised, we may add.) If you find it is impossible for the European to throw off the few centuries of old culture which there is in the West, do you think it is possible for you to throw off the culture of shining scores of centuries? It cannot be. To Europeanise India is therefore an impossible and foolish task.' (*The Complete Works* Vol. III. 1963, p. 172)

The spirit of these words will hold good with equal force in regard to any theoretician's mad dream-project of Indianizing America, Europe or any other country.

Again, as definitively Swami Vivekananda pointed out the dangers of feeling smug in the false idea that we are culturally at the top of the world and so had nothing to learn from others. He taught the people of India the urgency of staying a nation of students, eager to learn from those who know better. He said:

'Several dangers are in the way, and one is that of the extreme conception that we are the people in the world. With all my love for India and with all my patriotism and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to learn many things from other nations. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all, for, mark you, everyone can teach us great lessons. Says our great law-giver, Manu: "Receive some good knowledge even from the lowborn and from the man of lowest birth, learn by service the road to heaven." We, therefore, as true children of Manu, must obey his commands, and be ready to learn the lessons of this life, or the life hereafter from anyone who can teach us.

'We have many things to learn from the West. We should learn from the West her arts and sciences. We have to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organization, in the ability to handle powers, organizing powers, in brining the best results out of the smallest of causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III. 1963. pp. 277, 443, 149)

'We must travel, we must go to foreign parts. We must see how the engine of society works in other countries, and keep free and open communication with what is going on in the minds of other nations, if we really want to be a nation again. Stand on your own feet, and assimilate what you can; learn from every nation, take what is of use to you.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. V, 1963. p. 2)

These teachings of Swami Vivekananda provide us some sound guiding principles for developing mutually rewarding cultural relationships between different nations befitting the dignity and sovereignty of the spirit

of man in a growing interdependent world of ours. The great future of India of the dreams is in Indians being genuine Indians heart and soul, in their growing on their own cultural roots according to their law of growth and in not being imitation-Americans, or imitation-Russians or imitation-any other, but in yet judiciously assimilating from all whatever is good and great in them. The youth of India stand specially challenged by Destiny to find their way of being this new bold type of true Indians of the new frontier.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

KATĦA UPANIṢAD: SĀMĦHYA POINT OF VIEW BY DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA, M. SEN, 65/64 Moti Mahal, Kanpur, 1967. Pages 68. Price Rs. 7.50.

The evidence available in the writings of Śaṅkara points to the attempts made by the followers of the Sāṁkhya system to interpret the Upaniṣads in the light of their tenets. Dr. Anima Sen Gupta earlier tried this approach with the sixth chapter of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Now she has attempted to interpret *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* from the Sāṁkhya standpoint. While welcoming this attempt, one has to state at the outset that not all Upaniṣads are amenable to this approach. The texts quoted and interpreted by Śaṅkara in his great *Vedānta-Sūtra Bhāṣya* are the only ones that can plausibly be approached from this side.

When we approach an Upaniṣad from a Sāṁkhya standpoint, we should be cautious in reading a later theory into the text. Thus we cannot argue that both Puruṣa and Prakṛti are all-pervasive, and that the two are yet related. The very fact that an entity is related to another implies that neither is all-pervasive. Both cannot be *vibhu*. As *cetanāviṣṭa* we find Prakṛti to be limited. Thus the idea of Prakṛti being beginningless and the like may not hold good of any Upaniṣadic text, even if one tries hard to interpret it thus. It is such an error that vitiates the interpretation of *Tat tvam asi*. The chapter begins with *Sat* which is said to be *ekam* (one), and *advitīyam* (non-dual) in the same sentence; and it identifies this *Sat* or

Tat with *tvam*. There is no question of a *cetanāviṣṭa* Prakṛti when the text clearly refers to Brahman in the opening statement, '*Sadeva saumya idam agra āsit, ekameva advitīyam Brahma*.'

Dr. Sen Gupta has selected few passages from the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and offered a commentary. The commentary presupposes wrongly that even Śaṅkara misconstrued the Sāṁkhya position, and that Sāṁkhya influenced Śaṅkara in his concept of *Nirguṇa* Brahman. It is an acknowledged fact that Śaṅkara stated the position of his opponent more objectively than the opponent himself could do.

Kaṭha I. ii. 12, has *durdarśam* meaning 'can be seen with difficulty'. The translator and the commentator take *drś* to mean 'know'. '*guhāhitam*' does not mean *buddhi vṛtti* because I. ii. 20 has *guhāyām* referring to the heart; and Dr. Sen Gupta omits this verse. The verses 16 and 17 of this section clearly refer to Brahman. When we take up the opening verse of the third section we see the inadvisability of Sāṁkhya into this Upaniṣad. *Ṛtam* stands for truth, not the result; and the two enjoying truth cannot include Prakṛti, for if Prakṛti does it, she is no longer Prakṛti. The verse echoes the Rg Vedic and the Upaniṣadic '*dvā suparṇā*' stanza. Even the *buddhi* cannot come into the picture. The third verse clearly states: *buddhiṁ tu sārathiṁ viddhi*; the charioteer is *buddhi* while the Ātman resides in the chariot. Dr. Sen Gupta takes the *sārathi* to be the *aviveka* Puruṣa, while even the Sāṁkhya interprets *buddhi*

as *adhyavasāyātmikā*. Nor can we import the *avaccheda-vāda* into the *Sāṃkhya*, because here is room only for the *Pratibimba-vāda*.

I. iii. 11 states that *avyakta* transcends *mahat* and the 15th verse defines this *avyakta* as other than sound, touch, form, loss or change, taste and smell; and it is without a beginning or an end. The realization (*nicāyya*) of this *avyakta* takes one beyond death. Dr. Sen Gupta thinks that this refers to *Prakṛti*. But while on page 30 she takes *Prakṛti* to be the real object of knowledge, she admits on page 41 that *ātman* is the 'object of enquiry'. Under such conditions the author is forced to repeat the normal meanings of some words. For instance, *yacched* in I. iii. 13 is translated by 'should merge', but commented upon by 'should be subordinated'. *Vyatṛṇat* is not well translated in II. iv. 1. Nor can we accept that only in *Sāṃkhya* the *Puruṣa* is truly *asanga* because his *sannidhi* is necessary for the creative power of *Prakṛti*. Also *dhruvām adhruveṣu* of II. iv. 2 clearly distinguished the eternal (*dhruva*) from the non-eternal (*adhruva*). It is a feat of grammar and syntax to take it to mean 'the changeable eternal Nature'.

The verse II. iv. 10, 11 have *ya iha nāneva paśyati*. They reject pluralism. If we are to interpret them in line with the *Sāṃkhya* thought, it is better to assume that once even the *Sāṃkhya* accepted *Eka-jīva-vāda*. Dr. Sen Gupta omits II. v. 2 which is totally opposed to any *Sāṃkhya* interpretation. Here the *Ātman* is identified with the seen, air, fire, and guest; and it is said to be in man, in gods, in the sacrifice, in water, in the earth, and on the mountains. If we want to read it as favourable to *Sāṃkhya*, then *Puruṣa* must be immanent in *Prakṛti*.

The author is found misled in II. v. 8, II. vi. 1 and elsewhere. Here we have *tad eva śukraṃ tad brahma tad evāmṛtamucyate*. Here *eva* means 'alone'. 'That alone is Brahman, that alone is immortal.' Translating '*eva*' by 'verily', the author would ascribe immortality even to *Prakṛti*! It is also not possible to import *citta* and *caitanya* into II. vi. 13. Even if one does not want to accept Śaṅkara's interpretation that the reference is to

nirguṇa and *saguṇa*, one can plausibly interpret the two as reality and appearance.

Dr. Sen Gupta's monograph is interesting in spite of all this. Only we wish to state that a *Sāṃkhya* interpretation cannot be foisted on each and every *Upaniṣad*. Even Śaṅkara does refer to *Sāṃkhya* ideas only when he refers to passages in *Chāṅgodya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* *Upaniṣads*. Probably these were *Sāṃkhya* interpretations of these texts only. Moreover, any interpretation cannot pick and choose only a few verses. Some of the verses omitted in the present text are more significant than those presented.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

HINDI

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The Eureka Printing Works, Godhuliya, Varanasi.
Pages 261. Price Rs. 3/-.

This interesting and instructive book on travel to Kailasa and Manasa Tirtha in the spiritual Himalayas is both a guide and a literary piece of art. It is the result of a religious function where little glory seeks to efface itself in the larger and infinite one of the Divine which multiplies itself through its own creations of sublime scenes of nature and colourful atmosphere. The Swamiji's detailed descriptions of the various routes, and of the enchanting sunrises and sunsets over the hills and valleys, of the infinite play of the multi-hued shades of light over verdure and rocks, and above all the metaphysical metamorphosis effected in the minds by their impressions are verily some of the highlights of the volume.

The Hindi employed is more sanskritic, direct, simple, adequate, and precise. Very often his language soars into classic poetry commensurate with the essential beauty of the objects delineated.

Though neatly printed and got up, the book suffers from the dire want of illustrations. The price is moderate. The volume may well be prescribed as a text for higher Hindi classes.

P. SAMA RAO

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME, BELGHARIA

REPORT FOR 1966-67

Students Home: Started 60 years back, this Home for students studying in different Colleges of Calcutta is specially meant for meritorious boys of slender means who are helped in every way to pursue their studies. But some part-free and paying boarders too are allowed to stay considering their merit and aptitude to undergo the training imparted to the inmates to develop the nobler sides of their personalities through cultural, religious and intellectual instructions under the guidance of monastic members.

At the close of the period there were 96 students, of whom 64 were free, 16 concession-holders and the rest paying. In the University examination held in 1966, 23 students came out successful out of 24 in the Degree final Hons. securing 7 1st classes. Of the 3 Post-graduate students 1 got 1st class. In the Pre-University 14 out of 15 appeared passed in the examination 10 boys obtaining 1st Division. In all 36 students were helped with examination fees to the extent of Rs. 680/- from two memorial funds.

The Home library had 3500 general books and 2528 text books. It received 18 journals and 6 dailies.

The boys got some practical lessons in agriculture, animal husbandry, pisciculture, and workshop training in some small-scale home-industries. They also helped in conducting a free school for local boys and in the adult education of backward communities.

Important festivals, birthdays and days of national importance were observed by the inmates.

Shilpapitha: This polytechnic for three-year Diploma Courses in Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering had 720 boys on the roll. In the final Diploma examination one boy stood first in Div. 1 in Electrical Engineering. The final year boys were taken out for survey camp and educational tour.

Social Education: For the intellectual and cultural rehabilitation of the people of the locality who are mostly refugees from East Pakistan an Assembly Hall cum Library & Free Reading Room has been started with a view to have it as a

modest Institute of Culture. The Vivekananda Yuva Samiti, a social service organisation with the help of local youths did some cleaning work in the neighbouring ponds and road side ditches.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

REPORT FOR 1966

The activities of this branch of the Ramakrishna Mission during the period under review were as follows:

Educational: The Vivekananda Tamil School conducted in the morning and the Saradadevi Tamil School run in the afternoon had a strength of 61 boys and 70 girls in the former and 133 in the latter. The Schools are at 38 Norris Road.

Boys Home: The Home at 179 Bartley road accommodated 55 boys ranging from 8 to 17 years. The boys studied in Primary and Secondary Schools. The children's library attached to this Home, was made good use of.

Night Class for Adults: 54 pupils studied in two Tamil classes and one English class. Many of them prepared for examinations conducted by the Adult Education Board and the Ministry of Education.

Cultural The Swamis took weekly religious classes and delivered lectures in Singapore and Malaysia. Towards the close of the period a spiritual retreat was conducted at Seremban. Interviews were given to spiritual aspirants. Swami Siddhatmananda, the President of the centre visited Malaysia, Hongkong, Japan, and Ceylon and delivered 42 lectures. At the invitation of the centre, Swami Chidatmananda, went from India for a seven Weeks' lecture tour of Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Philippines and Cambodia and delivered 46 lectures in Hindi and English. A few distinguished persons including some monks visited the Centre and delivered lectures at the Mission Auditorium.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Swami Vivekananda and some important religious leaders and other festivals were observed with special programmes of puja, discourses and devotional songs.

Library and Reading Room: There were 5108 books in the Library and 58 journals and 6 dailies in the Reading Room. 2,386 persons made use of the Library and Reading Room.