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

THE UNIVERSAL CALL OF RELIGIONS

'The non-dual Ensnarer rules by His powers. Remaining one and the same, He rules by His powers all the worlds during their manifestation and continued existence. They who know this become immortal.'

Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.1

'He who takes refuge with Buddha, the Law and the Church; he who with clear understanding, sees the four holy truths;—that is the safe refuge, that is the best refuge; having gone to that refuge, a man is delivered from all pain.'

Dhammapada, 190, 192

'Even if one has but a little knowledge, he can walk in the ways of the Great Supreme.'

Tao Teh King 53.1

'And thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment.'

St. Mark, 12.30-31

'Shall I seek any other Lord than God, when He is the Lord of all things?'

The Koran 6.164

ONWARD FOR EVER!

Renounce the lower so that you may get the higher. What is the foundation of society? Morality, ethics, laws. Renounce. Renounce all temptation to take your neighbour's property, to put hands upon your neighbour, all the pleasure of tyrannising over the weak, all the pleasure of cheating others by telling lies. Is not morality the foundation of society? What is marriage but the renunciation of unchastity? The savage does not marry. Man marries because he renounces. So on and on. Renounce! Renounce! Sacrifice! Give up! Not for zero. Not for nothing. But to get the higher. But who can do this? You cannot, until you have got the higher. You may talk. You may struggle. You may try to do many things. But renunciation comes by itself when you have got the higher. Then the lesser falls away by itself.

This is practical religion. What else? Cleaning streets and building hospitals? Their value consists only in this renunciation. And there is no end to renunciation.

Sri Kanchi

THE INNER DYNAMICS EVERYONE NEEDS

Stop not here. Go ahead. Onward ho!

This is always the most important message for everybody in the world who is not a fossil but lives and wants to grow. He who wants to do something meaningful and worthwhile in life must respond to this message with enthusiasm. He who does not, his all future is mere past.

Incredible though it may appear, this message of inner dynamics and onward march for fulfilling a higher destiny was first (as far as we know) sounded in the Vedas. In later ages in various modulations it came to us through the words of sages, prophets and poets.

In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (33.15) there is this inspiring call for march—*Caraiveti*:

'There is no prosperity without constant movement: so we have heard from our superiors. Even a great man living constantly among his relatives becomes insignificant. The Lord is the friend of the wanderer. So march on!

'Of one who always keeps moving, legs become beautiful, body strong and healthy. His sins are destroyed by pilgrimage. So march on!

'The fortunes of a man keep sitting while he is sitting, stand when he is standing, sleep when he is sleeping, and move on when he moves. So march on!

'When a man sleeps it is *Kali-Yuga*¹ (for him). When he sits up, for him *Dvāpara-Yuga*² begins. When he stands up it is *Tretā*³, and when he moves on, begins the *Kṛta-Yuga*⁴. So march on!

1-4 An age of the world. According to Hindu concept the *yugas* are four in number viz. *Satya*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara*, and *Kali*. The duration of each is said to be respectively 1,728,000; 1,296,000; 864,000 and 432,000 years of men, the four together comprising 4,320,000 years of men, which is equal to one *Mahāyuga* (great yuga). It is supposed that the regularly descending length of the *Yugas* represents a corresponding physical and moral deterioration in the people who live during each age, *Kṛta* being called golden age and *Kali*, the present age, an iron age.

'While wandering one gets honey and sweet fruits. Look at the brightness of the sun who never sits idle but moves on. So march on!'

All problems of living originate in lost inner dynamics and outer movement.

When the flowing water stagnates it becomes a cesspool.

A great man becomes a small man when he becomes a prisoner of selfish affinities. A small man becomes a great man when he breaks open the prison walls of lineal home and goes out to meet his brother everywhere in the world.

He who tarries with the profit of today for over-counting his gain, loses tomorrow's business. The business of life is more than profit and loss. It is going beyond home, and making home in the beyond. Prosperity is not piling up one brick upon another but discovering the access to the unrealized.

Mere over-grown muscles are not health. Health is reaching out to more. Beauty is not flesh, but that the touch of which has made it living and throbbing.

Sin is in stopping for languishing, and denying the call of the Infinite. Coming out of false identifications and basking in the sunshine of one's true being, is the pilgrimage which destroys all sins. Pilgrimage is not going from one place to another but to the place where the Deity has spiritually exploded. The purpose of pilgrimage is to catch the burning splinters of the explosion and be aflame.

Keep sitting and your fortunes do the same; keep standing and your fortunes imitate you; keep lying down and your fortunes do no better. But move on and your fortunes catch up with the trails of your glory.

While living in the *Kali Yuga*, we can reach out to the *Satya Yuga*, if leaving aside sleeping, sitting and standing, we take our strides and grounds of falsity recede under our feet.

Satya Yuga is not away somewhere in

the bygone ages but in our actualized determination to live in the truth of our being.

If we wish to get honey instead of poison, we must move from shadow to sunshine so that flowers may blossom. Sweet fruits are the unmasked blessings which destiny anxiously brings on the way to one who constantly moves on without stopping until the goal is reached.

Today's peculiar human tragedy is that we have so much speed in the world but so little of going ahead. We keep going round and round and reaching almost nowhere. It takes more than mere mad speed to reach the goal of life which is self-fulfilment. For this, outer speed must allow itself to be guided by inner dynamics.

Man must grow through everything to outgrow everything. This is achieved through dropping the lower for catching the higher, giving up the lesser for actualizing the greater. This constant movement towards higher, nobler, truer and purer state of being through everything we do, or may not do, is renunciation. It is the inherent ingrained mission of everyone's life. Everyone's sky is star-spangled. No one has a sun which does not shine.

Renunciation is everyone's fundamental calling of life, for everyone seeks fulfilment. There is no self-fulfilment bypassing renunciation. But alas! how cruelly we destroy ourselves and we think we are advancing. Those who say: renunciation is not for you, because you are not monks, are not your friends but beguiling enemies, for by their tempting insinuations they smoothen your psychological process of self-devastation. He is your true friend who vividly holds before you what happens to you when you live in this world without the inspiration of and commitment to renunciation. Such a friend is Bhartrhari who warns us in his *Vairāgya-Śatakam* (verse 7):

'The worldly pleasures have not been enjoyed

by us, but we ourselves have been devoured; no religious austerities have been gone through, but we ourselves have become scorched; time is not gone (being ever present and infinite), but it is we who are gone (because of approaching death). Desire is not reduced in force though we ourselves are reduced to senility.'

How truly pathetic—the way we get devoured by the world!

But life was not meant to be like this. It was meant to be the triumphant march from one peak of illumination to another in joy and shining in immortality.

Everyone can recapture this triumphant glory. Religion is nothing if it cannot show us how to do it. It must be able to tell the earthworm which way it can have the wings of an angel. It must have a way open for the worst sinner to become the most exalted saint. But man must listen

to the message. He must have the sanity to understand that there is no true enjoyment except through renunciation. They who enjoy through renunciation have discovered the secret of life. Those who do not do so have become fools and captives of the world. The lower must be renounced for the higher, the lesser for the greater. Not doing so is getting smothered by the world.

Deep in the forest there are sandal woods. By going further ahead the pilgrim will discover rich mineral ores. But the copper mine, silver mine, gold mine, diamond mine—all must be left behind. He must move inward, forward and Godward until the goal is reached. And when it is reached, he will have discovered why the Upaniṣad Ṛṣi cried out in exaltation: 'Ah! this is the best of the worlds!'

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Kankhal
25-4-1912

Dear Sri—

I have duly received your post card of the 19th April. I am happy to learn that the *shrāddha*¹ ceremony of your father went off well without any impediment.

I do not know if you could grasp the import of my previous letter. But what have you written? Why have you to be only a little higher than an animal? There is so much love in your heart. You are more fortunate than many human beings and also superior to them. One should not think of oneself like that. Know yourself as one who has found refuge in God and is His own, and you will surely make progress. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that one who thinks 'I am nothing', 'I am nothing', 'nothing' he becomes. Swamiji also instructed in the same manner—he forbade people from thinking themselves low. Sri Ramakrishna used to teach us to think 'I am His'.

Practise absolute self-surrender to God. This will do you good.

Your well-wisher,
Sri Turiyananda

¹ Rite performed in honour of the departed spirits of dead relatives.



WHAT MAKES FOR BLESSEDNESS

ŚRI ŚANKARACARYA

Everyone craves for blessedness but who is ready to pay the price for it?

The pampered seeker in the permissive society of today is so much used to hearing the syndicated soft language of religion—and so many loud voices keep on declaring what they just know not about—that he starts taking his very attachments, idiosyncrasies, delusions and make-believe as high water-marks of attained spirituality. He gets to thinking that he can have immersion in sense-delights and conversion also; that he can worship God and mammon together on the same altar by just altering rituals and genuflexions. Why not?—he asks furiously and fights doggedly the novel battle of new morality' and sanctimonious empiricism. Tense, nervous, shabby and wildeyed he points with his unkempt finger to the drug box and says with an impish chuckle that he has all the chemical secrets of mystical experiences in there, and pat he can enter into realms supernal with their help without having to go through the bone-grinding classical disciplines.

This disturbing verse of Śankarācārya on 'What makes for Blessedness' is meant for those sincere aspiring souls who would dare to know what is the price for attaining the Highest in the universe. No small bargaining in this counter. Nobody compels us to ask for the Highest. But the Highest is not attained without staking one's all, and everything. Without *Mahā-abhi-niṣkramana*, great renunciation, there no *dharma-cakrapravartana*, no setting the wheel of dharma in motion. Nirvana was not the product of pleasure chambers of Kapilavastu, but of hard austerities of six years in caves, wilds and under a benign banyan tree. Without getting crucified there is no being of a Christ. Blessedness does not come like a flattering Christmas present wrapped in glittering paper but like the cozing of blood from the Cross.

To have all we must give all. But the incomprehensible sweetness is here: when we give all we get more than all as it were. We renounce the dusty, noisy world but get back the universe steeped in bliss.

Let the brave and intelligent hear this message.—ED.

धन्याष्टकम्

श्री शंकराचार्यविरचितम्

तज्ज्ञानं प्रशमकरं यदिन्द्रियाणाम्
तज्ज्ञेयं यदुपनिषत्सु निश्चितार्थम् ।
ते धन्या भुवि परमार्थनिश्चितेहाः
शेषास्तु भ्रमनिलये परिभ्रमन्ति ॥ १ ॥

आदौ विजित्य विषयान्मदमोहराग-
द्वेषादिशत्रुगणमाहृतयोगराज्याः ।
ज्ञात्वाऽमृतं समनुभूय परात्मविद्या-
कान्तासुखं वन गृहे विचरन्ति धन्याः ॥ २ ॥

त्यक्त्वा गृहे रतिमधोगतिहेतुभूता-
मात्मेच्छयोपनिषदर्थरसं पिबन्तः ।
वीतस्पृहा विषयभोगपदे विरक्ता
धन्याश्चरन्ति विजनेषु विरक्तसङ्गाः ॥ ३ ॥

त्यक्त्वा ममाहमिति बंधकरे पदे द्वे
मानावमानसदृशाः समदर्शिनश्च ।
कर्तारमन्यमवगम्य तदर्पितानि
कुर्वन्ति कर्मपरिपाकफलानि धन्याः ॥ ४ ॥

त्यक्तैषणाभयमवेक्षितमोक्षमार्गा
भैक्षमृतेन परिकल्पितदेहयात्राः ।
ज्योति परात्परतरं परमात्मसंज्ञम्
धन्या द्विजा रहसि हृद्यवलोकयन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

'WHAT MAKES FOR BLESSEDNESS'

1. That alone can be said to be Jñāna or true knowledge which extinguishes the cravings of the senses. That alone is the object of knowledge which the Upaniṣad has well ascertained (viz. Brahman). In this world they alone are blessed who have realized the Supreme Truth. All else wander in the abode of error.

2. They first thwart the onslaughts of binding sense-objects and conquer such enemies as pride, infatuation, attachment, hatred etc. and establish the sovereignty of Yoga. Thus having tasted the nectar of immortality and experienced the joy of the company of the beloved Supreme Knowledge, the blessed ones roam about in the home that is the forest.

3. Renouncing attachment to home which causes downward movement, drinking deep at will the elixir of the essence of the Upaniṣads, being free from desires and averse to the enjoyment of the sense-objects, the blessed ones, shorn of attachment, roam about in solitude.

4. With determination the blessed ones give up the binding ideas of 'I and Mine'. Being same-sighted in honour and ignominy and knowing the Agent to be distinct from their puny selves, they offer the maturing fruits of actions to Him.

5. The blessed twice-born ones, having ascertained the way for the attainment of the liberation of the spirit, renounce the desire for progeny, wealth and fame. They live with their bodies nourished by the nectar of the alms-gotten food. In solitude, and through meditation they realize Brahman, the Supreme Spirit, shining in their hearts than even the most Exalted One.

नासन्न सन्न सदसन्न महन्न चाणु
न स्त्री पुमान् न च नपुंसकमेकबीजम् ।
यैर्ब्रह्म तत्समनुपासितमेकचित्तै-
र्धन्या विरेजुरितरे भवपाशबद्धाः ॥ ६ ॥

अज्ञानपङ्कपरिमग्नमपेतसारम्
दुःखालयं मरणजन्मजरावसक्तम् ।
संसारबन्धनमनित्यमवेक्ष्य धन्या
ज्ञानासिना तदवशीर्य सुखं वसन्ति ॥ ७ ॥

शान्तैरनन्यमतिभिर्मधुरस्वभावै-
रेकत्वनिश्चितमनोभिरपेतमोहैः ।
साकं वनेषु विदितात्मपदस्वरूपं
शास्त्रेषु सम्यगनिशं विमृशन्ति धन्याः ॥ ८ ॥

अहिमिव जनयोगं सर्वदा वर्जयेत् यः
कुणपमिव सुनारीं त्यक्तुकामो विरागी ।
विषमिव विषयान् यो मन्यमानो दुरस्तान्
जयति परमहंसो मुक्तिभावं समेति ॥ ९ ॥

संपूर्णं जगदेव नन्दनवनं सर्वेऽपि कल्पद्रुमाः
गांग्यं वारि समस्तवारिनिवहः पुण्याः समस्ताः क्रियाः ।
वाचः प्राकृतसंस्कृताः श्रुति शिरो वाराणसी मेदिनी
सर्वावस्थितिरस्य वस्तुविषया दृष्टे परे ब्रह्मणि ॥ १० ॥

6. Brahman is existent, non-existent, or existent-non-existent; It is neither great nor small; It is not male, female or neuter. It is the one seed of the universe. Those blessed ones who whole-heartedly adore that Brahman through perfect concentration, they alone shine in freedom, all others stay fettered by worldly ties.

7. Having known the sterile and evanescent worldly attachments as the abode of misery, sunk in the mire of ignorance, and as causing birth, death and senility, the blessed ones cut asunder the worldly ties with the sword of knowledge and live in happiness.

8. The blessed ones live in forests with those who have quietened themselves, concentrated in mind, sweet-natured, well-settled in the inner certitude about the identity of the soul with the Supreme Spirit, without any delusion, and constantly and completely ruminate on what they have realized as the essential Self as taught by the scriptures.

9. He who shuns the association of men like serpents, and intent on fighting shy of beautiful women as corpses practises utter renunciation, gives up the untractable sense-objects like poison, that Paramahansa becomes triumphant, he attains liberation of the spirit.

10. When the Supreme Spirit is directly realized, this very world is viewed as the garden of paradise; all the trees become like wish-yielding trees; all waters are transformed into those of Ganga; all works stand exalted as virtuous; all talks whether in patois or in Sanskrit sound like the words of the Vedas; the whole world appears as holy as Varanasi; and one's casual stay in any manner is felt as stay in Brahman.

GURU NANAK: PROPHET OF UNITY

SWAMI RASAJNANANDA

Swami Vivekananda said in a lecture delivered at Lahore:

'Here (in India) it was that ... the gentle Nanak preached his marvellous love for the world. Here it was that his broad heart was opened, and his arms outstretched to embrace the whole world, not only of Hindus, but of Mohammedans too.'

A gem of numerous facets, Guru Nanak shone as a messenger of peace and love, unity and brotherhood, apostle of the essential unity of religions and social pioneer. Brighter and brighter became his luminosity in the spiritual firmament as he came face to face with truth. He disseminated it dauntlessly and founded Sikhism. This living faith has stood the test of time and engendered in its votaries a virile attitude of hard work and worship of One God, militant defiance of injustice and strict adherence to righteousness, humility and dynamism, tight bond of brotherhood and well-organized, casteless community, goodwill and charity to mankind. It was his genius to have drawn from the scriptures of Hinduism and Islam and happily harmonized them to formulate the new faith.

Endowed with a heart broad enough to embrace Hindus and Muslims, he strove to bring them together. This was not an easy task in the prevailing climate of intolerance and bigotry. For instance, as history bears it out, Sikandar Lodi put to the sword the Brahmana Budhan for the sole offence of stating in the presence of some Mohammedans that the religions of both the Muslims and Hindus, if acted on with sincerity, were equally acceptable to God. It therefore stands not a little to the credit of Nanak to have given to India a religion which could satisfy both the communities—Hindus and Muslims—and which

was free from casteism, priestcraft, ceremonialism, miracles, superstitions, and accretions of both Hinduism and Islam. That he was able to endear himself to both the communities is evident from the fact that 'at his death Hindus and Mohammedans quarrelled as to which sect should perform his obsequies'.¹

The popularity and esteem that he won were the natural outcome of the feeling of brotherhood of man emerging from his realization of God. His love for man manifested itself in his long ministry for dispelling the encircling darkness of his day and redeeming man from misery and ignorance. In his view none was high or low and all were equal. As such he condemned in strong terms the exploitation of the lower or under-privileged classes by the higher castes or influential sections. His solicitude for the welfare of the down-trodden and despised masses led him to identify himself with them, as he voiced his feeling in the following words :

I am with the lowest of the low

What have I to do with the great?

God's eye of mercy falls on those who take care of the lowly.

Service was his religion. He opened the portals of truth to one and all irrespective of caste, creed or colour.

Prophet of truth that he was, Guru Nanak laid emphasis on the supremacy of truth—truth that is fundamental in all religions. Hence he seldom asked anyone to give up his own faith. What is more important for an aspirant according to Nanak is truthful living. Religion degenerates to meaningless formality without moral foundation. Guru Nanak was not only a mystic but a

¹ Macauliffe: *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford Publication, 1909 Vol. I, Introduction p. li.

poet *par excellence*. His profound thoughts and teachings flowed in rhythmic notes striking a responsive chord in the hearts of the audience.

The achievement of Guru Nanak will be appreciated when we consider the age in which he was born and faced overwhelming odds. It was an age of dark crisis and constant strife, appalling atrocity and inhuman persecution. Nanak saw with his own eyes Babar's cruelty to the inhabitants of Saiyidpur; both he and his attendant were taken prisoners and obliged to work as slaves. The Guru gives us an idea of the Mohammedan rulers and the state of India in his time :

This age is a knife, kings are butchers; justice hath taken wings and fled.

In this completely dark night of falsehood the moon of truth is never seen to rise.

I have become perplexed in my search;

In the darkness I find no way.

Devoted to pride, I weep in sorrow;

How shall deliverance be obtained?²

Deliverance was indeed far off when there was political disruption and moral decadence, when in Guru Nanak's words 'men nowadays are men only in shape and name; in action they are dogs',³ when in matters of religion, form totally supplanted spirit. The extent of hypocrisy and falsehood of the Hindus can be gauged from the following words of Guru Nanak :

Thou performest the Hindu worship at home,
thou readest the Quran in public, and associatest with Mohammedans,

Lay aside hypocrisy, repeat God's name, and thou shalt be saved.

They who have strings on their necks eat men,
recite the Mohammedan prayers,

And use knives to cut men's throats.

Although the Brahmans sound shells in their houses,

And enjoy their viands as they do themselves;

Yet false is their capital and false their dealings.

But uttering falsehood they maintain themselves.

Far from them is the abode of bashfulness and honesty :

Nanak, falsehood everywhere prevailed.⁴

Thus at the time of the Guru, there was no religion. If there was one, it was an intriguing and intricate maze of observances and formalities, hiding the tyranny of heart and emptiness of devotion or knowledge. Where there was no devotion or knowledge, there was endless strife and wrangling. In the place of worship of God—One God who is the common feature of both Veda and Koran—there was worship of numerous deities, pirs and dargahs. Instead of uniting men, religion divided them into hostile groups, each one trying to exterminate others.

However, the dark cloud was not without its silver lining. The wave of Muslim invasion and oppression of Hindus leavened Hinduism and powerful religious reformers arose not only to defend the faith but to restate its catholic, cardinal principles in a popular manner and to make good the deficiencies at the social level. The fact arrests our attention that Muslims too were attracted to the teachings of Ramananda and became his disciples, Kabir being notable among them. In the oft-quoted words of Cunningham,

'in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Hindu mind was no longer stagnant or retrogressive, it had been leavened with Mohammedanism, and changed and quickened for a new development. Ramanand and Gorakh had preached religious equality, and Chaitan had repeated that faith levelled caste. Kabir had denounced images, and appealed to the people in their own tongue, and Vallabh had taught that effectual devotion was compatible with the ordinary duties of the world.'⁵

The message of these Hindu reformers called Bhaktas had close affinity with the tenets of the Mohammendan Sufis. The closer the Bhaktas and the Sufis drew to

² Ibid. p. xlv.

³ Ibid. pp. 75-76.

⁴ Ibid. p. 240.

⁵ Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, (1955 Edition), p. 34.

each other, the narrower became the gulf between Hinduism and Islam. The gulf was not very wide and it was left to Guru Nanak to bridge it.

EARLY LIFE

Guru Nanak was born in the year A.D. 1469 in the village Talwandi, about forty miles from the city of Lahore, now in Pakistan. His father, Kalu by name, was a Hindu belonging to the Khatri caste and made his living by working as an accountant in the village. Nanak was precocious even as a child. When he was seven years of age, he was admitted to the village school. After the schoolmaster wrote the alphabet on a slate for Nanak, the latter astounded the teacher by composing an acrostic on the alphabet—a hearty discourse on God, man, and education, a message of hope, joy and deliverance. The acrostic begins as follows :

The one Lord who created the world is the Lord of all.

Fortunate is their advent into the world, whose hearts remain attached to God's service.

O foolish man, why hast thou forgotten Him?

When thou adjustest thine account, my friend, thou shalt be deemed educated.⁶

Having thus demonstrated his scholastic proficiency, he left school and took to private study and meditation.

ASSOCIATION WITH THE ASCETICS

He would retire into the dense forests that surrounded the village and sought association with the ascetics and anchorites. He learnt of them the religious and philosophical literature as well as the reforms and revivals of the age. What is more important than this learning was his own undisturbed communion with nature, with his own soul and with his Creator. "The voice that had spoken to many a seer again became vocal in that wilderness, and raised Nanak's thoughts to the summit of religious

exaltation.'⁷ Alarmed at their son's frequent visits to the forest anchorites and discourses with itinerant fakirs, Nanak's worldly-minded parents arranged for his study of Persian—a knowledge of which was essential for employment at that time—and also for his marriage later. As at his first schooling, he is said to have astounded his Persian teacher with another acrostic on the Persian alphabet to boot. However, Nanak's use of numerous Persian words and some Persian verses in the *Granth Sahib*, the Bible of the Sikhs, shows that he became a fair Persian scholar.

INVESTITURE WITH THE SACRED THREAD

The next important incident in the life of Nanak was his investiture with the sacred thread (janeu) at the age of nine years. When the family priest put it on the boy's neck, the boy Nanak caught hold of it and asked the priest for an explanation of the ritual. Not satisfied with the explanation, Nanak composed the following song :

Make mercy thy cotton, contentment thy thread,
continence its knot, truth its twist.

That would make a janeu for the soul ; if thou
have it, O Brahman, then put it on me.

It will not break, or become soiled, or be burned
or lost.

Blest the man, O Nanak, who goeth with such a
thread on his neck.

Thou purchasest a janeu for four damris, and
seated in a square putteth it on ;

Thou whisperest instruction that the Brahman
is the guru of the Hindus—Man dieth, the
janeu falleth, and the soul departeth without
it.⁸

OTHER-WORLDLY TEMPERAMENT

Nanak was married at the age of fourteen to Sulakhani, daughter of Mula, a resident of Batala in the present district of Gurdaspur. In course of time two sons were born. But his spiritual pursuits con-

⁷ Ibid, p. 77.

⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶ Macauliffe, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 3.

tinued as before and he seemed to become unfit for all secular occupation. His indifference to worldly pursuits became a serious source of anxiety to his parents. They tried their best to get him interested in some worldly occupation. His father, Kalu first tried him in the capacity of a herdsman, then in that of a cultivator and finally attempted to make him a merchant, but all to no purpose. His mother attempted at the worldly reformation of her son. She even requested him to forget even for a few days his devotions and go abroad so that the neighbours might be assured that Kalu's son had recovered his reason. Finding no change in Nanak's way of life, the family grew sad that he had become mad. A physician was sent for treatment of his insanity. On being asked what he himself thought his illness was by the physician, Nanak replied in the following manner:

I first feel the pain of separation from God, then
a pang of hunger for contemplation on Him.
I also fear the pain which Death's powerful
myrmidons may inflict.

I feel pain that my body shall perish by disease.
O ignorant physician, give me no medicine.⁹

Thoroughly disgusted with his son, Kalu became despondent when a ray of hope shone in the form of a proposal from Jai Ram, husband of Nanaki, elder sister of Nanak. The proposal was that Nanak should be sent to Sultanpur and enter Government service there. It was at Sultanpur that Jai Ram was employed in the revenue department and resided with Nanaki. So Kalu agreed to the proposal and Nanak went to Sultanpur to join his sister and brother-in-law.

WORK AND WORSHIP IN SULTANPUR

Sultanpur is cherished in the hearts of seekers after Truth as the seat of the great turning-point in Guru Nanak's life, which we shall relate shortly. To continue the narrative, on Jai Ram's recommendation

the Governor Daulat Khan Lodi appointed Nanak as a store-keeper. Surprisingly enough, Nanak discharged his duties to the entire satisfaction of his employer, who was much pleased with his new servant. Out of the provisions which Guru Nanak was allowed, he devoted only a small portion to his own maintenance and gave the rest to the poor. He used continually to spend his nights singing hymns to his Creator.¹⁰ The minstrel Mardana subsequently joined Nanak in Sultanpur and became his private servant. Other friends too came, whom Nanak introduced to the Governor and procured employment. Their daily routine was as follows: 'At dinner-time they came and sat down with him, and every night there was continual singing. A watch before day, Nanak used to go to the neighbouring Bein river and perform his ablutions. When day dawned, he went to discharge the duties of his office.'¹¹

DIVINE VISION AND MISSION

Now we come to the blessed moment which changed the course of Nanak's career and charged him with the authority to preach. One morning, as was customary with him, he bathed in the waters of the Bein. After bath he disappeared from view and was therefore considered drowned. According to the biographers, he was taken in a vision to God's presence and God said to him, 'I am with thee. I have made thee happy and also those who shall take thy name. Go and repeat Mine, and cause others to do likewise. Abide uncontaminated by the world. Practise the repetition of My name, charity, ablutions, worship, and meditation.'¹² At that time, Guru Nanak uttered the following words:

There is but one God whose name is True, the
Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal,
unborn, self-existent, great, and bountiful.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 33.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 33.

¹² Ibid., p. 34.

⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

The True One was in the beginning; The True One was in the primal age.

The True One is, was, O Nanak, and the True One also shall be.

Immediately a voice was heard: 'O Nanak, to him upon whom My look of kindness resteth, be thou merciful, as I too shall be merciful. My name is God, the primal Brahm, and thou art the divine Guru.'¹³ This mystical experience of God, the primal Brahm, decided the mission of Nanak as Guru, divinely ordained teacher. The illumination is said to have taken place in the year 1499 when he was in his 29th year.

'THERE IS NO HINDU, NO MUSSALMAN'

After the lapse of three days and nights, Guru Nanak came out of the river. He then went home and gave all that he had to the poor. After observing silence for one day, he uttered the pregnant announcement, 'There is no Hindu and no Musalman'. The Sikhs interpret this to mean generally that both Hindus and Moham-medans had forgotten the precepts of their religions.¹⁴ When the Governor questioned him as to the meaning of the announcement, the Guru uttered the following:

To be a Musalman is difficult; if one be really so, then one may be called a Musalman.

Let one first love the religion of saints, and put aside pride and pelf as the file removeth rust.

Let him accept the religion of his pilots, and dismiss anxiety regarding death or life;

Let him heartily obey the will of God, worship the Creator, and efface himself—

When he is kind to all men, then Nanak, shall he be indeed a Musalman.¹⁵

In reply to further questions, the Guru sang the following songs suited to Moham-medans:

Make kindness thy mosque, sincerity thy prayer-carpet, what is just and lawful thy Quran,

Modesty thy circumcision, civility thy fasting, so shalt thou be a Musalman;

Make right conduct thy Kaaba, truth thy spiritual guide, good works thy creed and thy prayer, The will of God thy rosary, and God will preserve thine honour.¹⁶

His words carried so much conviction that everybody present there was amazed and saluted him. As there was no Hindu present, his songs did not refer to Hinduism. However, his significant utterance, 'There is no Hindu, there is no Musalman', brought him to the forefront and created a great stir in Sultanpur.

BEGINNING OF TRAVELS

The next part of Guru Nanak's life was spent in travelling as a preacher. He finally resigned his post, abandoned worldly life, and after a short stay with some Fakirs, set out in the garb of an Udasi (monk) with Mardana as his companion. His travels abounded in instructive incidents. We shall mention two of them which illustrate his keen insight into the character of persons and his saving power. In Saiyidpur of the Punjab, the Guru accepted the poor food prepared by Lalo, a carpenter, in preference to the rich feast of Malik Bhago, steward of the Pathan who owned Saiyidpur. When Malik Bhago, feeling insulted at Nanak's action, charged him with dining with low-caste carpenter, it is said that Nanak squeezed the coarse bread of Lalo in his right hand and milk came out of it whereas blood issued from the dainty bread when squeezed by Nanak in his left hand. The meaning was that Lalo's bread had been obtained by honest labour and was pure, while Malik Bhago's bread had been obtained by bribery and oppression and therefore impure.¹⁷

Guru Nanak met his first notable adventure when he came upon Shaikh Sajjan, a notorious robber. The robber had built a temple and a mosque for his Hindu and

¹³ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 44.

Mohammedan guests respectively and provided every comfort for them. When darkness set in, he dismissed his guests and then threw them into a well in which they perished. In this way he robbed them of their belongings. But next morning he appeared religious with a pilgrim's staff and rosary in the true spirit of an ancient Pharisee. He tried the same trick with Nanak, but failed miserably. It was his good fortune to have contacted the Guru, for he admitted in a mood of open confession a long catalogue of his most heinous crimes and ultimately turned over a new leaf. On the Guru's instruction he distributed all the property of his victims to the poor and became a follower of the Guru. It is said that the first Sikh temple was constructed on the spot where this transformation had taken place.¹⁸

EXTENSIVE ITINERARY

Guru Nanak's itinerary extended to Assam in the East, Ceylon in the South, the Himalayas in the North, Mecca and Madina, Basra and Baghdad in the West. These extensive travels he undertook with the objective of preaching to all a religion of the heart as distinguished from a religion of external forms and unavailing ritual. He visited Hindu and Muslim places of pilgrimage and discussed spiritual problems with ascetics and holy men. One could discern in his mixed dress 'his desire to found a religion which should be acceptable both to Hindus and Mohammedans without conforming to either faith'. Armed with the authority of a Guru and filled with love of a mother for her children, wherever he went, he taught the people—kings and servants, learned pundits and common folk. During his visit to Kurukshetra, many were enthralled to hear his gospel and became converted to Sikhism. When departing, he thus addressed his

Sikhs: 'Live in harmony, utter the Creator's name, and if any one salute you therewith, return his salute with the addition true, and say "Sat Kartar", the True Creator, in reply. There are four ways by which, with the repetition of God's name, men may reach Him. The first is holy companionship, the second truth, the third contentment, and the fourth restraint of the senses. By whichsoever of these doors a man entereth, whether he be a hermit or a householder, he shall find God.'¹⁹ At Varanasi he met pundit Chaturdas, the chief Brahmin of the holy city, proud of his vast learning, and teaching the people the fourteen sciences—reading, swimming, medicine, alchemy, astrology, singing the six rags and their raginis, the science of sex, grammar, music, horsemanship, dancing, archery, theology, and statesmanship, Guru Nanak convinced him that better than all these was knowledge of God and sang the long composition called the Omkar, the first two stanzas of which are as follows:

It is the one God who created Brahma;
 It is the one God who created our understanding;
 It is from the one God the mountains and the ages of the world emanated;
 It is the one God who bestoweth knowledge.
 It is by the word of God man is saved.
 It is by the name of the one God the pious are saved.
 Hear an account of the letter O—
 O is the best letter in the three worlds.
 Hear, O Pandit, why writest thou puzzles?
 Write under the instruction of the Guru the name of God, the Cherisher of the world.
 He created the world with ease: in the three worlds there is one Lord of Light.
 Under the Guru's instruction select gems and pearls and thou shalt obtain God the real thing.
 If man understand, reflect, and comprehend what he readeth, he shall know at last that the True One is everywhere.
 The pious man knoweth and remembereth the

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 49-50.

truth—that without the True One the world is unreal.²⁰

On hearing the whole composition, the pundit fell at the Guru's feet and became a Sikh.

Guru Nanak and Mārdana met the Sidhs at Gorakhmata, or temple of Gorakh, some twenty miles north of Pilibhit. The instruction given to them by the Guru regarding religion is worthy of note:

Religion consisteth not in a patched coat, or in a Jogi's staff, or in ashes smeared over the body; Religion consisteth not in earrings worn, or a shaven head, or in the blowing of horns.

Abide pure amid the impurities of the world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion.

Religion consisteth not in mere words;

He who looketh on all men as equal is religious.

Religion consisteth not in wandering to tombs or places of cremation, or sitting in attitudes of contemplation;

Religion consisteth not in wandering in foreign countries, or in bathing at places of pilgrimages.

Abide pure amid the impurities of the world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion.²¹

When Guru Nanak visited Kamrup, a queen called Nurshah and her women companions, who were famous for their skill in incantation and magic, went to him and tried to obtain influence over him. As all their spells and charms failed, they fell at the Guru's feet and prayed to him to show them the path to salvation. In a mood of forgiveness, the Guru instructed them to repeat God's name, conscientiously perform their domestic duties and renounce magic. It is said that they became followers of Guru Nanak.²²

Guru Nanak and his companion went to Meccā, the pole star of Mohammedan devotion. Weary and footsore, the Guru lay down to sleep at night with his feet unwittingly turned towards Kaaba. An enraged Arab priest kicked him and said, 'Who is this sleeping infidel? Why hast thou, O

sinner, turned thy feet towards God?' Significant was the Guru's reply: 'Turn my feet in a direction in which God is not.' It is said that on the priest's turning the Guru's feet, the temple itself turned round. Some interpret this to mean that Guru Nanak made all Mecca turn to his teaching. Wonderstruck at this miracle, the Qazis and the Mullas crowded round him and enquired which was superior—the Hindu or the Mohammedan religion. The Guru replied, 'Without good acts the professors of both religions shall suffer. Neither the Hindus nor the Mohammedans shall obtain entrance into God's court. All their devotions shall vanish like the fleeting dye of safflower. Both sects are jealous of each other. The Hindus insist on saying Ram and the Moslems Rahim, but they know not the one God. Satan hath led them both along his own flowery way.' He continued:

Thy fasting and worship shall be acceptable

When thou, O man, ...

Abandon delights, ease, evil speaking, mental anxiety, and vexation;

Treasure kindness in thy heart, and renounce the devices of infidelity;

Extinguish the fire of lust in thy heart, and thus become cool. Saith Nanak, thus practise fasting, and thy faith shall be perfect.²³

When the high priest of Mecca asked Guru Nanak how God might be obtained by men, the Guru replied that it was by humility and prayer.

LAST PHASE OF ACTIVE LIFE

After a long and strenuous itinerary, Guru Nanak returned home tired and old. On the last lap of his life, he settled down at Kartarpur, a village on the bank of the river Ravi, founded by a millionaire who from a detractor gradually turned into a great admirer of the Guru. There Guru Nanak finally gave up his Udasi style, wore the garb of a house-

²⁰ Ibid., p. 64.

²¹ Ibid., p. 60.

²² Ibid., p. 78.

²³ Ibid., p. 176.

holder, lived with his family and took to farming, thus becoming an inspiring example of his own teaching 'to abide pure amid the impurities of the world'. For religious men who ought to be guiding their flocks had retreated to the solitude of mountains or forests. A true religion had been founded with a pragmatic approach and simple methods. There was a halo of holiness in the personality of Guru Nanak and everyone addressed him, 'Hail, Nanak! a great saint hath been born in the world.' His reputation increased day by day, a large number of people—Hindus and Muslims—flocked to hear him and many became his disciples or sishyas from which the Punjabi word Sikh is derived. Sikh societies began to be formed and the Guru busied himself in the work of consolidation. We get an idea of the daily routine he initiated for the Sikhs at Kartarpur from the following account:

'At Kartarpur, a watch before day, the Japji and the Asa ki War were repeated. Then followed reading and expounding of the Guru's hymns, until a watch and a quarter after sunrise. This was succeeded by singing and the reading of the Arati (Gagan mai thal). After this, breakfast was served. In the third watch there was again singing, after which in the evening the Sodar was read. Then the Sikhs all dined together. The repast ended with further singing. After a watch of night had elapsed the Sohila was read, and every one then retired.'²⁴

GLORIOUS END

Aware of the approaching end, Guru

²⁴ Ibid., p. 136.

Nanak appointed his faithful disciple Angad to be his successor, setting aside the claims of his own sons. Having fulfilled his divine mission on the earth by founding a separate religion with an easy and simple way of obtaining salvation by the repetition of God's name and worship of One God—primal and omnipresent—and having established a casteless society, Guru Nanak at last breathed his last in the year 1539. He was great in death as in life. Just before death, a difference of opinion arose between the Hindus and the Muslims over the disposal of his body, the former being anxious to cremate him as a Hindu and the latter no less anxious to give him an Islamic burial. According to the biographers, the difference was resolved by the Guru himself. The body having disappeared, the two communities stood satisfied to salute the spot where the Guru had lain. No better compliment could have been paid to Guru Nanak at the time of his passing than this spontaneous one for the wide tolerance taught by him, social cohesion achieved by his efforts and the deep love he bore to all. Even today people lovingly and reverently remember him as the Guru for Hindus and Pir for Muslims when they utter the following words:

Guru Nanak Shah Fakir

Hindu ka Guru, Musalman ka Pir.

In view of his invaluable gift of eternal spiritual riches to mankind, he continues to be a source of guidance and inspiration to the seekers after Truth.

God is one, but He has innumerable forms. He is the Creator of all and He Himself takes the human form.

—Nanak



The Strange Attorney

True greatness is a quality of the soul, characterized by its depth and durability; as such it reveals itself even in the common contexts of domestic or professional life. It brings truth, goodness and beauty into the most unexpected vocations, even into that of the lawyer and politician.

It is not just a theoretical possibility; it is an actual fact of life. In flesh and blood there existed such a person, a lawyer, who could not divorce truth and goodness from his profession. He never took a case he knew to be wrong; and before he undertook one he would use all possible means to get at the truth. He believed in settling cases without trial, rather than carry them into the court, and that he did without charge. Trivial cases not amenable to such a procedure, he would generally refer to some younger attorney, for whom he would have a good word at the same time. To these young beginners he was ever kind and courteous, when he was the opposing counsel; he would set them at ease and actually encourage them.

Rather than be a party to an unconvincing case he would readily sacrifice his own interests. A lady client once wanted him to institute proceedings regarding a real estate claim, and entrusted him with the necessary papers along with a substantial cheque as retaining fee. He said he would

look the case over and asked her to call again the next day. When she did, he told her that he had gone through the papers very carefully and was obliged to tell her frankly that there was not 'a peg to hang her claim on'. He could not honestly advise her to bring an action. The lady was satisfied, thanked and was about to depart. Suddenly he remembered something, fumbled in his pocket, and saying 'here is something you left with me', returned the cheque. 'But', the lady replied, 'I think you have earned it'. 'No, no', he responded handing the cheque back, 'that would not be right. I can't take pay for *doing my duty!*'

Then the question arises: A person may adopt such attitudes and behaviour but could he even succeed in the world, hold his own against others, more aggressive and less scrupulous? Well, our lawyer did. Not only did he succeed in the legal profession, but even as a politician. Such was his resounding success in politics that he rose to one of the highest positions open to man, discharged his onerous responsibilities with unique distinction and left an indelible mark on history. He was Abraham Lincoln, perhaps the greatest American President.

The secret of his success, energy and character was his passion for truth and service to those in need. Take the instance

of Hannah Armstrong, a widow in distress, with her son charged with murder. In earlier days she had sheltered Lincoln when he was out of work and treated him with great kindness. Lincoln never forgot his debt of gratitude, and when later Hannah appealed to him for help, the successful lawyer promptly went in to help. Apparently the case was so clear against the accused that defence seemed to be almost useless. But Lincoln made his own investigations and in the light of his own findings defended the accused most eloquently. He took the jury to storm; they sat entranced by his compassionate and sincere plea. The boy was cleared not because of lack of testimony against him but because of the irresistible appeal of an advocate moved by truthful compassion. Something had made him declare, 'Hannah, your son will be cleared before sundown', and cleared the boy was through God's grace. Grateful Hannah, though in poverty, inquired what the fee was. 'Why Hannah, I shan't charge you a cent—never. Anything I can do for you I will do willingly and without charges,' was the prompt reply of Lincoln. And he meant it. About a land dispute in which others were trying to exploit her, he advised her: 'After trial in the Circuit Court, you appeal and bring it to the Supreme Court. We will attend to it for nothing.'

Relentless was his devotion to truth so far as he was concerned; that did not mean compromising or sacrificing other's interests. He was once associated with Mr. Swett in defending a man accused of murder. He listened to the testimony which witness after witness gave against his client,

until his honest heart could stand it no longer. 'Swett', he said, 'the man is guilty; you defend him; I can't.' Mr. Swett did defend him, and the man *was* acquitted. And as the partner, his share of the large fee was proffered to Lincoln. Such was the built-in integrity of the man that he most emphatically declined it saying, 'All of it belongs to Mr. Swett, whose ardour and eloquence saved a guilty man from justice'.

Tender and self-sacrificing as he was, yet he could never brook wrongful misuse of legal rights; that could make him stern. A would be client carefully stated his case. Lincoln listened carefully and said: 'Yes, there is no reasonable doubt that I can gain your case for you. I can set a whole neighbourhood at loggerheads; I can distress a widowed mother and her six fatherless children, and thereby get for you six hundred dollars, which rightfully belong, it appears to me, as much to the woman and her six children as it does to you. You must remember that some things that are *legally* right are not *morally* right. I shall not take your case, but will give you a little advice, for which I will charge you nothing. You seem to be a sprightly, energetic man. I would advise you to try your hand at *making six hundred dollars some other way.*'

A very valuable advice which many of our clever folks today could use with great profit.

←EXPLORER

Source: *The Every-Day Life of Abraham Lincoln* by Francis Fisher Browne, 1914.

VIVEKANANDA AT THE PARIS CONGRESS, 1900

PART TWO

SWAMI VIDYATMANANDA

This is the concluding portion of a study of Swami Vivekananda's appearance at the Congress of the History of Religions, held at Paris in 1900. The first part of this study appeared in the March, 1969, issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*.

Part One touched on the following topics: Swamiji's admiration for France and for the Exposition Universelle Internationale of which the Congress was a part; the fact that the Congress was organized and conducted by academic students of religions, mostly professors from the Sorbonne; the extreme insignificance of the Congress, as revealed by contemporary indications; the opening meeting, held on the grounds of the Exposition; general and sectional meetings, held in various rooms of the Sorbonne.

Part Two takes up Swami Vivekananda's one and only appearance at the Congress, at a session of the combined Sections II. History of the Religions of the Far East and V. History of the Religions of India and Iran, held on Friday morning, September 7, 1900.

Sectional meetings were held in the Sorbonne at the School of Higher Studies, in rooms of the Department of Historical and Philological Sciences. M. Germain Calmette, Head Librarian of the Sorbonne library, conducted me through all of these rooms. There are four or five of them, and in size and design they resemble ordinary classrooms, accommodating about thirty people. In his letter to Swami Turiyananda, Swamiji himself seems to be saying that twenty was the number of participants present when he spoke. M. Calmette was unable to find any data indicating which sectional meetings of the Congress were held in which rooms. Thus it seems unlikely that we shall ever know in precisely what room of the Sorbonne it was that Swamiji spoke.

We learn from the volumes of proceedings that after the Congress got started it was considered 'advantageous' to combine Section II (History of the Religions of the Far East) with Section V (History of the Religions of India and Iran).

This combined sectional group met on Monday afternoon, September 3, on Wednesday morning, September 5, and on Friday morning, September 7. There is no mention of Swami Vivekananda anywhere

in the four volumes of the *Actes* except in connection with the Friday meeting, as detailed below. We do not know if the Swami attended any sectional meetings other than that of Friday.

A M. E. Senart was named President of Section II-V; Mr. Sylvain Lévi, Vice-President; and M. A. Foucher, Secretary. None of these is listed in the latest edition of the *Petit Larousse*. In the larger two-volume *Larousse* of 1922 none is listed except Sylvain Lévi. Lévi is identified as a French Sanskritist born in Paris in 1863. He worked on a number of books concerning Indian subjects, including a translation of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* in French (which was still in print in 1968).

There were three talks at the Monday session. Professor V. Henry of the University of Paris spoke on the relation of, and the differences between, Buddhism and positivism. After the talk there was some discussion. Sylvain Lévi then spoke for a Japanese professor, named Ryavon Fujishima, on Japanese Buddhism and the state of other religions in Japan. There was some discussion, and Lévi went on to comment that on his recent trip to Japan he had found good libraries and excellent work being done by the Japanese in study-

ing the history of Buddhism. Finally a M. Minas Tchéráz read a work concerning legends relative to Alexander the Great, collected from word-of-mouth reports by Armenian storytellers. The session opened at 2.30 and closed at 5.30.

On Wednesday morning a Persian named M. H. Arkélian spoke on the history and doctrines of Babism, a modern reform religion containing ideas common to Christianity, Islam, and Sufism. A. M. Foucher then read a paper on the evolution of Buddhism in Japan for a M. J. Chikadzumi, who seems to have been present; but like his countryman, Fujishima, seems not to have been secure enough in any of the official languages of the Congress to have himself presented his own paper. Then a M. Ed. Chavannes spoke on the old religions of China, touching on ancient ideas concerning the goddess of the earth and the god of the sky. Several of the people present joined in the discussion which followed, commenting on how the old Chinese ideas were similar to ideas found among the aborigines of India, and in the Vedas. The meeting, which had opened at 9.30, closed at 11.30.

Because the session of Friday, September 7, is the one where there is an indication that Swamiji was present, I shall reproduce in full the report from Volume I of the *Actes* concerning this session. The following is a full translation.

The session of Friday, September 7, opened at 9.15 A.M. under the presidency of M. Senart, the President.

1. M. G. Oppert explained the ideas concerning and the worship connected with the Śālagrāma, a sort of fossil found in the Gandaki which, according to the speaker, symbolized for the aboriginal peoples of India the female energy, and which became the emblem of Viṣṇu.

M. de Gubernatis [probably the Count A. de Gubernatis, Professor of the Uni-

versity of Rome] recalled in this connection certain superstitions concerning 'lightning stones' [meteorites]. M. Sylvain Lévi wanted to know if the place where these stones were found—Cakratīrtha—was completely limited to the course of the Gandaki in Nepal. Swami Vivekananda, who did not believe in the sexual aspects of these symbols, spoke of the correspondence existing on the one hand between the Śālagrāma of Viṣṇu and the *tulasī* tree (basilic); and on the other hand between the *lingams* of Śiva found in the Narmada and the *vilva* tree (aegle marmelos), and finally the relation between little Buddhist stūpas and the *aśvatha* tree (*ficus religiosa*). The President gave the opinion that, because of the difficulties existing in giving the exact value of these symbols, such comparisons had a good deal of value. He thanked M. G. Oppert for his interesting contribution and praised him for having been able to gather with such precision all the details concerning these curious stones.

2. M. Sylvain Lévi, the Vice-President, read a report from M. P. Regnaud, Professor of the University of Lyon, on the Ninth Maṇḍala of the *R̥g-Veda*, in which he attacked the brāhmanic tradition and proposed a new method of interpretation. Since a question of this type could not be usefully discussed without having in hand the actual texts, this contribution did not give rise to any discussion. The President expressed his approval for the neatness of the views and the conviction of the author.

3. Swami Vivekananda expressed his views concerning the development of the Hindu religion since its beginnings. He gave the most important place to animism and the worship of ancestors, naturism being, in his view, only accessory. In addition, he made a distinction between two other elements, one philosophical and the other magical, which he thought to be equally very ancient. He spoke out against

such arbitrary nomenclatures and the theories—very often false because of their point of view—of European orientalists, and defended the basic Indian tradition which, he felt, further studies would justify. In conclusion, he emphasized the renewal of the influence of the Upaniṣads.

The President thanked the Swami, and without taking the time to defend the scholars against him (who had already shared with him his ideas on the importance of the *Mahābhārata*, the disappearance without violent persecution of Buddhism, etc.), wanted to make evident the interest with which the Section had listened to the exposé of the personal opinions of a Hindu on the ancient religious matters of his native land.

4. M. A. Foucher gave the Section a copy of his *Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde*, which was just about to be published. He explained what new documents had been of use to him and regretted the absence of M. S. d'Oldenburg, who had given him the original idea for the study. The President said that the work, developed with solely Indian documents, was a basic contribution in the area of Buddhist iconography.

5. M. Sylvain Lévi, in an informal improvization, gave some picturesque information concerning his recent voyage in Nepal and described in a very lively fashion the state of Buddhism in that country. He distinguished the diverse factors, religious, political, and social, which, he felt, would contribute to make Buddhism disappear from Nepal in a few years, without any violent pressure being exerted against it. The President thanked the speaker and declared himself to be, on this point, completely in agreement with him, as he was with Swami Vivekananda. One knows quite well that it is not by persecution that religions perish. As M. Oppert indicated, there were doubtless some local disturbances; but the historic theory positing the idea that Indian

Buddhism had been destroyed or pushed out as the result of veritable wars of religions should be entirely abandoned.

The session closed at 11.30.

I shall now reproduce portions of Professor Oppert's paper on Śālagrāmas, translated from the French text appearing in Volume II of the *Actes*.

The subject on which I have the honour to speak with the audience deals with śālagrāmas, a kind of stone, which of yore were worshipped by the natives of India as symbols of female energy and which more recently have become Viṣṇu's symbol, representing the same principle.

The curious outside aspect of the śālagrāma with its pierced hole (*chidra* or *dvāra*), its spiroidal shape (*cakra*), its various colours (*varṇa*), and other characteristic marks are a source of astonishment and surprise to the superstitious or naïve onlooker; and as the stone possesses a tremendous magnetic force it is not surprising that divine or supernatural properties have been attributed to it, nor that it should be considered as a manifestation of the Divine. These peculiarities no doubt must have struck the people of India long before Aryans invaded the country and later, at a more advanced period, these peculiarities drew the attention also of the conquering race. The aborigines of India considered the śālagrāma as a representation of their supreme deity, the feminine energy, the Prakṛti, whom Kapila introduced in his system of philosophy named Sāṅkhya; I believe I proved this in my work on the aborigines of India. Traces of this worship still exist as several kinds of śālagrāmas are dedicated to the śakti principle as represented by the deities Bhavānī and Kuṇḍalinī. It is also admitted that the great deity Mahādevī resides in the śālagrāma.

The Aryan god Viṣṇu is worshipped in the form of images (*vigraha*) but the pious Vaisnavas prefer worshipping him in the form of the śālagrāma stone, though he is also sometimes represented by jewels, paintings, or piles of seeds. The worship of images is always difficult and needs great attention, as the least mistake or slightest omission may threaten the worshipper with the anger of the offended deity, who, for instance, in the manifestation of Narasimha will become angry and revenge himself upon the careless worshipper.

It is very difficult to assert when and how

the śālagrama became Viṣṇu's emblem, considering the changes which Viṣṇu had to bear in the esteem of the Aryan people of India. Since the time he aroused the religious feelings of the Aryans as a Vedic *āditya*, many important fluctuations in the religious dogma took place. Probably Viṣṇu represented in the Hindu trinity—the Trimūrti—the protecting influence which must be considered as one of the chief attributes of the feminine principle. However there is a great chasm between the admission of this principle and identifying Viṣṇu with the feminine energy which the Brāhmanic Smārtas revere in him. There is no need to insist upon the legends in which Viṣṇu figures under the aspect of the pretty Mohinī.

Owing to the sacred character of the subject, the greatest importance must be attributed to one of the *Rg-Veda* mantras (X, 184, 1) which is repeated at the end of the wedding ritual, beginning by the words: 'Viṣṇu will shape the womb.' We must also mention the *mantra-praśna* of the *Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda*, namely the fifth sloka of the thirteenth chapter of the *Āpastambasūtra*. Viṣṇu is therein mentioned as having the female organ. This mantra goes back to a very old period and is for that reason very important, since it was getting the mind accustomed to more radical changes in the Viṣṇu concept. The special purport of the Vedic text does not necessarily imply that Viṣṇu be there considered as the one who shaped the *yoni*, because the Sanskrit word *kalpayatu* can also express another meaning.

However in the *Rudrahṛdayopaniṣad* Viṣṇu is identified with Umā, Śiva's consort, who, elsewhere is meant as the female organ. The mantra is repeated and told to the engaged couple the night of the marriage ceremony when they are sitting upon the marriage bed. We may only mention that in the *Vedikalinga* the basic part immediately under the *lingam* is assigned to Viṣṇu and that Brahmā resides below Viṣṇu.

Whatever be the period during which the śālagrama was adopted as Viṣṇu's emblem, it certainly was adopted at a more recent date than the *lingam*; which was probably known by the old Hindu Aryans as a divine representation. The *lingam* worship is found in the whole world, whereas the śālagrama is originally confined to India alone, even when it is found outside India, because the śālagrama stone is partic-

ular to India. As Śiva's worship stone not always attached to the *lingam*, the representation of Viṣṇu by the śālagrama must belong to more modern times. I believe the adoption of the śālagrama stone by the Vaiṣṇavas took place to mark their opposition to the *linga* worship and if this point of view is correct, the Vaiṣṇava emblem was adopted more recently than the adoption of the *linga* by the Śaivas.

Oppert then goes on in the same pedantic way to explain other matters concerning śālagramas. He describes the various shapes or varieties, with their different markings, and says that different shapes represent different deities. He describes the area in Nepal where śālagramas are found and tells how they are formed; and speaks of legends connected with that area. He tries to explain the origin, from Sanskrit, of the word śālagrama.

Good or bad qualities are mysteriously attached to various śālagramas; the same stone can bring luck to someone and ruin another. So a sweet śālagrama fulfils the wish of some worshipper, a small one brings heavenly reward, a fresh one gives pleasure, a black one, glory, a red one, a crown. A śālagrama with a large hole destroys a family, another with a crooked spiral inspires one with fear; those whose spirals are arranged unequally bring poverty, that of a smoky colour makes one stupid; a brown one kills the wife of the one to whom it belongs; those with many holes yield much. However, the same virtues or the same evils are not always attributed to the same stones.

A śālagrama and a *tulasī* plant must be worshipped in each house, otherwise this house is like a cremation ground; but two śālagramas must not be worshipped in the same house. A similar law is also applied to the *lingam*. The śālagrama must neither be bought nor sold at a certain fixed price; those who do not comply to this go to hell. Someone who as a gift gives a śālagrama is supposed to give his best. It must not be touched by a śūdra, or a pariah, or a woman. The sacred stone must be put aside with care in the shrine between *tulasī* leaves and wrapped in some pure linen. It must often be washed and scented; the water used for this purpose becomes sacred and as such can be drunk. The śālagrama must be amply supplied with milk, rice, and other ingredients. This is

also done as a testimony of its qualities and choosing a clean stone.

The householder must once a day offer worship to the śālagrāma, either by his morning ablutions or at dusk. Closing his eyes, he rings the bell to announce the coming of Viṣṇu and warning people to withdraw because the god is going to appear outside of the śālagrāma, which is placed on a little dish representing a throne (*siṃhāsana*). He supplies camphor, lighted candles, sprinkles himself with water, also puts some on the stone and offers his worship to the god (*mantra, arghya, pādya, ācamanīya, snānīya, pānīya, and annādikam*). He perambulates around the śālagrāma, by the right side, repeats the thousands of names of Viṣṇu; and when his prayers are over, he takes his meal.

The efficacy of the stone grants pious Hindus felicity in this world as well as in the other. Consequently the śālagrāma is presented to dying people, and the water poured upon the *tulasī* is sprinkled upon them through the hole of the stone to insure the dying people the benefits of dying in Kāśī. Even sinners when they receive this blessing have their sins forgiven. This ceremonial also grants pleasure to the departed manes.

I think that in this sketch I have shown that the stones called śālagrāmas have for some immemorial times been considered as sacred, both by ancient races as well as their present progeny and by today's brahmins.

Who was this Professor Gustav Oppert, whose sole interest to us today lies in the fact that he made a speech which Swami Vivekananda contradicted? Gustav Oppert was one of three brothers, all three professional orientalist. Of German Jewish descent, Gustav was the youngest, having been born in 1836. He was an instructor of Dravidian languages at the University of Berlin. For twenty-two years—from 1872 to 1894—Oppert was professor of Sanskrit at the University of Madras. He was the author of numerous books on obscure subjects relating to India. The precision of the the paper testifies to Oppert's academic outlook.

On the basis of the summary from the *Actes* given above, the actual words of

Oppert, and Swamiji's report in the *Udbodhan* letter, let us try to reconstruct what must have happened at the Sorbonne on that morning of Friday, September 7.

In his letter, Swamiji refers to Professor Oppert as a 'German pandit.' Says Swamiji:

He traced the origin of the śālagrāma worship to that of the emblem of the female generative principle. According to him, the śiva *Liṅgam* is the phallic emblem of the male, and the śālagrāma of the female generative principle. And thus he wanted to establish that worship of the śiva *liṅga* and that of the śālagrāma—both are but the component parts of the worship of the *liṅgam* and the *yoni*!

Swamiji says that he responded, repudiating these views, and observing that though he had heard of the śiva-*liṅgam* interpreted in such a ridiculous manner, the other theory, concerning the śālagrāma, 'was quite new and strange and seemed groundless' to him. The Swami then went on to explain his idea of the development of the *liṅgam* from the Buddhist stūpa; and as for the śālagrāma representing the female power, this he considered to be an 'imaginary invention.'

In his talk which followed Professor Regnaud's presentation of his new approach to the interpretation of the Ninth Maṇḍala of the *R̥g-Veda*, Vivekananda dealt with the historic evolution from the Vedas of India's manifold religious ideas. He denied the often repeated claims that Indians learned science and art from the Greeks, stating that knowledge of these subjects had existed in India long before the arrival of these visitors. He gave numerous reasons for establishing the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the *Mahābhārata* as pre-Buddhist, and spoke of the great value of these two scriptures. He emphasized the point that the traditions of India are true and that occidental Sanskrit scholars, instead of developing fanciful theories on the basis of piecemeal discoveries, should try to discover the truths residing in the

established traditions and fit their discoveries into these.

The session lasted about two hours. There were six speakers, several discussion periods, and several summaries by the President. Whatever Swamiji said in his rebuttal of Oppert, and in his more formal talk, must thus have been quite brief.

It is clear from Swamiji's tone in his *Udbodhan* letter, and even from the polite phrases of the published report, that Swamiji was annoyed with Oppert and that he did not conceal his annoyance. If we may presume to say what it was that caused Swamiji to protest, it was that on the basis of isolated discoveries and partial comprehensions, the academic Sanskritist may try to draw sweeping conclusions—which sometimes served to put Hinduism in an unfavourable light. He found such pundits literal and only partially informed and unaware of their ignorance. What he wanted them to do was to try to see their separate discoveries in the context of the whole tradition, the trend of Indian thought. The discoveries would then not appear curious and damaging, but parts of a large, worthy whole. Swamiji was not merely defending Hinduism; he was saying that at base the occidental Sanskritist may not have been truly scholarly.

Swamiji says in his *Udbodhan* report that although the President remained unconvinced as to the contemporaneousness of the *Gītā* with the *Mahābhārata*, at the end of the presentation the scholars crowded around him and said that they felt the bad old days of Sanskrit antiquarianism were over. To achieve this was Swami Vivekananda's aim at the Paris Congress.

In the official *Life* of Swami Vivekananda we read the following: 'Though he was present at several sittings of the Congress, the Swami's ill-health prevented him from lecturing before the assembly more

than twice.'

I know of no evidence to indicate that Swamiji was present at more than the one 'sitting' of Friday, September 7. And this was not a sitting of the Congress, but only of a section. Further, he did not lecture twice before any 'assembly'. He gave an extemporaneous rebuttal and an improvised talk at the one sectional meeting.

Swamiji said in the *Udbodhan* letter that ill-health prevented him from preparing a paper. If he had prepared a paper it would probably have been reproduced in the *Actes*, as was Oppert's. There were no tape recorders in 1900, and one may guess that stenographers were not employed for the sectional meetings. It is fairly clear that the reason Oppert's contribution was printed in the *Actes* and Swamiji's was not is that the compiler of the proceedings had in Oppert's case a manuscript he could send to the typesetter. Swamiji says at the end of the *Udbodhan* letter that a summary of what he said was to be printed in French in a general report of the Congress, and this, as we have seen, is what was done.

The official *Life* of Swami Vivekananda continues:

He had been appointed by the committee to debate with the Western Orientalists as to whether the Vedic religion was the outcome of nature-worship or not. The prominent position he had attained as the spokesman of the Vedānta philosophy and Indian culture in the West, and his numerous lectures and writings, which the Westerners either read or heard, made it evident that he, above all others, was best fitted to interpret the Indian position.

It is undoubtedly true that Swamiji received an official invitation to speak. Mrs. Frances Leggett has stated, on the basis of information taken from an original letter among the Leggett papers, that it was Gerald Nobel who secured for the Swami the invitation. From the standpoint of the organizers of the Congress and the other participants, Swamiji was to some degree a

non-professional. And this was a meeting of professionals. To have asked him to speak may be said, thus, to have been a tribute to his known mastery of his subject.

But in light of present knowledge, the writer of this paragraph from the *Life* appears to have been naive; and, worse, to have betrayed a certain servility. To see added lustre being given to Swami Vivekananda as a result of his having appeared at the 1900 Congress reveals a mistaken idea of what the 1900 Congress was. We can see now that it was the Congress that was rendered an honour by Swamiji's appearance at its deliberations.

If we are seeking evidences of Swamiji's greatness in connection with his appearance at the Congress, I think we can find them, but in another area. Let us face the fact that Swamiji's contributions were without great significance in a Congress equally without great significance. But think of what a performance he was able to give! Much if not all of what went on that Friday morning was certainly in fluent, subtle French. There is no indication in the *Actes* to tell us in what language Oppert gave his paper; he certainly would have been fluent in German and English; and since in 1900 French was a language known to most educated Europeans, Oppert probably knew French also. My guess is that Oppert read his paper in French. And here was Swamiji, a newcomer to the language, apparently able to understand what was said; and then able to deliver a rebuttal extemporaneously to a paper whose content he is unlikely to have known about in advance. After that, he was able to give a talk sufficiently historic to meet the demands of the regulations, sufficiently deep to qualify it as appropriately professional and scholarly, and at the same time extremely creative and timely in its message.

Granted that Swamiji was a very great genius, a special messenger of the Divine,

and a man of *samādhi*, the observer is mystified as to how he could have performed so well when confronted with a language he certainly had not had the time to familiarize himself with. I have wondered whether Oppert's paper was delivered in English, or whether if read in French it was translated into English. Swamiji seems to have been clearly aware of the content of the Regnaud paper also, and of everything else that went on at the session. But so much took place in that brief two-hour meeting on September 7 that it hardly seems likely there was sufficient time for everything to have been translated. To have employed an official translator for a sectional meeting seems unlikely.

As for Swami Vivekananda's responses, how did he manage? Having clearly understood what was going on, he could, of course, have responded with facility in English. But that would have entailed translation of his words into French so that, as we know they did, the others present could have understood him. Again the problem of there not having been enough time for translating to have been done. There are substantial differences between the report of his two talks printed in the *Actes* and Swamiji's own account of what he said. This suggests strongly that Swamiji spoke in English, which the recording secretary did not fully comprehend. It is equally unlikely that many of the other French persons present at the session would have known English well.

In referring to Swamiji's appearance at the Congress, the original 1912 four-volume *Life* reports :

For this occasion the Swami had prepared himself for two months previously, in endeavouring to master French so that he could deliver his lectures in that language. ... He found that he could speak French with ease and make the intricate terms of Sanskrit philosophy readily intelligible to his hearers in that foreign language.

The condensed *Life*, published in two volumes in 1933, has hedged slightly, in changing 'he could speak French with ease and make' to 'he could speak French with sufficient ease to make...'

Swami Vivekananda arrived in Paris on August 3 and spoke at the Congress on September 7. Until a day or two before the opening of the Congress, when he went to live with Jules Bois, Swamiji spent most of his time with the Leggetts at 6 Place des Etats-Unis. The Leggetts spoke little French, and many of their friends were Americans or British. How could Swamiji have learned in these five weeks sufficient French to understand what was going on at the meeting and to be able to respond in French? The conferees could not have spoken in schoolboy French understandable to a beginner in this language; and the subjects he covered could not have allowed the Swami to talk in that kind of French either.

On this question of language we gain no help from Swamiji's own revelations about his knowledge of the language. On August 28 Swamiji wrote to Sister Nivedita: 'I am trying to learn French, talking to—here. Some are very appreciative already.' On September 1 he wrote to Swami Turiyananda: 'I shall stay with the French to pick up their language... I have somewhat mastered the French language; but if I stay among the French for a month or two I shall be able to carry on a conversation well.' This does not sound like the knowledge of someone able to lecture in that language. Furthermore, in a letter dated September 10, Alberta Sturges writes to Joe MacLeod, 'Now he won't be able to learn French.' On October 14 Swamiji wrote to Sister Christine: 'It may be that I shall give a few lectures in Paris after my return [from the impending trip to the near East], but they will be in English with an interpreter. I have no time any more, nor the

power, to study a new language at my age [thirty-seven].' And two or three weeks later, in his 'Memoirs of European Travel', we find the Swami saying:

It was my cherished desire to remain in Paris for some time and study the French language and civilization; I left my old friends and acquaintances and put up with a new friend [Jules Bois], a Frenchman of ordinary means, who knew no English, and my French—well, it was something quite extraordinary! I had this in mind that the inability to live like a dumb man would naturally force me to talk French, and I would attain fluency in that language in no time; but on the contrary I am now on a tour. ...

We know of two letters written in French by Swami Vivekananda. They give an indication of his knowledge of the language. Both are printed in English translation in the *Complete Works*. The first, undated but probably written on October 8, 1900, was written from the apartment of Jules Bois, probably to Josephine MacLeod, to announce a return trip to Brittany. The original French text may be seen by referring to the July, 1949, issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*. The second is a long letter written on October 14 to Sister Christine. Swamiji apparently wrote to her in French as an interesting gesture, because he was studying that language and she, being originally European, understood it. Mr. and Mrs. Boshi Sen of Almora supplied me with a copy of the original text of this October 14 letter.

French people to whom I have shown these two examples of Swamiji's French tend to agree that his knowledge of the language, as revealed by these two letters written more than a month after the closing of the Congress, was that of a promising beginner. They are astonished that he could have known what was being said at the session, and that he could have himself responded so appropriately.

I find myself, thus, at a loss to comprehend how it was that Vivekananda managed

so well at the meeting of Sections of II-V. I cannot see that what Oppert and others said could have been in English, or translated into English. I cannot see that Swamiji knew enough French to understand what they said. I cannot see how he could, after having understood, have replied in anything but English. And if he had done so, we have the question before us as to how his audience could have, in turn, understood him.

I must thus leave the question of Swami Vivekananda's knowledge of French an unsettled, fascinating question which I hope the presentation of new evidence in the future will help us resolve. In any case, however it was managed, Swamiji's performance at the Congress, as now more fully revealed, gives us a new glimpse of his greatness.

The closing session of the Congress of the History of Religions was held on the afternoon of Saturday, September 8, at the Palais des Congrès on the Exposition grounds. The session was given over to summaries of what had been accomplished, and with announcements and felicitations. The principal address was delivered by the Count A. de Gubernatis, Professor of the University of Rome, who talked about the future of research in the history of religions.

The proceedings volume states that that evening a reception was held to celebrate the success of the Congress and mark its closing. I reproduce in translation the account given in Volume I of the *Actes*:

A banquet of eighty places brought together for one last time some of those attending the Congress; this was held in the Russian Restaurant on the first floor of the Eiffel Tower, from which there was a beautiful view over the Exposition and all Paris. The freest gaiety prevailed during the meal, at which numerous women were present. The President proposed the health of the President of the Republic and of the sovereigns or chiefs of state of all the nations represented at the Congress. The banquet broke up about 11.00 p.m.

The 'numerous women' were of course the wives of the members of the Congress. Whether Swamiji was present for this farewell banquet we do not know.

And now the days of his sojourn in his much-loved France went by rapidly. A week after the closing of the Congress Swamiji went to Perros-Guirec in Brittany to stay on the seacoast for a fortnight. He was back in Paris the first week of October, and then went again to Brittany for a few days. By the third week of October his time in France was over. He wrote on October 23: 'Tomorrow I am to take leave of Paris.... Everything on earth has an end. Once again I took a round over the Paris Exhibition...'

He bid farewell to beautiful Paris and its fascinating Exposition with these sad-sweet words:

It has been raining in Paris for the last two or three days. During all this time the sun who is ever kind to France has held back his accustomed grace. Perhaps his face has been darkened over with clouds in disgust to witness the secretly flowing current of sensuality behind this assemblage of arts and artists, of learning and learned folk, or perhaps he has hid his face under a pall of cloud in grief over the impending destruction of this illusive heaven of particoloured wood and canvas.

We too shall be happy to escape—the breaking up of the Exhibition is a big affair. The streets of this heaven on earth, the Eden-like Paris, will be filled with knee-deep mud and mortar. With the exception of one or two main buildings, all the houses and their parts are but a display of wood and rags and whitewashing—just as the whole of the world is!

Glad to come. Glad to go. Happy to see the Exhibition; happy to leave it. Like his visit to earth. I suspect that, for Swamiji, his thirty-nine years here below was nothing but an appearance at a very strange Congress. He performed magnificently, spoke creatively. Some heard and forgot. Some heard and remembered. More will hear in the future. And the world, like the Paris Congress of 1900, was honoured by the fact of his brief appearance.



WHAT
INSPIRES ME
MOST IN
HOLY
MOTHER'S
LIFE

MALLIKA CLARE GUPTA

When I think of Holy Mother, two of her photographs immediately come before my mind. One is the picture we are all familiar with, and which is usually in our shrines, of that serene and reassuring face so full of purity, love and compassion. The other is an enlargement of a picture showing Mother in a high state of spiritual consciousness, of ecstasy. It expresses tremendous power, an all-embracing love, which seems to draw us within its protective orbit. To my mind, this great protective power which was expressed in the Holy Mother inspires me more than anything else in her life.

That protective love or power of the Holy Mother was shown in three different aspects of her personality : her Purity, her Patience, and her Power. Mother could never see the faults of others. We may wonder why that was so, for it seems but natural for us to see faults in other people. Holy Mother once said, 'It is in the mind alone that a person feels pure or impure. A man, first of all, must make his own mind guilty, and then alone he can see another man's guilt. He who has a pure mind sees everything as pure.' Spiritual teachers tell us that we see outside ourselves what we carry within us. Holy Mother could not see faults outside herself, because she had none within her. Love for others filled up her whole mind ; there

was no room left for anything else. Holy Mother's purity was based on her all-embracing love.

We usually think of saints and great spiritual personalities living quiet lives in Retreats or Ashramas, far away from this humdrum life of ours. But Holy Mother lived many years of her life in the congested Baghbazar area of Calcutta where the houses are built so close together that the din from neighbouring houses penetrates and mingles with one's own household noises. And Mother was the head of a large household. On the ground floor of the house lived some of the monks of the Ramakrishna Mission. Several saintly women always lived with Mother, and some of her impetuous and demanding relatives also always stayed with her. The heads of large Indian households are often apt to become irritated at the many little things that crop up during a day, they often have worries and sometimes lose their tempers. But nothing could disturb the equanimity of Holy Mother. Her great love and compassion for everyone sustained her through the most trying situations.

Those who have read the details of the life of Holy Mother know how harassed she was by some of her relatives and how, sometimes, they actually ill-treated her, as for instance when the unbalanced Radhu, Mother's niece, threw a large egg-plant at

her, causing much pain in her back. Anyone else would have reacted sharply in some form or other. But Holy Mother merely said, 'Oh, Master, please do not be offended with her.' Her patience, born of her great compassion, left no room for indignation or complaint. Sometimes, it is true, she would become tired of the streams of people who came to see her. Once the remark was made in her presence that the many people who came to her for blessings and instructions must make her very tired, and she answered, laughing like a child, 'Yes, just see! They come like a line of ants!' But she never refused them. Her patience was unbelievable.

Holy Mother was so unassuming that few people could realize what great spiritual power she had. Swami Premananda expressed his feelings about the Holy Mother's great spiritual power in a beautiful letter written to a devotee. He wrote :

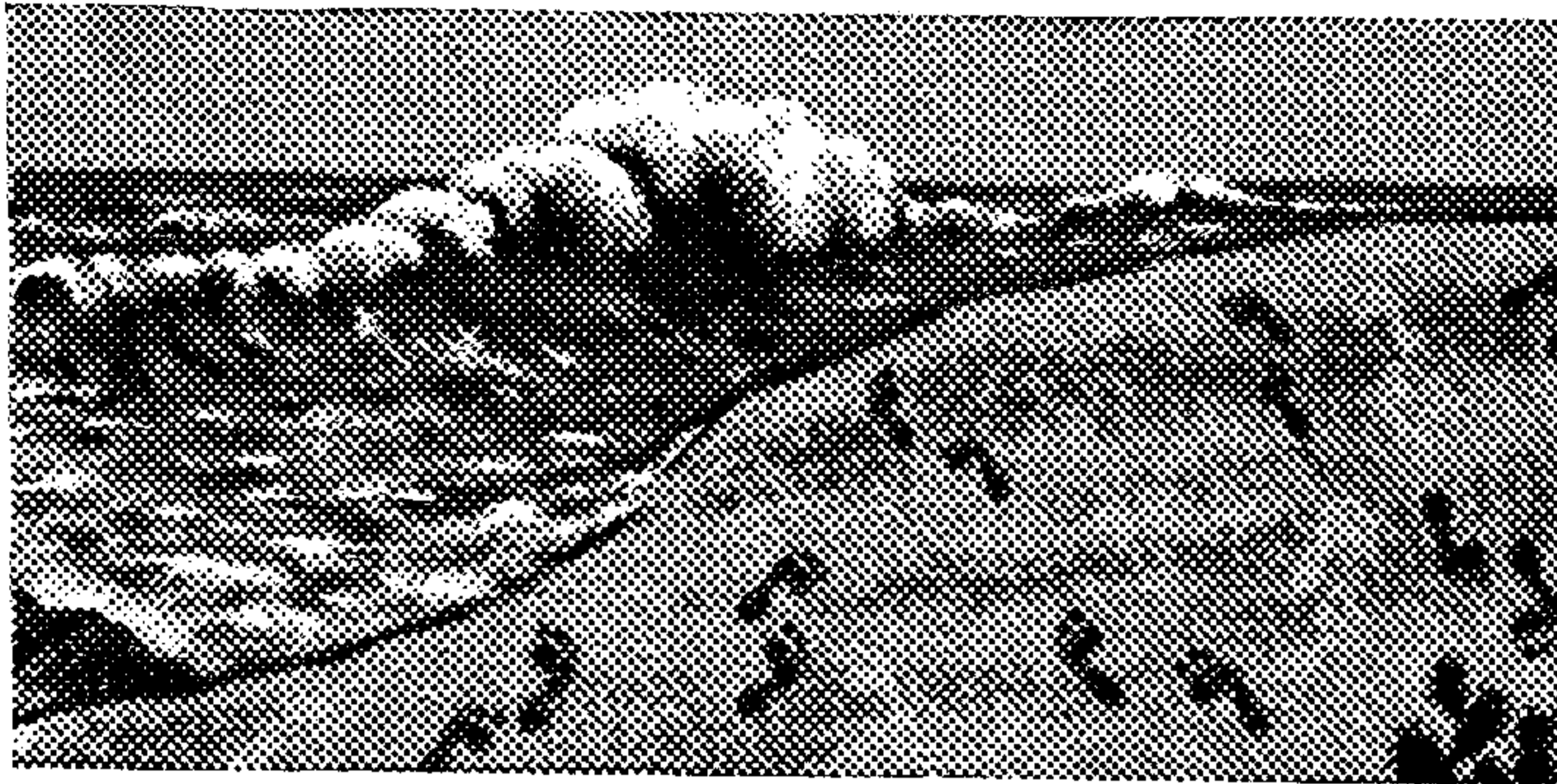
'She is difficult to understand because she keeps her superhuman powers hidden. . . . Mother holds these powers within herself. . . . Hail Mother, the embodiment of *Shakti*—the Divine Mother! . . . People who are so wicked that we are unable to help them, we send to Mother, and she holds them on her lap, as it were, and wipes out all their weakness. She is the embodiment of infinite power. She has boundless grace towards all. . . . She is indeed performing miracles, sheer miracles! She gives refuge to all. . . . Don't you

people realize that our Mother, who is the empress of the universe, has assumed the mask of a poor woman . . . and is performing all sorts of tasks? . . . Who can really understand the greatness of Holy Mother? True it is, there have been holy women in past ages—such as Sita, Savitri, Sri Radha. You have heard of these great ones. But in this present age, before our very eyes, we see Holy Mother surpass them all by her exemplary life.'¹

It is no wonder that, although we cannot fully understand the greatness of the Holy Mother, we naturally turn to her in times of need. When trouble, illness, or depression overcome me, it is to that serene, gentle, yet all-powerful Holy Mother that I turn. And she always responds with her protective love. I feel that she is none other than that great Divine Mother of the Universe who will 'take us across the ocean of life.'

I feel that the source of her great spiritual power was universal love. It is that universal love expressed in Mother's life as an all-embracing protective power which knew no difference between high and low, good and bad, between Hindu, Moslem or Christian, that love which saw only the best in everyone and which never, never criticized any one that, to my mind, stands out as the most inspiring aspect of her life.

¹ Letters of Swami Premananda in *Vedanta and the West*. No. 187.



HUMAN TRENDS

AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY —THE INNER ANSWER

Living in the United States today one would have to be a completely unthinking, unfeeling person not to at least occasionally have some thoughts and concern about all the problems confronting us as a nation at all levels—local, national and international. We are faced with juvenile delinquency; riots and violence because of racial inequities; the question as to whether or not we have any right to be at war in Vietnam; to mention but a few of the more burning issues of the times. Much as we as individuals would like to insulate ourselves from any uneasiness or discomfort due to these distressing issues, it is just not possible nor right that we do so. As citizens of the country, it is our duty to know what is going on and to accept the responsibility of doing all we can to right the wrongs of which we have knowledge.

Having accepted our responsibility, let us ponder a bit on the problem of racial inequities and the resultant violence and think about what we, individually, can do at the grass-roots level to help meet and overcome this most divisive issue. Further, along with the desire to meet this responsibility, do we not also have a real longing to do whatever we can to help overcome misery

and heartache wherever found and for whatever reason? Is there a heart so cold and callous that it does not constrict with shame and remorse that conditions should exist in this affluent land where a little boy would eat falling plaster from the wall out of sheer hunger; and that children have died from being bitten by rats in the slums of our cities? It is no use saying 'the poor we will always have with us,' until we have exhausted every means of alleviating their suffering. True, great strides have been taken to materially help the poor and uneducated by improving employment and educational opportunities and by providing better housing facilities for all, regardless of race or creed. One must reluctantly admit that much of this was done only after the enactment of Civil Rights legislation, which in reality has been too slow in coming. Was not the Civil War fought and won hundred years ago and was not this tragic war waged to free the slaves? Should not something have been done much sooner then to make it possible for the Negroes to become proud and self-sustaining citizens of the nation? Possibly, if more had been done sooner to treat Negroes as first-rate citizens—including giving them the right to vote, which right has only very recently been given them in some areas—the despair, frustration, misery and tensions created by their seemingly

hopeless and endless struggle to rise from their miasmatic state of bondage and subjection would not have reached the point where it exploded into the violence and hatred now so prevalent. The fact remains, nevertheless, that there has been an explosion of violence and that this violence has certainly hurt everyone, including the very people it was meant to help. This is not surprising, as violence can never be a right means to correct a wrong. It will always have its reaction on the perpetrator as well as those perpetrated against.

However, in this relative world in which we live, it is said that no action can be completely without a spark of good in it, so possibly the spark of good in the violence that has occurred is that the seriousness of racial inequities has been exposed in a way not otherwise possible and that citizens everywhere now know that these conditions do exist—that people of our nation are starving and are living in utterly deplorable conditions. Living comfortable, sheltered lives, too many people do not know what is going on outside their own front doors, and so perhaps it is only in this unpleasant way—the eruption of violence—that otherwise conscientious individuals can come to know about and be forced to face their responsibility in this most serious and dangerous issue of America today.

The question now is how to face the issue and to determine just how our responsibility should be shouldered. A great deal is heard about the necessity of becoming involved in affairs of community, state and nation. Too many of us are so involved in earning a livelihood, caring for our families, and meeting other personal obligations, that we despair of ever having any energy or time left over to give to outside activities. Quite possibly this is as it should be, for are there not enough efforts being made by well-meaning and good-intentioned individuals to correct inequities

on the material plane? We all can and should help in these efforts by voting for measures aimed at eliminating injustice wherever found; by voting for candidates for public office who are high-principled and moral in their objectives; and by giving our help in a material way to those less fortunate than ourselves, in so far as it is in our power to do so. But there is yet another way in which anyone who has even a very minimal understanding of the higher life can help to right existent wrongs, and that is by living in accord with that cardinal precept of all true religion—the belief in the divinity of man. It is in this divinity, which is of the spirit, that the true brotherhood of man exists, and it is only on this plane, the spiritual plane, that wrongs can be righted with any lasting effects. Those of us who have the great good fortune to know and believe in this basic truth of the spirit also have a responsibility to live in such a way that this truth becomes manifest in our daily life. To do this, we must search out and remove all the injustice, prejudice, bigotry and intolerance from our own being and we must constantly and diligently strive to recollect that each person with whom we come in contact is divine. It would then naturally follow that we could not but treat others with utmost respect, kindness and consideration. Ultimately, the troubles that now beset our nation can only be overcome in this way. The task lies with each one of us, for a nation is made up of individuals and it cannot be any better than the sum total of all the little people that go to make up its totality. All change in the final analysis starts with the individual and in these dramatic times each one of us does have an important part to play, and that is to do all we can to make our nation great in the truest sense of the word by earnestly living the life of the spirit. If even a small number of people would live in this manner, a

new age may yet dawn where respect and consideration and, yes, love for all will not be just a dream but a reality.

There is a saying that all the darkness in the world cannot put out the light of one small candle. So all the hatred and intolerance in the hearts of men cannot stamp out the divinity present in all hearts which, though seemingly extinct, is ever ready and waiting to respond. Let us work to call it out from our own being first, and then it will be just a matter of time before we will

see it being called out from all other beings. Then only will our nation become truly great and then only will Divine Providence bless us by sending us spiritually great souls. To all arguments that this is an impossible dream and the goal too distant, let us reply that all great achievements anywhere must first start in the hearts and minds of men and that to start any long journey, the first step must always be taken.

Anna Nylund

DYNAMICS OF STRESS AND CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

DR. SURENDRA VERMA

Contemporary world scene and the way of life have become so complicated that its stress is almost universally felt.

We live in a world of stress—whether we like it or not. And yet we care to know very little about the dynamics of stress. We are usually tempted to believe that stress is something purely physiological and is to be equated with exhaustion and pain, inertia and inactivity and the wear and tear of organism. This may be one of the aspects of stress but is surely not the whole of it.

Stress is indeed hard to define but it can best be understood in terms of a threatening situation, a fear-stricken individual and the interaction between the two.

Situation of stress however is not objectively given by events for there are individual variations in 'perceiving' and 'interpreting' a situation as 'stressful'. Stress thus is derived not from the objective environment itself but from the meaning and significance of a given event. Those situations which are judged as threatening to the very existence of an individual or to

some of the aspects of his otherwise well-integrated personality are real stresses.

Threatening situations arouse fear and anxiety in individuals. But in the presence of one and the same situation the degree of anxiety felt by various individuals differs. The difference is directly related not only to the individual's 'judgment' of a situation but also to his 'capacity' to cope with stress. Every individual in accordance to his psychosomatic resources has, what can be termed, his 'stress-point', i.e. his limit of homeostatic tolerance. If he goes beyond his stress-point he becomes irritable and restless and finally inactive. If he goes far beyond, he may even suffer breakdown. This however does not mean that stressors are always harmful. As a matter of fact, without stress, life with all its dialectical movements becomes impossible. Stress is an extremely valuable and an utterly essential component of life. Proper stress works as a spur to activity. In the complete absence of stress life may vegetate.

We cannot avoid stress. It is neither

possible nor desirable. A mentally healthy person is one who accepts it and even though he is anxious and understands the danger, he still attempts to make himself face up to it. But it is not always possible to face stress squarely and rise to the challenge. It may be either because of the difficult situation or the limitation of the individual or both. When an individual fails to face stress, catastrophic results may occur. He may then either completely 'deny' stress and may throw himself headlong to a potentially dangerous situation threatening his very existence; or, he may regress to childhood behaviour and may exhaust himself in unintelligent over-preparedness which may prove more dangerous than the stressor itself.

What is true of stress in relation to individuals is true of it in relation to societies and nations also, for there exists only an arbitrary line of demarcation between an individual and society. One can never say for certain that here the individual ends and now the society begins. There is always a continuum between the two.

The sources of anxiety to individuals seem to be things in immediate environment—home, job and family relations. But stressors in relation to human society as such are not so immediately perceptible but imagination can surely apprehend them.

The modern world is full of situations of stress which are threatening not only to the integration of various societies and nations but to the very existence of human race itself resulting in mass anxiety and frustration. Colour and caste prejudices, religious bigotry, economic exploitation and political subjugation are some of the human situations which have worked for social disintegration from time immemorial and unfortunately are still actively working. But the modern world with all its scientific and technological progress (or, probably because of it) has yielded to much

more severe stressors which are threatening to man's very faith in himself and his very life and being on this globe. For the present I shall speak of only two of such situations. They are (i) the challenge of automation which constitutes a threat to one of the very important aspects of human personality, viz. its ego-structure and (ii) the challenge of nuclear warfare which constitutes a threat to the continued existence of human society and culture itself.

One of the most revolutionary development of the present age is the establishment of factories run by calculating machines without workers. Such automation in industry which has become possible through the invention of electronic computers has rendered routine clerical jobs useless and, thus, one of the major aims of industrialization, viz. to give employment to millions of people is completely defeated, or, at least, is likely to be defeated in a very near future. Automatic factories, electronic computers and calculation machines thus pose a real economic problem concerning employment, but a more severe challenge than the economic one is posed by them to the human psychology itself; for man who till the other day was taking pride in enslaving nature through science and technology is now confronted with his own slavery of machines—machines that he himself has designed and invented. Gradually, but steadily, all human work is being replaced by machines which are more powerful and have better skill than the man who produced them! This phenomenon is completely disintegrating the ego-structure of human personality and the stress is so great that man, in order to remain himself, is constantly 'denying' his anxiety in this regard and is throwing himself headlong to this potentially dangerous situation of automation threatening his self-confidence and dignity.

If automation is a threat to human dig-

nity, labour and intelligence, nuclear weapons are a threat to the very life and being of human race itself. Ours is the first generation that has ever been threatened with extinction. Ever since that eventful day when the atom was split for the first time, the very meaning and significance of life changed. We may like it or not, we are now living in a world which can be blown to pieces any moment making human life, civilization, norms, culture, values, science and technology and things of which we are proud, a mere farce.

The fact that the invention of nuclear weapons is suicidal, is such a stressing situation that man seems to have been completely lost in his anxiety and is behaving like a neurotic child in piling up nuclear armaments, enough not only to kill every one of human beings but three or four times over and still feeling 'safe' in the attempt! He probably still believes in the old traditional theory that when threatened, the right thing to do is to increase the ability to kill, not realizing that ultimately the 'ability to kill' in the present context only means 'paving way for suicide'. It seems that man has not yet accepted full responsibility for member-

ship in the human race in completely changed circumstances of the present age.

What, then, is the way out of the present stress? The modern man is surely behaving like a frightened neurotic in heading towards automation and nuclear warfare. Understanding well on the academic plane that both of them are a real threat to his personality—integration and survival, he still is in no mood to check the trends and knows not how to stop the childish behaviour.

The essential condition of a stable world order and mental peace can be created only when, instead of either 'denying' the present stress or allowing ourselves to be overpowered by it, we face it boldly and squarely. We must realize that scientific progress without a parallel progress in what is essentially human is a deception and a farce; science and technology are neither bad nor good in themselves. It is we who make them bad or good by using them to increase either our brute-force or soul-force. In man there is a dichotomy between good and evil and ultimately if he has to come to himself he has to work for the integration of the opposite forces within him—and that only can relieve him of stress.



A FLY-LEAF OF WISDOM

The following fly-leaf of wisdom came to this wanderer on wings of chance from a distant land.

The message carried in these words is so valuable that no one should keep it to himself but share with all. Hence it is being presented to you:

DESIDERATA
GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE AND
HASTE, AND REMEMBER
WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE
IN SILENCE.

As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is, many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the Universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be HAPPY.

Found in Old Saint Paul's Church,
Baltimore; Dated 1692

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Man blunders, founders, sins and suffers only when he stagnates on the way. The Vedic seer therefore breathed the *mantra*: *Charaiveti*, move on. One who keeps on moving reaches the goal. The same life-quickening *mantra* vibrated again on man's consciousness in Vivekananda's words of power: 'Onward For Ever!' In this column 'Onward For Ever!' we will present such words of the Swami as can rouse, inspire, and guide every human being to the luminous destiny. The passage occurs in the *Complete Works*, IV, 1963, P. 243.

The editorial of the month is on inner dynamics without which all our outer achievements can prove disastrous. Given inner dynamics, we can discover an ever-increasing purpose in life and move on triumphantly until self-fulfilment is reached.

In this year of world-wide celebration of five-hundredth anniversary of Guru Nanak we participate in it and pay our homage to him. Swami Rasajnananda in his article

'Guru Nanak: Prophet of Unity' draws a pen-picture of the Guru's life and message.

The article 'Vivekananda at the Paris Congress 1900' by Swami Vidyatmananda of the Ramakrishna Order, is concluded in this issue. The first part appeared in the March 1969 issue of the Journal. The second part takes up Swami Vivekananda's one and only appearance at the Paris Congress session held on Friday, the 7th of September, 1900.

Mallika Clare Gupta from Calcutta, by birth an American who has made India her home, records here 'What Inspires me most in Holy Mother's Life'.

Dr. Surendra Verma, Head of the Department and Professor of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, in his article 'Dynamics of Stress and Contemporary Situation', after analyzing the dynamics of stress in general, singles out two in particular, namely, the automation and nuclear weapons posing real threats to human personality and human civilization respectively and suggests a remedy.

ON INDIAN STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

We do not agree with the person who said that the law was an ass. If we had no law then alone we would have known how difficult it was even to become a progressive ass. We, however, believe that a law, especially social or moral law does not become a living force without love.

In nascent democracies there is such pathetic faith in instant law-making, and there is so little cultivation of moral sensitivity, not to speak of love, that social progress keeps on eluding man's grasp.

Untouchability (offences) Act was passed in 1955. How much progress has India made in this important regard since 1955? This press report (Vide: *The Hindustan Times*, October 30, 1968) should convince any one that there is little basis for complacency.

'Porbander, Gandhiji's birth place, still maintains separate public water taps for Harijans and caste Hindus.

'Mr. L. Elayaperumal Chairman of the Seven-member Committee on Scheduled Castes, told reporters here today that this was merely one

of the numerous instances of indignity still being heaped on Harijans and other Scheduled Caste members throughout the country.

'He said that in Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh, Harijans were not allowed to sport their moustaches pointed upwards. Defiance by a Harijan youth some time back had led to a riot.

'In Andhra Pradesh and Jammu, the Committee learnt that the Harijans were forbidden to touch the waters of tanks where high caste Hindus bathe.

'The Committee was appointed by the Social Welfare Department of the Central Government in 1963 to study the various aspects of untouchability and suggest remedies.

'The Committee which was also asked to study the problem of education and economic uplift of Scheduled Castes has completed its tour of all States except Rajasthan. It will submit the report in about three months.

'Mr. Elayaperumal said that the Committee found Harijan women were not being allowed to wear ear rings in parts of Madhya Pradesh. In Neyveli area, in Madras State, it was a social offence for Harijans to ride bicycles.

In Akola Panchayat which was adjudged the best and the most progressive in Maharashtra by the State Government, a Harijan was compelled to give up an accommodation because of objection by neighbours.

'In parts of Himachal Pradesh, the social ostracism of Harijans was carried to such an extent that they were not allowed to touch the houses of high caste Hindus.

SOCIAL PREJUDICES

'As for education, Scheduled Caste students still had to face many social prejudices and subtle forms of discrimination. The Scheduled Caste students also receive their scholarships and allowances only at the end of the term and this was a great handicap in seeking admission to schools and colleges.

'Except in a few cities and towns Harijans and other Scheduled Caste members were still being barred from places of public worship.

'He said, the Committee was not in favour of de-scheduling any of the Scheduled Castes. It was true that in some areas, a few Scheduled Caste members had made progress economically and educationally but these castes were by and large still in the same status as they were 16 years ago.

'One of the reasons for the general indifference

towards Scheduled Castes was the election to legislatures and various local bodies. Public leaders who ought to guide the society in this matter were afraid of doing anything that might cost them the votes of caste Hindus.

'There had been no progress at all in the recruitment of Scheduled Caste members in Government services while the Untouchability (Offences) Act of 1955 had remained ineffective. 'The number of Scheduled Caste members in the Class I posts in Central Services constituted just about 1.9 per cent compared to 12.5 per cent reservation.'

The Untouchability (Offences) Act has undoubtedly given the much needed protection of law against social tyranny to a section of our people. But the report also proves that law cannot remove people's deep seated prejudices. What is to be evoked from people's heart cannot come out of cold print of a penal code. Yet we cannot reject the penal code.

In reporting, however, the conditions of the scheduled castes as they prevail today, the Committee would have been wiser to hold before the country the total picture of the entire situation. If it has reported the indignities heaped on Harijans and other scheduled castes, it should also have mentioned the dignities that have been showered on them. If it made such an important discovery that Harijans were not allowed in some places to sport their moustaches pointed upwards, it should also have highlighted the fact that some others coming from the same social background occupy the most honoured positions in the country and are engaged in moulding the very destiny of the land. They move in the circles where many high caste people have no easy access.

The Indian Constitution has provided all the protection and privileges needed by our backward classes for their progress and prosperity. There is perhaps no parallel of the enlightened manner in which this was done in India. The motive force behind what Constitution has provided was gener-

ated by the work of many saints and sages and men of great heart down the centuries. Most of those who worked for the upliftment of these unfortunate people belong to so-called high castes. It were the touchables, if such a word may be used, who launched crusade against untouchability. The 'untouchables' had no voice. Their agonies were voiced by those who did not suffer their indignities.

These facts need to be remembered so that while not being complacent, we may not overdraw the grimness of the situation. Leaders of Harijans should also express appreciation of what is being achieved while being critical of what is not yet achieved. The question is whether or not in totality progress is being made. No one who knows the social history of India and facts of today can deny that progress has been made and is all the time being made.

If Indians chose an 'untouchable' as the law giver of the country, if worthy men coming from the same status of society are today occupying highest positions in administration, if jobs and education are fully open to them, if a Harijan can any day become India's President—these facts should also be gratefully and joyously acknowledged and acclaimed by those who have reasons to complain. This is a psychological necessity in India of today.

We may plead with the Committee that its approach should be allowed to be influenced by the facts of human psychology, for this is the only practical approach when enduring beneficent results are being sought.

Every Indian of a right frame of mind wants that all the members of the scheduled castes enjoy perfect equality with all in the country. But equality is not a privilege. It is a discipline of the negation of all privileges. Now when the tide had turned in favour of Harijan by way of getting privileges, obstruction to attainment of equality will not be so much coming from the higher

castes, as from the Harijans themselves. The Committee has already expressed itself against de-scheduling any of the scheduled castes. This, ironically enough, amounts to vote against equality. The only plausible reason for doing this can be the fear that in the case of descheduling, these castes will lose the privileges granted in the Constitution.

It may not be impossible for these castes to get extended the time limit of granted privilege through agitation. Country's public opinion also may grant it. But the members of scheduled castes must be sure about one thing that as long as they will ask for privileges they will never be equals. And if ever the scheduled castes begin to use these privileges granted in high-minded solicitation and good faith as vested interests, then the inequality problem will have entered into a more baffling phase, mostly created by the scheduled castes by their own conduct.

Already there are many cases in the country where we find talented children of poor parents belonging to higher castes finding little opening for education, whereas children of even affluent families belonging to scheduled castes getting all help which they may not know how to turn to good account. What is the criterion of social justice in such cases? What is the justification of spending money from the national exchequer on the children of parents who are affluent while denying the same benefit to children whose parents are poor? If the Committee on scheduled castes is truly aspiring to attain equality, they should without any further loss of time address themselves to converting this caste issue to an economic issue. Those families included in the scheduled castes who have attained economic affluence and stability should voluntarily renounce those privileges and declare themselves as not asking for privi-

leges any more, and claiming the dignity of equals in society.

In America, where another struggle for equality has been going on for a longer time, a new healthy trend is discernible. Some enlightened Negroes being convinced that as long as they enjoyed privileges granted by the Government, they could not be equals with whites, are giving up their well-paying secure jobs to venture into new fields, for as a Negro explained, he found that his civil service job had been a 'racial refuge'. This is a remarkable development in the American struggle for equality. The enlightened members of the scheduled castes have a valuable lesson to learn from this. They also will do well to renounce the 'caste refuge'.

As the Committee Chairman's report goes: 'There has been no progress at all in the recruitment of scheduled caste members in Government services The number of Scheduled Caste members in the Class I post of central services constituted just about 1.9 per cent compared to 12.5 per cent reservation.'

While we are not aware of all the reasons which have contributed to the poor showing in recruitments of scheduled caste members to Class I jobs, we wonder if a part of the responsibility for this is not to be shared by the members of scheduled castes themselves. Class I jobs call for class I men. Here somehow comes in the question of competency in spite of reservation. If the members of scheduled castes are capable of producing such men then the Government surely would be

happy to recruit them for such jobs, as long as they have the moral and constitutional obligation to fulfil. But if such men are not coming forth from the scheduled castes, should the Government fill those posts with incompetent people coming from among them while they have more competent people coming from other castes? Can talents be victimized because they are not born in scheduled castes? If this is done the future of the country will be sacrificed for perpetuating castism. Competence alone should be the sole criterion of recruitment in class I jobs if the country is to make progress of which everyone would be the eventual beneficiary.

Therefore members of scheduled castes will serve their communities best if they avail of their obtaining opportunities for bringing about qualitative up-grading of their children through better nurturing education, training and discipline.

The members of the higher castes so-called will be fulfilling a duty to themselves by remembering the fact that it is to their interest to raise all their countrymen to the status of equality. Whatever may have been done upto now has not been enough. There is need of greater devotion and dedication to the cause. Law helps but it cannot make us love. What is lacking in the country today is the love for those who had been kept at the fringe of the society for ages and oppressed. India needs a new moral awakening and as Swami Vivekananda said, 'above everything else, love'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE YOGA-SYSTEM OF PATANJALI: JAMES HAUGHTON WOODS: Moti Lal Banarasi Dass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-7, 1966 Price Rs. 7.50.

The present work is indeed worthy of the high tradition of scholarship which has always been the characteristic of the Harvard Oriental Series. The author Mr. J. H. Woods has done the English translation of *The Yoga-System of Patanjali* competently. The translation has embraced the commentary called Yoga-Bhasya attributed to Vedavyasa and the explanation called Tattvavaisaradi of Vacaspati Misra.

It is good to see that the author has mainly devoted himself to the exposition of spiritual and intellectual aspects of Yoga. The author's lucid introduction is helpful for it contains illuminating information about the authorship, date etc. of the Yoga-sutras. Needless to say it is a very neat and lucid exposition of the yoga-philosophy.

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

THE DIARY OF A MYSTIC: EDWARD THORNTON, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London, 1967, pages 180, price sh. 25/-.

Mr. Edward Thornton is a self-educated business man and also a mystic. An accident put a book on Yoga into his hands. This led him to know Tantine MacLeod, the friend of Swami Vivekananda. Thus he came to know the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The present book in its 15 valuable chapters takes us into his meditations and visions. He does not find any difference between the Indian mystico-religious tradition and the Christian belief. He emphasizes the Rig-Vedic insight that 'truth (sat) is one, though the wise (vipras) call it by different names'.

The book has a foreword by C. A. Meier.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

KANT'S THEORY OF TIME. BY SADIK J. AL-AZM. Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, 1967. Pages 84. Price \$ 3.95.

Time and space have always been objects of deep philosophical speculation. In this context the views of Kant, the famous philosopher of Germany, on 'Time' are certainly worth serious consideration. Dr. Al-Azm, Professor of Philosophy at the American University of Beirut, has done a very useful work in presenting before us in an objective and analytical manner Kant's earlier views and writings on 'Time' that were not so well known to the general public. Kant first stated these views in his 'Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces' in 1747. In 1768 he was converted to the Newtonian point of view regarding absolute time when Kant wrote his essay 'On the First Ground of the Distinction of the Regions in Space'.

Dr. Al-Azm then points out the different theories of 'Time' held by Kant at different stages and their relevance to the modern ideas of non-Newtonian mechanics and temporal series.

The book is very well documented and reveals considerable study. Almost every writing of Kant relevant to the purpose has been fully and critically utilized.

It is, however, a serious study for serious scholars and not for the lay public. The subject and author (Kant) are deep and philosophically abstruse, and of nature and necessity remain so, inspite of the best efforts of Dr. Al-Azm.

We, therefore, recommend the book to the scholarly world who will derive considerable inspiration and benefit from it.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE DEDICATION CEREMONY
OF THE NEW EXTENSION OF THE VEDANTA TEMPLE
AT 205 SO. SKINKER BLVD., ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI,
U.S.A.

A. Ceremonial Worship on Friday, October 4, 1968

In the early morning Sri Ramakrishna's portrait was installed on the altar of the remodelled chapel

by Swami Satprakashananda in the presence of the three guest Swamis, Shraddhananda, Ranganathananda, and Bhashyananda. It was the same picture that used to be in the chapel before the remodeling. Then the four Swamis carried down from the shrine upstairs the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda with their respective thrones and

placed them on the altar platform of the chapel for the occasion. All the pictures were adorned with flowers and garlanded.

The function began at 9 a.m. with the chanting of Sanskrit hymns from the Vedas and other scriptures by Swami Bhashyananda. Then Swami Shraddhananda performed the ritualistic worship with the offering of sixteen different items. He was assisted by Swami Bhashyananda. At the same time Swami Ranganathananda chanted seven hundred Sanskrit verses in praise of the Divine Mother (Sapta-shati). After the worship, which took about three hours, flower offering was made by the devotees. Then there was an offering of food to the Deity, which was followed by the chanting of the Hymn to Sri Ramakrishna to the accompaniment of four musical instruments by the Swamis present. Two probationer boys also joined with them. The function was concluded with the performance of the 'homa' (oblations to the fire representing the Deity) by Swami Shraddhananda and Swami Bhashyananda.

About seventy persons, including eleven out-of-town devotees, attended the celebration.

A Hindu dinner was served to all present.

The whole function was joyous and inspiring.

B. Formal Opening of the Remodelled Chapel on Sunday, October 6, 1968

By 10-30 a.m. the audience filled the chapel, the entrance hall, and the library of the Society. Swami Satprakashananda and the four guest speakers—Swami Ranganathananda, Swami Bhashyananda, Swami Shraddhananda, and Professor Huston Smith were seated in special chairs on the altar platform. The altar and the platform were beautifully decorated with flowers. The meeting opened with the chanting of the Vedic prayers (followed by English translation) by Swami Satprakashananda. Then Swami Ranganathananda and Swami Bhashyananda chanted together a hymn from the *Mahā-nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*.

With a short address Swami Satprakashananda greeted and welcomed the audience to the Vedanta Temple dedicated to the Lord, with whose blessings he declared the remodelled chapel opened not only to all seekers and worshippers of God but also to all others who seek their own good.

'Take man where he stands and from there give him a life.' This saying of Swami Vivekananda he

declared to be the motto of the Society. Then the messages of the President of the Ramakrishna Order, of four Swamis (Heads of Vedanta Societies in America), and of two local ministers were read. Next Swami Shraddhananda sang a Bengali devotional song (which Swami Vivekananda used to sing) to the accompaniment of three Indian musical instruments. Before singing the song the Swami gave to the audience the English version.

Then Professor Huston Smith was requested by Swami Satprakashananda to unveil the portrait of the symbols of the eight major religions of the world. He delivered a short address before proceeding to the place where the portrait was hung on the wall of the chapel. The entire audience stood up as the portrait was unveiled.

Then being asked by Swami Satprakashananda, Swami Bhashyananda (Head of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago) spoke on 'Appeal of Vedanta to Modern Man', and Swami Shraddhananda (Assistant Minister of the Vedanta Society of Northern California) on 'The Quest for Peace'. Next Mrs. Richard Bergman sang a devotional song in English. Swami Satprakashananda then introduced to the audience the main speaker, Swami Ranganathananda of Calcutta, India, who spoke on 'Religion in the Age of Science'. After the speech Mrs. A. V. Rangarajan sang a devotional song.

There was a short interval and then the very interesting documentary film, 'Requiem for a Faith' made by Professor Huston Smith last summer among the Tibetan refugees in Northern India, was shown. Dr. Rabindranath Bhattacharya sang the concluding song. Swami Satprakashananda in his closing remarks expressed the Society's deep appreciation and thankfulness to all for their sympathy, co-operation, and help in whatever form. He particularly mentioned the name of the late Mr. Fred Weisbrod, a devotee who lived in Kansas City and whose generous bequest to the Society made the new addition to its building possible.

Finally, the Swami said the benedictory prayer in Sanskrit with English translation.

Attention of the audience was also drawn by him to the basic scriptures in the original of eight major religions, which were displayed on a table in the entrance hall.

The meeting was very impressive and elevating. About one hundred and eighty persons attended.