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Prabuddha Bharata

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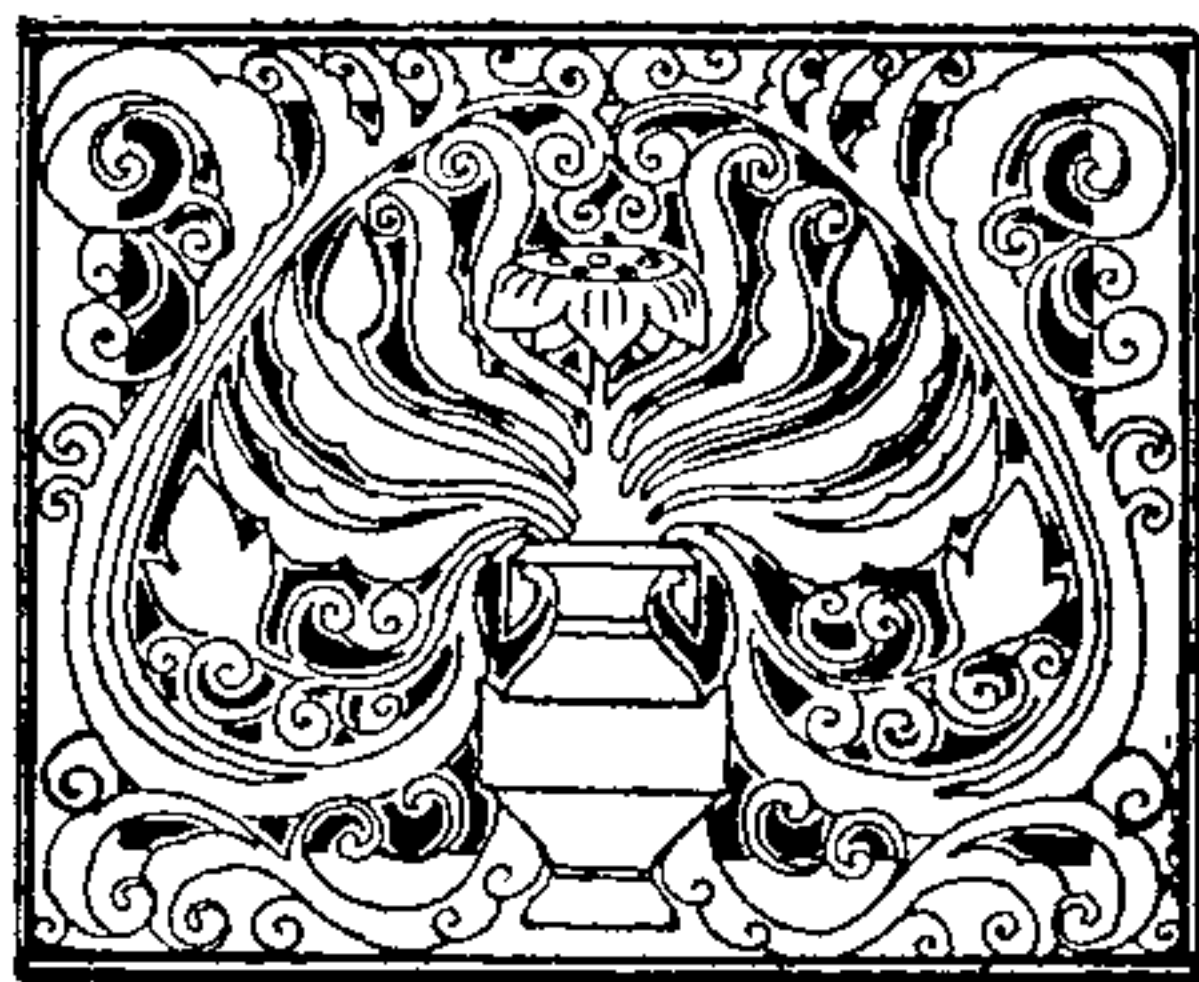
AWAKENED INDIA



ARISE, AWAKE, AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED



ADVAITA ASHRAM



Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE
RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

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CONTENTS

Sri Ramakrishna Answers	449
Reproduction of the Facsimile of Swamiji's Writing on the Ideals of the Advaita Ashrama	451
Act Right Now— <i>Editorial</i> . ..	452
Letters of a Saint	457
Prabuddha Bharata : Seventy-five Years Ago ..	458
Vivekananda Rock Memorial Inauguration Benedictory Address — <i>Swami Vireswarananda</i>	459
Presidential Address — <i>Thiru M. Karunanidhi</i>	460
Inaugural Address— <i>Sri V. V. Giri</i> ..	461
Profiles in Greatness— <i>Explorer</i> ..	465
The Mind and Its Control — <i>Swami Budhananda</i>	467
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and The New Age of Science— <i>Swami Kirtidananda</i> ..	474
A Travellers Looks at the World — <i>Swami Ranganathananda</i>	482
Notes and Comments	485
Reviews and Notices	486
News and Reports	487

*Information for subscribers, contributors and
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Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXV

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No. 10

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ANSWERS

Question (asked by a musician) : 'Sir, what is the way to realize God ?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Bhakti is the one essential thing. To be sure, God exists in all beings. Who, then, is a devotee? He whose mind dwells on God. But this is not possible as long as one has egotism and vanity. The water of God's grace cannot collect on the high mound of egotism. It runs down. I am a mere machine.

'God can be realized through all paths. All religions are true. The important thing is to reach the roof. You can reach it by stone stairs or by wooden stairs or by bamboo steps or by a rope. You can also climb up by a bamboo pole.

'You may say that there are many errors and superstitions in another religion. I should reply: Suppose there are. Every religion has errors. Everyone thinks that his watch alone gives the correct time. It is enough to have yearning for God. It is enough to love Him and feel attracted to Him. Don't you know that God is the Inner Guide? He sees the longing of our heart and the yearning of our soul. Suppose a man has several sons. The older boys address him distinctly as "Baba" or "Papa", but the babies can at best call him "Ba" or "Pa". Now, will the father be angry with those who address him in this indistinct way? The father knows that they too are calling him, only they cannot pronounce his name well. All children are the same to the father. Likewise, the devotees call on God alone, though by different names. They call on one Person only. God is one, but His names are many.'

Question (asked by 'M') : 'Is it necessary to practise discipline all through life ?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'No. But one must be up and doing in the beginning. After that one need not work hard. The helmsman stands up and clutches the rudder firmly as long as the boat is passing through waves, storms, high winds, or around the curves of a river; but he relaxes after steering through them. As soon as the boat passes the curves and the

helmsman feels a favourable wind, he sits comfortably and just touches the rudder. Next he prepares to unfurl the sail and gets ready for a storm. Likewise the aspirant enjoys peace and calm after passing the waves and storms of "woman" and "gold".

'Some are born with the characteristics of the yogi; but they too should be careful. "Woman" and "gold" alone are the obstacles; they make them deviate from the path of yoga and drag them into worldliness. Perhaps they have some desire for enjoyment. After fulfilling their desire, they again direct their minds to God and thus recover their former state of mind, fit for the practice of yoga....

'Unless the mind becomes steady there cannot be yoga. It is the wind of worldliness that always disturbs the mind, which may be likened to a candle-flame. If that flame doesn't move at all, then one is said to have attained yoga.'

Question (asked by 'M'): 'Sir, what is the meaning of the realization of God? What do you mean by God-vision? How does one attain it?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'According to the Vaishnavas the aspirants and the seers of God may be divided into different groups. These are the pravartaka, the sadhaka, the siddha, and the siddha of the siddha. He who has just set foot on the path may be called a pravartaka. He may be called a sadhaka who has for some time been practising spiritual disciplines, such as worship, japa, meditation, and the chanting of God's name and glories. He may be called a siddha who has known from his inner experience that God exists. An analogy is given in the Vedanta to explain this. The master of the house is asleep in a dark room. Someone is groping in the darkness to find him. He touches the couch and says, "No, it is not he." He touches the window and says, "No, it is not he." He touches the door and says, "No, it is not he." This is known in the Vedanta as the process of "Neti, neti", "Not this, not this". At last his hand touches the master's body and he exclaims, "Here he is!" In other words, he is now conscious of the "existence" of the master. He has found him, but he doesn't yet know him intimately.

'There is another type, known as the siddha of the siddha, the "supremely perfect". It is quite a different thing when one talks to the master intimately, when one knows God very intimately through love and devotion. A siddha has undoubtedly attained God, but the "supremely perfect" has known God very intimately.

'But in order to realize God, one must assume one of these attitudes: santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, or madhur.

'Santa, the serene attitude. The rishis of olden times had this attitude towards God. They did not desire any worldly enjoyment. It is like the single-minded devotion of a wife to her husband. She knows that her husband is the embodiment of beauty and love, a veritable Madan.

'Dasya, the attitude of a servant toward his master. Hanuman had this attitude toward Rama. He felt the strength of a lion when he worked for

Rama. A wife feels this mood also. She serves her husband with all her heart and soul. A mother also has a little of this attitude, as Yasoda had toward Krishna.

'Sakhya, the attitude of friendship. Friends say to one another, "Come here and sit near me." Sridama and other friends sometimes fed Krishna with fruit, part of which they had already eaten, and sometimes climbed on His shoulders.

'Vatsalya, the attitude of a mother toward her child. This was Yasoda's attitude toward Krishna. The wife, too, has a little of this. She feeds her husband with her very life-blood, as it were. The mother feels happy only when the child has eaten to his heart's content. Yasoda would roam about with butter in her hand, in order to feed Krishna.

'Madhur, the attitude of a woman toward her paramour. Radha had this attitude toward Krishna. The wife also feels it for her husband. This attitude includes all the other four.'

REPRODUCTION OF THE FACSIMILE OF SWAMIJI'S WRITING ON THE IDEALS OF THE ADVAITA ASHRAMA

In whom is the Universe who is in the Universe who is the Universe In whom is the Soul, who is in the Soul, who is the Soul of man, knowing Him and therefore the Universe as our Self,—alone extinguishes all fear, brings an end to misery and leads to Infinite Freedom. Wherever there have been any expansion in love or progress in well-being of individuals or numbers It has been through the perception, realization and practicalization of this eternal Truth—the oneness of all Beings. "Dependence is misery Independence happiness." The Advaitic is the only system which gives unto man a complete possession of himself—takes off all dependence and its associated superstitions, thus making us brave to suffer brave to do and in the long run attain to absolute freedom.

So long this noble Truth could scarcely have been preached entirely free from the settings of dualistic weakness; that alone we are convinced explains why it has not been more operative and useful to mankind at large.

To give this one Truth a freer and fuller scope in elevating the lives of individuals and leavening the mass of mankind, we start this Advaita Asram on the Himalayan heights the land of its first expiration.

Here it is intended to keep Advaitism free from all superstitions or weakening contaminations. Here will be taught and practised nothing but Advaitism pure and simple and though in entire sympathy with all other systems this Asram is dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone.

ACT RIGHT NOW

EDITORIAL

I

A couple of astounding announcements of scientific breakthrough were flashed across the globe in the month of June: artificial synthesis of a gene and longest manned space flight spanning more than seventeen days. The achievements no doubt signify the onward march of man in the extension of the frontiers of knowledge and utilization of his hitherto unknown powers. This endues him with a sense of confidence to make further and further attacks on nature with a view to conquering it.

However, despite this advancement, there is the inner impoverishment in man. He is not at peace, nor is he happy. Even if he succeeds in the conquest of nature, external nature, the accomplishment cannot reasonably be expected to give him a feeling of fulfilment and perfection as long as he is troubled by tensions, anxieties and fear that are rife in modern life. His story of successes, however spectacular, savours of smallness unless his external victories are matched by overwhelming mastery over his insidious, lower self. The challenge to the ingathering of the fruits of his toil comes not from some mysterious object out there, but from the inbred fiend within. A biblical question may be adapted to suit the present-day condition and posed: What avails a man if he gains grip of the whole world but loses control of himself? It is imperative that he be a lord of himself to grapple the growing knowledge of external forces and to be a beneficiary of the advantages wrested from nature. He must be his own master or come under Frankenstein's monster. In the latter case, instead of controlling, he will be controlled.

II

It is not our intention to paint a pessimistic picture of the future of man, but to forewarn him of the possible peril and point out the need for forearming himself with the superior strength stemming from self-control. Is self-conquest impossible for the modern who has reached a stage of evolution where he can proudly lay claim to a number of victories over nature in diverse spheres? Certainly not, if he turns his attention inwards and makes a determined bid for it. It may be somewhat difficult but not altogether impossible. Experience teaches that no great work can be accomplished without difficulties and obstacles. The more we face them, the more is our fire roused: they add zest to our endeavours as long as we don't give in. Mountain-high impediments melt down before our burning spirit. As we launch ourselves on this campaign undeterred by difficulties, we find to our delight new potentialities unfolding themselves and pushing us up.

With immense faith in oneself, in one's capacities, one needs to elevate oneself. 'Let a man raise himself by himself,' urged Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*¹, 'let him not debase himself. For he himself is his friend and he himself is his foe.' There is a mine of resources in every one of us, waiting to be excavated and exploited. If a person fails to dig due to ignorance or indifference and thereby becomes a creature of circumstances, who is to blame but himself? He is his own enemy, a prisoner in the self-created cell of passion, prejudice and pride. Is there no hope for him? Is he doomed to die there despite his power and pelf? No, he can affirm his freedom, turn over a new

leaf, befriend his higher nature and save himself. Again, the power to lift himself comes not from any external source, but from the ever-flowing fountain within. He must summon it with all his strength and stand on his own feet, discarding the debasing tendencies and letting go all leanings on other beings and objects, however formidable they might be.

III

Self-reliance is not to be construed as dependence on one's ego or the egotistic notion arising from one's wealth, learning or position. It is the ego that stands as a mighty obstruction to the exploration and manifestation of inner potentialities. It is the massive veil which conceals the higher nature of man from his view. Whatever is done on the basis of ego binds and bedevils him. If he is to rise to higher altitudes, it is not by affirming and accentuating his ego but by curbing and conquering it. Self-conquest will then be tantamount to ego-conquest. But the ego has entrenched itself so securely in the human personality that it is a comparatively easier task to assault the distant galaxies.

However, given the will, even the ego can be subjugated. One of the disciplines Sri Ramakrishna practised for the purpose is of profit to us. He 'would go to a Pariah and ask to be allowed to clean his house. The business of the Pariah is to clean the streets of the cities and to keep houses clean. He cannot enter the house by the front door; by the back door he enters, and as soon as he has gone the whole place over which he has passed is sprinkled with and made holy by a little Gangā water. By birth the Brahmin stands for holiness, and the Pariah for the very reverse. And this Brahmin (Sri Ramakrishna) asked to be allowed to do the menial service in the house of the Pariah. The Pariah of course could not allow that, for they all think that

if they allow a Brahmin to do such menial work it will be an awful sin, and they will become extinct. The Pariah would not permit; so in the dead of night, when all were sleeping, Ramakrishna would enter the house. He had long hair, and with his hair he would wipe the place, saying, "Oh, my Mother, make me the servant of the Pariah, make me feel that I am even lower than the Pariah." "They worship Me best, who worship My worshippers. These are all My children and your privilege is to serve them"—is the teaching of Hindu scriptures.² In a similar strain does the Christian scripture speak of service: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'³

By service to others, one can subdue the ego; but oftener than not, one falls a victim to ulterior motives like desire for name and fame which only increase the ego. Hence if service is undertaken, it should be done dispassionately with the conscious purpose of crushing the ego. The attitude of looking upon service as worship of God and the person served as God Himself is highly commendable in this connection. For, the giver of gifts gives a blow to his ego by placing the receiver on the pedestal of God and himself occupying the humble position of a devotee. Regarded as a rare privilege for offering his whole-hearted worship to God in the form of the served, service makes him a true servant. If he has ego, it is servant ego or devotee ego. Instead of degrading him, it raises him beyond the level of the ordinary run of mankind. Social service organizations and public welfare institutions can adopt this attitude with benefit..

² *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta 14, Vol. IV (1962), p. 175.

³ St. Matthew 25. 40.

IV

The question now arises: If the ego, which is ingrained in human nature and central to man, is gone what would then remain? Is it not courting death? The answer has necessarily to be sought outside the region of intellect, for the latter is inseparable from and coloured by ego. Sages and seers have to their credit experiences beyond the realm of intellect. A dispassionate study of their lives reveals that on the ego being exploded, the real nature of man shines in its resplendent glory. They bear unmistakable evidence to the eternal truth of man and the universe, the truth absolute behind all relative truths. To their keen insight all our conceptions, experiments, trials and movements appear in the proper perspective, in their true colours, as something passing, on the way, albeit necessary to our evolution.

We are inclined to lend ear to their voice because they do not dogmatically assert their statements but persuade us to experiment and see for ourselves the truth of their discoveries. 'You see many stars in the sky at night, but not when the sun rises. Can you therefore say that there are no stars in the heavens during the day? O man, because you cannot find God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.'⁴ He who makes himself pure of all trace of lust, anger and greed, and sincerely seeks God sees Him. We are called upon to test the truth of the statement. Here is a challenge of a scientific nature which we cannot reasonably brush aside. Religion in the broad sense is not opposed to reason, rather it makes use of it in sifting the real from the illusory and in validating its own conclusions.

Another reason why they appeal to us is that they bear a happy and hopeful message

⁴ *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, (1938), p. 27.

when we are losing hope everywhere. None is lost or condemned. Everyone is a child of immortality. All are marching in a grand procession to the supreme goal of Brahman, yea, the supreme goal of Brahman. Some will reach It early, others late. That is all the difference. All our successes and failures, joys and sorrows, hope and despair are but attempts to manifest the Divine within. Even the criminal whom society chastises and condemns has in him the divine spark which can blaze up at the opportune moment. The sinner of today is the saint of tomorrow. The kingdom of heaven is in everyone. The call comes to us, 'Come ye, one and all, and drink deep of the immortal bliss.' Man is born in bliss, exists in bliss and will merge in bliss. Such is the joyous tidings of the divine destiny of man that the prophets bring from afar beyond the ken of our vision.

V

Tat tvam asi (That thou art) is the great liberating truth that is iterated and reiterated in the sixth chapter of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The subject being subtle, the Upaniṣad expounds it by means of illustrations. One of them is reproduced here: it is in the form of a dialogue between father and son, Uddālaka and Śvetaketu. 'Bring hither a fruit of that *nyagrodha* tree.' 'Here it is, Venerable Sir.' 'Break it.' 'It is broken Venerable Sir.' 'What do you see there?' 'These extremely fine seeds, Venerable Sir.' 'Break one of these, my son.' 'It is broken, Venerable Sir.' 'What do you see there?' 'Nothing at all, Venerable Sir.' Then he said to him, 'My dear, that subtle essence which you do not perceive, verily, my dear, from that very essence this great *nyagrodha* tree arises. Believe me, my dear. That which is the subtle essence, this whole world has for its self. That is the True. That is the Self. That thou art, Śvetaketu.'⁵

⁵ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI, 12.

The chapter ends with a note of fulfilment: he then understood it from him, yea, he understood it. Having been taught by his father, Śvetaketu realized his identity with the Self which is the inner essence of everything and which is unborn, immortal, fearless, all good and one without a second. It is the goal of goals beyond which there is no further going. It is the final fulfilment.

The long and the short of it is, you are Brahman. Mere intellectual knowledge of it is inadequate. That thou art, no doubt, but potentially. It has to be manifested by controlling nature, not only external but also internal. Laudable attempts are made today to subjugate external nature with the aid of science. As these alone are proving insufficient for man's well-being and sometimes injurious to his cause, it stands to reason to supplement them by similar bold endeavours in regard to internal nature. This can be done by selfless work or worship or psychic control or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these. Since man is divine in essence, everyone is eligible to launch on the inward journey irrespective of one's occupation or station in life. When nature, external and internal, is controlled, the Self is realized. 'When the Self which is both high and low is realized the knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are dispelled and all one's actions are dissipated.'⁶

Ecclesiastes begins with the observation: Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.⁷ Solicitous of our welfare, the seers warn us that without realization everything is vanity, vanity of vanities and great will be the grief. An external or objective millennium is a myth. The endeavours for happiness, peace and plenty tend to end in disillusionment as one, after bestowing one's whole attention on the external nature, has to be satisfied with the crumb the world

gives niggardly. Every bullet has its billet, there is no rose but has a thorn; no pleasure can be got without pain, nor is there permanence in the pleasure obtained. On the other hand the treasures of bliss of the spiritual world which lie deep within are many, nay, infinite. There is wisdom indeed in unearthing them and realizing the infinite Self. What is called for is intensive persistent effort. Brahman being 'Truth, Knowledge, Infinite',⁸ the effort cannot but end in fulfilment. And the fulfilment gained is superlative inasmuch as 'the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme'.⁹

VI

Should we then put a stop to our scientific pursuits or for that matter all our preoccupations in life? Are we to cease from our activities and duties and flee to the forest or cave for realizing the Self? Such a step is not advocated as it is perilous save for those exceptional souls who possessing a clear vision of truth and comprehending the vanity of the world can at one fell stroke cut at the root of nescience. For if a man devoid of dispassion and self-control gives up his hearth and home and retires to solitude, he runs the risk of going crazy. What one needs to do is just to give a higher direction to one's aspirations and activities. No situation is hopeless, the world is but a manifestation of Brahman. Far from feeling stranded and sorrowing over his present predicament in the world, a man will discover a new strength-giving meaning in life when he looks upon everything including himself as part and parcel of Brahman and happily participates in the divine drama. He continues to do his duties, but they are deified. His actions being without selfish motive, he becomes an object-lesson of love and charity, sacrifice

⁶ *Mundaka Upaniṣad* II. ii. 8.

⁷ *Ecclesiastes* I. 2.

⁸ *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* II. i.

⁹ *Ibid.*

and service, peace and perfection. It is obvious that when a man confines his interests to his little lower self, his world dwindles from the wide expanse and he falls an easy prey to hatred, suspicion and fear. This canker of confinement with the consequent alienation and tension is discernible in a greater or lesser degree in many a man irrespective of race, country or occupation. The remedy for this malady is to recognize the evil arising from the base attachment to self; to see oneself in others and love them; to turn the direction of the mean attachment to That which is the Self of the universe and thus expand oneself to infinitude that is Brahman.

The scientist too is not asked to relinquish his vocation, viz. search for truth, but to widen it. This he can do by getting to know the limitations of science itself, and by enlarging the area of his experiments so as to cover the inner realm of the Self. His quest can scarcely be comprehensive if it is limited to the universe of matter and energy, for the objective world, being but a manifestation or reflection, bifurcated or manifolded, of the unitive Self, gives him only partial or relative truth. Besides, scientific discoveries as also technological inventions, no matter how breathtaking or novel, do not in the final analysis add to the good of man or detract the evil from the world since history bears testimony to the truth that the sum total of good and evil remains ever the same. We have today new enjoyments unknown to our forbears, all the same we could not escape the equally fresh miseries peculiar to our time. The news of the first man-made gene hailed as a fundamental breakthrough in human history has sent the world into a state of delightful dream of the genetic planning of individuals in the future

—turning out supermen! Nevertheless there rises before our mind's eye, however we might detest it, a nightmare of another possibility—creation of mindless men tailored by the State!

It may be recalled in this connection how people went, as it were, into raptures thinking of the marvels and bumper benefits that would follow when the atom was first split. Little did they anticipate that the breakthrough would besides break their fancies, unleash destructive forces and place in the hands of super Powers nuclear weapons threatening the very existence of man. This time, however, one is wary of being overmuch optimistic, nay, one is apt to doubt the adequacy of science and even give in to despair. There is still a way out of the wood. A wholesome effect would ensue from wedding science which studies the external nature to spirituality which is concerned with the internal. It would be a grand edifying alliance. Without priding himself on his successes, the scientist then has also to learn the technique of turning his attention to the Truth within himself and within everything, the Truth which manifests Itself as good and evil, happiness and misery, knowledge and ignorance. In that case he will be able to vouch the seers' statement that man verily liberates himself from all ills, fears and tensions by realizing the Self.

Realization of oneself as the Self beyond human follies and foibles is the potent light to dispel the enveloping gloom and despondency. There is then no reason for despair, much less to pay heed to the prophets of doom. Fortunately for *Homo sapiens*, every one has the faculty for realization. Human life is a rare opportunity for it. Time is flying. Delay is debasing. Act right now.

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Kankhal
18.5.1914

My dear—,

I duly received your letter dated the 28th Vaisakha¹.

... It is a very happy news that you desire to come here. No doubt, however, it is to be seen how far your pilgrimage to Badrinarayan will materialize, for it is an extremely strenuous journey. I have seen people with strong physique returning from the journey with shattered health. Now you may well understand what may happen to one like you with such a soft body. This is not, however, to say that people like you do not go on the pilgrimage. To be sure, though there is hardship, there is also a joy in it. And what is more, after pilgrimage many are completely freed from physical ailments....

Wherever you may be, if alone you are completely resigned to the Lord, there will be no reason for fear. Weal betides him who passes his days in the remembrance and contemplation of God, there is no welfare in anything else. One has to accept Him as one's mother, father, brother, friend, and relative. He alone is one's own — when one is convinced of this, one gets rid of all fear and attains peace and happiness; there is no other way. One must wholly consecrate oneself at His feet, as a result of which one becomes completely free from worries. But this will not happen unless one is able to become completely His own. Everything can happen through His grace.

Pray constantly to the Lord and also try your best to act in the spirit of your prayer. Then the Lord's grace will descend on you. Most certainly His mercy is always there; we cannot understand it—that is all. The Lord who is the embodiment of auspiciousness is always dispensing what is good for us. When this faith becomes firm, all troubles come to an end.

My health continues to be as before. Kalyanananda and others are keeping well. Your welfare is the object of my constant prayer.

SRI TURIYANANDA

¹ A month of Indian calendar.

From

Prabuddha Bharata

75 Years Ago

MANKIND SHOULD BE GRATEFUL EVEN FOR THE IMPERFECTIONS OF GREAT MEN

Lord Rosebery in concluding his address at Glasgow in connection with the centenary of Robert Burns on the 21st of July last, said:

“Mankind is helped in its progress almost as much by the study of imperfection as by the contemplation of perfection. Had we nothing before us in our futile and halting lives but saints and the ideal, we might well fail altogether. We grope blindly among the catacombs of the world, we climb the dark ladder of life, we feel our way to futurity, but we can scarcely see an inch around or before us. We stumble and falter and fall; our hands and knees are bruised and sore, and we look up for light and guidance. Could we see nothing but distant unapproachable impeccability, we might well sink prostrate in the hopelessness of emulation and the weariness of desire. Is it not then, when all seems blank and lightless and lifeless, when strength and courage flag, and when perfection seems as remote as a star, is it not then that imperfection helps us? When we see that the greatest

and choicest images of God have had their weaknesses like ours, their temptations, their hour of darkness, and their bloody sweat, are we not encouraged by their lapses and catastrophes to find energy for one more effort, one more struggle? Where they failed, we feel it a less dishonour to fail; their errors and sorrows make, as it were, an easier ascent from infinite imperfection to infinite perfection. Man after all is not ripened by virtue alone. Were it so, this world were a paradise of angels. No! Like the growth of the earth, he is the fruit of all the seasons; the accident of a thousand accidents, a living mystery, moving through the seen to the seen. He is sown in dishonour, he is matured under all the varieties of heat and cold, in mist and wrath, in snow and vapours, in the melancholy of the autumn, in the torpor of winters, as well as in the rapture and fragrance of summer, or the balmy effluence of spring—its breath, its sunshine, its dew. And at the end, he is reaped—the product, not of one climate, but of all; not of good alone, but of evil; not of joy alone, but of sorrow. Perhaps mellowed and ripened, perhaps stricken and withered and sour. How, then, shall we judge any one? How, at any rate, judge a giant, great in gifts, and great in temptation; great in strength and great in weakness? And when we thank heaven for the inestimable gift of Burns, we do not need to remember wherein he was imperfect. We cannot bring ourselves to regret that he was made of the same clay as ourselves.”

VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL INAUGURATION

BENEDICTION BY

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

PRESIDENT, RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

Rashtrapatiji, Hon'ble Chief Minister, members of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee and friends,

I consider it a great privilege to participate in this solemn and impressive function held at the feet of the Divine Mother, Kanya Kumari, to honour the memory of one of Her noble and noted children whom She was pleased to send amidst us for our good and for the good of the world. May the blessings of the Divine Mother be on all of us who are present here today and also on the thousands who might be watching us from far and near and on the organisers of this function!

I hope it will not be out of place if I recall in this connection some of the precious thoughts that filled the mind of Swami Vivekananda in his meditation on that rock. When he arrived here, he—after worshipping the Divine Mother in the temple—was seized with a desire to retire to that solitary rock for deep meditation. So he swam to that rock where stands the memorial Temple today, dedicated to this great son of India. Seated on that rock he went into deep meditation. In his meditation he reviewed the vast data that he had collected during his travels about the people and their lives from Princes down to the peasants as also the centuries of India's life, its aim and achievement. He saw that religion was the life and spirit of the people; that the future regeneration of the country as a whole was to be through religion. He saw that amidst the various diversifications of race, language and customs there was a sense of oneness in their cultural and spiri-

tual outlook which was the common bond that unified them as a nation.

Though Swamiji realised the importance of the spiritual ideal and its influence on the nation, he could not forget the miserable condition of the masses all over India, their poverty and ignorance. They had been oppressed for centuries by designing people in the name of their own religion. The upper classes had neglected the masses, depriving the vast majority of the followers of Hinduism of its benefit, and the result was national degeneration. He realised that the material condition of the masses should be improved and they should be given education if India was to rise once more.

One of the causes of India's downfall was because she isolated herself from the rest of the world and refused to mingle with other nations and share with them the life-giving Truths which she had. She was great in ancient times when she did so, but from the day she began cultivating a narrow outlook her downfall also started. By the wider diffusion of Vedanta both India and the world outside will gain immensely. He envisaged a future civilization, a complete civilization as he called it, which would combine Indian spiritual ideal with the Western science and technology, for which humanity was waiting. With this idea in mind he thought of going to the West.

These were the contents of Swamiji's meditation on the rock, and when he got up from his meditation he had a clear vision of the Mission of his life, which was to be a message to India for her national regeneration, and a message to the West for the rebuilding of humanity as a whole.

This rock has, therefore, an historical importance to the nation, and it is, therefore, fitting that there should be a memorial for this Great son of India on this rock.

The whole nation is grateful to Sri Eknath Ranade and his colleagues and friends who have co-operated with him to accomplish

this great task. May the blessings of the Divine Mother be on all of them and through Her grace, may this become an active centre for the dissemination of the great message that Swami Vivekananda has left as a legacy to the world.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY THIRU M. KARUNANIDHI, CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU

Revered President of India, Swami Vireswarananda, Thiru Eknath Ranade, Members of the Committee, Sisters and Brothers,

It is my proud privilege to preside over this momentous inauguration of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial today. Kanyakumari is a place of great antiquity. Tholkāppiam, our ancient Tamil grammar, refers to 'Thenkumāri' as the southernmost boundary of Tamil Nadu.

Washed by the three seas, stands this majestic rock where Swami Vivekananda got enlightenment before he passed to the world his message of light and learning.

Swami Vivekananda's historic visit to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago was an epoch-making one, in the history of the world.

It was the good fortune of Tamil Nadu and this place 'Kanyakumari' to have played a notable part in Vivekananda making up his mind to attend this important world meet, where he conquered the minds of men.

The name 'Vivekananda' means one who can distinguish the right from the wrong. He was a noble sage who had universal vision, which ennobled everyone who came into contact with him or with his teachings.

When this quite unknown young man of 30 appeared at the inaugural meeting of the

Parliament of Religions at Chicago in September, 1893, his strength and beauty, his grace and the dignity of his bearing, the dark light of his eyes, his commanding personality and the splendid music of his rich voice took the audience by storm.

Wherever he went he was the first. Though he is not with us today, the flame he lit is still alight and from his teachings have sprung the conscience of India and the faith in her unity; and in his great message mankind finds solace and confidence.

The memorial that stands here today will be a sentinel guarding not only our frontiers but also our culture and tradition.

The entire structure, I learn, has been designed by Thiru S. K. Achari of Devakottai and I am really happy to see his artisanship.

Tamil Nadu is proud that when Vivekananda went to Chicago, Tamil Nadu stood at his command, under the leadership of our noble Sethupathi, and today I see before me as if the whole civilized world has assembled at the southernmost tip of the Tamil Nadu to pay homage to Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda always had before him the great motto of 'elevation of the masses'. Many of his speeches were full of sympathy for the poor, the fallen and

the downtrodden. His messages were always gospels of salvation, social elevation and equality for every one.

I am very happy to inform on this historic occasion that the Tamil Nadu Government is deeply wedded to the thoughts and gospels for which Swami Vivekananda stood for. As we all know, Peraringar Anna clearly outlined in his life and works that the salvation of humanity lies only in the salvation of the poor and the downtrodden. We see God in the smile of the poor and this Government has taken as its duty to make the poor smile.

Vivekananda's vision was 'all-embracing' and his outlook 'universal'. I would advocate very much at this hour that class and caste feelings should be abolished from all of our hearts, and a united India thus creat-

ed, where every one feels equal in every respect, will be the rightful tribute India could pay to the greatest of her sons.

Let me also greet all sisters and brothers present here from various parts of India and abroad.

Tamil Nadu has always been a great meeting place of minds. I can take pride today, when I see before me here a new generation emerging at Kanyakumari.

It is very fitting that the President of India, who is the embodiment of our rich culture, is here to inaugurate this international memorial, since Vivekananda belongs to the entire human race.

Let us arise, awake and stop not, till our goal is reached.

Vanakkam!

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY SRI V. V. GIRI, PRESIDENT OF INDIA

I am extremely grateful to the members of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee for affording me this unique opportunity to be here today to inaugurate this Memorial in honour of Swami Vivekananda. I deem it a proud privilege to participate in this function as I claim in all humility that I have made my humble contribution by launching mass collection drives at Mysore, Delhi, Lucknow—to mention some. The construction of this Memorial at this historic spot is significant, for it was here that Swami Vivekananda derived inspiration and found answer to the problems tormenting his mind. It was after this he undertook the historic journey to the United States of America to participate in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago.

While the function that you have organis-

ed today and the Memorial that you have erected here no doubt symbolise our keen and fervent desire to pay our tribute to one of the greatest sons of India, what is more important is that we should follow in our own lives, even if it is in a limited measure, what he had taught us. Otherwise, I am afraid all that we do will be a mere mockery and these monuments will remain nothing more than stone structures. We claim that ours is the land that has produced great savants and seers whose message transcended all barriers. We proudly feel that ours is the land that has produced Buddha, Shankara, Vivekananda and Gandhi. We sing their praises to the skies. We interpret and analyse their message of wisdom and knowledge, but if we fail to follow the true implications of this

knowledge, if we do not live upto their teachings, we will but be poor inheritors of that great legacy. It is therefore of urgent necessity and a primary duty that we should search our hearts to see how truly we follow the tenets of these great seers and saints. What is required is a sincere determination that will translate the ideals that they have placed before us into practice. Mere lip-sympathy to noble values will not take us far. They have to be matched by action—positive and concrete action. Unless and until we learn to practise what we preach and preach what we practise, we cannot claim to be true followers of the great legacy about which we often talk. If great personages succeeded in whatever they attempted it was solely because there was no dichotomy or divorce between what they said and did. A nation is known to be great not only by the contribution of a handful of leaders, but also by the masses of people and if our country is to occupy its rightful place and claim itself to be civilised, every individual has to perform his duty.

Swami Vivekananda's contribution was not only limited to a religious revival or a cultural renaissance in our country, but more in bringing about a salutary change in the attitude and approach of the people. In this he was next only to Shankara and combined in himself the many dimensions of a philosopher, saint, patriot, thinker and reformer. His approach to problems was not based on any dogma or superstition but firmly rested on a rational outlook. No wonder his approach finds a greater acceptance than many others not only in India but even among those who do not practise Hinduism. His remarkable and noteworthy work of social emancipation of the down-trodden and the awakening of national consciousness among the millions inhabiting this vast sub-continent will ever stand out strikingly as the supreme testimony of a versatile master-mind at work. He was

not a mere idle philosopher who speculated on the 'Beyond' or a saint who stressed on the negation of work and contemplation of the spirit but one who was deeply involved with the hopes and aspirations of the people. He ceaselessly endeavoured to give a practical orientation to religion and made the ordinary man understand the meaning and relevance of religion. The message of Swami Vivekananda can be summed up in one single sentence: 'Be a man'. As he said, his religion was man-making. According to Vivekananda, Ātman was not beyond definition or understanding but was a tangible manifestation of courage and valour and he said Brahman was fearlessness.

As one who has spent a major part of his life in concern for the common man, very early in life I was deeply struck with Swami Vivekananda's realisation that it was absurd to present spirituality before hungry millions. Swamiji pointed out that what people needed first were food and employment and only then could any spiritual feeling be aroused among the masses. He said: 'For the next fifty years, let all other vain Gods disappear from our midst. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere his hands, everywhere his feet, everywhere his ears, he covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain Gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all around us, the Virāt! The first of all worship, is the worship of the Virāt, of all those around us. These are our Gods, men and animals, and the first Gods we have to worship are our countrymen'.

His was the religion of the living for he concerned himself most with the problems that in reality afflicted the people—hunger, ignorance, poverty and destitution. He held every man as a traitor who did not pay the least heed to the sufferings of humanity. He summarised his concept of brotherhood

of man as follows: 'What good is it if we acknowledge in our prayers that God is the father of us all, and in our daily lives do not treat every man as our brother?'

Swamiji stressed the cultivation of a power of introspection. He felt that unless man constantly developed an awareness and recollection of the ideal towards which he was striving, all work became mere bondage. He, therefore, emphasized that one should work irrespective of the rewards, and he regarded work as the highest form of worship.

I was struck more than anything else by the Swamiji's emphasis that one can remain in the world as a householder and yet attain the highest goal. In fact Swami Vivekananda put across the question: 'Which is the greater man—he who gives up the world and becomes a *sannyāsi*, or he who lives in the world and performs his duties as a householder?' He always said that to be an ideal householder was much more difficult than to be an ideal *sannyāsi*. The true life of work was indeed as hard as, if not harder than, the equally true life of renunciation.

He emphasized that non-attachment is complete self-abnegation. The main effect of work done for others is through purification of ourselves. Doing good to others and a constant realization that we are born in this world to serve our fellowmen will help us to become better individuals and overcome one's preoccupation with one's own self.

Swami Vivekananda always referred to Buddha as the one who carried the teachings of Karma Yoga into perfect practice. Swamiji said that Buddha is the only prophet who said, 'I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is'.

Swami Vivekananda's concept of universality of religion was unique. He said that by the study of different religions we find that in essence they are one. When he was a boy, he was sceptic and, therefore, it seemed for a time that he must give up hope of religion. But, fortunately for him, he said that he studied Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and other religions, and, to his surprise, realized that the same foundation principles taught by his religion were also taught by other religions.

His religion is, to put it in one word, 'humanism' embracing all religions of the world. He preached this great principle emphasizing the selflessness of the individual. He insisted on every individual acquiring character, integrity, truth and on the necessity of pursuing selfless service. He rightly said that the primary task was to develop individual character and if individual character was developed the character of the nation as a whole would automatically be built up. This is a lesson that we must remember every day of our lives. All our talk of establishing a society free from exploitation and want will be a mirage if we in our individual lives, whatever our position be and whatever our status be, do not adhere to certain fundamental values and norms that should guide our action and thought.

The problem of human suffering and inequality between man and man has no doubt existed from the dawn of time, but it was only during the recent decades the affluence of a few and the misery of the many have become sharper and more acute. Whether one approaches the problem purely from the materialistic angle or a humanistic angle or from an ethical angle, one will find that only by a change of heart and outlook can we be able to build a society in which all distinctions could be wiped out and truly we will be able to establish the Kingdom of God.

Swami Vivekananda, during his lifetime,

strove to understand the causes of human suffering and inequality. His solution was to purify the mind of man. When he came across human selfishness and concerted attempts to justify human inequality, he could not help saying:

Where darkness is interpreted as light,
Where misery passes for happiness,
Where disease is pretended to be health,
Where the new-born's cry but shows 'tis
 alive,
Dost thou, O wise, expect happiness
 here?

Swamiji stressed that both pleasure and pain are great teachers and that man learns as much from evil as from good. As pleasure and pain pass before one's soul, they leave upon it different pictures, and the result of these combined impressions is what is called 'man's character'. He pointed out that good and evil have an equal share in moulding character, and in some circumstances, misery is a greater teacher than happiness just as it is poverty that teaches us more than wealth.

Swamiji thus emphasised the realization of the divinity latent in every man. He, therefore, pleaded acceptance and respect of religious modes and methods as pathways leading to the same goal. He accepted all religions that were in the past and worshipped them all with the same intensity and sincerity. He believed as much in Hinduism as in Christianity or Islam or Buddhism. To him, as it should be to everyone, all religions laid themselves on the same foundations of charity, truth and tolerance.

Swami Vivekananda's establishment of the Ramakrishna Mission was one of his greatest gifts to India and to the world. The Ramakrishna Mission which he founded has always kept before it the ideal of social and national service. The inmates of this Mission have always rushed to the rescue of the victims of national calamities and selflessly contributed their mite for affording succour and solace to the destitutes. His coined phrase 'Daridra Nārāyaṇa' (the Divine in the form of the poor) became the symbol of active service to the poor and the underdogs.

Vivekananda's message is of special significance when we are on the cross-roads of destiny. With such a great legacy still many of the parochial and narrow and divisive forces tend to thwart not only the underlying unity but cut at the very root of our great cultural heritage. It should be our resolve on this occasion that we will fight these forces and re-enthone in our hearts the laudable and lofty message of all-pervading humanism of Swami Vivekananda.

In conclusion let us chant with this great son of India his song of renaissance: 'Let new India arise out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emerge from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves and forests, from hills and mountains... Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached'.

JAI HIND!



SECRET OF GREATNESS

It was the summer of the year 1897 and the scene of action was Almora, the Himalayan town. Unknown to the outside world, a great deal of quiet activity was going on, in one of its quarters, for the real and lasting good of humanity. The small group from which this activity stemmed was centred round a sadhu, a Hindu monk, and a strange one at that; for he was one who spoke English, rode horses and moved in 'lordly style'. He was even served by an Englishman!

To the same town came a great patriot, a saintly patriot, desiring to fulfil a personal mission initiated fourteen years earlier. That was Aswini Kumar Datta from Bengal, seeking to meet Swami Vivekananda. Fourteen years ago he had chanced to meet the great Swami when the latter was still the 'boy' Narendra or Naren Datta. That very boy had become the 'world-conqueror' Swami Vivekananda, admired and adored by Indians as well as Westerners.

When he started inquiring of the whereabouts of 'Swami Vivekananda', no clue could be got from the local people. However, they knew about a 'riding sadhu', and pointed out a bungalow as his residence. Almost simultaneously an ochre-robed sadhu arrived there on horseback; he was received and was led inside by an Englishman.

The 'riding sadhu' was himself, in fact, Swami Vivekananda, the dearest disciple of Sri Ramakrishna or 'Paramahansa Deva'. He was there in that bungalow with some of his eastern and western disciples. And it was one of the fruitful and inspirational periods of his life, when he was training some of his chief disciples, envisioning plans for the future working of the Ramakrishna Mission which he had recently founded, for the establishment of a Himalayan monastery and for running *Prabuddha Bharata*, the future journal of the Order. Here indeed was a great man with great projects.

But as Aswini Babu arrived at the entrance of the bungalow, he enquired not about 'Swamiji' but if 'Naren Datta' was there. The accepted etiquette even in relation to ordinary monks is that no reference is made to the pre-monastic name or relationships; the pre-monastic life is supposed to be obliterated. So, the young monk at the door became understandably sensitive about it and replied, 'No, Sir, there is no Naren Datta here. He died long ago! There is only Swami Vivekananda here.'

This admonition had no effect on Aswini Babu. He did not yield any ground and insisted, 'I do not want Swami Vivekananda. I want Paramahansa Deva's Narendra!' The sounds of the altercation

reached the ears of Swamiji who summoned the young monk and asked what it was about. The monk faithfully reported what had transpired. To this, however, Swamiji reacted in an unexpected way. He did not obviously approve of the well meant reply. 'What have you done!', he exclaimed, 'Send him in immediately.'

And the moment Aswini Babu entered, Swamiji stood up to greet him. Explaining his visit, the guest said, 'Sri Ramakrishna had once asked me to have a good talk with his "dear Narendra"... But on that occasion Narendra could speak to me but little. Fourteen years have gone by and I could not adequately fulfil the Master's behest; but at last the opportunity has come now!' To his wonderment he found that Swamiji had not only not forgotten the episode but remembered all the details even. Overcome by a sense of reverence, he could not help addressing the other as 'Swamiji'. But, to his surprise, it was Swamiji who interrupted him, saying, 'What do you say? Why should I become "Swamiji" to you? I am, to you, still the same Narendra. The name by which I used to be called by the Master—that to me is most precious. Kindly do call me by that same name.'

Charmed by this simplicity, Aswini Babu's respect for the Swami deepened, and he began asking Swamiji several questions regarding the future of India and wished to learn of his views. The essence of Swamiji's reply was, 'In India, religion is the very essence of our being, and all reforms must come through it to be acceptable to the masses. The masses must be awakened first. Let them have full meals and they will work out their own salvation. The essence of my religion is strength. You are an educationist. See that man-making education spreads among the masses. Make your students' character as strong as the thunderbolt. Of the bones of our youth

shall be fashioned the thunderbolt that shall strike at India's thralldom. Go to the lowly and downtrodden, the untouchables, and tell them, "You are the Soul of the nation and in you lies infinite energy which can revolutionize the world!"'

As time went by, Aswini Babu's admiration for the deep wisdom of the young spiritual giant waxed. However, one issue rankled in his mind. So just before taking leave, he could not help asking, 'Is it true that while in Madras, the local Brahmins called you a Śūdra having no right to preach the Vedas, and you hit back saying, "If I am a Śūdra, then you the Brahmins of Madras are the Pariah of Pariahs!"'

No hesitation, no hedging. Straightaway Swamiji admitted, 'Yes, I did.' Aswini Babu countered, 'Was it, then, becoming of you, a great religious teacher and a monk of self-control, to have retorted in those terms?' Again Swamiji gave a direct reply, without resorting to indignation, sophistry or justification, 'Who says it was right? I don't. I was put out by the impudence of those people. I lost my temper and the words came out. I could not help. But I do not justify them!'

This frank admission did not lower the Swami in Aswini Babu's estimate. He was a true connoisseur of character and realized that only a truly great and noble soul could so freely admit a fault which lesser people would by all means try to hide or explain away. Overwhelmed by emotion, he rushed forward and embraced Swamiji, declaring, 'Today you stand taller than ever in my regard and estimate. Now I realize why you are a "world-conqueror" and why Sri Ramakrishna loved you so intensely!'

—Explorer

Source: *The Life of Swami Vivekananda*, by His Eastern and Western Disciples, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta-14.

THE MIND AND ITS CONTROL

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

MIND-CONTROL—DIFFICULT BUT POSSIBLE

In this central theme of our inner life we all are deeply interested, in a very personal way, for nothing affects us individually more than our own mind.

We know something about the subject. All of us try to control our minds. But we would like to know more and do better.

But who can help us in this regard? Only those who have perfectly controlled their own minds. What we may learn from such sources we shall present here as an integrated system of simple discipline.

In fact control of the mind is a very interesting inner game. If you have a sportsman's attitude you will thoroughly enjoy it, even while apparently losing. In the playing, this game takes a great deal of skill, alertness, sense of humour, goodness of heart, sense of strategy, patience and some heroic flair which makes it possible not to get disheartened in the face of a hundred failures.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was explaining in his discourse in the *Gītā* how the supreme state of Yoga was to be attained.

After listening to him Arjuna said to the Lord in understandable despair :

'O Kṛṣṇa, this yoga which you declare to be characterized by perfect evenness of mind, I do not see how it can endure, because of the restlessness of the mind.'¹
'The mind, O Kṛṣṇa, is restless, turbulent, powerful and obstinate. To control the mind is as hard, it seems to me, as to control the wind.'²

Śrī Kṛṣṇa listened to this representative complaint of man and gave a final reply for all times and for all men. All Indian thinking and practice on mind control are largely based on this teaching of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He said :

'Undoubtedly O Arjuna, the mind is restless and hard to control. But by practice and detachment, it can be controlled.'³

From this conversation we know three basic facts about mind-control:

- That it has always been an extremely difficult task even for heroic persons of the stature of Arjuna.
- That yet it is possible to control the mind.
- That there are well-defined methods for controlling the mind.

In these two words : *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, practice and detachment, Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the whole secret of controlling the mind.

It is the uniform verdict of all the saints of India down the ages that there is no other way of controlling the mind except through 'practice and detachment'. This is also called the '*abhyāsa yoga*' or '*yoga through practice*'.

We are quoting here a dialogue between Sri Ramakrishna and a devotee, in which the former emphasizes a fundamental point which everyone needs to remember on the subject we have on hand.

'Sri Ramakrishna (smiling) : "Don't sit idle simply because your spiritual consciousness has been awakened a little.

¹ Vide : VI. 33.

² VI. 34.

³ VI. 35.

Go forward. Beyond the forest of sandal-wood there are other and more valuable things—silver-mines, gold-mines and so on.”

‘Priya (smiling) : “Sir, our legs are in chains. We cannot go forward.”

‘Sri Ramakrishna : “What if the legs are chained? The important thing is the mind. Bondage is of the mind, and freedom is also of the mind.”

‘Priya : “But the mind is not under my control.”

‘Sri Ramakrishna : “How is that? There is such a thing as *abhyasa-yoga*, yoga through practice. Keep up the practice and you will find that your mind will follow in whatever direction you lead it. The mind is like a white cloth just returned from the laundry. It will be red if you dip it in red dye and blue if you dip it in blue. It will have whatever colour you dip it in.”⁴

Practice and detachment are no doubt the entire secret of controlling the mind. But how do we bring them into our life-stream? That is the question.

To do this,

- a. we shall have to develop a strong will to control the mind ;
- b. we shall have to understand the nature of the mind ;
- c. we shall have to learn certain techniques and practise them earnestly and intelligently.

HOW TO STENGTHEN THE WILL TO CONTROL OF MIND

It cannot be said that we have no will to control the mind. The very fact that all of us have our own inner struggles indicates that we have the will. But in most cases this will to control the mind is not very strong.

Our will to control the mind can never be strong until and unless we have deliberately and irrevocably renounced pleasure

as one of the main pursuits of our life. The canker which eats away the vitality of our will to control the mind is pursuit of pleasure. It is like this. If you have a servant who is aware that you depend on him to procure you illicit drugs and both of you enjoy the drug together, you cannot then control that servant. The same is the case with the mind. The mind which you use for seeking and enjoying pleasure, you can never control, before you give up seeking pleasure. Even after giving up the pursuit of pleasure it will not be easy to do so, for the mind will always have past references to cite for embarrassing you. The strength of our will to control the mind will be proportionately to the degree of our strength and intensity of renunciation of the pursuit of pleasure, by which we mean enjoyment of sense objects. Unless the pleasure-motive is knowingly, truthfully and totally renounced, no matter what else we do, we can never perfectly control the mind. The derivative of this truth is that those who are reluctant to renounce pleasure-motive do not sincerely want to control their mind whatever their professions.

Opposites sometimes look alike. Two types of persons do not have inner struggles : those who have become unquestioning slaves of their lower nature, and those who have completely mastered their lower nature. All others have inner struggles, which are the results of inadequate or unsuccessful attempts at controlling the mind. Inadequate attempts are indications of the weak will and lack of knowledge as to how one can control the mind.

The most important thing is to strengthen the will to a degree, where in the face of repeated failures we never get disheartened. On the contrary with every new failure to control the mind we are roused to fresh endeavours with new enthusiasm.

Now, how do we strengthen this will to control the mind?

⁴ Vide : ‘M’ : *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, 1964, p. 499.

We have to remove the reasons which cause weakness in our will. And we shall have to inject reasons which will strengthen it.

No doubt some of us have struggled with our minds but have faced repeated failures. So we have come to believe that controlling the mind is not for us.

Another reason for the weakness of our will is that most of us have perhaps seldom clearly thought what exactly is at stake in the control of the mind. If we had thought, the sheer instinct for survival would drive us to strengthen our will to control the mind.

As regards the failures to control the mind, we need not be over exercised. It has never been an easy task even for the noblest of men, the nature of the mind being restless.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā :

‘The turbulent senses, O Arjuna, do violently snatch away the mind of even a wise man, striving after perfection.’

‘For the mind which follows in the wake of the wandering senses, carries away his discrimination, as a wind carries away from its course a boat on the waters.’⁵

The Buddha teaches :

‘If one man conquers in a battle a thousand times, a thousand men, and if another conquers himself, he is the greatest of conquerors.’⁶

From this we can understand that controlling the mind is the most difficult conceivable job in the world. It is indeed a hero’s job. Hence occasional or repeated failures to control the mind should not be taken too seriously. Failures should be taken as invitations to more determined, sustained, and intelligent efforts, for we are assured by the great teachers that perfect control of the mind is possible. All thoughts to the contrary must be eschewed like poison.

We must clearly understand what is at stake in controlling the mind.

Insanity is the worst thing that can happen to an individual as a result of the non-control of the mind. Collectively speaking, non-control of mind may lead to the downfall of an entire civilization, however prosperous or stable it may appear to be. There are many other lesser misfortunes that directly or indirectly issue from non-control of mind.

Non-control of mind effectively obstructs integration of personality. Such a person will always have a tendency to take unpredictable shapes and to disintegrate. Even under most favourable circumstances he will not realize his potential or fulfil expectations.

One who has no control over his mind cannot have peace of mind. One who has no peace of mind, how can he have happiness ?

A victim of many wrong movements of passions and emotions and consequent tensions, he may develop obstinate mental maladies or turn out to be a criminal.

If he is the head of a house, there will prevail indiscipline, disorder, delinquency, and wretchedness of human relationship leading to family misfortunes. In an Indian maxim it is said, a man may have received the grace of God, the teacher and holy men. But if he does not have the grace of his own mind he will go to rack and ruin. Grace of one’s own mind functionally means the controlled state of the mind.

On the positive side, at the highest, through control of mind one can attain spiritual illumination. Short of that there are many other covetable blessings of life attainable through control of mind.

A controlled mind can be easily concentrated. Through concentration of mind one gains knowledge. And knowledge is power,

⁵ II. 60 and 67.

⁶ Vide : *Dhammapada*, verse 103.

One of the spontaneous outcome of the control of mind is integration of personality. Such a person always achieves more than what was expected of him, especially in adverse circumstances.

Controlled state of mind leads to its calmness, calmness leads to peace of mind. Peace of mind leads to happiness. Such a person makes others happy.

The quality of his work improves steadily and he attains enduring prosperity as a matter of course.

At home where he is the head there is order, discipline, joy, culture, and excellent human relationship. Society looks upon such a person as an exemplar of good life.

A person of controlled mind will be singularly free from mental maladies and even from some types of physical troubles caused by mental tension.

In a person who has controlled his mind his higher nature asserts itself, and his hidden powers are released. Friends wonder how this person could become, before their eyes, this great.

A popular Sanskrit maxim says:

'Who conquers the world? He alone who conquers his mind.'

Progress, prosperity or peace—nothing of an enduring nature can be achieved in any field without control of mind. People without self-control will not retain even their given prosperity.

Such are the stakes in control of the mind. To develop a strong will for control of the mind, we must educate our own minds to the effect that, without it, we are nowhere and impress upon ourselves the fact that the character of our entire future depends on whether or not we control our minds.

Other things may be important, but nothing in life is more important than controlling the mind.

Once we really understand this and believe this, our will to control the mind will

become strong, as strong as we need to have it.

THE NATURE OF THE MIND—HINDU VIEW

The will to control mind, however, is not enough.

We need also to know something about the nature of the mind. This we shall briefly discuss in the light of Hindu psychology.

We shall also discuss the topic how to control the mind mainly from the standpoint of Hindu psychology because in Hindu psychology an adequate system of disciplines for controlling the mind has been taught down the ages. What we are going to write on the mind here, are derived from Hindu psychology as is found interpreted by Swami Vivekananda in his *Complete Works*.

Hindu psychology is considered to be a perfected science because it has through proper investigation devised methods for absolute control of the mind, leading to the attainment of perfection or illumination.

We may now briefly state the Hindu concept of the mind:

Mind is a finer body within this gross body. In a true sense the physical body is only the outer crust of the mind.

The mind being the finer part of the body, one affects the other. When you are physically sick you are mentally sick, too. When you are emotionally upset, that again affects your body.

Behind the mind is the Atman, the real Self of man. Body and mind are material; Atman is pure spirit. Mind is not the Atman but distinct from the Atman.

Distinction between matter and mind is only apparent, their difference being only in the rate of vibration. Mind, at a low rate of vibration is called matter. Matter in a high state of vibration is known as mind. Both matter and mind are *therefore govern-*

ed by the same laws of time-space and causation.

How matter is convertible into mind is not a very uncommon experience, though we may not notice it as such.

Take for instance a person who does not eat for two weeks. What happens to him? Not only does his body become emaciated, his mind also becomes blank. If he fasts for a few days more he cannot even think. He does not even remember his name. When he begins to take food again, strength slowly returns to his body, memory is revived. We find here a case where food which is matter, truly becomes mind.⁷

⁷We read in the Upaniṣad Uddālaka teaching his son Śvetaketu on experimental basis how food is converted to mind. The two chapters with other relevant teachings run thus:

'That, my dear, which is the subtlest part of curds rises, when they are churned and becomes butter.

'In the same manner, my dear, that which is the subtlest part of the food that is eaten rises and becomes mind.

'The subtlest part of water that is drunk rises and becomes speech.

'Thus my dear, the mind consists of food, prana consists of water, and speech consists of fire.'

The Son Śvetaketu said:

'Please, Venerable Sir, instruct me further.'

'So be it, my dear.'

'A person, my dear, consists of sixteen parts. Do not eat (any food) for fifteen days, but drink as much water as you like, since the prana consists of water, it will not be cut off if you drink water.'

'Śvetaketu did not eat (any food) for fifteen days. Then he came to his father and said: "What, Sir, shall I recite?"

'His father said: "The Rik, Yajus and Sāman verses."

'He replied: "They do not occur to me, Sir."

(He could not remember the Vedas)

'His father said to him: "Just as, my dear, of a great blazing fire a single coal, the size of a firefly, may be left, which would not burn much more than that, even so, my dear, of your sixteen parts only one part is left; and therefore with

Essentially man is not the mind but the soul or Atman. The Atman is ever free, boundless and immortal. It is pure consciousness. In man the free agent is not the mind but the soul.

Mind is, as it were, an instrument in the soul's hands through which the soul apprehends the external world.

This instrument with which the soul catches the external world is itself constantly changing and vacillating. When this vacillating instrument is made motionless, it can reflect the Atman.

Though not a free agency, powers of the mind are simply incalculable. If man has smashed the invisible atom and released its power, if man has realized the unseen Atman and become illumined—and all other achievements of man in diverse fields between these two poles of attainments, are all manifestations of the powers of the mind.

In fact the mind is omnipresent. Each mind is a part of the universal mind. Each mind is connected with every other mind. And as such, each mind wherever it may be

that one part you do not remember the Vedas. Now go and eat and you will understand me."

'Śvetaketu ate and approached his father. Then whatever his father asked him, he showed that he knew it.'

'Then his father said to him: "Just as, my dear, of a great lighted fire a single coal of the size of a firefly, if left, may be made to blaze up again by adding grass to it, and will thus burn much more,

'Even so, my dear, of your sixteen parts only one part was left, and that when strengthened by food, blazed up. With it you now remember the Vedas. Therefore, my dear, the mind consists of food, the prana consists of water, and speech consists of fire."

'After that he understood what his father said. Yes, he understood it.'

Those who would tend to doubt this teaching are invited to fast for fifteen days living only on water and see what happens to their mind!

(Vide: *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI., v. 5-6).

located can be in actual communication with the whole world.

The Upaniṣad says that the mind has such functions as desire, determination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, steadfastness, lack of steadfastness, shame, intelligence, fear etc.⁸

The mind has the reflexive power of looking back into its depths. With the help of the mind we can see what is going on within the mind.

According to the Hindu concept the mind has three constituents, three levels, three faculties and three states which we shall explain very briefly.

Why is it that the mind is not always found in an uniform state? The reason is: mind is a compound of three substantive forces called the *guṇas*, viz. *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas*. These *guṇas* also constitute the entire physical universe. *Sattwa* is the principle of poise conducive to purity, knowledge and joy. *Rajas* is the principles of motivity, leading to activity, desire and restlessness. *Tamas* is the principle of inertia resulting in inaction, dullness and delusion.

Tamas gives the mind a lower movement; *Rajas* scatters the mind and makes it restless and dynamic; and *Sattwa* gives it a higher movement.

The individual minds are constituted by the various combinations and permutations of these *guṇas*. This explains the existing varieties in human nature and also the vacillating nature of the mind.

We often say: 'I have changed my mind'. That would be impossible if mind were composed of one substantive force only. In that case men could neither fall nor rise. All would be then born saints or born villains or born idiots.

We are all familiar with the words con-

scious and subconscious. These indicate different planes of the mind.

In the conscious plane all work is always accompanied by the feeling of egoism.

In the subconscious plane the feeling of egoism is not there.

There is still a higher plane in which the mind can work. It can go beyond consciousness. Just as subconscious is beneath consciousness, there is another state which is above consciousness. This is called the super-conscious plane. Here also the work of the mind is unaccompanied by the feeling of egoism, but with vast difference from the subconscious state. When the mind passes beyond the plane of consciousness it enters into samādhi or the state of super-consciousness.

The super-conscious state of the mind is the only pure state when it is identical with Atman. This is why Sri Ramakrishna says: 'That which is pure mind, is also pure buddhi; that again is pure Atman.'⁹

These three planes of conscious, subconscious, and super-conscious, all belong to the same mind. There are not three minds in one man but one state develops into the other. Instinct develops into reason, and reason into transcendental consciousness. Therefore these three states do not contradict one another.

The question of controlling the mind is relevant only in regard to the conscious plane where the mind is accompanied by the feeling of egoism. We cannot directly control the subconscious state unless we are established in yoga. the question of controlling the super-conscious state does not arise. But the super-conscious plane can be reached only by those who have controlled their minds on the conscious and sub-conscious planes.

The mind in its functional aspect has

⁹ Vide: 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 111.

⁸ *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.5.3.

three faculties: viz., manas, buddhi, and ahamkara. Manas is the *recording faculty* which receives impressions gathered by the senses from the outside world. Buddhi is the *discriminative faculty* which classifies those impressions. Ahamkara is the *faculty of ego-sense* which claims these impressions as its own and stores them up as individual knowledge.

The ordinary states of the mind are 'darkened' and 'scattered.' In the darkened state of the mind a man feels dull and passive. In the scattered state, one feels restless. Through practising the disciplines of yoga the same mind can be 'gathered' and made 'one-pointed'. The whole purpose of mind-control is making the mind one-pointed.

When this one-pointed mind is put in any sphere of activity, in that one shines. A businessman with a one-pointed mind will prosper in business; a musician with a one-pointed mind will become a great musician; a spiritual aspirant with a one-pointed mind will gain spiritual experience.

HOW NOT TO MAKE MIND-CONTROL UNNECESSARILY MORE DIFFICULT

We have known something about the nature of the mind as understood in Hinduism. While this knowledge may be helpful, it will not necessarily lead to the control of the mind. Much knowledge about human psychology can very well go with absolute non-control of the mind. The main thing is to have a strong will to control the mind. If we have that, knowledge of psychology will certainly help, provided we steadily practise the prescribed disciplines.

But by certain actions of our own we may make our task of controlling the mind almost impossible. It will be helpful to know what such actions are, so that we may avoid doing them.

If we have strong likes and dislikes,

attachments and aversions we shall not be able to control our minds as long as we do not get rid of them.

If we live an immoral life we shall not be able to control our mind.

If we have the habit of deliberately harming others we shall not be able to control our mind.

If we indulge in intoxicants, live unbalanced and chaotic lives, (eat, drink, talk, walk, or sleep too little or too much) we shall not be able to control our minds.

If we habitually indulge in vain controversy, are inordinately inquisitive about others' affairs, and are too anxious to find others' faults, we shall not be able to control our minds.

If we torture our bodies unnecessarily, spend our energies after futile pursuits, force rigid silence upon ourselves, and become what may be called 'self-opiates' we shall not easily control our minds.

If we are over-ambitious irrespective of our capacities; if we are jealous of others' prosperity, and if we are self-righteous in disposition we shall not easily control our minds.

If we have guilt-sense, we shall not be able to control our minds. Therefore we must erase out all guilt-feeling from within us.

Repent for sins committed, ask God's help for the strength of will that they may not be repeated. That is all needed for removing guilt-feeling.

To succeed in controlling the mind apart from the strong will we must have faith in ourselves. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā¹⁰ that one must subdue one's weakness by oneself, and raise oneself by oneself. This teaching must be practised by one who intends to control his mind.

The mind will have to be controlled by mind itself. The difficulties which we

¹⁰ VI. 5.

experience in controlling the mind are created by our own mind. Mind cannot be controlled by any artificial means for any length of time. Deliberate, patient, intelli-

gent, systematic hard work according to tested and suitable disciplines is needed.

(To be continued)

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA AND THE NEW AGE OF SCIENCE

SWAMI KIRTIDANANDA

Objectivity is the characteristic feature of the scientific method, as it should also be of philosophic inquiry. The introduction of personalities would to that extent tend to vitiate scientific and philosophic discussion. Yet I am encouraged in the choice of the above subject by the following remarks made by Dr. P. B. Janardhan, Professor of Analytical and Inorganic Chemistry, University of Madras, at a seminar:

‘The intimate chemical and physical knowledge that man has now acquired of his environment represents the greatest of all intellectual achievements, but to gather the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he must learn to master and control his own *nature*. It is here that philosophy becomes an oasis for him.’

Should this be the view taken of philosophy and its purpose, then the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have a special bearing on the present topic; for these two represent two of the best fruits of the tree of knowledge that India has produced, and their life and thought are closely interlinked with the problems of the day. Though, as Romain Rolland points out in his biography of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Ramakrishna’s outer life was set in a limited frame without any striking incident, outside the political and social activities of his time, his inner life embraced the whole multiplicity of men and gods. Swami Vivekananda, of course, was a true

child of the times, imbued with the scientific spirit of the new age; and in the meeting of these two souls we have a perfect synthesis of science and philosophy or science and religion, of reason and faith, of ancient wisdom and modern thought. However, my endeavour here will be to project only their thought, keeping their personalities in the background.

To the human spirit striving to rise above the trammels of earthly existence, the new age of science presents a challenge. On the intellectual level, quantum mechanics, the principle of indeterminacy, and the theory of relativity in physics have set scientists pondering over many cherished philosophical concepts like causality, free will, etc., and are posing fresh problems for philosophy in their wake. The time has come to appraise and re-evaluate many of the age-old philosophical concepts in the light of the latest developments in modern science. It is for those who are competent, to deal with the technical aspects of this relation between science and philosophy. The importance of such an analysis and appraisal in stabilizing and putting on a surer basis the fundamental ideas of philosophy, as also in laying religion on firmer foundations, cannot be over-emphasized.

To the layman, however, not conversant with or disinclined to go into the technicalities of the question, or for that matter,

even to the philosopher or the scientist, when he comes down from the heights of his philosophical or scientific inquiry, the real problem is one of finding a practical philosophy of life that would be in tune with the highest demands of reason and yet would satisfy the inmost aspirations of his heart. This the modern man does not find in the prevalent forms of religion. He finds in the latest advances of science the greatest impediment to doing so. He sees an eternal contradiction between them and the so-called affirmations of religion. As Swami Vivekananda graphically sums up the situation:

'The foundations have been all undermined,¹ and the modern man, whatever he may say in public, knows in the privacy of his heart that he can no more "believe". Believing certain things because an organized body of priests tells him to believe, believing because it is written in certain books, believing because his people like him to believe, the modern man knows to be impossible for him. There are, of course, a number of people who seem to acquiesce in the so-called popular faith, but we also know for certain that they do not think. Their idea of belief may be better translated as "not-thinking-carelessness".'¹

This, in fact, is the crisis of the age, the greatest impact of science in general on the modern man: it has taken away man's belief in the higher verities of life, without providing a suitable substitute in its place; so much so that he is filling up the vacuum created thereby with the vanities of life. This is not to say that he has become more scientific in his outlook on life and its problems. If he had been, it would have been a matter for gratification and a thing to be wished for. But, unfortunately, he has

not. A scientific outlook implies clarity of thought and a saner attitude in all situations, which is not much in evidence today, whether it is in the field of politics or in the field of religion. Particularly in the field of religion, which is our main concern here, there is such a mass of superstition, bigotry, fanaticism, conservatism, hidebound orthodoxy, unmeaning ritualism, and weakening mysticisms going by that name, it is no wonder that the modern man is drifting away from religion. Added to that is the conflict among various religions, each one of which claims infallibility and divine sanction for all its dogmas, sectarian doctrines and every local custom. This, to say the least, is most bewildering to the modern man. To make confusion worse confounded, many of the assertions of religions with regard to man and his destiny, the nature of the universe, etc. are in utter conflict with the conclusions of modern science, and it is natural that man today is weary of religion and philosophy. To such a man fighting shy of religion, modern technology comes forward with its promise of a heaven on earth, with the result that the hold of religion on mankind is loosening.

If religion is to regain its position in the life of man today as of old, and man is to be weaned away from the materialistic tendencies of the age to which he is subject, the first and foremost thing to be done is to approach religion in a scientific spirit, reject what is irrational and unverifiable in it, and base it on the firmer foundations of reason and logic. Such an approach to religion is nothing new as far as India is concerned. The very doctrine of the *avatāra* in Hinduism is a recognition of the need for such an approach to religion. Hinduism visualizes periodic reverses in the religious spirit of a people, when these *avatāras* or divine Incarnations come on the scene and revive and re-establish

¹ *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta 14, Vol. I (1965), p. 367. Subsequently this work will be referred to as CW. The year of the volume cited will be mentioned only in the first reference to that volume,

the religious spirit. In the words of Śrī Śaṅkara (*Gītā* commentary, Introduction):

‘When, owing to the ascendancy of the materialistic tendencies in its votaries, religion was overpowered by irreligion, caused by the vanishing faculty of discrimination, and irreligion was flourishing—it was then that the original Creator, Viṣṇu, known as Nārāyaṇa, wishing to maintain order in the universe, incarnated Himself as Kṛṣṇa, of Devakī and Vasudeva, for the preservation of the spiritual life on earth.’

This bringing to bear a fresh scientific outlook on the religious and spiritual life of the people of the times is what all our great teachers, from Buddha downwards, have done. ‘Therefore, O Ānanda,’ says the Buddha, addressing his beloved disciple, ‘be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast as a refuge to the Truth. Look not for refuge to anyone beside yourselves.’² Kṛṣṇa, in one of the most beautiful and inspiring perorations, which could have come from any of the modern scientists, dissuades the elders of the village from propitiating the imaginary god Indra, the deity of the rains, and asks them to worship instead the hills and the forests, which are the real givers of rain.³ And in the *Gītā* he exhorts Arjuna: ‘Reflect thou over what I have said and act as thou chooseth.’⁴ In our own times, we have the mighty call of Swami Vivekananda:

‘Everything it (religion) claims must be judged from the standpoint of reason. Why religions should claim that they are not bound to abide by the standpoint of reason, no one knows. If one does not take the standard of reason, there cannot be any true judgement, even in the case of religions....’⁵

Or again:

‘Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation, which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside to be applied to the science of religion? In my opinion this must be so, and I am also of opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better. I am thoroughly convinced that its destruction would be the best thing that could happen. All that is dross will be taken off, no doubt, but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation. Not only will it be made scientific—as scientific at least as any of the conclusions of physics or chemistry—but will have greater strength, because physics or chemistry has no internal mandate to vouch for its truth, which religion has.’⁶

‘We should, therefore, follow reason and also sympathize with those who do not come to any sort of belief, following reason. For it is better that mankind should become atheist by following reason than blindly believe in two hundred millions of gods on the authority of anybody.... Let men think. A clod of earth never thinks; but it remains only a lump of earth. The glory of man is that he is a thinking being. It is the nature of man to think, and therein he differs from animals. I believe in reason and follow reason, having seen enough of the evils of authority, for I was born in a country where they have gone to the extreme of authority.’⁷

And Sri Ramakrishna said to Swami Vivekananda: ‘Test me as a money-changer tests his coins, and then only accept what I say.’ Here is scientific spirit exhibited at its best and, strangely, in one who did not know anything of the recent developments in science; who, as a matter of fact, dismis-

² *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. 100.

³ *Bhāgavata*, X. xxiv. 13-30.

⁴ XVIII. 63.

⁵ CW, II. (1963), pp. 335-36,

⁶ CW, I, p. 367.

⁷ CW, II, pp. 335-36,

sed the value and scope of science in a few words: 'And what does your "science" say? This combined with this produces that; that combined with that produces this. One is more likely to lose consciousness by contemplating those things—by handling material things too much.'⁸ Sri Ramakrishna was essentially a man of faith, who embodied in himself the best that religion promises. We may not all be scientists; but nothing prevents us from being scientific in our outlook. As J. A. Thomson puts it:

'Science is not wrapped up with any particular body of facts; it is characterized as an intellectual attitude. It is not tied down to any particular methods of inquiry; it is simply sincere critical thought which admits conclusions only when these are based on evidence. We may get a good lesson in scientific methods from a businessman meeting some new practical problem, from a lawyer sifting evidence, or from a statesman framing a constructive bill.'⁹

Then why not from a religious person or the philosopher?

The tools of science, says Sir James Jeans, the celebrated scientist, are observation and experiment; but he makes a distinction between science and philosophy by saying: 'the tools of philosophy are discussion and contemplation'.¹⁰ Vivekananda, however, would say:

'All knowledge must stand on perception of certain facts, and upon that we have to build our reasoning. But, curiously enough, the vast majority of mankind think, especially at the present time that no such perception is possible in religions, that religion can only be apprehended by vain arguments.... Religion is a question of fact, not of

talk, we have to analyse our own souls and to find what is there. We have to understand it and to realize what is understood. That is religion. No amount of talk will make religion. So the question whether there is a God or not can never be proved by argument, for the arguments are as much on one side as on the other. But if there is a God, He is in our own hearts. Have you ever seen Him?... There are certain religious facts which, as in external science, have to be perceived, and upon them religion will be built.'¹¹

Here is the vital difference between philosophy as understood in the West and in the East. Philosophy in the West has by and large been a mere intellectual pursuit, with no basis in experience, its methodology being purely speculative and inductive; its tools, naturally, are discussion and contemplation, as Sir Jeans observes. Moreover, it has grown and developed independently of religion there, both running along parallel lines. But in India philosophy has been, from the very beginning, a matter not only of discussion and contemplation, but also of observation and experiment and, in the last analysis, of experience, as any other science is. This idea of philosophy being something practical and intimately connected with our everyday life, of religion being something to be experienced here and now, pervades the entire Indian thought. From the Vedic times downwards to our own times, this has been the one theme of Indian life: to see God, to realize religion, to actualize philosophical truths in life. 'I have known that effulgent Being beyond all darkness, the cosmic Reality' was the bold declaration of the Vedic seer. 'I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense, and if you want, I can show Him to you also' were the reassuring words of Sri Ramakrishna to the feverish question of Swami Vivekananda: 'Have you seen God, sir?' That was the one thought

⁸ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, transl. by Swami Nikhilananda; Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, 1st ed., p. 845.

⁹ *Introduction to Science*, Home University Library, p. 58.

¹⁰ *Physics and Philosophy*, p. 81.

¹¹ CW, II, pp. 162-63.

burning in the young mind of Vivekananda, the college student nurtured in the philosophic and scientific thought of the day, both eastern and western: If God is true, it must be possible to see Him, to touch Him, to feel Him; if religion is true, it must be possible to experience the truth of it. Restless to get the answer to this all-important question, he wandered from teacher to teacher, but could get a definite reply in positive terms only from this unsophisticated sage, Sri Ramakrishna, with no pretensions to learning or modern education.

Sri Ramakrishna himself was afflicted with a similar problem during the early part of his stay at the temple of Dakshineswar, near Calcutta. There he wept and prayed incessantly before the image of Kālī, with tears rolling down his cheeks in terrible anguish: 'Mother, is it true that Thou existest, or is it all poetry? Is the blissful Mother an imagination of poets and misguided people, or is there such a Reality?' And from the depths of his realization that came to him in the wake of persistent prayer and cleansing of the heart, he said:

'Religion can be given and taken more tangibly, more really than anything else in the world. God can be seen. But who wants to see Him? People shed a jugful of tears for the sake of family, friends, wealth, name and fame; but who weeps for God in the same way?'

Swami Vivekananda, with the courage of conviction born out of his contact with Sri Ramakrishna, echoed in ringing tones years later these words of Sri Ramakrishna. Said he:

'Religion is not talk, or doctrines, or theories; nor is it sectarianism.... Religion does not consist in erecting temples, or building churches, or attending public worship. It is not to be found in books, or in words, or in lectures, or in organizations. Religion consists in realization. As a fact, we all know that

nothing will satisfy us until we know the truth for ourselves. However we may argue, however much we may hear, but one thing will satisfy us, and that is our own realization; and such an experience is possible for every one of us if we only try.'¹²

Now, here is the meeting-point of science and religion. The validity of scientific truth is that it can be experimented with for oneself. So is the case with religious truth. In religious and spiritual matters, experience is the fundamental thing. Philosophy, according to the Indian view, comes in only as a handmaid to religion, to show the plausibility and possibility of the religious experience and its non-contradiction with reason and other experiences of life. That is why philosophy in India is called 'Darśana', literally 'perceiving', that is to say, it is something which helps us to see the reality face to face, the reality behind man and the universe; not merely to get an intellectual understanding of it. Thus, from this common basis of experience as the final test of truth, we find religion and philosophy, on the one hand, and science, religion, and philosophy, on the other, to be applications of the same principle to different phenomena. The method of religion and philosophy need not be different from that of science; the truths of science need not necessarily be in contradiction with the truths of religion and philosophy. Only they refer to two orders of reality—the external and the internal.

Religion and philosophy are a sincere, rigorous, and persistent search for truth. So is science in its pure aspect. Science has got another aspect, viz applied science. The conflict of religion in modern times has been with both these aspects of science. The conflict arises because of an incomplete understanding of each other, and when each oversteps the well-defined boundaries of

¹² CW, IV (1966), pp. 179-80.

the other and appropriates to itself the other's role. Religion, like science, has got two aspects—one the essential, the eternal portion, valid for all times and places; the other, the non-essential, non-permanent aspect, which is valid only for the time being, and varies from place to place and people to people, the *śruti* and the *smṛti* elements of the Indian scripture. The *śruti* elements are the eternal values of religion and are universal in character, like the discoveries of science, and are capable of being tested by anyone anywhere, provided one is prepared to take the necessary steps. Not so are the *smṛti* elements, which are local in character and are conditioned by time, place, and circumstances. They are true only for a period as instruments designed to preserve and pass on, in a practical manner, the *śruti* elements, the eternal truths of religion, to the living and coming generations. Such are the dogmas of the Christian church and the Paurāṇika portions of Hinduism, which reduce religion to a closed system of thought and belief. The real dispute of science is, and can only be, with this portion of religion; for many of the assertions of religion here go counter to the latest discoveries of science, and they really overreach themselves in their pronouncements on the origin and nature of the physical universe etc., which, strictly speaking, do not belong to the domain of religion at all. Thus, whether the earth moves round the sun or the sun moves round the earth, whether man, with all the beings in the universe, animate and inanimate, was created one fine morning by the fiat of the Lord or whether he gradually evolved into the present state by graded steps, is of no consequence at all as far as the eternal values of religion are concerned. Yet, those were the issues on which the Christian church fought and subjected many scientists to the Inquisition and the tortures thereof.

Religions, thus, have been coming into

collision with science over unnecessary details. Every local custom is mistaken to be the essence of religion, and the cry of 'religion in danger' is raised by the bigoted when these customs and manners and ways of thinking are affected by the changes necessitated by the advance of science. With a thunderous voice Swami Vivekananda calls forth:

'Give up all those old discussions, old fights about things which are meaningless, which are nonsensical in their very nature. Think of the last six or seven hundred years of degradation when grown-up men by the hundreds have been discussing for years whether we should drink a glass of water with the right hand or the left, whether the hand should be washed three times or four times, whether we should gargle five or six times. What can you expect from men who pass their lives in discussing such momentous questions as these and writing most learned philosophies on them? There is a danger of our religion getting into the kitchen. We are neither Vedantists, most of us now, nor Paurāṇikas, nor Tāntrikas. We are just "Don't-touchists". Our religion is in the kitchen. Our God in the cooking-pot, and our religion is, "Don't touch me, I am holy". If this goes on for another century, every one of us will be in a lunatic asylum. It is a sure sign of softening of the brain, when the mind cannot grasp the higher problems of life; all originality is lost, the mind has lost all its strength, its activity, and its power of thought, and just tries to go round and round the smallest curve it can find. This state of things has to be thrown overboard, and then we must stand up, be active and strong; and then we shall recognise our heritage to that infinite treasure, the treasure our forefathers have left for us, treasure that the whole world requires today.'¹³

Christ admonishes:

'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and

¹³ CW, III (1964), p. 167.

anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.'¹⁴

In another place, drawing a clear distinction between the essential and non-essential portions of religion, he says:

'There is nothing from without a man that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.... Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him: Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?... That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.'¹⁵

So, if we keep in view this distinction between the essentials and non-essentials of religion, the conclusions of modern science on the genesis of the physical universe or the ultimate nature of matter and the universal laws governing them—either in the small-scale world of atomic physics or the large-scale world of astronomy or in the man-sized world—really do not affect the core of religion, which derives from the essence of man's being and the eternal values of life springing therefrom. In fact, as Swami Vivekananda points out, the recent advances in science have only fortified religion. He says:

'Modern science has really made the foundations of religion strong. That the whole universe is one is scientifically demonstrable. What the metaphysicians call "being", the physicist calls "matter", but there is no real fight between the two, for both are one. Though an atom is invisible, unthinkable, yet in it are the whole power and potency of the universe. That is exactly what the Vedantist says of Ātman. All sects are

really saying the same thing in different words.'¹⁶

Though science and religion are both attempts to probe into the mystery of this universe, on the one hand, and of man, on the other, and arrive at the reality behind both, the scientists themselves have been the first to recognize the limitations of science in this regard. Professor Oliphant, for example, says in the Rutherford Memorial Lecture delivered in Madras in 1955:

'... These examples will make it clear that scientific knowledge is never complete. As Rutherford used to say, work in basic science is like digging in Tom Tiddler's ground; if the search is diligent, something new is always being turned up, even in regions which have been dug over many times in the past. The so-called laws of nature change with increasing knowledge. There is never certainty in understanding; only a probability that the facts are right, and the explanation a good one. There are fashions in science, just as there are in art or in literature.'

In the words of Sir James Jeans:

'We can never understand what events are, but must limit ourselves to describing the pattern of events in mathematical terms; no other aim is possible—at least until man becomes endowed with more senses than he at present possesses. Physicists who are trying to understand nature may work in many different fields and by many different methods; one may dig, one may sow, one may reap. But the final harvest will always be a sheaf of mathematical formulae. These will never describe nature itself, but only our observations on nature. Our studies can never put us into contact with reality; we can never penetrate beyond the impressions that reality implants in our minds.'¹⁷

In fact, modern science has left us at a point quite indecisive with regard to the

¹⁴ Matt. xxiii. 23.

¹⁵ Mark vii. 15, 18-20.

¹⁶ CW, VII (1964), p. 50.

¹⁷ Op. cit. p. 15.

nature of reality. To quote James Jeans again:

'Physical science set out to study a world of matter and radiation, and finds that it cannot describe or picture the nature of either, even to itself. Photons, electrons, and protons have become about as meaningless to the physicist as x, y, z are to a child on its first day of learning algebra. The most we hope for at the moment is to discover ways of manipulating x, y, z, without knowing what they are, with the result that the advance of knowledge is at present reduced to what Einstein has described as extracting one incomprehensible from another incomprehensible.'¹⁸

Moreover, the sphere of scientific search is confined to only a portion of life—the external, physical universe—and it is bound down by the instruments it has chosen to work with, viz the senses and the mind. Religion, on the other hand, is concerned with the totality of experience, not merely the physical or the biological. Science cannot, and in fact does not, exhaust or deny the other aspects of phenomena. Sir Arthur Eddington, the famous mathematician and physicist and the author of several books on the philosophy of science, emphasizes this point when he says:

'I am not among those who think that in the search for truth all aspects of human experience are to be ignored save

those which are followed up in physical science. But I find no disharmony between a philosophy which embraces the wider significance of human experience and the specialized philosophy of physical science, even though the latter relates to a system of thought of recent growth whose stability is yet to be tested.'¹⁹

He gives the following striking example to illustrate his point:

'Let us suppose that an ichthyologist is exploring the life of the ocean. He casts a net into the water and brings up a fishy assortment. Surveying his catch, he proceeds in the usual manner of a scientist to systematize what it reveals. He arrives at two generalizations:

1. No sea-creature is less than two inches long;
2. All sea-creatures have gills.

These are both true of his catch, and he assumes tentatively that they will remain true however often he repeats it.... His generalization is perfectly true of the class of creatures he is talking about—a selected class perhaps, but he would not be interested in making generalizations about any other class.'²⁰

We may add, he would indeed be overstepping his bounds if he did extend his generalizations to the other class.

(To be concluded)

¹⁸ *The New Background of Science*, p. 68.

¹⁹ *The Philosophy of Physical Science*, Preface, p. ix.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 16.

A TRAVELLER LOOKS AT THE WORLD

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

Question: What do you think is the future of those Indians who have married Americans and settled down there? How is American life going to affect the future of their children?

Answer: There are many Indians who have married in America and settled down there. And several of them told me of their difficulties in training their children. Their children get sucked into the stream of American society, the forces of which are harmful even to American children today. Many parents in America are also worried. 'What is happening to our children?' they ask. The children are carried away in the stream of American social life. Unfortunately much of that social life is patterned on the Hollywood films and on the TV.; so it is a problem for American parents as much as for Indian parents in America. They do not know how they can cope with it. They find it difficult. The children, for example, very easily pick up all values and jargon of the contemporary American social scene; and sometimes they lose all sense of respect or reverence for anything in human society. No respect for father and mother. Any respect for God, of course, is very rare. These are the difficulties in a highly mechanized and industrialized civilization. Sometimes I heard of the father referred to as 'that old guy' by the children. 'That old guy has given me the body. He is done for—finished. Now I will have my own life.' This is how the children think.

That there is something sacred in a personality—that is not to be found in their philosophy of man. Much of this is the product of what you may call an exaggerated Freudianism, the product of the Freu-

dian view of human nature. Freud was a scientist. He did wonderful things for man and science. But science is of our own making. New facts are continually coming to light; so to build the philosophy of man on what Freud said and end there, that is dangerous. Freudianism is a great tyranny over the human mind in the West today. It is now being recognized more and more.

What does Freudianism say? 'Here are the human impulses. Give them free play. Don't restrict them; don't check them; don't thwart them. If you thwart them it will create a traumatic condition in the human personality. Don't disturb the human personality at all.' So the parents do not thwart their children. They do not ask the children to check their impulses; nor do the teachers in schools; nor does society.

The result is that a new philosophy has come on the American scene. It is called impulse release. Whatever impulses come, release them; do not check them. Naturally these impulses are of the organic nature; impulses of the organic man; nothing higher. So it generally ends up in life at the physical level, life more and more restricted to the physical level.

One educationist in America, the president of a university, who was dealing with the subjects and who saw the evil, made a remark which I often quoted in some of the lectures. He said: We have an old dictum which we have wisely given up: spare the rod and spoil the child. Today's educational theory tells us that children are best dealt with through love and not through corporal punishment. That was wonderful. But we need a new dictum and that dictum I shall put in this way: spare the Freud and

save the child! If you want to save the child, Freudianism must go. You have to ask the child to restrain himself, discipline himself, so that his energies can be used to raise him to a higher level. Is there a higher level? We have to see that there is. This is what the deeper philosophy of man means. Here Vedanta comes into the picture, giving you an intellectual conviction that there is a higher level of the human personality.

I was speaking about this problem of overcoming the evils of Freudianism in modern society. There have been protests from thinkers in the West itself. One such protest I have just mentioned, that from the president of an American university, who said, 'We want a new dictum: spare the Freud and save the child.' The evils of this Freudian tyranny have affected literature, art, education and society generally in an increasing measure. I came across one aspect of the evil during a two-hour interview at the Portland radio station, in Oregon. At Portland we have a Vedanta Society presided over by Swami Asheshananda. For one week I stayed there. So they arranged a radio interview originally for about twenty minutes. But it went on for full two hours, with questions coming from listeners in various places by telephone. There was one Mr. Z. who was the interviewer, a very energetic man of the modern type, and slightly of the aggressive variety who do not like modern society; he was very firm and strong. Many people told that this was what he was like, very difficult to deal with and so forth. I said that that did not matter.

In the beginning, generally, in all these interviews, they start in a light way: 'Oh, here is a new swami coming.' The word 'swami' is used in a very light way. But in a minute everything changes. In all the interviews it was: 'Oh, this is a new type of Swami'—not mere 'a new Swami'. That

was how things changed immediately, and the whole affair became serious. On this particular occasion, in the course of the first few minutes of the interview, I had occasion to refer to the need for Self-discipline on the part of modern man. As soon as I mentioned the word 'self-discipline', Mr. Z. immediately butted in and said, 'Oh, Swami, we don't believe in this word "discipline"'. We don't believe in discipline at all. We believe in being spontaneous, natural.'

I at once grasped the whole background of thought behind that one utterance and immediately said, 'Mr. Z., just a few moments ago, you were highly appreciating Pandit Ravi Shankar's beautiful sitar recital. How natural, how spontaneous, how beautiful is that music! That's fine; but did you ever stop to think that behind that spontaneity and naturalness of Ravi Shankar's music there are years and years of hard discipline? Did you ever stop to think of that?'

As soon as I put it that way he became excited: 'This is a wonderful idea. I never thought of it in this way. This is something new. I do realize the importance of discipline from this point of view.'

Then I told Mr. Z.: 'We also emphasize naturalness and spontaneity. Man must be natural and spontaneous. But there are two kinds of spontaneity and naturalness in man. One is below discipline and the other is above discipline. The animal is spontaneous and natural. Wherever the cow moves it eases itself. That is spontaneity and naturalness. But we subject a human child to a bit of toilet discipline.. That is the first lesson we give our children. And certain control of impulses we insist on in children. But that is only the beginning of discipline; it continues.

At the highest level, that of a Buddha, a Jesus, a Ramakrishna, there all is so natural, so spontaneous. In between this

spontaneity and that spontaneity lies a whole world of struggle, of discipline, to raise the psychic energy to the highest level, to a level which is worthy of man. This struggle and discipline cannot be removed from human society. If you do, you will reduce life to animal proportion. That is what much of modern society is doing most of the time. Man has become reduced to animal proportions. Whatever impulses come I must express them. I must have this, I must have that. We do not emphasize control and discipline at all. It is a great misfortune.

Mr. Z. was impressed. After that every question was put with great respect. At the end of two hours we finished. His wife also came in. It was night, already 11.30 p.m. Then I said, 'Mr. Z. you have not seen our Vedanta Society in Portland. Please come next Sunday. Swami has asked me to speak in the morning at 11 o'clock. You come and your wife also. Please come.' He said, 'We shall try.'

Next morning when the lecture was to begin I noticed Mr. and Mrs. Z. and one child sitting on the front row. That was how the Vedantic idea of discipline started having some meaning for this particular person. There is a way of putting Vedanta in the context of modern thought and modern needs. Nobody will say no to it. Vedanta is not a killjoy philosophy: It is the philosophy of supreme joy. Why should I discipline myself? That is the greatness of Vedanta, it has its most satisfying answer.

I often used the word *tapas* (self-discipline) in my talks. If the matter is properly put, there is no objection to it. Every great achievement, creative achievement, whether in science, or art, or in any other field, is the product of *tapas*. Stated in this way, there is no objection to the idea of *tapas*. This is what I would especially like to stress, that these ideas have to be

put in a practical and rational way, not as mere Do's and Don'ts.

Question: What is the opinion of Westerners, particularly Americans, with regard to social and political conditions in India?

Answer: Many universities and colleges chose as one of the subjects of discussion, that of Tradition and Social change in India. A very important subject. In Stanford University and several other universities, we had discussions at the end of the lectures, where this subject came up. A great change is going on in Indian society: a revolutionary transition with industrialism and scientific development. What is going to happen to India? Many people felt or suspected that India may go the way of the West, giving up her solid spiritual heritage.

I had to agree that uncertainty is there. But at the same time I pointed out that this ancient spiritual tradition has a philosophical strength behind it; and secondly, that we do not live entirely in the past. We have had giants of spirituality in this age, who came and gave this tradition a freshness and a new authenticity, almost before our eyes. There is Ramakrishna, there is Vivekananda; so that India has a tremendous strength even in the midst of the industrial development, the industrial revolution; and men like Vivekananda welcomed the change in India. They wanted what you may call a toned-down materialism for India. We want a little materialism for India, Vivekananda said; but we shall control it and discipline it.

We have a philosophy which can discipline this materialism. We don't have that dichotomy between man's secular life and man's spiritual life; we see life as one. So, that hatred of man's external life is not there. In the philosophical tradition of India, in the spiritual tradition of India, and in the religious expression of piety, you do not find this contradiction,

Therefore there is a chance and a good chance that India will overcome the limitations of the present age, developing industrial and economic strength, yet not losing its own soul. This question was a matter of concern to many friends in the United States, Canada and other countries, so they asked it again and again.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The questions and answers are from: 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras 4, 1964. References : Question 1. pp. 38-39 ; 2. pp. 39-40 ; 3. pp. 41-42.

There being some mistakes in the reproduction of the facsimile of Swamiji's writing on the ideals of the Advaita Ashrama on page 281 of the 75th anniversary number (July, 1970), we reprint it exactly as Swamiji wrote.

The inner impoverishment of the modern man discernible in the growing peacelessness, anxiety and fear in spite of astounding achievements of scientific breakthrough poses a serious challenge to his well-being. The editorial of this month addresses itself to the task of showing him a way to meet it.

'Prabuddha Bharata: 75 years ago' is from October 1896 issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, p. 44.

The sixty-days celebrations inaugurating the Vivekananda Rock Memorial at Kanyakumari were begun on 2nd September 1970. We print the texts of speeches delivered on the inauguration day by the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, the President of India and the Chief Minister

of Tamil Nadu. An illustrated report of the consecration of the Memorial by the President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the inaugural function will appear in our November issue.

In Profiles in Greatness, the 'Explorer' brings to our view a distant scene of summer 1897 in the quiet Himalayan town of Almora where the patriot-educationist Aswini Kumar Datta in the course of a conversation with Swami Vivekananda was struck with the greatness of the latter and said, 'Today you stand taller than ever in my regard and estimate. Now I realize why you are a "world conqueror" ...' Swamiji's words reproduced in the article shed light on the secret of greatness.

'The Mind and Its Control' is a theme of universal interest among thinking people all over the world. Religion in its applied aspect has to concern itself deeply with this theme. Hindu Vedanta and Yoga has much to teach about the ways of controlling the mind. Swami Buddhananda continues here his series of Essays on Applied Religion. These essays are designed to present in the light of authentic teachers and scriptures how to apply essential religion in and through the struggles and problems of living.

What light does the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda throw on

the relation of science and religion? And how is it relevant in this scientific age? Swami Kirtidananda, a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, deals with these and connected questions in his 'Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and the New Age of Science'.

Questions answered by Swami Ranganathananda at the Brothers' meet at Calcutta after his return from a long lecture tour of nearly one and a half years in 24 countries continues to be serialized here from the month of July 1970.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ARE THE GATHAS PRE-VEDIC? AND THE AGE OF ZARATHUSHTRA BY H. S. SPENCER, Published by H. P. Vaswani, 1, Rajkamal, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona 2, 1965, pp. 126. price Rs. 7.50.

The Gathas of the Avesta have been claimed to be pre-Vedic and post-Vedic by different scholars. Mr. Spencer in the first part of the book under review ably argues that most of the R̥g-Vedic hymns are pre-Gathic, that some are contemporaneous with Zarathushtra and that a few came after him. This is in reply to the contention of Sri Ardeshir Framji Khabardar that the Gathas are pre-Vedic.

In yasna 48 that prophet Zarathushtra attacks iconolatry; in 30 he condemns idolatry; and in 32 he speaks of some contemporaries wanting in love for Mazda. There was then a reformation giving rise to Mazda-yasna with Zarathushtra as the prophet. But the enemy attacked was not the Vedic Aryan because iconolatry and idolatry were not Vedic. Mr. Spencer does not appear to accept this position. He takes the arguments of Sri Khabardar one by one and refutes them successfully. In passing we may mention that *urva* (15) does appear in the Veda as *urvarukam*, that *spenta* (17) is *sveta* or *svitra*, that *usta* (18) is *jushta*.

We cannot agree that before Zarathushtra the Indo-Iranians were not monotheistic (16); nor can we agree that the Indian alphabet brought about the loss of the proper method of accentuation (26). The use of Asura in the old sense in R̥g-Veda shows that those parts where this meaning appears are pre-Zarathushtrian. The reference to Nodha, son of Gautama, a Vedic seer, in Farvandin yasht makes him a contemporary of Zarathushtra. The prophet respects Kanva and Beas. This Beas may be Vyāsa; but Vyāsa was only the earliest editor of the Vedic texts.

Mr. Spencer adopts the astronomical criteria to fix the periods of the various parts of R̥g-Veda. Here he is helped by Sarosh yasht Hadokt. From this and other data he finds that Zarathushtra lived and taught when the vernal equinox was in Pusya Nakṣatra. The change of the nakṣatra coincides with a change in the spiritual cycle. When the vernal equinox was in Purvāśādhā, fire was discovered. But Mr. Spencer is wrong in believing that this discovery brought about a schism in the Indo-Iranians (51); for, the Indian Aryans were wedded to the fire cult as much as the Iranians. One might say that this discovery separated the Indo-Iranians from other Aryans.

In the second part entitled 'The Age of Zarathushtra', Mr. Spencer offers a summary of his earlier valuable work 'The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle' to fix 7129 B.C. as the year of the Prophet's birth. This is an irrefutable conclusion. The work deserves a close and careful study.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

POLITICAL AND NATIONAL LIFE AND AFFAIRS: (VOL. III)—BY M. K. GANDHI; COMPILED AND EDITED BY V. B. KHER—Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14; 1968; pp. vii+276; Price Rs. 6/-.

This volume, the third in the series, brings to the readers Gandhiji's celebrated views on non-violence, civil disobedience and Satyagraha, and incidentally inspiring glimpses of Mahatmaji himself. The passages are culled mainly from *Young India* and *Harijan* covering a period of over thirty-five years. On going through the pages of this volume, one feels that Gandhiji had to fight a fiercer battle with his own countrymen in convincingly advocating non-violence than with the British rulers to overthrow their rule. What strikes one most of all is Gandhiji's unflagging patience and

devotion to truth and non-violence in the face of fanatical and determined opponents. He takes a firm and uncompromising stand against what he terms as 'Bhagat Singh cult' (p. 60) and, through his apt replies, upholds non-violence as the sole and supreme weapon for winning Indian political freedom. In his opinion, Satyagraha should be undertaken as a *tapascharya*, a self-purifying discipline. 'He (a Satyagrahi) fears God alone, so that no other power can intimidate him. He will never, out of fear of punishment, leave a duty undone,' (p. 83). Now and then we catch flashes of Gandhiji's ethical eminence in such utterances as 'The only tyrant I accept in this world is the "still small voice" within. Even though I have to face the prospect of a minority of one, I humbly believe I have the courage to be in such a hopeless minority. That to me is the only truthful position.' (pp. 231-2).

S.T.

WHAT EVERY HINDU OUGHT TO KNOW BY A HINDU MONK Pub. T. S. Shama Rao 1401, 5th Cross, Khrishnamurthipuram, Mysore-4, 1968, p. 66 Price 40 paise.

This tiny book is a compendium of the essential features of the Hindu religion and will be quite useful to our youth to understand its fundamentals, to dispel their doubts about it and to be able to answer criticism against its tenets. The sources and scriptures of our religion, its ethical and moral principles, the rationale of its rituals, reform movements which cleansed it of its accretions and answers to criticisms are some of the chapters in it. Written in simple and easy style, it makes a direct and convincing appeal. Alike the scoffer and the sceptic will be helped by a perusal of it.

The book which can be read in an hour deserves wide circulation.

PROF. P. SANKARANARAYANAN

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA BY H. MAHESWARI, M.A., Ph.D., Published by Shiva Lal Agarwala and Company, Agra 3, 1969, pages 192, price Rs. 15/-.

In this volume under review Dr. Maheswari tells us in brief the story of Swami Rama Tirtha's life (1873-1906), and gives a comprehensive exposition of the philosophical thoughts of the scholar-mystic. A brilliant student in early youth, a successful university teacher of mathematics by profession, and above all a mystic of the highest order, the Swami, who was one of the builders of modern Indian thought, is not much known to the general public. Dr. Maheswari has done a real service in presenting the life and thoughts of the Swami in a systematic manner. After giving an unbiased account of the Swami's life, the learned author goes on to analyse critically the Swami's views on epistemology, God, world, self, morality and the problems of India today. The Swami did not build up a system, nor was he an exponent of any philosophical 'ism'. Yet his leaning towards Vedanta is quite unmistakable, although for him there is no antagonism between the transcendental Being and the immanent Becoming. The reality is an integrated whole, and as such, the phenomenal world is not an illusion. So the Swami preaches what he himself calls the 'Vedantic Socialism'. Dr. Maheswari has been very careful in analysing thoroughly all these aspects of Rama Tirtha's views comparing and contrasting them, when necessary, with the thoughts of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Vivekananda, and Sri Aurobindo. He writes with admirable clarity and it goes without saying that the book is good reading. For, the author knows just what he wants to say and says it well. He is rational, exact and precise in his approach. We sincerely believe that the book will be a valuable addition to philosophical literature.

PROF. A. K. BANERJEE

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

REPORT FOR 1968-69

Patients exceeded the accommodation limit in the general wards, cabins, or cottages. As there was great demand during the year for additional beds, arrangements were made in some cottages for the same. Out of 250 beds in the Sanatorium, 228 were in the General Wards, 13 in Cabins and 9 in

the Cottages. 158 beds were reserved by different bodies. With the help of subscriptions and donations collected and the income derived from endowments, the Mission maintains a good number of free beds for poor patients. A few beds are also maintained at concession rates for those who are unable to pay the full charges. During the year under review 80 patients were treated free of all charges. 14 patients were granted concession in their maintenance charges. Modern facilities for

the treatment of tuberculosis were available at the Sanatorium. There were four X-ray machines, and the operation room and the recovery room were air-conditioned. Pathological laboratory is well-equipped. Radio sets, library, recreation hall with permanent stage and auditorium, plays staged by the ex-patients, inmates of the Sanatorium and members of the staff, film shows, indoor games, newspapers and magazines were among the other amenities provided for the patients.

Number of patients treated during the year: 603 (newly admitted 358; repeated cases 245). Details of treatment: discharged with disease arrested: 162; quiescent 42; improved 79; stationary 25; worse: 3; as non-tuberculosis 25; died: 11.

Surgical Operations: 122 surgical operations were performed including 4 pneumonectomy, 9 lobectomy and 101 thoracoplasty.

X-Ray Department: Number of X-rays taken was 4922.

Clinical Laboratory: Total number of specimens examined: 16302.

After-care Colony and Rehabilitation Centre: 36 ex-patients were accommodated in the colony during the year. Of these 9 worked in the tailoring department under a master tailor who was also one of the ex-patients; 6 worked in the office, 1 in the X-ray Department, 6 in the laboratory, 1 in the medical stores, 2 in the electrical and water supply department and 2 in the patients' library. 5 ex-patients worked in the wards as nurses and 2 were employed as office attendants. 10 ex-patients were taught typewriting. One ex-patient looked after the poultry farm. Free homoeopathic dispensary was in charge of an ex-patient.

Other activity: In the free homoeopathic dispensary set up for attending to general ailments of the local people, 6007 new cases and 7918 old cases were treated during the year.

Some Needs of the Sanatorium:

1. Endowment for free beds Rs. 30,000 per bed.
2. Endowment for ordinary beds Rs. 6,000 per bed.
3. After-care and Rehabilitation Centre Rs. 10,00,000.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SALEM

REPORT FOR 1968-70

The activities of the Ashrama have been mainly twofold: Spiritual-cultural and Humanitarian.

Spiritual Activities: There were regular daily pūjās in the mornings and Ārati and prayers in the evenings in the Ashrama. Classes were con-

ducted on Sunday morning on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and on the *Gītā* and other scriptures in the evenings. Discourses on religious subjects were also organized. The birth anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated with special pūjā, Bhajans and public meetings when eminent Bhāgavatars and men of erudition were invited to participate in the functions. The birthdays of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Christ, etc. and religious festivals like Śivarātri and Navarātri were duly observed. On Saturdays the children of the local Sri Sarada Bala Mandir and on Wednesdays the women devotees conduct Bhajans. Monday is devoted to the singing of devotional songs. On ekādaśī days the Rāma Nāma Sankirtana is held.

The reconstruction work of the shrine and prayer hall was taken up in 1967 and was completed in 1969. The actual consecration took place on the 29th November 1968. This holy act was solemnized by Srimat Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission, who had come to Salem specially for the purpose.

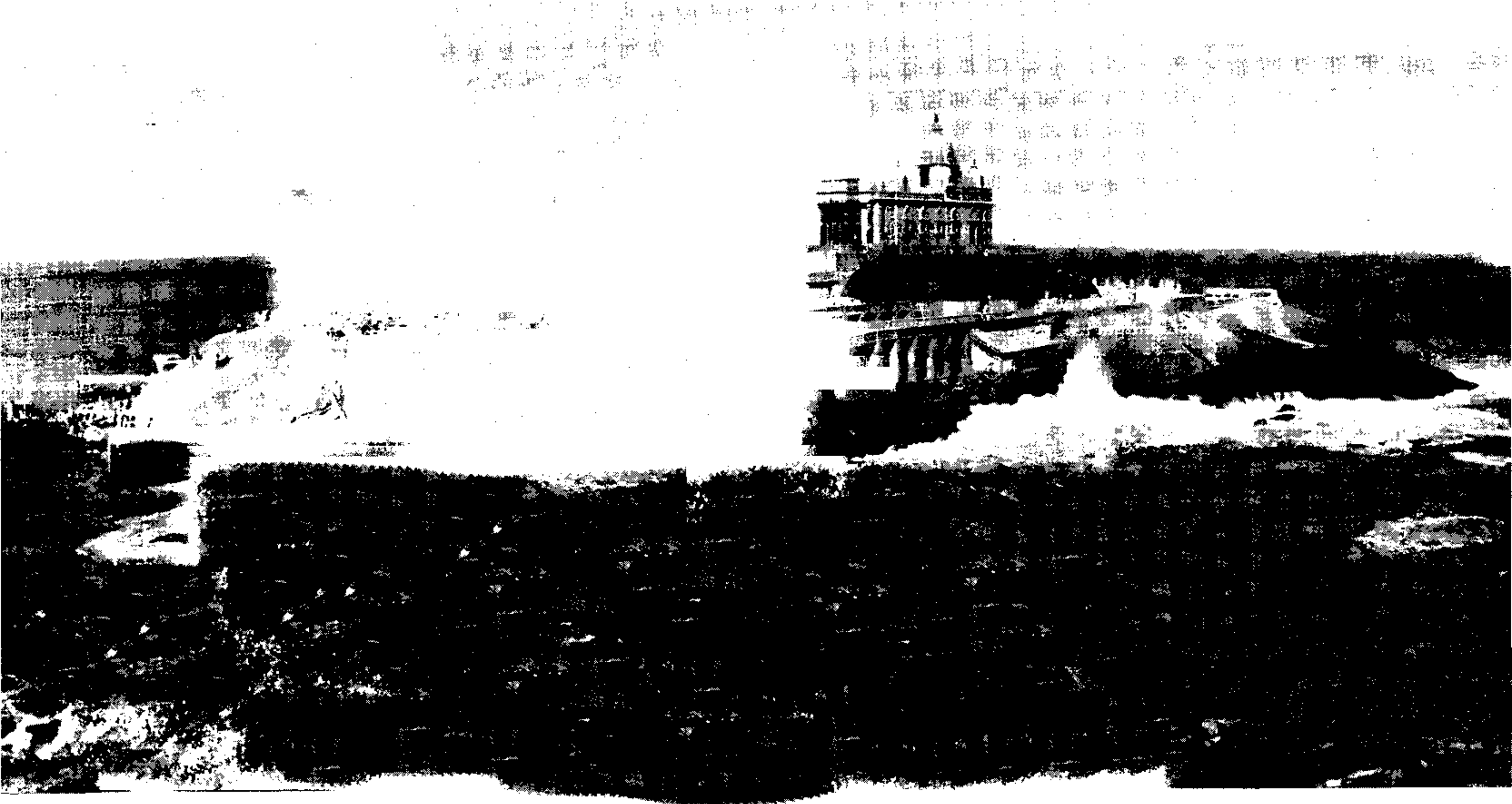
The Ashrama library has a select collection of books in English, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi. The total number of Books: 1325. Journals received in the library: English 5, Tamil 3, Telugu 1, Hindi 1.

Humanitarian Work: Free and Charitable Dispensary continues to render service to the people of the locality including the town and its suburbs, and also the rural parts adjoining the town. There are six beds in the ward attached to the dispensary; additional accommodation for more patients is also provided. There is a fairly equipped operation theatre. Arrangement for treating eye diseases is also made. Total number of cases treated: 77,717, of which 39,462 were new cases.

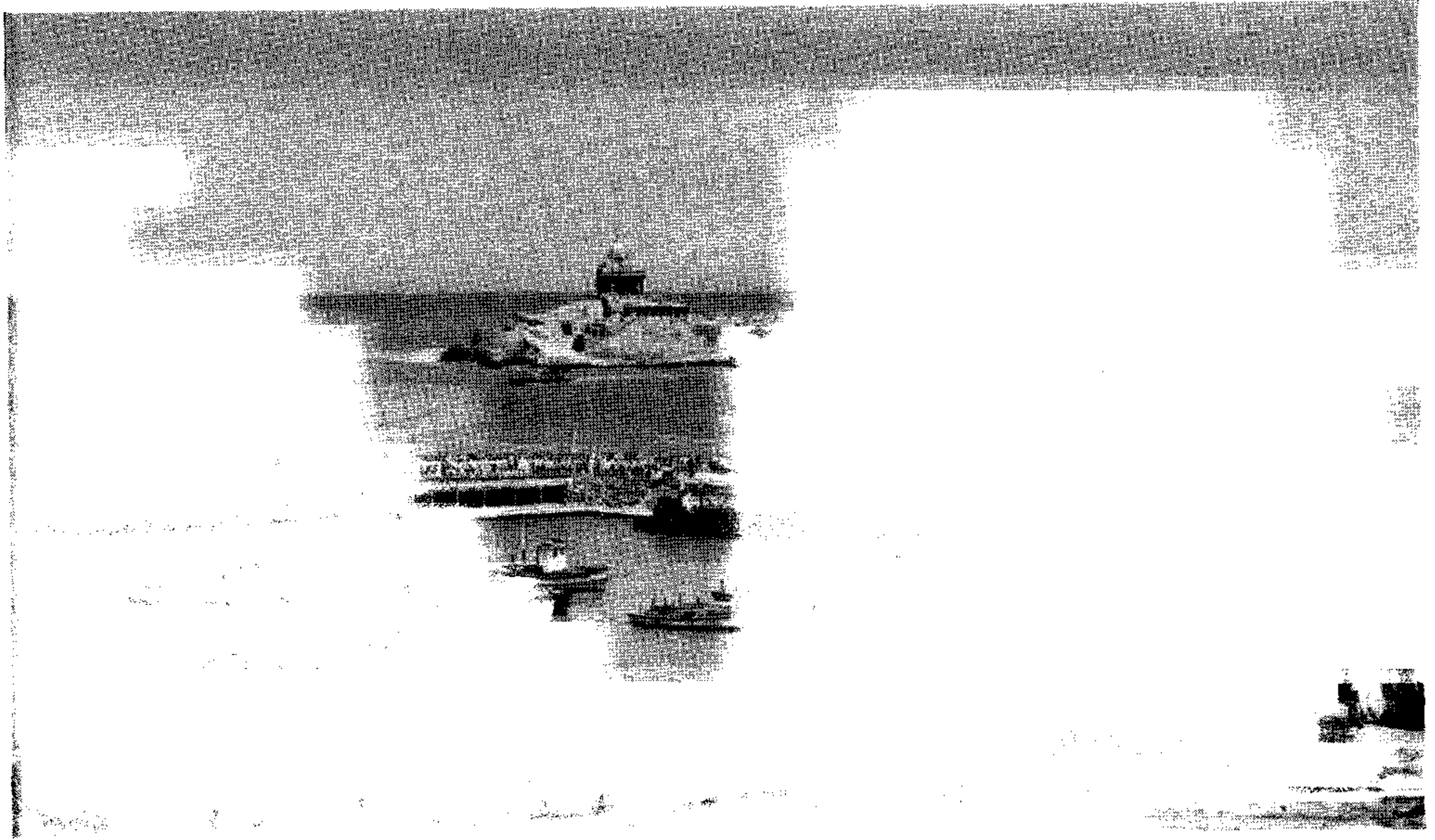
Fresh milk is supplied to a few ailing and undernourished children of the locality.

Immediate Needs:

1. A hall for Children's Library and Reading room Rs. 30,000.
2. Books and journals etc. Rs. 7,000.
3. Furniture, fittings etc. Rs. 3,000.
4. Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the Library and conducting the cultural and educational activities Rs. 50,000.
5. Development and expansion of Mobile Unit for the Charitable Dispensary Rs. 50,000.
6. Completion of project of Shrine and Prayer Hall Rs. 15,000.
7. Permanent Fund for maintenance of Shrine and Prayer hall Rs. 45,000.



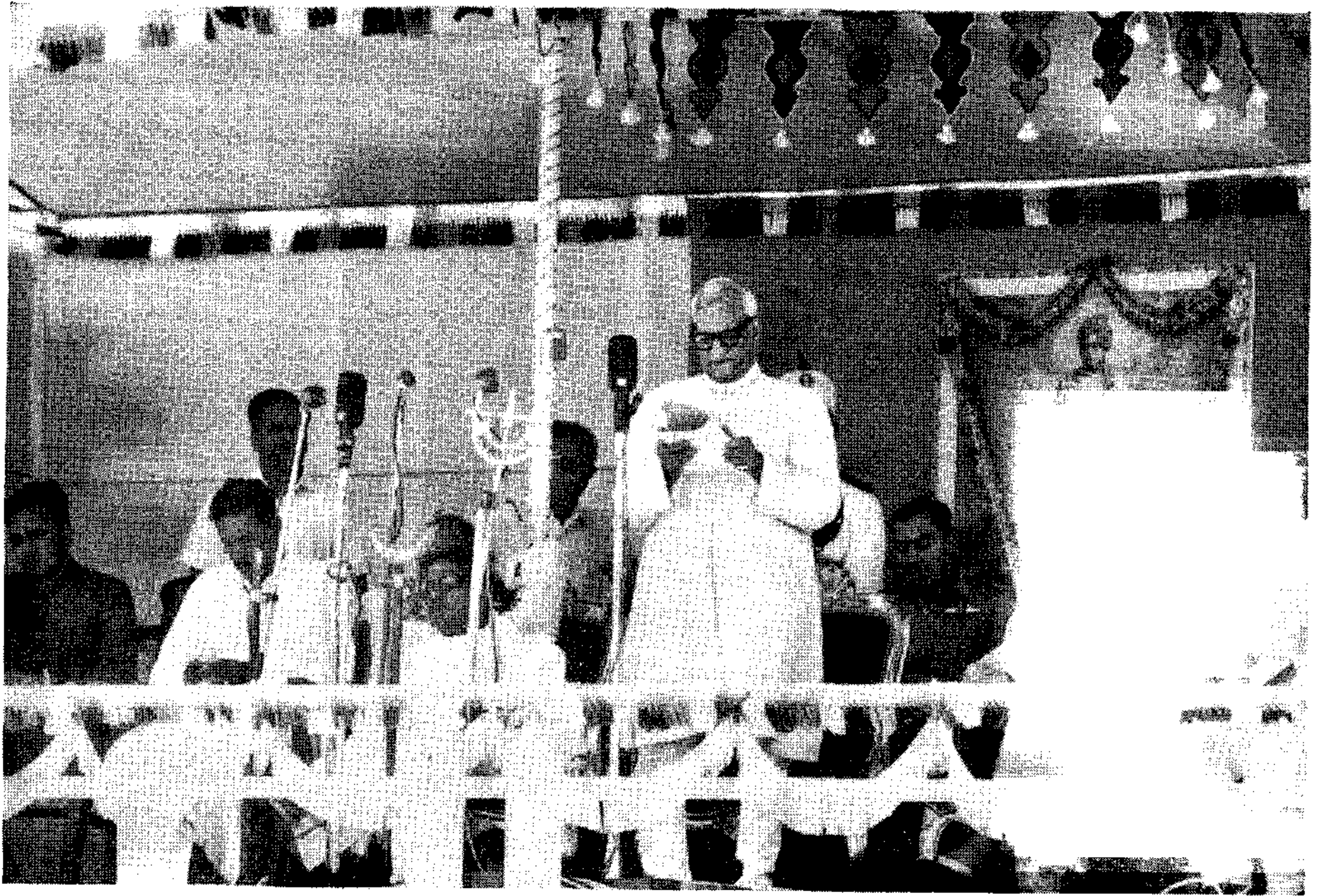
A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL, KANYAKUMARI
*Consecrated by Swami Vireswarananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission and
Inaugurated by Sri V. V. Giri, President of India on 2nd September 1970*



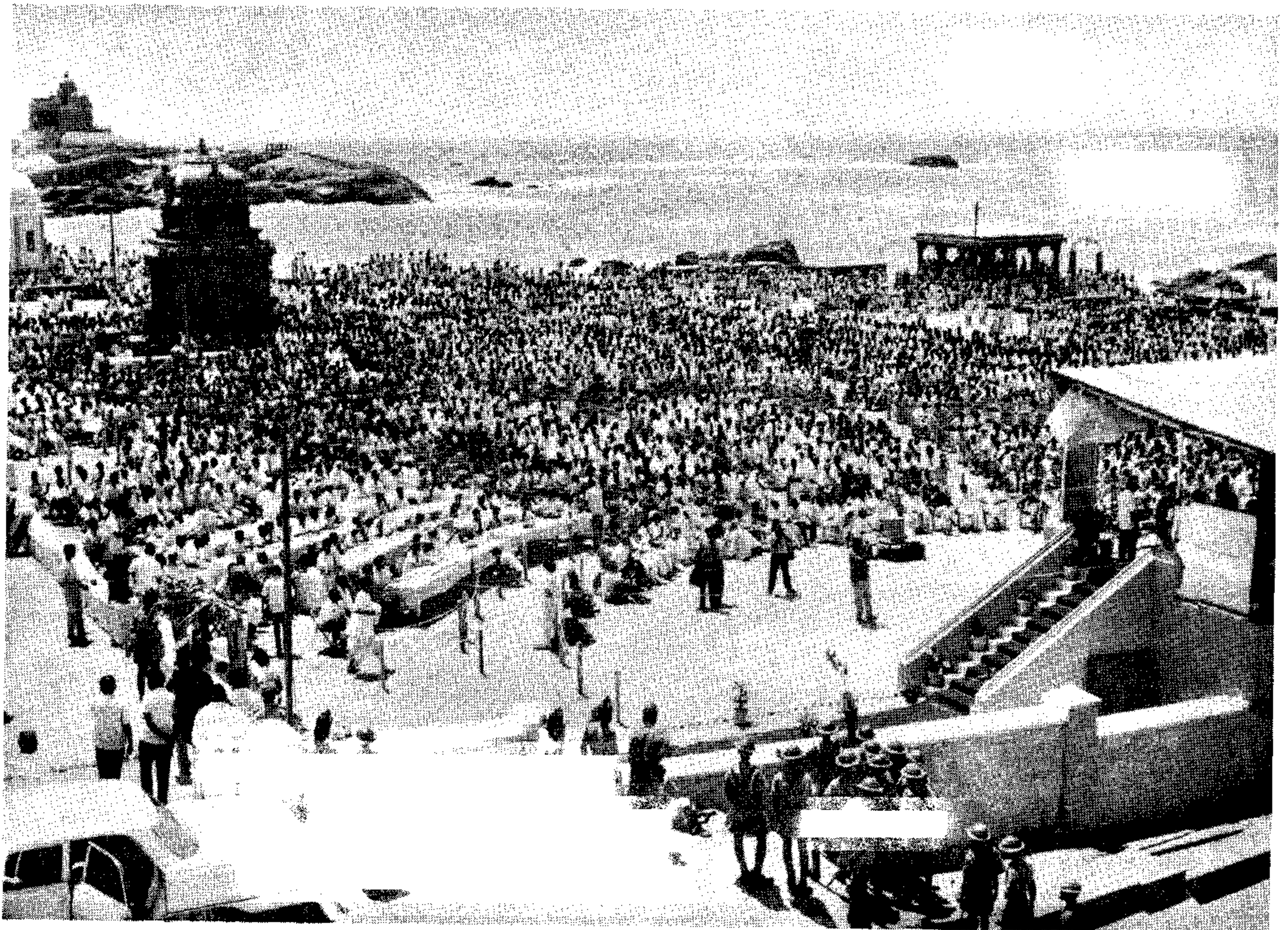
A long line of pilgrims awaiting their turn to board the launch



Swami Vireswarananda giving his Benedictory Speech



President Giri delivering his Inaugural Address



The vast audience at the inaugural meeting