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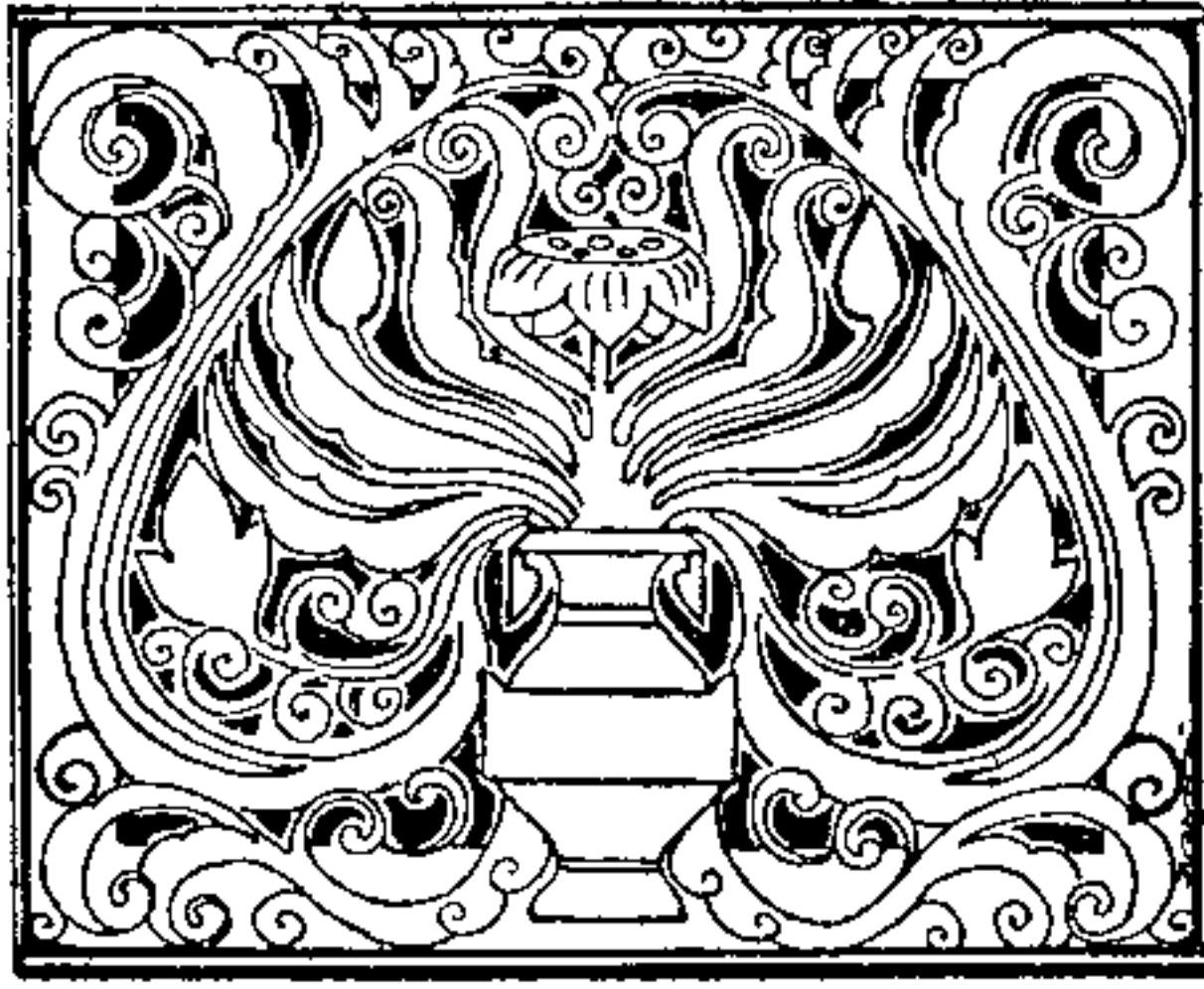
Prabuddha Bharata

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JANUARY 1970

CONTENTS

The Universal Call of Religions	1
Dharma Alone Can Save the Troubled Revolutions— <i>Editorial</i>	2
Letters of a Saint	7
Grounds for Optimism— <i>Swami Pavitrananda</i>	8
Profiles in Greatness ; Spirit of Science — <i>Explorer</i>	17
The True Welfare of Students — <i>Prof. Robert P. Utter</i>	19
Musings of the Musafir	27
What Inspires Me Most in Holy Mother's Life — <i>Srimati Mekhala Jha</i>	29
Human Trends— <i>Anna Nylund</i>	31
Notes and Comments	33
Reviews and Notices	36
News and Reports	38

Information for subscribers, contributors and
publishers overleaf.



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL| LXXV

JANUARY 1970

No. 1

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

THE UNIVERSAL CALL OF RELIGIONS

Work alone art thou entitled to, and not its fruit.
So never work for fruit, nor yet desist from work.

Gītā II. 47

There should not be the practice of what is good
with any thought of the fame which it will bring,
nor of what is evil with any approximation to
the punishment which it will incur.

Kwang Tze 3.1

Benefactors shall pass to the reward prepared for the wise,
of which Thou, O Wise One, art Determinant.

Yasna 34.13

If a man does what is good,
Let him do it again.
Let him delight in it;
Happiness is the outcome of good.

Dhammapada 118

Verily, there is a reward for the righteous.
Verily, there is a God who judgeth in the earth.

Psalms 58.11

Whoever shall have wrought righteousness
shall receive a reward beyond the desert thereof.

Koran 27.91

ONWARD FOR EVER!

To attain liberation through work join yourself to work but without desire, looking for no result. Such work leads to knowledge, which in turn brings emancipation. To give up work before you know, leads to misery. Work done for the Self gives no bondage. Neither desire pleasure nor fear pain from work. It is the mind and body that work, not I. Tell yourself this unceasingly and realize it. Try not to know that you work. Do all as a sacrifice or offering to the Lord. Be in the world, but not of it, like the lotus leaf Let your love go to all, whatever they do to you. A blind man cannot see colour, so how can we see evil unless it is in us? We compare what we see outside with what we find in ourselves and pronounce judgement accordingly. If we are pure, we cannot see impurity. It may exist, but not for us. See only God in every man, woman and child; see it by the antarjyotis, 'inner light', and seeing that, we can see naught else. Do not want this world, because what you desire you get. Seek the Lord and the Lord only. The more power there is, the more bondage, the more fear. How much more afraid and miserable are we than the ant! Get out of it all and come to the Lord. Seek the science of the maker and not that of the made.

Sri Kanchi

DHARMA ALONE CAN SAVE THE TROUBLED REVOLUTIONS

I

The revolutions, everywhere in the world, are in trouble.

The solution to the crisis of rising expectations, eddying forth turbulently in the contemporary life of the world, is sought through science and socialism. But the tragedy of modern times is that the more socialistic and scientific the world grows, the more atomized, the more like an insect man becomes—with consequent accentuation of problems and miseries of life. While enthusiastically going scientific and socialistic we are increasingly becoming prisoners of materialism with the result that the promised emancipation of man is progressively becoming more a dream than an achievement.

We have recently witnessed in the world the strange historic fact of the metamorphosis of 'the white man's burden' into 'socialism's responsibility'. In the historic process it takes only a little time for a liberation movement to turn into a movement of enslavement. Whatever names we may use, enslavement is not liberation. But tremendous efforts are afoot in the world for selling enslavement as processed liberation. And this has entangled issues making it extremely difficult for the common man to find his way out of the maze.

Socialism without a spiritual foundation, that is without committing itself to being deliberately a movement toward the unlimited at every level of being and life, could become the worst engine of tyranny. It is time that people venture to think about the inadequacies of a mere half-baked and 'half-a-loaf' socialism and search for the more that they need for self-fulfilment.

Science has been increasingly putting more and more power in the hands of unregenerate man ; and with that power man has already turned the world into a house full of explosives. And politics continues to supply motivations for using those explosives for selfish pursuits, between rival competitors. So man lives a potentially scorched life frantically searching for meaning and security. What could be more dangerous than power divorced from sanity? And how can sanity prevail if man does not increasingly seek for qualitative self-improvement? There is nothing in science and socialism which can induce this seeking. Oddly enough, the increased desire for material gain and pleasures, which goes with devotion to science and socialism, amounts to bad applied economics !

Mere socialization of the sources of production cannot bring the days of our dreams unless the process of purifying human motives is built into the attendant strivings.. If a man is helped to increase his income it is helping him indeed. But if in the process he is goaded by the forces of his *milieu* to increase his desires by a higher ratio, then what good has really been done? Though his income may have increased, he is poorer because he still needs more than he has and does not know how to satisfy his increased needs. But it was unnecessary to impoverish him in this deceptive manner.

'Higher standard of living' has become a sacrosanct concept, and people dare not question it. Generally speaking, they do not see its hidden traps. Unless a higher standard of living is paralleled by a higher standard of inward being, man works against himself to his own disaster. He often seeks to attain this higher standard of living through violent revolutions ; but the study of history, as has been rightly said, shows

that violent revolutions are not conditioned by the logic of revolution but by the logic of violence.

So in many parts of the world peoples' revolutions are going against the people, because such revolutions have fallen into the old ruts of fanatic sectarianism too familiar to students of religious history. We need to understand that sectarian politics, like sectarian religion, can only do more harm than good in the long run. It has been truthfully said that what was done in previous ages by religious fanatics in the name of God is being done now by political fanatics in the name of the people !

Sectarian politics which insists that the welfare of the people can and must come only by the way of its choosing and by no other way, does not so much work for enduring welfare as for obdurate egocentricity. Thus group-loyalties keep society locked in a self-cancelling pastime of a bizarre type, propelled as it were by a sort of sardonic determinism. The result is that every group-endeavour becomes a prisoner of an opposite force ; freedom of thought and action vanishes, and fear pervades everywhere, leaving security nowhere. And yet these were not the fruits for which any one proposed to work. How then do these poisonous fruits grow and mature ?

The simple answer to this question is : no revolution which fails to work for the regeneration of the total man at the same time as for improved material conditions of living, can fail to create more problems than it sets out to solve. Many people who are the least competent for the job keep on playing with others' destinies. But to play with others' destinies before one has achieved one's own purification of motive, is a dangerous game. More thinking, selflessness and active love for all are

needed if less blood is to flow from attempts at doing good to people.

No doubt, planned economy in developing countries has sought to provide a constructive basis for political and social revolutions; but it is hardly recognized that planning on purely materialistic lines is bad economics, because, in effect, it devalues man himself by ignoring him in his higher dimensions. And when man is devalued things around him are overvalued. Then everywhere there ensue the forced battles for the fictitious prizes of life.

If we mean by a higher standard of living only the capacity to purchase more consumers' goods, the attained higher standard of living can only consume us—for we never get away from the law of diminishing returns. In the language of Bhartrihari, the Sanskrit poet, we are then simply eaten up by what we want to eat and enjoy. We have only to look around to see how this has indeed been happening in the world. But if higher standard of living did not mean only the capacity for better quantitative living but better qualitative living also and mainly so, the contemporary history of the world would have been a different one.

It is crucially important to realize that Dharma is of supreme economic importance and value, for it creates invisible wealth, by chastening the cravings and impulses of man from within. It gives greater value, meaning, power and sanity to our visible wealth. A thousand rupees can then give us the value of a lakh of rupees. Even poverty, when it is voluntary, is a kind of superior wealth for the chooser of it. The planning which does not augment Dharma in the truest sense of the term is the devourer of its own children. Prosperity which only fattens the flesh and whets the appetites is so much ash in the mouth.

Neither in manipulating the sources of

production, nor in modernizing the methods of production lies the solution of problems, if we leave out the central factor, the critical factor—the man who will handle them. The social upheavalists have indeed a generous impulse in that they seek to socialize the sources of production. But it is forgotten or not understood that the most important factor in production is man himself. If the manhood of man is not cultivated, more wealth also increases problems, as we find happening in affluent societies of the world. So man must cultivate himself, augment his physical, mental and spiritual powers. He must mine within himself and power-project himself. How this is to be done is taught by essential religion alone. To plan the economic salvation of mankind without having anything to do with transformation of man, is like trying to build a superstructure without foundation.

Those who have shown the way to raise the under dog to the human level were revolutionaries undoubtedly. But their revolutions would have succeeded far better had they dared to think that men could rise to a higher level, nay, that they were essentially divine. To prove this fact may indeed be the contribution of religion to the next cycle of collective human development.

No doubt, human frailties distort revolutions and falsify promises. But no one can stop the onward movement of the working-people, for, by the law of the cyclic manifestation of group-powers, the power of the time-spirit is at their back. The greatest good of the working-people can come only through the many-sided opening up of the dimensions of their own being. The worker must not forget that his is not a robot-power but *ātma-sakti*, power of soul. Too much emphasis on the clever manipulation of labour in harnessing outer

material resources for the production of wealth, has already hurt the working-people by way of obscuring their inner resources for higher well-being. The working people have lost qualitatively in gaining quantitatively. Maybe this has been a necessary phase in the actualization of the revolution that is in process. But where are the signs that the leaders of the working-people are aware that this need not always be the case?

On the other hand the working-people and their leaders seem to have been caught in the trap of a self-defeating unconcern for purity of means; and so we find that an unabashed assertion of rights goes along with a blatant unconcern for duties. Wrong actions are considered condonable in pursuing 'legitimate claims'; and these latter are not defined in a responsible manner. This has hurt not only the more privileged classes, but more so the working-people themselves. Witness how promptly members of the working-classes are ready to harm or destroy other members when group-wise differences arise on any account. This cannot surely be cited as a gain to the working-people.

It is time that working-people are helped to work for their higher interests along with their economic interests, which are in fact inseparable. They need to be helped to manifest the manhood of their higher nature in order to live, grow and attain self-fulfilment. This opiate of the masses, namely the prospect of crass material betterment, is precisely what has robbed them of the vision of, and faith in, their higher possibilities. The aspiration for the highest is lost sight of. The working-people's struggle will not cease, but it should be graduated and aimed at higher and higher objectives, while the gains are wisely consolidated.

II

The youth of the world, for whose minds a fierce battle is raging on this planet between various forces, specially needs to see clearly that in this tough-going world the soft-headed, unsure-footed have no future. Truth is no respecter of persons or creeds. Only those who are strong and are not afraid of truth, but dare to look it in the face and stand by it, come life or death, will triumph in this exacting world. They alone are strong who are irrevocably committed to and affiliated to the highest.

The criterion of the truth is that it benefits, helps and uplifts one and all. Truth never works for sectional salvation but for the salvation of all. History has amply proved this and keeps on proving it as every day passes: if we do not work for the salvation of all, no particular section will truly achieve it. In that case the vicious circle to be seen in world history will not be broken. Actualized truth quickens the intellect, opens the understanding in a new way, and expands the heart, enabling it to embrace all. In the language of truth there is no word for revenge. All is love and service. Love is renunciation. Service is self-actualization. The way to get anything enduringly is to give it. 'If you seek salvation give it to others. Those who clamour that only their class should have salvation no matter what happens to others, do not even know that they do not love their own class well enough.

Modern man stands at a vantage point of history. Time has brought him unexpected possibilities. He can transform himself and his world if he chooses. But what will he choose? This will depend on his acquired wisdom. Everything is propitious and waiting. Only man must arise out of dirt and sloth, cruelty and chaos, delusion and cleverness, to own his

inherent stature of divinity. That is perfectly possible if only he will have it so.

The facts of the physical unity of the universe and of the spiritual unity of man and reality, must be seen to have far-reaching implications for man. In the light of these we can solve all our problems. What prevents the world from being a more habitable place for us all is that we have not accepted *all* in our heart. We have lived down the ages in the hovels of egocentricity built by our lack of faith or our abundance of wrong faith. These are the consequences of man's unregeneracy. The solution is precisely in being regenerate. There is no other known way of becoming regenerate except through practising the disciplines which chasten the stuff of which man is made and from which arise thoughts, motivations and actions. That is called Dharma, religion in practice.

The world is agog with collective awakening today. This is the result of the millennial work of many sages, heroes and revolutionaries. But the collective awakening which has come has to be converted

into individual betterment and transformation through socio-economic measures and spiritual striving; otherwise much of the benefit of the revolution will have been lost. The world today needs those greater revolutionaries who can integrate in their scheme of action concern for the regeneration of man, welfare of one and all, universal love that knows no counting, faith that never fails any, and irrevocable commitment to the highest.

'Be bold and fearless and the road will be clear!' said Swami Vivekananda.

Those who act in fear of anybody or anything, or who act by creating fear, do not know the truth. Those who do not know the truth, their doing involving the destinies of others, must produce problematical results; the good they may do will be outweighed by attending evils. The way of life, essential religion preaches is the way of truth, love and fearlessness. He alone who seeks truth at any cost has identified himself with all. Such a person sees the road clearly and can lift others onto the right path.



'Dharma leads to destruction when it is itself destroyed, and protects when it is safe-guarded; therefore it must not be endangered, for the reason that Dharma which is harmed may not ruin us. . . . One's soul is one's witness, and his final resort; therefore disregard not your inner self which is the highest witness of man. . . . Sinners imagine that none sees them; but then the gods watch closely, as also the inner being in oneself.'

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Kankhal

14.5.1913

Dear Sri —,

I am very happy to receive your letter of the 6th instant. I am pleased to learn that Sri— is still in Madras and is doing well. Please convey to him our love and best wishes.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

One should lift oneself by oneself, the self should never be slighted for the self is the friend of the self and the self is its enemy.

Please remind him :

नामुत्र हि सहायार्थं पिता माता च तिष्ठतः ।
न पुत्रो दारं न ज्ञातिः धर्मस्तिष्ठति केवलः ॥

Father, mother, wife, son, relative—none of these stays to help you in the hereafter. Only Dharma stays by. Let him realize this fully.

The Lord is your helper, be not worried, all dangers will pass away. Stay very firm and very devoted—there is no fear.

I am pleased to learn that Te— has gone to Kualalumpur.

With my good wishes for you all.

Sri Turiyananda

¹ *Bhagavad-Gita* 6.5

‘... He specially projected that excellent form, righteousness (Dharma). This righteousness is the Controller of the Kṣatriya. Therefore there is nothing higher than that. (So) even a weak man hopes (to defeat) a stronger man through righteousness, as (one contending) with the king. That righteousness is verily truth. Therefore they say about the person speaking the truth, ‘He speaks of righteousness’, or about a person speaking of righteousness, ‘He speaks truth,’ for both these are but righteousness.’

GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

'What if the sky falls,
The earth quakes,
The mountain turns upside down,
The swelling sea dries up,
And the sun comes down,
To one who has attained the perfect Lord?'
'Free we are!
Subjects are we to none!
Death we fear not!
In hell we shall not suffer!
Weaklings we are not!
We rejoice!
We know no disease!
We bow to none!
There is ever bliss and never misery for us.
By none is He ruled: to such a supreme
Sovereign alone are we subject.
We shall not relax from that faith.
We have dedicated ourselves to His feet.'¹

Some persons are, fortunately, born optimists. They are optimists by nature. Other persons easily succumb to despair and frustration. They think they see dark omens all around. It is a question of temperament—mere temperament—of mental attitude, of right or wrong, healthy or unhealthy outlook. There is not a successful person who has not had his moments of crisis in life, and there is not a person who conceives himself to be a failure who has not had moments of exultation, who was not pleased by the praise of his friends. Difficulties come to anyone. But some persons like to sit on those difficulties, whereas others like to walk over them. Holy Mother said that difficulties will come to everyone but some will shake them off just as a duck shakes off water from its back. That is the secret.

We should not judge a thing by only a

thing; then we can judge it correctly. For instance, in a painting, there are dark portions as well as light portions. If you look only at the dark portions, it is an ugly, horrible thing. But when you get a view of the whole picture, it is so beautiful. Even the best painting will have some dark spots, which are simply the offset to bring out the beauty of the picture.

In weather, there is severe winter—below zero temperatures, and with gusts of wind blowing; and there is hot summer—120 degree temperature with 80 per cent humidity. But that's not all there is to the weather. There is the refreshing autumn season and there is the welcome, pleasant spring season. And whatever our sufferings during winter or summer, everyone welcomes the new year. There is great rejoicing when the new year comes. So we must judge the thing as a whole.

So also with our life. We should not judge a life, much less our own life, by particular incidents, particular moments, particular difficulties. In a mountain journey, you go up and you go down. After going two miles up, you may go even six miles down. It is all dark, let us say. But you rise up. Through ups and downs some persons have climbed Mount Everest. In the same way, in our life there are ups and downs. That *means* life.

And we should not even judge our life only by the incidents in *this* life, by this limited span of existence. We have our past; we have our future. Our existence does not end when this body falls off. We must judge by the whole picture and not by only a fragment of it. We must see our life in relation to our past, in relation to our future. Some persons cannot look

¹ Hymns by Appar, a saint of South India, a worshipper of Śiva, who is believed to have lived in the seventh century A. D.

segment of it. We must see the whole into the future; they cannot understand their future nor can they understand their past. But here we must learn from the experiences of others who know, who feel. There is no other way.

Even those religions which do not believe in reincarnation, which believe in one life, do believe in a hereafter, in eternal heaven or eternal hell. They also say that this present life is a fall from a state of bliss: Adam fell and we are suffering because of that. The important thing is not our suffering; the important thing is what we really were. The state of bliss was our real nature.

Buddha did not talk of God; he said that the goal of life is Enlightenment, *Nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇam paramam sukham*: *Nirvāṇa* is infinite bliss. He said after his realization:

'Many a life I have lived,
O builder of this tabernacle;
But this time thou canst no more deceive me:
I have found out my real nature—
The eternal bliss of Enlightenment!'

Patañjali's *yoga* book says that our real nature is the transcendental state of the mind. Not this mind; what we see of our mind is fluctuating, constantly changing. But when we reach a steadfast condition of the mind, that is called the superconscious state. In the superconscious state, the highest state, there is pure bliss. In the intermediate state, that is, in the relative world, there is a mixture of good and evil, happiness and unhappiness, difficulties and opportunities.

Ordinary persons go after success. Yes, a certain amount of material success is necessary for us to go on with our lives. But what is called success may not be success. Success relates to the relative world. When we get that success, we are disillusioned. And we do not know

what real happiness is. What we call happiness may not be happiness. Success ordinarily means wealth, fame and power. When we have wealth, there is the fear that we shall lose it or that others will become richer than we. There are few persons who are without jealousy of others. And if a person is famous, all of a sudden his name may be eclipsed. And when one has and loves power, then always there is fear of someone more powerful than he. Success is unreliable, though all go after success in the material world. Success is undependable; when you get it, you become disillusioned.

There is a Chinese parable: A poor man had a fine horse. His friends would come to him and say, 'Oh, what a fine horse! You must be very happy.' He would say, 'Do you call it happiness?' After some time the horse fled away. And people came to sympathize with him, thinking he was unhappy. He said, 'Do you call it unhappiness?' Some days afterwards the horse returned and brought with it several wild horses. And the man's friends exclaimed, 'How happy you must be! You have got so many horses!' He said, 'Do you call it happiness?' He had a son. The son liked those wild horses. One day he went for a ride on one of the horses and fell down and became crippled. People came and sympathized with his father, 'Oh, how unhappy you are—only one son and he has become crippled!' And the man said, 'Do you call it unhappiness?' Then there was a war in the country and young men were drafted for the army. But his son escaped because he was crippled. And his friends said, 'You must be very happy that your son has not been drafted for the war.' And he said, 'Do you call it happiness?' He was not sure what would come afterwards.

So as far as material success is concern-

ed, one cannot be sure what will come. It is most unreliable, though all go after it. Even for success in material life, a great deal depends on how optimistic you are. If you are optimistic, you can go on. If you are not optimistic, then you succumb very easily. Your real power does not come. Even in material life it has been found that we do not utilize all our capabilities. In any case, though, life is usually judged by the standard of material success, which is mostly unreliable. But still, with an optimistic outlook, one succeeds much better than one would have done otherwise. But in spiritual life, success is thoroughly reliable.

There was a boy in ancient India. He got some education and became conceited. His father was a wise man, a sage. He said to his son, 'You seem to be very conceited. Do you know how unheard things can be heard? How unspoken things can be spoken? How unknown things can be known?' The boy was in a dilemma—he did not know what it was. So he blamed his teacher. He said, 'Perhaps my teacher did not know, and so he did not tell me.' Then his father said, 'Bring a fruit of the nyagrodha tree' (something like an acorn). The boy brought it. 'Break it. . . . What do you see?' 'Some seeds, sir, extremely small.' 'Break one of them. . . . What do you see?' 'Nothing, sir.' 'The subtle essence you do not see, and in that is the whole of the nyagrodha tree. In this material world there is a subtle essence. That subtle essence is in everything you see. That is the Truth, the invisible Reality behind this visible world. That is your real Self. Thou art That.' 'That'—the Existence behind the changing things of this world—we do not know; yet it is our real nature.

Nowadays scientists are saying that behind matter there is something conscious,

that there is no qualitative difference between animate beings and inanimate things. They think there will come a time when we shall be able to find out how matter developed consciousness, how matter became spirit. One scientist was saying these things recently in a science conference.

So even in ancient times, without any scientific knowledge, that father said to his son, 'when you break some substance into pieces, the material thing which you saw and which afterwards you do not see—that invisible core is the essence of the thing. That is the reality, and "thou art That."' The boy couldn't understand it. And the father, by nine illustrations, explained nine times. Each time the son said, 'I do not understand it.'

The father continued, 'What happens when one sleeps? At that time we are all lost, we forget the existence of the material world. In that state, all are on the same level—a great scholar and a great fool, a great king and a great pauper, a sage and an animal. In deep sleep, they are all in the same category. They are quite forgetful, oblivious of the surrounding world. That state is common to all. And thou art That.' In deep sleep we go to a state that almost resembles the highest state, our Reality. Almost, but there is some trace of ignorance which connects us to the relative world. In deep sleep, we get joy. But in the waking state, there is a mixture of joy and misery.

Nine times the father said, 'Thou art That.' That means, you are the Ultimate Reality; your real nature is that state, which is invisible and not material. Material things change—there is decrease and increase, in quantity and quality. But the substratum of this universe is Infinite Existence which does not die, which is not born, and which is Eternal Bliss and

Knowledge Itself. In that Infinite Existence, who will know whom? That is your real nature.

This statement, 'Thou art That', is one of the most important texts in the Upaniṣads. There are other similar texts—'Thou art Knowledge', 'Thou art Bliss', 'Thou art Oneness'. This text is extremely important. People are asked to meditate on it and through that they get the Realization.

In this (*Chāndogya*) Upaniṣad, the father said to his son: 'Once a man was taken from his home by some bandits, blindfolded, brought to a forest and left there. He was crying out for someone to remove the bandages from his eyes and show him the way to his home. Then a person came who compassionately took off the cloths from his eyes and gave him directions which way to go. After going this way and that, making blunders and mistakes, he reached his home. In the same way, when a man of God, a man of Realization comes, he shows you the way, he gives you the direction. If you follow that direction and continue the journey, you will reach that state of Bliss which cannot be described by words, which cannot be seen by eyes. That is the Ātman, your real Self.'

The important thing is: if That be our real nature, there cannot be any reason for pessimism, there cannot be any reason for frustration. We have to reach that state, our real state. Through some mistake, there came ignorance, we don't know how. We are not even aware that we are in ignorance, but that does not matter. If a man has a jewel in his hand, it does not matter if he does not know the value of the jewel. It does not lose its value.

There is a story about a poor man who once found a jewel by chance and did not know what it was. He went to a shop where eggplants were sold. The shop-

keeper thought it might be helpful to him as a weight and wanted to give him a few cents for it. But the man thought it was worth more than that and went to another place. Another person offered him a higher price, and some other person wanted to give an even higher price. Then a jeweller saw it and gave the man a fabulous price—it was so valuable. But the man who found the jewel did not know its value.

In the same way, our ignorance does not change the fact that we are the eternal Self and our real existence is the state of Bliss. But we are in ignorance, and when there is ignorance it is a question of removing the ignorance. When there is darkness, it is a question of bringing the light and removing the darkness. There is no question of optimism or pessimism. Optimism is in the very nature of the universe. It is proved by reasoning and it is proved by experience. The Upaniṣadic sages were not simply making philosophical assertions, philosophical statements. That father spoke to his son from his own experience. There were many such sages in the Upaniṣadic Age who spoke from direct experience. And then afterwards those persons who followed them, followed their teachings, got those same experiences. Even in modern times, those who have succeeded in spiritual life have got exactly those experiences which you find in the Upaniṣads or other ancient scriptures. These things, therefore, are proved by reasoning, by experience in personal life, and by scriptures. Scriptures give the experiences of persons who have realized the Truth. They give the challenge; they give the direction. If you follow these methods you will get the same experience.

The proof of any truth is experience. Religion offers that challenge: you have just to do these things and get the experi-

ence. Sages, men of realization, do not like to waste your time by intellectual discussion. They just give you the direction, and if you follow it, they are sure you are going to reach That. Sure that you will succeed at least to a certain extent, which will indicate that there is truth in these things. So these truths are proved by reasoning, by scriptures and by experience. Of all the proofs, the greatest is *experience*.

In one of the Upaniṣads (*Kaṭha*) it is said: 'The knowledge of the Ultimate Reality cannot be attained by discussion.' Any amount of discussion will not give you the final or irrefutable proof. If someone gives you arguments which you cannot refute, you need not worry. There will come another person, or after a century, new theologians, who will refute his arguments. Perhaps he has greater intellect than you. Spiritual truths depend on the fact that some persons have realized them. The Upaniṣads say that if you come into contact with a person who speaks from experience, it will be very hard to resist him. The very fact that he speaks from experience carries with it great power.

A judge whom I know once told me, 'In the courts I hear the arguments and counter-arguments. But invariably I can find out the real truth from the way in which the witnesses talk. And I come to a decision and give judgment on the basis of my own intuition.' He said that in one important case he gave a verdict against a very powerful lawyer. There was much fuss about it. Afterwards he met that lawyer on a train and the lawyer told him that the judge was right. So when there is truth in something, you cannot resist it. But leaving aside the truth, you want to prove whether the living horse is dead or dying. You can do anything by argumentation. You go to a lawyer and he will make truth into falsehood and falsehood

into truth. And sometimes in politics also they will do that. So it is not a question of arguments. It is the question of experience. If that be so, our task is simply to remove our ignorance. Or, in a more practical way, to remove the obstacles that are in our way.

In one important aphorism of Patañjali, it is said: 'We change our life through a process of evolution, not by transforming 'ourselves, but simply by removing the obstacles' *Yoga* philosophy believes in evolution. To speak in modern language, from the amoeba comes the human being. But in the amoeba there was the man involved; the development did not come from outside. The amoeba by struggle removed the obstacles and began to grow into a human being. Until the human stage is reached, it is a struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. But after the human state is attained, continued evolution lies in self-effacement.

On the human level the ego is at its greatest extent, and this ego is the source of ignorance—'I am a knower. I am a doer. I am somebody. I am separate from the world. I am separate from all other existence. I deny God.' One scientist said recently that scientists will soon become Nature, will become God. That means they will bring new life into this world. So at the human level egotism is at its highest, and here further evolution will come through self-effacement. One sees even in worldly life that a person who has self-effacement, who leads a dedicated life, who gives love for hatred, who is forgiving, is praised. He is called a saintly man, if not a saint. In this way he grows. But all the while he is simply removing the obstacles. A forgiving man has removed his tendency to get angry. That was his obstacle. He has removed that, and so he is called forgiving. When

the obstacles are removed, one's real nature comes forth.

At the ultimate state, we know that our real existence is the undying Self. We know our Divinity; we become one with the Divinity. Or we realize God and find that we are one with Him. It does not matter whether you say you are a child of God or you are a part of God or you are one with God. You have found out the state of bliss which is your inheritance, 'the peace that passeth understanding'.

In spite of all these things which the world has experienced and which we have as our guideposts, people become pessimistic, frightened and doubtful. But it is a wrong outlook: it goes against common sense, it goes against the facts of life. If you consider yourself weak, weak you become. It is the law of nature—you become weaker and weaker. The man who asserts himself becomes stronger and stronger.

It is much more so in spiritual life. Christ said, 'Unto every one that hath shall be given...but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.' The more you do not claim your birthright, the more you go against the facts of life—the facts of real life, whole life, not a segment of life in which you exist on this earth at most 100 years or 120 years—the weaker you become. And the more you assert yourself—not in the ordinary sense, but in the fullest sense—the more you force yourself to believe and live the truth that has been realized by men of God, the stronger you become. The scriptures say: 'You might be weak, but He in whom you have taken refuge is not weak.' Appar (the Śaivite saint quoted above) was much persecuted by the Jain king under whom he lived, but he stood firm and said, 'man is not weak.' His steadfastness was so great that afterward the king was converted to his faith. What

was the source of his strength? The real source of strength is not this body or this mind. It is something much deeper. The true source of strength is our real Existence, our Divinity. To believe in God and at the same time to feel weak is a contradiction in terms. It does not speak of one's faith in God.

It is true, most persons cannot have such tremendous faith, but we should know that this is the way. When we lose faith, it is a mistake. Correct that mistake! Try to correct that mistake. Those who have deeper experiences say that our real nature is trying all the while to manifest itself. There is an embankment in the form of ego and the flood tide from the ocean cannot come in—our ego is so strong. Make some hole and the water will rush forth. To make some hole means just to believe in these things, to try to follow the directions, to find by what means we can rise to a higher level. For man it is impossible but not for God. When we get the connection with the source of all reality, we become strong. As it is, all the while we feel we are helpless, we are weak. We do not like to believe in our real source of strength; we have forgotten our real nature. We are so much in ignorance that we think it is the reality.

Swami Vivekananda said in his poem *the Song of the Sannyasin*: 'Where seekest thou that freedom?' Freedom means bliss. 'That freedom, friend, this world nor that can give. In books and temples vain thy search.' Simply going to temples and reading books won't give you freedom. 'Thine only is the hand that holds the rope that drags thee on.' You have blindfolded yourself. Remove the folds from around your eyes. 'Then cease lament, let go thy hold,... know thou art That ...' That is the real fact of life, of spiritual life. We are holding the rope. We do

not like to see the light. We do not like to make an effort, even if we are told it is possible to succeed.

A great saint said that sometimes even when God tries to reach you—and God is trying to reach you all the while—and there is a teacher who gives you instruction, and there are persons on the path who are a source of inspiration to you, even if you get these advantages, you do not succeed because your mind is against you. You are so weak and you want to remain weak. Some persons like to sit on their difficulties. They do not like to walk over them. Difficulties are there to be surmounted. But here we have a great advantage; we are sure of the goal and the goal is ours. It is not an unknown goal. It is unknown only because we are in ignorance. We have simply to make an attempt and continue our journey, our path. The path is sure and the goal is sure. All saints say the same thing. If you make a little attempt you get the reward a hundred-fold, a million-fold. If you walk one step toward God, God comes to you a hundred steps. Mohammed said, 'If you walk to God, God *runs* to you.' And he said to his followers, 'You are never alone.'

In all your struggles, at least in spiritual life, there is help behind you. It is the experience of the sages, the ancient sages and the modern sages. They all speak in the same terms. They say, 'Do a little and great help will come.' God is always with you, because He is your real nature. When we say, 'God is always with you', we speak in devotional terms. In terms of philosophy, God is our real nature. One has not to prove it by reasoning; one will know it in time. You are bound to reach this state because it is your nature. Sooner or later, everyone is sure to reach that same state.

Swami Vivekananda once said, 'The matter of today will be the Spirit, the God, of tomorrow.' It is a tremendous statement. This is a fact: behind matter, there is the spiritual existence. Matter will develop consciousness. When consciousness has developed, there will come spiritual awakening. There is no difference between animate and inanimate existence. Animate existence is also in ignorance. A great scholar may be in darkness, spiritual ignorance. There is no difference as long as one has not known the Truth, as long as one does not know one's own Reality. Everyone will get the Truth through the process of evolution. But why should one wait? Religious life means to struggle right now!

For ordinary persons, those who feel weak, what is the remedy? This is also true: if you simply say to a weak person, 'Don't be weak! Don't be weak!', that does not help him. But that person should be ready to feel that weakness is bad. Then there is hope for him. But if one revels in one's weaknesses, just to find comfort in his weaknesses, just to get sympathy from others, nothing can be done for him. It might be that more experiences are necessary. Through experiences, hard experiences, perhaps not in this life but in some future life he will turn back, he will put his back to the wall and fight. But there must come the desire to get rid of this weakness. Even a slight desire is enough. If water falls slowly drop by drop for a long time, it will fill up a big lake. Much more quickly it will come in religious life, they say. And this is logical.

As it was stated before, the ego is like an embankment preventing the water of the ocean from coming in. But if there is even a slight hole, it will begin to widen and widen, and afterwards there will be a tre-

mendous crash and everything will come down. For one who is conscious of his weakness the practical direction would be: 'Make a list of your strong points. Everyone has his strong points. Even a person who feels weak or sorry for himself has his strong points. Just meditate on those things. You need not meditate on God. Meditate on your own strengths and try to develop those qualities. Read healthy books—scriptures—and write down the texts which speak of your real nature, which speak of your potential spiritual experiences. Read the lives of saints, those who have succeeded. Don't seek the company of those persons who fail and who speak of failure. Write down those texts which speak of the Truth, which speak of the real nature of human beings, the glory of the Ātman, the glory of God-realization. Write them down and meditate on them from day to day.' In this way even a drooping heart will gradually find strength.

The text 'Thou art That' is given for meditation. But even then, the mind is so treacherous. Some persons might not even feel strong enough to do that, at least in this life. So there is a direction for repetition: Repeat this text from day to day, or take some simple text from some real scripture—scripture means the teachings of those who speak from personal experience—take that one text and try to repeat it and try to follow that in practice. We find that persons following different religions—Catholics, Moslems, Buddhists, Hindu—all repeat some holy text. Repeating a holy text is comparatively easy. If you can continue it, afterwards those ideas will sink into your mind. At first it becomes meaningless, but if you follow it—if the person who gives it is very powerful spiritually—it will work in your mind. It is a great help.

The *Gītā* says that in spiritual life if you

begin sincerely, however little you do it will bring great results. 'A doer of good will never come to grief.' In ordinary attempts, material attempts, if you begin a work and do not finish it, it is ugly, it does not give you any return. But in spiritual life if you have done even a little thing it will come to your help, 'it will free you from great fear', because you will get a glimpse, you will get a feeling that these things are true. And even the little you do will give you a taste; you will have a belief and that belief will be sound. It has not become strong enough to burn away your ignorance, but it is something, you will feel. Then afterwards it is a question of just continuing your journey. In that journey there will be ups and downs, but that does not matter. One who wants to reach the mountain-top and is determined to do that and has longing for it, is sure to succeed.

It is not only a question of determination. Longing is much more important than determination. Determination is simply will-power against things. Longing does not think in terms of difficulties. If one continues, one is sure to reach that state. When one has true longing for spiritual things, help comes. It comes beyond one's expectations. One cannot prove how help comes, why it should come. But it is experienced that help comes. One explanation might be that there is one Mind behind everything. Spiritual progress means that you have to find out your universal existence, your oneness with the Universal Mind. If in one corner of the globe a mind is earnestly thinking of spiritual progress, if that mind longs intensely enough, the response will come, for the Universal Mind is everywhere. In any case, the help comes.

The important thing is to put the spiritual teachings into practice. It is not a

question of listening to lectures. It is not a question of theological proof of the existence of God. It is a question of practice. If a person, instead of reading too many things, just puts into practice some little thing, that will be more valuable than reading libraries of books. If a person puts one idea into practice, that will be enough to bring out a great change in his life. So it is said that even a little doing of good will finally lead you to the ultimate success. There is no ground, no reason for becoming pessimistic. Because we had to select a title, we chose 'Grounds for Optimism'. But it is not a question of 'grounds for optimism'. It is a question of claiming and getting your birthright. That is the great fact of life.

'Bondage is of the mind, and freedom is also of the mind. Man is free if he constantly thinks: "I am a free soul. How can I be bound, whether I live in the world or in the forest? I am a child of God, the King of Kings. Who can bind me?" If bitten by a snake, a man may get rid of its venom by saying emphatically, "There is no poison in me." In the same way, by repeating with grit and determination, "I am not bound, I am free", one really becomes so—one really becomes free.

'Once someone gave me a book of the Christians. I asked him to read it to me. It talked about nothing but sin. (To Keshab) Sin is the only thing one hears of at your Brahma Samaj, too. The wretch who constantly says, "I am bound, I am bound" only succeeds in being bound. He who says day and night, "I am a sinner, I am a sinner" verily becomes a sinner.

'If a man repeats the name of God, his body mind and everything become pure. Why should one talk about sin and hell, and such things? Say but once, "O Lord, I have undoubtedly done wicked things, but I won't repeat them."

'One should have such burning faith in God that one can say: "What? I have repeated the name of God, and can sin still cling to me? How can I be a sinner any more? How can I be in bondage any more?"'

—Sri Ramakrishna



'SPIRIT OF SCIENCE'

Even as a young child Manya Sklodowski had the gift of absorption; she would remain fascinated by her reading totally oblivious of external surroundings and distractions.

The passage of time but served to intensify this faculty; she became absorbed in the quest of knowledge oblivious of the common yet powerful attractions and demands of human life. 'Science' became her prime pursuit and passion and the obscure Manya Sklodowski became the renowned Marie Curie, the distinguished discoverer of 'Radium', twice recipient of the coveted Nobel Prize. The 'Spirit of Science' seemed to have found a lodgement in her soul.

A brilliant student right from the beginning, a brilliant academic career was a natural 'must' for her; but the noble heart of the girl made her more concerned with the needs of her father and sister. In order to help her elder sister through medical studies in Paris, she interrupted her own for three years and instead took up the unenviable job of governess in a difficult household.

When at last she could proceed to Paris to become a 'Master of Science', it was only on the basis of barest monetary re-

sources which were not even enough to give her a third class railway travel! But the call of science was irresistible and when finally she could be a student in the Faculty of Science at Sorbonne, with all its lectures and laboratories, it was to her a paradise.

And how she became absorbed in her quest! To fellow students she was 'a foreigner with an impossible name, who was always in the first row at the physics courses but who talked little'. This strange Polish girl had no interest in young men but when the elderly professors came, the 'majestic men of science' who could impart knowledge, she would be thrilled and all the privations and sufferings of her life as a poor student would disappear.

Marie's student life was one of monastic simplicity. Her meagre funds as well as her burning desire to be alone and free to dedicate herself to study had made her choose for her residence a garret on the sixth floor. The 'room' had neither heating nor lighting and water had to be carried all the way up. To minimize expenses she would walk to the Sorbonne and in the night study as much as possible in a public library which had light and warmth! As for food she almost lived on 'air'! Yet

these were the heroic years when the eternal student in her kept her 'so content with herself, so proud'.

Only a like 'hermit', a similar 'science-monastic' could claim the heart of such a one and precisely such a one materialized in the person of Pierre Curie, a science genius—passionately fond of his independence, a stranger to worldly pride and ambitions, one who would never approach others for careerist favours, one for whom the romantic love of woman held no appeal. Yet, in Marie Sklodowski he found a kindred spirit, worthy of respect and friendship. She was to him actually 'beautiful' in her austere setting—the denuded garret, the threadbare dress and her own stubborn features.

Soon they became partners in scientific research; each converted and 'humanized' the other. Her genius, courage and nobility and her total dedication to work held him fascinated. He had sworn never to get married as that would be an obstacle to 'science' but with Marie it was different. She soon became his beloved partner in life also, both living for the common quest of Science. Love and science nurtured each other. For Marie the combined demands of the home and laboratory, of husband and child, were staggering but that could not deter her from going ahead with further research work that would lead her on to doctorate in science. 'Life is not easy for any one of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all, confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something, and that this thing, at whatever cost, must be attained'—such was her attitude.

So, in spite of unbelievable inconveniences and in a primitive laboratory fashioned out of a discarded lumber room, in which even a workman would not have willingly worked, the two determined heads

and four dedicated hands collaborated in search of an unknown element—later on known as the renowned 'radium'. 'It was in this miserable old shed that the best and happiest years of our life were spent, entirely consecrated to work.' It was killing work, dragging on for months and years; yet their faith sustained them: 'We lived in our single preoccupation as if in a dream.' At one stage the poverty of equipment and other trying conditions hindered the work so much that Pierre was ready to cry halt but he had counted without Marie's character. She wanted to isolate the element 'radium' and she would not rest till she did that. And after forty-five months of unbelievable labour she did that.

While they were absorbed in their research work, they could not ignore their domestic economic problems. 'We have to be very careful and my husband's salary is not quite enough to live on.' A solution could be if Pierre could obtain a professorship at the Sorbonne but he disdained to canvass for himself. Fate seemed to be kind when a very generous and respectful offer came from the University of Geneva offering all facilities to both Pierre and Curie. But they did not want to interrupt their work on radium and so even that promising offer was sacrificed. Pierre continued with unsatisfactory jobs in Paris. How he wanted to have a suitable laboratory!

Friends protested at the merciless way in which they were wearing themselves out—and all that for what earthly gain? But soon results started manifesting. Their work was recognized all over the world; it had a great impact on the world of science. Radium proved to be of invaluable worth in alleviating human suffering, in diagnosis and treatment of malignant tumours, etc. A new industry began to develop on the basis of the new element.

One day Pierre received a request from certain American technicians asking for information about the process of separating radium from the ores and its purification. 'We can describe the results of our research without reserve, including the process of purification. . . .' to which Marie assented, 'Yes, naturally!' 'Or we can consider ourselves to be the proprietors or inventors of radium' added Pierre. They could patent the process and fully benefit by its monetary gains which they certainly and fully deserved. But Marie was quick to declare: '*It is impossible. It will be contrary to the scientific spirit.*' Pierre replied, 'I think so too. But I do not want this decision to be taken lightly. Our life is hard and it threatens to be hard for ever. For our children and for us this patent would represent a great deal of money, a fortune. It could eliminate our drudgery

and assure us comfort. And most important, we could have a fine laboratory of our own!'

After a good deal of reflection, Marie spoke: 'Physicists always publish their researches completely. If our discovery has a commercial future, that is an accident by which we must not profit. And radium is going to be of use in treating disease . . . It seems to me impossible to take advantage of that.' . . . Silence . . . Then Pierre echoed her previous sentence, - 'No. It would be contrary to the scientific spirit.'

The Scientific Spirit triumphed and the needed information was passed on to the American technicians.

EXPLORER

Source: *Madame Curie* by Eve Curie (Translated by Vincent Sheean).

THE TRUE WELFARE OF STUDENTS

ROBERT P. UTTER

For the past several years various student revolts and riots have captured the headlines the world over. When the youth of the world are in revolt in San Francisco, New York, Paris, Rome, Calcutta, and Tokyo, the situation is indeed serious. Each college seems to have its own peculiar reasons for the disturbances, such as war, the draft, taxes, free speech, government, academic freedom, civil rights, class-room conditions, examinations, teaching methods, subject-matter of courses, and so forth. When we ask why these revolts take place, we are bewildered by the number of different proximate causes they can be ascribed to, and we cannot find any order or con-

nection between the different outbreaks. Yet we cannot help feeling that there must be a connection, so we try to find a single cause somewhere. Many people come up with the easy solution of 'Communist conspiracy.'

There may be some truth to the 'Communist conspiracy' theory, but by itself it is too glib and superficial an answer. Even if true, the question is, why are the students ripe for such a conspiracy? There must be something in the present world's climate of opinion which accounts for the readiness of students to revolt in so many diverse countries and for the alienation students feel from parents, teachers, tradi-

tions, and society in general. Only by understanding the deeper causes can we make any kind of attempt to answer the basic questions: What is the true welfare of students, and what can we do to change our educational system and our society to ensure that the true welfare of students is realized?

We hear much today about 'alienated man'. This is a phrase that has been much discussed by sociologists. It refers to the complex phenomena caused by the scientific and industrial revolutions, the repeated impacts of which have spread a network of cracks throughout society so wide and deep that they have separated man from man, man from his work and his environment, and man from himself. Modern machine living has divorced the worker from the products of his work, employer from employee, and man from nature. It has brought about such a break with tradition that now for the first time in history man has no past, and therefore no future. This fact alienates the traditionalist from the modernist. It also alienates reason from the emotions, and both of these from sense experiences. Bifurcated, trifurcated, infinitely severed within himself, severed from his work and from nature and from other men, modern man is divided and sundered into a million pieces and is aware of his division as man in previous ages of history never was. It is human nature to be divided, but modern machine living has made that division agonizingly clear to the common man who in previous ages merely slumbered his life away in ignorance of philosophic issues. What was known before only in the thinking of the intellectual elite is now the everyday experience of the multitudes. The mind-splitting paradoxes of Zeno on space and time are now splitting the personalities of the populace through the experiences generated by the time-

saving, labour-saving, assembly-line techniques of the machines. The machines that split seconds and atoms are also splitting human souls.

Yet for all our awareness of the problem of alienation, the solution is hidden from us. Sociologists and psychologists see no farther than the visible world. They lack the solution to the problem precisely because they lack a basic, underlying philosophy of unity. Without a fundamental assumption of man's unity, all talk about curing the disease of disunity becomes futile. How can we even talk about curing alienation if division is man's natural state? Alienation is not a disease unless man is in reality one. Yet by our very talk about alienation as a disease that requires a cure we prove that we believe man's natural state is oneness. Here we have a glaring paradox: if man is only what science reveals him to be, the body-mind complex, he is hopelessly divided and no cure is possible; yet if a cure is possible we must go far beyond the limited vision of science and assume that man is basically one. The modern psychologist, however, in refusing to make this assumption reveals that he is as alienated as the patient he is trying to cure. The blind is leading the blind.

For centuries the type of philosophy which may be called mysticism or monism, the type taught in the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavad-gītā and by Śaṅkara, Sri Ramakrishna, and Swami Vivekananda as Advaita Vedānta, and by Plotinus, Meister Eckhart, Emerson, and Thoreau, and a few other isolated mystics in the West—this type of philosophy and religion has said from time immemorial that man is fundamentally one. Any and all apparent divisions of his being are appearances only, no more real than the apparent divisions of the dreamer into a dream self and a

dream world. The cure of alienation, as taught by all such mystical philosophers, is to awaken from the sleep in which such illusions appear as real, and to directly experience the inner unity of the self.

Furthermore, according to such a philosophy, our partial, divided experiences in this apparently divided world are not wholly unreal any more than dreams are. Just as all dreams have the dreamer as their real basis so the divided universe has the one Self as its real basis, and therefore all the multiple objects we see are hints or symbols of this real One. It is simply our failure to see the world as symbol of the One that leads to delusion and despair. If we could see phenomena as grounded in the One, we would see them as they are: apparently diverse symbols of a real underlying unity.

Our educational system today the world over is founded upon science. Science should not actually assume anything philosophical about the world it deals with, but most people, scientists as well as laymen, interpret the findings of science as limiting both knowledge and reality to what we can prove through observation. This in effect limits reality to the sense world. Yet science works a great deal with things not readily observable, such as microbes and atoms. Much of the subject-matter of science is invisible to our senses. Science thus points the way to a much finer world of very subtle matter hidden within the gross objects we see, but most people are reluctant to open the door to extra-sensory, extra-rational modes of being and knowledge. Yet mystical philosophy from time immemorial has taught that the gross world of sense objects is made up of very subtle matter, which, in turn, is the emanation from or the appearance of a completely undivided, immaterial Divine Being.

If we assume, with mysticism, that man

and the universe are more than the observable body, mind, and sense objects, then we must conclude that attempts to limit our attention, action, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts to what we can observe must not only leave out vast areas of our being, but also seriously cripple us. It is as if a man were to believe his right arm were paralysed. Even though it is not, such a belief would cripple him as much as if it were. If the reality of ourselves and the gross world about us is absolute Oneness, then any belief that we are many is a serious disease. If the emphasis of our educational system is placed on the teaching of manyness instead of oneness, then our educational system cripples rather than helps the growth of the personality.

Just consider how the child, from birth to adulthood, has it drummed into his ears that the world of the senses is the 'real' world. His parents teach him to be practical, to fight for his rights, and not to believe in foolish 'fairy tales', which are all false. Instead of having his imagination stimulated by myth and fairy tale, he is hardened by having his whole imaginative and emotional world closed off by the word 'unscientific'. He learns to mistrust his emotions because they do not yield 'knowledge' in the empirical and rational sense. All the subtle extra-rational experience which could give him glimpses of non-literal, symbolic truths are sealed off from him as if buried in a tomb. His parents teach him to 'be a little man and not cry'. All his griefs, rages, frustrations, and joys are bottled up tearless and voiceless within him, because it is 'unmanly' to express emotions. When he goes to school he finds that memorization of facts brings rewards; creative imagination is punished as 'lying', or at best is considered irrelevant. He finds that in today's 'scientific'

world it is mathematics and science that bring rich rewards, and that literature and the humanities are only poor relations. If he were asked why he should study the humanities in an age of science, he could not possibly answer, except perhaps to say that they 'broaden' the mind. In short, today's young person is starving for his own deepest self, but he does not know it, to say nothing of knowing what to do about it.

Thus we see that the vague, romantic yearnings of Byron's *Manfred* or Shelley's poet in 'Alastor' are today everyday realities. The romantic poets perhaps wrote better than we have given them credit for. They anticipated the agonies of today's age of steel and concrete when modern cities were just being born. They saw the birthpangs of today's Frankenstein's monster and interpreted them correctly. But they had no answers to the problem. For the very world of 'nature' in which they sought solace and escape from the griefs of city life was itself about to be destroyed. Their answer, to find comfort in nature, will not do today. Today, wherever we go, we continue to suffer, for we cannot escape the monster civilization which we have created. The modern starvation for the Eternal Self is universal, ubiquitous, and inescapable.

Modern man is starving for his Eternal Self in a very special, modern way. All men in previous periods have starved for it, but not quite as acutely or universally as today. In the past all aspects of life—religious, artistic, practical, civic, military, social, and personal—were interwoven with imaginative symbolism and 'passage rituals' of various kinds which made living much less agonizingly literal than it is today. Today a river is a river and a tree is a tree, but in all previous ages they have been the abode of spirits and the vehicle

of symbolic meanings, always embodying an added imaginative and symbolic dimension of being over and above the obvious and the literal. In the past the boundaries between the literal and the symbolic were continually being broken down by the imaginative interplay between the two. Today the boundary, like the Berlin Wall, is higher and thicker and more unbroken and unassailable than ever because of the emphasis on the empirical method of science and the profit motive in industry. And any breakdown of that boundary is branded instantly 'hallucinatory' or 'psychotic' or at best 'useless' or 'false'. These terms are self-fulfilling prophecies, for what makes the breakdown between the literal and the imaginative worlds destructive is mainly the fact that we disapprove of it. If we could only understand that the imaginative and the symbolic is the occasional rain which falls from the heaven of the Self down on the arid plains of our literal, sense-bound lives, we would then be more open to its creative and regenerative powers. But when we brand all such incursions from the apparent 'outside' as 'false', 'wrong', or 'insane', we twist, pervert, and destroy the mind in which they graciously appear, and, instead of helping that mind to see that such extra-rational experiences come from the Source of all creation, we cut that mind off from its Source, its Mother, its own deepest Self, and thus make it an orphan wandering lost and lonely in the desert world of literal experiences. When that orphan, created by our own literal-minded, 'scientific' attitude, turns on us and rends us limb from limb like a wild lion or tiger, we are terribly surprised and hurt—but in reality we are only reaping the whirlwind of our own sowing.

It is our own sowing because of the sterile lives our modern civilization has

created. The man of today, unlike men of previous times, has been deprived since birth of any glimpse of the symbolic element in life, that is, of any significant 'passage rituals'. Each person must face the hours of the day, the seasons of the year, the years of his life alone and without help. Deprived of the help of passage rituals in making the transition from one period of time to another, whether it is minutes, hours, days, months, or years, he feels that time's individual moments have become unendurable agonies that tear his very flesh from his bones. Each moment seems to burn him like a red-hot nail, and each becomes a nail in his crucifixion or his coffin. Today's young people thus face a crisis the like of which their ancestors never dreamed of, save perhaps for a few especially sensitive saints. But now what was the suffering of a few saints has become the suffering of the many. The common man has become a saint in the making, much more than ever before, because today's young have become acutely aware of their spiritual hunger, a hunger that they know cannot be assuaged by false promises. They look around and see that all the springs are dry. No hidden meanings, no indwelling spirits, no symbols of the divine, no sense of divine presence.

Yet there is a wealth of hidden symbolic meanings, even for science, if we but had eyes to see. Perhaps in time science will forge new myths for new men. In the meantime, what do we do? We have to show the real meanings in the old myths, not discard them but rethink and re-experience them. We cannot solve the problems of today's youth simply by forcible repression or indifference. Nor can we pursue to the death a mythless science. We must teach our students that science and myth, science and literature, science and the arts, science and

philosophy, and science and religion are not incompatible and opposed, but are two arms of the same man. It will not do to say that art and religion are all right as long as we don't believe in them. We must believe in them wholeheartedly and also believe in science wholeheartedly, and we must see where the relationship lies. We must see that emotions, imagination, myth, and symbolic meanings play as much a part in scientific thinking as in humanistic thinking, and that a sense of fact and controlled experimentation plays as much a part in the humanities as in science. We must learn that religion conflicts with science only when religion is unscientific and attempts to dabble in scientific theories without scientific methods, as it did when it told Galileo he was wrong in his theory of the heliocentric solar system. We must learn that science conflicts with religion only when it tries to interpret the great myths of religion in a literal, scientific manner, as it does when it says the world could not have been created in seven days. These two faults are simply two sides of the same coin: the confusion of the factual and the symbolic.

The real truth which we must teach our students, without waiting for science or religion to forge any new myths in a new language, for time is running out, is that every fact in the universe, no matter how small or insignificant, is far more than it appears. In every stone or piece of chalk, in every dustgrain or dew-drop, in every worm or seed or flower, the whole universe opens out in all its complexities and unity, if we but had the eyes to see. From a cat or a dog, from a cow or a snake, from a water-drop, flame, atom, or star, we can trace the pathway, the golden thread, the umbilical cord of creation back into the infinite beyond space and time. Each lizard or fish, grassblade or leaf or flower, each

pebble, dew-drop or jewel, is a gateway into primordial being if we but open our eyes and see. To cut our young people off from this glimpse is to cut them off from their true Self. Yet what do our schools and colleges do to awaken this vital insight?

By itself reason can only go so far; by itself reason cannot reveal infinite truth. By itself it is a terrible prison-house in which we are shut away from the light of infinite truth. The intense suffering caused by this shutting of ourselves away in the iron and stone dungeon of the rational mind is incalculable. It is deep, personal, and different for each; yet for each it is essentially the same: the deprivation of our real Self.

The help the young need must come from parents and teachers who understand their problem, parents and teachers who are more than intellectual masters but are spiritual masters as well. This is the one thing they need, but it is the one thing they do not get. All they get is more of what they already have too much of: more gadgets to learn with, and more subjects to learn in a strictly rationalistic and scientific way. Instead of being given the key to inner peace, they are given more and more of the kind of things that have driven them mad. Suppose that, instead of blind indulgence on the part of parents and ever more scientific subjects to study, the young could see both parents and teachers steeped in the art of meditation. Suppose that from childhood on up the young had seen their parents and their teachers rise out of the deep waters of meditation every morning as from a bath in pure divine light and love and peace—what a change of heart just this one experience alone would bring! What else would really need to be changed? Their lives would be suffused with the subtle warmth of creative beneficence as spring bathes the world in crea-

tive force each year. The separation we now experience between sense experience, emotion, and reason would melt away as icebergs melt in warm tropical seas. The mind would become one, and its anxieties and sufferings would then be healed.

The students of today are dimly aware of this, but only dimly. They demand, among other things, that their teachers speak to them in the living language of truth and not the dead language of falsehood, but they hardly know what this means. We must provide this demand with a meaningful answer. Parents and teachers must learn to speak the language that flows like a burning fountain of love direct from the heart of God. Nothing less will suffice to bridge that awful chasm of yearning and ignorance which today severs student from teachers and child from parent. Unless we can give our children truth instead of dead words, actual cash instead of promissory notes, actual food instead of recipes for tasty dishes, we shall have a complete breakdown in education, family life, and society as a whole. We must have teachers for whom every dustgrain and worm, every dog and cat, every tree and mountain and river, every man and woman is a living flame spouting direct from the burning heart of God. Only then will the students listen.

But we the adults must also listen. We must listen to our children's cries, and learn to distinguish between the real, the true demands and the false forms in which many of these demands appear. We must listen to the cries of the drug addicts, for example. Why are they seeking these hallucinatory experiences? Until we know why, we are talking to the wind and crying to phantoms and shadows. Perhaps without knowing they seek direct experience of things hidden from the senses and the mind. This is a legitimate demand, and we must

learn to recognize it as such. But we must teach our youth to understand that seeking experience of the divine through psychic phenomena and drug hallucinations is the worst possible solution. It is like a prisoner trying to dig his way out of his cell only to find that his tunnel ends in a still deeper cell even harder to escape from. Yet we, the adults, must learn to recognize that though the new bondage is worse than the old one, the attempt to escape is the serious symptom of the urgent need for escape. It is the symptom of the spiritual bankruptcy of our society. It is the danger signal that cries out for us to heed its warning that unless we do the right thing quickly all will collapse about our heads. We must learn from the agonies of the drug-seekers the full urgency of the need for escape, but we must all learn the art of true escape from ignorance, and not confuse any of the false methods with the true. Only then can we help our children and our students. Unless teachers are able to take students on a genuine spiritual 'trip' without drugs into the realm of the Divine Truth, students are going to continue to call the bluff of the false teachers who for all their clever teaching devices still cannot produce anything genuinely real in the class-room.

But students must learn that all such genuine spiritual experiences as I have been referring to cannot be attained without the strictest of self-discipline. *Tapas* or austerity and renunciation are the only possible means by which the spiritual heights may be scaled. There are no shortcuts by drugs or any other means. The ego and the desires must be transcended and left far behind. Students will have to learn the lesson that may be a bitter one for all those who are bent on a career of total self-indulgence, and that is that the solution to the problem of life's suffering

is to be found only in strictest austerity. All the present-day emphasis on sense enjoyment will have to go by the board. It is not discipline for discipline's sake but discipline for spirituality's sake that they will have to learn. Without such discipline, no genuine spirituality can be attained, and without spirituality there can be no end to the sufferings of life. Without such self-discipline the present turmoil will continue until it is controlled by a dictatorship, a rigid external rule which would then make the self-control of the spiritual solution to the problem extremely difficult if not impossible for most people.

Any society, whatever its form, whether a democracy or a limited or absolute dictatorship, will, if it is not illumined from within by a spiritual life, collapse and die of its own weight sooner or later. Just as a living body, when the supporting inner life leaves it, collapses and dies and becomes prey to vultures and worms, so does a society, when not uplifted and vivified by spiritual principles, collapse and die from within and become an inert corpse, prey to all. If the students of the world persist in the present course of destruction for destruction's sake, the result will be anarchy, chaos, death. And anarchy quickly becomes absolute dictatorship. The result of such wilful and blind destruction will be the end of free democratic society as we know it, and who knows if there then would be any opportunities for spiritual practice?

But the teachers, scholars, administrators and the community at large must do their part to see that this result does not come about. All must change their hoary view embedded in centuries of tradition, the belief that sense experience and reason are the only avenues to knowledge. All segments of society alike—parents and educators and the general public, intellectuals

and non-intellectuals, country people and city people—all must join together not only in accepting the truth of higher experience but in dedicating every ounce of energy to realizing the unitive divine knowledge in their daily lives.

In this tightly-knit world of today what happens in one place affects every other part of the globe. Anarchy in New York or San Francisco cannot but affect Tokyo and Calcutta and Delhi and Rome. Likewise, spiritual effort in one place will hearten and strengthen all mankind. All peoples today stand or fall together. This truth is at once our tragedy and our strength. For if the weakness of one is

contagious to all, so also does the strength of one spread on the winds of spring to all. Let us realize, all of us, high and low, rich and poor, learned and illiterate, that there is but *one* strength, *one* knowledge, *one* love, *one* joy, *one* peace, and that one supreme is the one, undivided Lord of all, Heart of hearts, Light of lights, Ocean of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. Whether we approach it through reason or love or selfless action or concentration, approach it we must, and we must make it the goal of all our living, or else all of our education, all of our activities, all of our lives are spent in vain.

SPIRITUAL MAXIMS OF ABBA EVAGRIUS THE MONK

Faith is the beginning of love ; the end of love is knowledge of God.

Man's patience gives birth to hope ; good hope will glorify him.

He who keeps his flesh in strict subjection will reach passionlessness.
He who feeds it will suffer from it.

Solitude with love purifies the heart. Withdrawal from others with anger agitates it.

It is better to be among thousands with love, that to hide alone in caves with hatred.

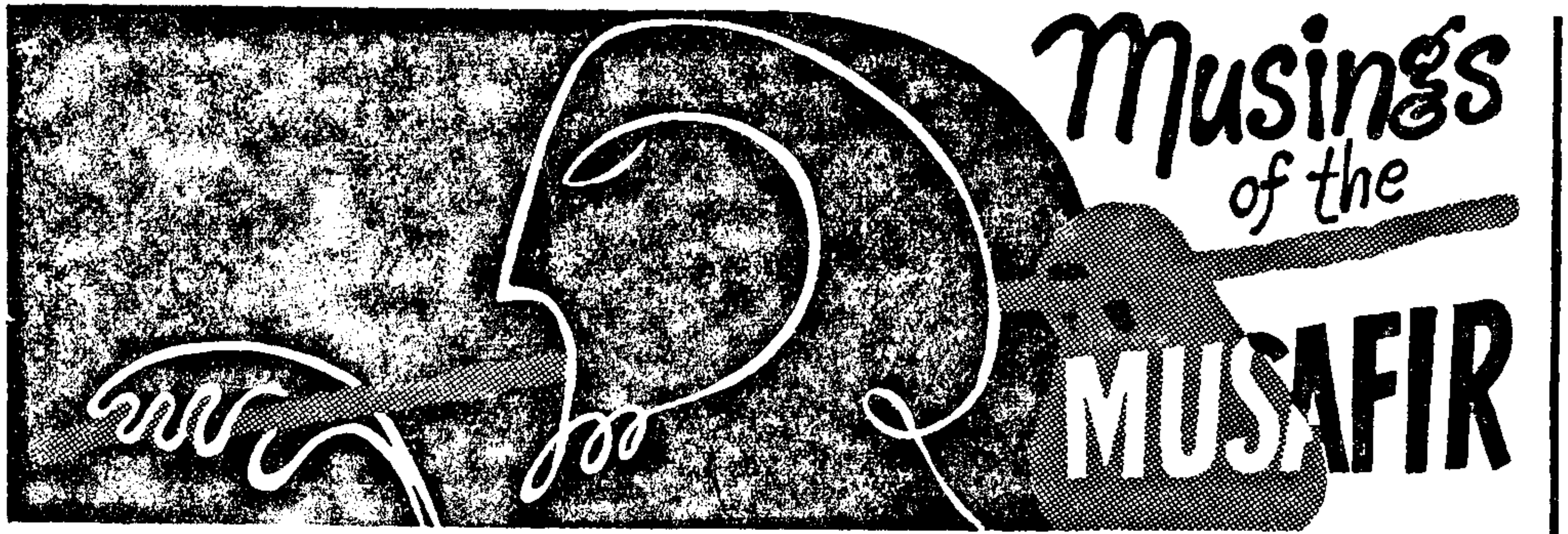
He dishonours God who transgresses His law. But he who obeys it glorifies his Creator.

Where sin enters, there too enters ignorance ; but the hearts of the righteous are filled with knowledge.

Better poverty with knowledge than riches with ignorance.

The highest adornment of the head is the crown ; the highest adornment of the heart is knowledge of God.

From : *Early Fathers from the Philokalia*



IN THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMAPADA

WHO CONQUERS THE WORLD ?

Thus teaches the *Dhammapada*:

He who lives looking for pleasures, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle, weak, Mara (the tempter) will certainly overthrow him as the wind throws down a weak tree. (7)

He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well-controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Mara will certainly not overthrow, any more than wind throws down a rocky mountain. (8)

He who wishes to put on the yellow dress without having cleansed himself from sin, who disregards also temperance and truth, is unworthy of the yellow dress. (9)

But he who has cleansed himself from sin, is well-grounded in all virtues, and endowed also with temperance and truth, he is indeed worthy of the yellow dress. (10)

They who imagine truth in untruth, and see untruth in truth never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires. (11)

They who know truth in truth, and untruth in untruth, arrive at truth, and follow true desires. (12)

As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, passions will break through an un-reflecting mind. (13)

As rain does not break through a well-thatched house, passion will not break through a well-reflecting mind. (14)

We all seek to become a small or big conqueror of the world, the master of the situations of our life. We want to make a hobby-horse of the world. We want to eat and enjoy. We compete, we fight, we elbow others out of our way for going ahead and capturing the prizes of life. We oppress, suppress, maim and crush others so that we may rise and thrive. That is

the heroic way of victorious living, we imagine.

But if we would watch it out well, we shall find that life has been liberal enough to bring us disappointments, deprivation and defeat. Having come to eat we get eaten up; having come to have a ride, we become hobby-horses of destiny; while all the time seeking victory, we

are worsted by the world. Shams, sorrows and ignominy surround us. Our foreheads become furrowed by violent thinking. Our sky grows murky.

We were earnest. We put forth energy. And yet why did everything go so wrong that even the prizes of life became like punishments? Where did we actually err?

We erred in the very axis of our aspiration. We adopted pleasure as the main object of life's search in place of truth.

Little did we understand that to seek pleasure is at once to become a slave of the senses. Once we became the slave of the senses, we became brittle like reeds. Any gust of wind was then strong enough to throw us down and out.

Once we sought pleasure in place of truth, we started imagining untruth in truth, and truth in untruth. Our entire scheme of values went wrong and sense of direction was lost. After that whatever we did went against ourselves.

Passions broke through our unreflecting minds and we revelled in becoming the fools of the world, energetically seeking what would destroy us, and enthusiastically rejecting what would save us.

But if we liked to rise from the ashes, the way always remained open. Hope is precisely that thing of life which is never lost in spite of ourselves. Hope is the un-failing saviour when everything seemed to have been lost.

So, first catch hope. There was never a cloud which did not pass away. So far, no night has been everlasting. Believe firmly that there is no permanent defeat of man. Then alter the axis of aspiration from search for pleasure to search for truth. Seeking truth is not seeking pain, though pain may come. Preparedness for

suffering is any day a more intelligent and heroic disposition than mean search for pleasure at any cost. In the ultimate analysis, seeking truth is seeking everlasting joy.

If 'pursuit of happiness' is motored by fear of pain, and if 'happiness' is not synonymous with truth and purity, then we are in for insanity.

Search for truth has always to go hand in hand with acts for self-purification.

For searching truth, mastery of the senses is the inevitable first step. One who has controlled the senses gets rid of vain desires. Once vain desires are gotten rid of, truth is easily seen in truth, untruth in untruth and the whole life force is then set in perspective.

Then the will is set free for seeking the main objective of life. There is then not only no more inner wastage of power but there is in-gathering of strength, which knows no defeat.

He conquers the world, who conquers himself. So Śrī Kṛṣṇa says so pointedly in the *Gītā* (III. 41) : at the outset control the senses.

Conquering the world means conquest of the senses, through which the world conquers us.

To Simha, a visiting general-in-chief, the Buddha once said :

'Great is a successful general, O Simha, but he who has conquered self is the greater victor.'

'The doctrine of the conquest of Self, O Simha, is not taught to destroy the souls of men, but to preserve them. He who has conquered the self is more fit to live, to be successful, and to gain victories than he who is the slave of the self.'¹

¹ Vide : Paul Carus, *Gospel of Buddha*, The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago and London, 1965, p. 147.



SRIMATI MEKHALA JHA

The biography of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi may be heard repeatedly; little incidents of her life may be narrated daily; yet every time new facets are brought out, which are not merely fascinating to listen to, but also seem to have so much utility value, for the purpose of daily living, to ordinary householders with all their painful problems.

Her happy childhood phase, with all its delightful little anecdotes, her austere domestic life during the lifetime of Sri Ramakrishna, and her later life as the spiritual guide to so many, all have this common point—that her life, in all its phases, consisted of giving, rather than taking.

The Holy Mother gave her love and understanding to all those who crossed her path, irrespective of caste, creed and even so-called moral purity.

Once a member of her household threw a broomstick somewhat roughly after sweeping a room. The Holy Mother scolded her for this: 'One should not trifle with a thing even if it is very insignificant. The broomstick is also a part of the family. The Lord resides in this, as well.'

If this was her attitude towards an inanimate object, what did she not feel for a human being?

Sister Nivedita expresses the sentiment of quite a few devotees who had direct experi-

ence of the love of the Holy Mother, through a letter she spontaneously wrote to her:

'Dear Mother,

... You are full of love! And it is not a flushed and violent love like ours, and like the world's, but a gentle peace that brings good to everyone, and wishes ill to none. It is a golden radiance, full of play ... stealing unnoticed into our lives, quietly, like the air and the sunlight, and the sweetness of gardens and of the Ganges. These are the silent things that are like you! ...'

Her early years of married life was a difficult phase. She and her parents were constantly told by so-called well-wishers that Sarada's husband was practically insane. But later, Sri Ramakrishna proved all these accusations false, by being very gentle and attentive to the well-being of Sarada Devi, when she came to live with him in Dakshineswar. It was at this stage that he took charge of her spiritual development.

When Sarada Devi was about eighteen years old, Sri Ramakrishna paid her a unique tribute. He worshipped her as Goddess Sōḍaśī even as a goddess is worshipped in a temple. For the Holy Mother, after this ceremony, was opened the door leading to the highest achievement that humanity combined with divinity can attain.

Now it was typical of her personality, with all its innate humility, that she kept

this realization of her divinity a secret within herself. Only once in a while, to her close associates, did she make remarks like this:

'The vision of God is in the palm of my hands; I can get it whenever I want it.'

'In the midst of worldly activities, whenever I desire, I understand in a flash, that all this is nothing but a play of the Mahāmāyā.'

And once she said, 'No one will know my real nature, so long as I am alive.'

She would have continued like this quietly, keeping her divinity a secret, if, after the passing away of the Master, circumstances had not led her to carry on Sri Ramakrishna's work of awakening the divine consciousness latent in mankind.

The Holy Mother from then on became the spiritual guide or *guru* to hundreds of people. She gave freely to whoever came earnestly asking her for initiation. Often her close associates told her that she seemed much too liberal with her granting of *mantras* to all and sundry. They compared her disciples with Sri Ramakrishna's chosen few great personalities. Her reply was, 'Is it to be wondered at? He picked out the best types, and with what care he selected them! And towards me he has pushed all this small fry coming in their hundreds like ants! Don't compare my disciples with his.' On another occasion, she said, 'When they come to me addressing me as Mother, I forget everything and they get more than they deserve.' She was often seen sacrificing sleep and rest even in her old age during her illness, doing *japa* till late at night for the welfare of her disciples.

Japa, or constant repetition of God's name, occupied a truly high place with her:

'Through *japa* and austerity, the bondage of *karma* is cut asunder.'

'As the wind removes the cloud, so the repetition of the name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness.'

'Work', she said, 'you have to do as a matter of course. Work keeps the mind well. Man must work because God expresses His will through the actions of man—but *japa*, meditation and prayer are specially needed. That is like the helm of a boat.'

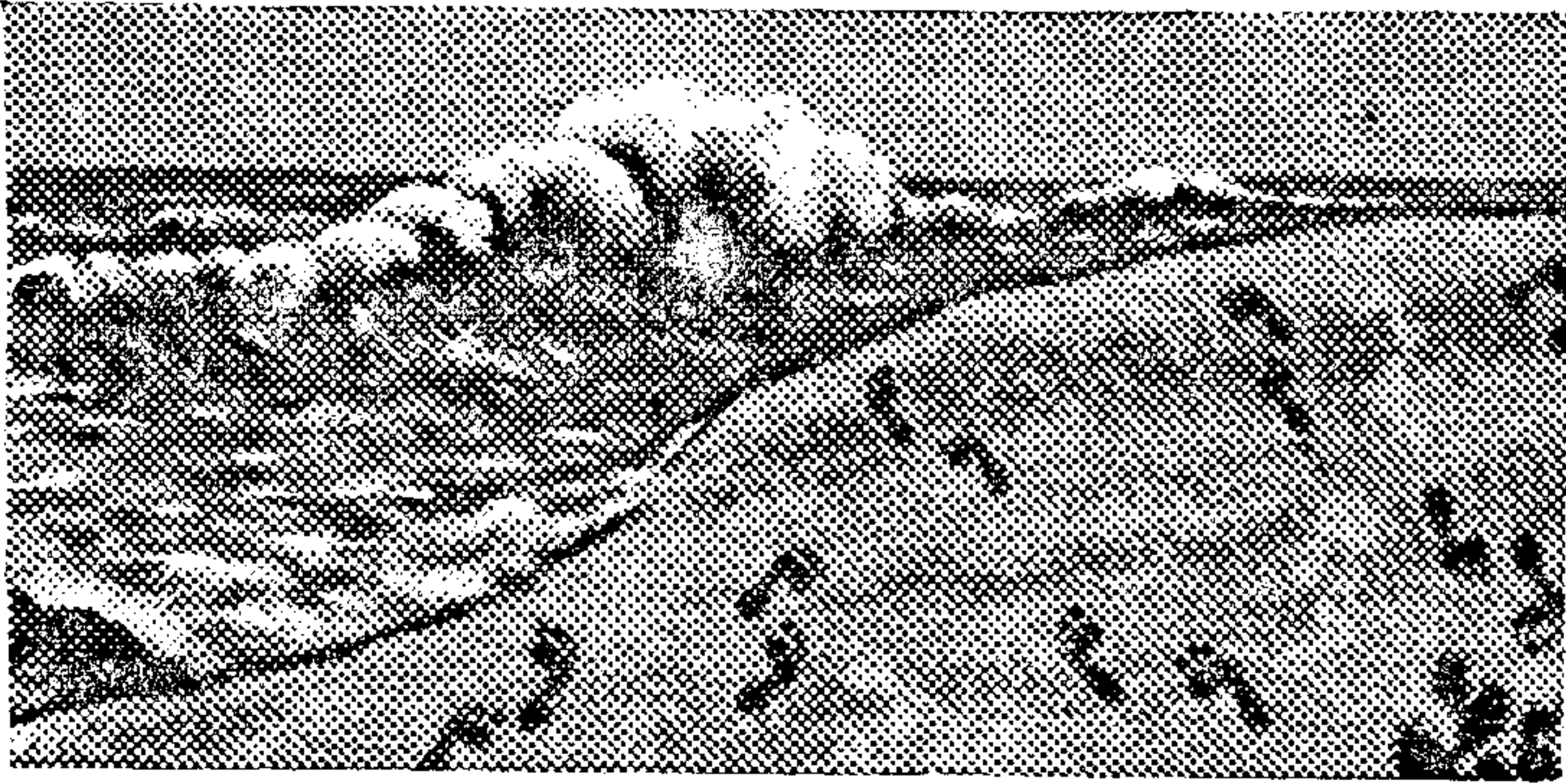
She pointed out to a timepiece once and said, 'As that clock is ticking, so also go on repeating God's name. That will bring you everything. Nothing more need be done. Consider how small the seed of the Lord's name is, and yet from this, sprout in time, divine moods, devotion and love, and above all surrender to His will.'

These were her powerful words to disciples and devotees.

Every great personality has delivered his message partly through his life and partly through his teachings. It must be pointed out that the Holy Mother never preached from a platform. She delivered her message to humanity while doing the most wordly of domestic chores, through her own actions to her fellow beings and not merely through words. One declaration she quite often made during ordinary conversations: 'What does one obtain by realizing God? Does one develop a pair of horns? No, he gains discrimination between the real and the unreal, gets spiritual consciousness and passes beyond life and death.'

As the years passed, the spirit of motherhood shone brighter than ever in all its glory and pristine purity, expressing this great cosmic principle wherein humanity and divinity meet.

In the light of this idea one can understand the meaning of the Holy Mother's own words: 'You must be aware that the Master looked upon all the world as Mother. He left me behind for demonstrating that Motherhood to the world.'



HUMAN TRENDS

THE URBAN CRISIS

Interest in urban areas has been exhibited by government at all levels—local, state and national—for some time, but it became clear just a few years ago that both businesses and government would have to pay much more attention to urban problems in the future. Prior to that time most efforts to improve living and health conditions in cities more or less had been confined to social and welfare agencies. Since then the economy has been re-orienting itself to the demands of urban development and a new something has been added, namely the entry of businessmen, as individuals, and as members of large corporations, into these areas. Businessmen are often referred to as hardheaded, shrewd and calculating. They also are known to be farsighted because, of course, in any successful enterprise, planning ahead is necessary and most essential. Just what is it that has made them so very interested in our cities and related problems which only a few years back really didn't concern them too, too much? Could it be that the very talent of projecting into the future has made them all too aware that unless existing and growing problems of the cities are met and properly dealt with, their own way of living and earning a livelihood is in jeopardy?

Long-time residents of any large city may

not be too cognizant of what is happening in the urban centres other than to know that the construction of taller and taller buildings is changing the skyline. However, there are many other changes in the cities of today, some apparent and others not so apparent.

A few decades ago, young people just out of school and eager for employment sought positions in the cities, the glamour of which was a strong attraction. This glamour was found in the shops and theatres and fashionable restaurants, all of which naturally were appealing to young people on their own for the first time. But times have changed and the old 'downtown' is not what it used to be. Residents of the suburbs now have their own attractive shopping areas, for most of the better shops have opened stores in the suburbs and there is no dearth of better eating places in these areas and even the various arts now stage shows and performances in what were once considered out-of-the-way places.

Then, too, there has been a great exodus of the large middle-class wage earners to the suburbs for here it was felt one could raise a family in more spacious, relaxed surroundings. It is the children of these middle-class citizens who are now needed to fill the clerical, sales and other various positions in offices and stores in urban centres but many

of them prefer to work closer to home and it is certainly possible for them to do so because of the decentralization of shops and other industries previously referred to and this, of course, brings about the now prevalent shortage of qualified people to fill the urban jobs. Another reason for a shortage of qualified, young people is that more and more of them who are trained are refusing to tie themselves down to a permanent job just for the promise of security in their later years. They are not sure they want the type of life to which their parents have been dedicated. So for various reasons there is a shortage of qualified employees in the cities and it is this shortage of help which is calling the attention of the business community to our cities and what they have seen has indeed alarmed them and roused many to become involved in projects to meet and correct the problems they find prevalent. Attention should also be called to the revolution in agriculture over the years, which revolution has caused an influx of people, whose manual labour on farms is no longer needed, into the cities. This influx of unskilled workers greatly compounds the problems already existing. On the one hand, there are jobs to be filled but not enough skilled people to fill them and on the other hand, there are scores of people needing jobs but not trained to fill the jobs available. To meet this problem, many corporations are now employing unskilled people and training them so that they can advance to skilled jobs and some corporations are sponsoring classes to teach the numerous office skills. Businessmen know full well that a person who is qualified to earn a living will be a happier, more stable, loyal citizen than one dependent on welfare and doles.

Housing is another matter which concerns businessmen and has top priority in their planning. New York and other large cities in the United States warn of the seriousness of urban deterioration. As more and more

middle-class people move to the suburbs, more and more once well-kept larger homes have been turned into multiple dwelling units and once respectable apartment houses have become run-down, slum-like and rat-infested. It is feared and rightly so that if this trend continues, cities will one day just consist of the very wealthy on the one hand and the very poor on the other. Seeing this danger, the life insurance industry a few years ago instituted a billion dollar investment program, making funds immediately available for housing and job-creating facilities in the core city areas. In effect, this program makes funds available for housing improvement and construction in areas that would not qualify for conventional bank loans.

Lack of proper play and recreational areas for children in crowded cities is a very serious matter and one that is also receiving more and more attention. It is neither proper nor safe to have children playing in the streets, exposed to the hazards of city traffic, and more and more efforts are being made by individuals and community organizations to raise funds to purchase and construct play areas for children living in the poorer sections of our cities.

Businessmen know government can only do so much, and being astute, they know that if our cities are to survive, today's problems must be faced and overcome and that they, as private citizens, must do their part. Some cities of the Far East (one especially) have pointed up the tragic disaster of urban blight run wild and unchecked and, no doubt, this knowledge has helped to bring about the concerted efforts of American businessmen to save our cities.

The urban problem is certainly a complex one, but if jobs and proper housing can be provided where necessary, great strides will have been made toward preserving our cities. A 'fringe benefit' (to use a businessman's term) is also found in this whole matter, for

through this whole undertaking a much more complete understanding by businessmen of the problems and basic needs of the struggling masses is sure to emerge along with, let us hope, a dawning concern for these less fortunate souls. It follows and is axiomatic that anyone who helps to bring about a better and happier life for his fellow-travelers on this planet earth will, himself become a better and happier person. Perhaps greater benefits than 'fringe' will be found—conceivably bonds of brotherhood between rich and poor, learned and unlearned, black and white, and all the other multitu-

dinous individuals who go to make up the population of cities everywhere will result.

Surely, if ever a day should dawn when man's basic material needs are taken care of, then yet another day may dawn, a day when larger and larger numbers of people will be freer to pursue, and will have stronger desires to pursue, other than material values—those of the spirit. Has it not been proven down through the ages that man does not live by bread alone?

Anna Nylund

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

By listening to the Universal Call of Religions one finds one's way open to the Highest, from where one stands.

The words quoted in 'Onward For Ever!' occur in *The Complete Works*, Vol. VII, 1958, p. 63-64.

The editorial suggests that the troubled revolutions of the world need the sanity and succour of essential religion if they are to serve as instruments of the welfare of one and all. The theme has occasionally and partially been discussed in the editorial columns of the Journal. Because of the importance of the subject a fuller discussion is again presented.

Swami Pavitrananda, a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order, is the Head of the Vedanta Society, New York. There being no ultimate ground for pessimism, his article 'Grounds for Optimism' stresses the

need for the practice of optimistic outlook by claiming our divine birthright.

In 'Profiles in Greatness', the 'Explorer' draws our attention to the greatness of Marie Curie who embodied in her life the 'Spirit of Science', spurning all advantages that accrued from the discovery of radium.

Mr. Robert P. Utter is a teacher of English and Philosophy at City College in San Francisco. In his article, he suggests practical methods to be adopted in the educational institution and in the society for ensuring the 'True Welfare of Students'.

The Musafir expounds 'Who conquers the world?' in the light of the Dhammapada.

Srimati Mekhala Jha, Chairman, Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Samiti, Bombay, records here 'What Inspires me most in Holy Mother's Life'.

Anna Nylund writes on a pressing 'Human Trend' this month: 'The Urban Crisis', which concerns all peoples in the world, in various stages of development.

MAY ALL BE HAPPY

On the occasion of the New Year's coming we send forth our hearty greetings to one and all of the human family—to those whom we know through the concerns of our interest and affinity, and to those whom we do not know in any such way. Our simple prayer is: May all be happy.

It is customary to wish a happy new year to friends though we are not unaware that in all probability the new year is to be anything but a happy one for most of us. The world in which happiness is to be experienced is so ridden with deep-going strifes, dark suspicions and bad blood, that to wish friends a happy new year would appear to be mere ritualistic make-believe, devoid of any effectual meaning. Naive though this annual ritual may appear, it must be conceded that it is a well-meaning one. And it may well be meaningful if the wishing which usually comes from the lips were to well forth from within our hearts.

Psychologically speaking it is good exercise to wish happiness to others. When sincerely done the habit thus formed can act as a healing therapy on minds laden with contrition and unhappiness. Unless we are pure in heart and grounded in truth, those to whom we wish happiness may not be affected by our wishing. But if we sincerely wish happiness to others we ourselves gain inwardly: our contracted hearts begin to expand making it possible for us to experience a greater awareness of more abundant being in which is rooted a superior quality of happiness—and also, perhaps, sorrow!

The exercise of wishing happiness may begin with our near and dear ones but it

should never stop there. Through persistent inner work we should progressively enlarge the circle which includes our own people until it includes all in the world excluding none.

Truly speaking the whole world is our own. There is no stranger here except him whom our ignorance and hard-heartedness separate from us. As long as we fail to wish happiness to all, so long are we going to fail in being truly happy.

Therefore, it is very important to sincerely wish happiness to those whom we have for some reason or other classed as aliens or enemies. If at the outset we are unable to do this out of genuine charity of heart, let us do it out of clear-sighted sagacity. There can hardly be anything in the world today which will not have to be shared by all—war, peace, happiness, misery, hope, despair. So if our 'enemies' are unhappy, a share of it is sure to travel to us. If we do not wish to have an added share of unhappiness which so agonizingly belongs to us rightfully, let us learn the art of sincerely wishing happiness to all.

It is, however, not an easy exercise to sincerely wish happiness to an enemy. But all things are not meant to be easy all the way through. Especially when we are out to make higher grades, lessons are hard, climbs are steep and stakes are enormous. So, for this, we need to call forth all our wisdom, skill and goodness; and do a lot of cleansing work within ourselves so that we may reach a state of mind in which good and auspicious thoughts for all well forth from within.

It is indeed to the development of a special kind of mind that we must devote

ourselves so that all may be well with the world. How this mind can be developed is, therefore, a very important question with humanity today, and it will be so always. These benign powers which we seek to evoke in our mind are already there, but in many cases, for want of culture, they have become atrophied. These powers need to be awakened through practice. And these practices should be carefully learnt from a great spiritual teacher who himself has developed such a mind. Such a teacher we find in the Buddha.

In the 'Mettasutta' the *Sutta-Nipata* teaches in the simplest words one of the most profound lessons of the Buddha on how universal well-being can be worked for in individual minds. The Sutta places before the aspirant some suggestions for meditation. These suggestions place the essence of ethics and spirituality before our minds for adoption and absorption:

'It is said:

"May all beings be happy and secure; may they be happy-minded."

"Whatever living beings there are, either feeble or strong, either long or great, middle-sized or short, small or large, either seen or not seen, living afar or near, either born or seeking birth may all (these) creatures be happy-minded."

One of the surest ways of being miserable is asking happiness for ourselves, excluding others. In an unhappy world, if happiness were to be exclusively ours, the cares of preserving it would make us more miserable than others. So the best insurance of one's own happiness is in the assured happiness of others. If we can fill the whole world with happiness then we may be sure that our share in it will be secured.

The first intelligent step, therefore, is to set in motion within ourselves the power-

ful thought-process of wishing happiness for all creatures. The teaching is: 'May all creatures be happy-minded.' In other words, may every mind generate happiness for itself and others. This also implies dedication to such action as will make all happy-minded.

If we are to honestly wish all to be happy-minded then how can we think and act in ways which amount to deceiving, despising and harming others? In-built in the discipline we find provision for saving aspirants from wastage of effort. The teaching continues:

'Let no one deceive another, let him not despise another in any place, let him not out of anger or resentment wish harm to another.'

It is not mere wishfulness that is being taught here but a continuous act of inner participation and outer engagement in what is for the welfare of all. A sensitization and quickening of the psyche is necessary to become inwardly oriented to the genuine welfare of all.

So the teaching runs:

'As a mother at the risk of life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let everyone cultivate a boundless (friendly) mind towards all beings.'

What we need in the world is sacrificial and boundless love for all that exists, a love which faces death fearlessly, to save the dear one from danger. This mother's heart we have to cultivate towards fellow human beings if we intend to see a change in the climate of human relations in the world.

Ask not: What if I act this way and others do not? A mother does not ask such a question when the child's life is in danger. When your dream-child—the world—is in danger, you, the mother, will not wait to see who else does or does not rush to save the child. If you are the mother, you rush. And you are asked to be the mother

of all—a mentor of all, a saviour-servant of all. Here you function on a plane where logic cannot peep in. Here the whole function is on a supra-rational plane.

Our powers are potent and patent. We have filled the world with anger, hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy, with all that makes us miserable. If we can do this, it surely lies open to do just the opposite. The great Teacher is very sure that we can do this. So the precepts continue :

‘And let him cultivate goodwill towards all the world, a boundless friendly mind, above and below and across, unobstructed, without hatred, without enmity.’

A little compassion, a tiny bit of good, a particle of charity, will not do for us. Our needs are so enormous that we require boundless love which will saturate the

whole world through and through—and more.

This kind of mind is not easily developed. For this, constant devotion to practice is necessary. Time and again, and always, we must return to this theme and settle down within ourselves, working patiently for such inner self-transformation as will ensure spontaneous absorption in the well-being of all. The concluding words of the teaching are :

‘Standing, walking, sitting or lying, as long as he is awake, let him devote himself to this mind ; this (way of) living they say is the best in this world.’

Be it noted that these teachings are meant to be conducive to the best way of living in *this* world. Hence they concern everybody who wishes well of the world.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IS REALITY MEANINGFUL: STATIC CONTRADICTIONS AND DYNAMIC RESOLUTIONS BETWEEN FACTS AND VALUE BY KELVIN VAN NUYS, Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 pp. XIII+510, Price \$10.00.

This is a voluminous work consisting of twenty chapters and running to over six hundred pages. The twenty chapters are classed under five parts. Part I consisting of the first four chapters is entitled Basic Problems and Kinds of Approach to Solutions ; Part II comprising chapters five and six deals with Epistemology and Theories of Knowledge ; Part III comprising chapters seven to thirteen is concerned with Ontology and Theories of Reality ; Part IV comprises the next five chapters and deals with the Theories of Value, what is known as Axiology ; Part V consists of the last two chapters and is entitled Philosophy of Religion.

It will be seen that the book covers the whole ground of philosophy including psychology and religion also. The treatment of every topic is elaborate. It is both comparative and critical. Almost all the views that are relevant to a topic are passed in review and critically examined.

Passages from the original writings of the authors whose views are to be examined are given *in extenso* to ensure that there is no understatement or distortion of those views. Thus we come across passages from the writings of Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, William James, Dewey, Bertrand Russell, Joad and others. It is clear that much patient study and deep thinking have entered into the production of the work. Professors engaged in teaching philosophy to post-graduate classes and research scholars will find a valuable mine of information in this work. One who wants to know something about Gestalt psychology, Freudian psychology and Behaviourism will not be disappointed if he takes a dip into this book. The index gives information about the pages where we can look for the information that we want. Even those who are curious to know what the author thinks about Hindu thought will be rewarded. In eight contexts there are references to Hindu thought by which the author means the system of Advaita Vedanta. Reference to the views of the Sāṅkhya school would have been more helpful to the author

in elucidating some of his views especially those relating to evolution. While dealing with current theories of evolution, especially those adumbrated by Professor Alexander and Prof. A. N. Whitehead, the author could have usefully instituted comparisons with similar theories advocated by the Sāṃkhya. Prof. Whitehead's book, *Process and Reality* seems to have influenced the author's views to a considerable extent. Prof. Alexander's book *Time, Space and Deity* deals with evolution from the same point of view as Prof. Whitehead's book. The Nyāya theory of *Asatkārya-Vada* and the Sāṃkhya theory of *Satkāryavada* would have proved more useful in elucidating the author's line of thought than the references to Advaita Vedanta. About the Brahman and Ātman of Advaita Vedanta the author's views are based on inadequate understanding.

The main theme of the work is to show that the world as it is, with all its imperfections, is not devoid of meaning. Scientists who seek to explain phenomena, even mental and moral, in terms of the chance combinations of atoms as also Dialectical Materialism and the atheistic brand of Existentialism are mistaken. If the ultimate Good or value is viewed, as Plato, Plotinus, Aristotle and Hegel did, as a static and unchanging entity, then it may be difficult to explain the imperfections, especially the fact of evil, in the world. If the Good is eternally perfect and does not stand in need of any change or improvement, then there will be no room for any process, no passage from what is partially good to what is totally good. Evil and imperfections, being out of place in such a static order of reality, will have to be relegated to the realm of illusion or mere appearance. As distinct from this order of illusion there will stand Reality, immutable and eternally perfect. There being no logical connection between the two orders of reality, we will be faced with an ultimate dualism. It is said that the thought of Spinoza, Kant, Bradley and Advaita Vedanta is open to this error.

It is no use relegating evil and imperfection to the realm of mere appearance or illusion. They cannot be conjured away so easily. They do not cease to exist merely because we have dubbed them to be illusory. They are hard facts to be reckoned with. The only straight course is to take count of them and somehow find a place for them in the scheme of reality. This will not be possible so long as we take a static view of ultimate reality.

If, on the other hand, we view ultimate reality as a process, as something in the making, then it

may be possible to fit in evil and imperfection into it. Our view of ultimate reality must be such as to render evil and imperfection necessary for its completion. 'Meaningfulness requires not only the belief and feeling of a reason and purpose for one's individual life, but the ability to believe in reason and purpose behind reality itself. We must believe that *existence as such* expresses or embodies divine intention and design, that it is required by some intelligible meaning.' 'The fullest sense of meaningfulness requires the conviction that reality is intelligently designed and consequently that all that exists is *required to be as it is* by some intelligible purpose of a cosmic mind or God.' The Vedanta takes the view that an ethical purpose enters into the creation of the world. It is the place where the rewards and punishments for past merit and demerit overtake the embodied souls. The world, in short, is the vale of soul-making.

Endorsing the views of Prof. Alexander and Prof. Whitehead the author speaks of new creations emerging by the mere fact of organization. Electrons, atoms, molecules, super-molecules, viruses, protozoa, multi-cellular organism, plants, animals and men—these form a hierarchy. Deity will emerge at the end. It is all the while in the making. Process is the key-word. It is a continuous development. We cannot dichotomize reality into living and dead. One cannot draw the line anywhere and say 'here ends the dead' and 'here begins the living'. Throughout we witness the freedom of energy organizing itself into more and more complete and patterned wholes.

But is it not possible to take this movement to mean that universal, all-pervading spirit is gradually making itself more and more manifest through molecules, atoms and so forth? May it not be that this manifestation of spirit reaches its maximum limit in man? May it not also be that it disengages itself from its material adjuncts and shines in its pristine glory when man attains the state of *samādhi*? Viewed in this light, matter in its various forms will have to be treated as obstructing its manifestation. In the earlier stages matter sits heavy on spirit and almost conceals it; but it gradually gives way and spirit becomes more and more manifest as the process advances. At last spirit gets completely disengaged from its adjuncts and shines in its native splendour. Thus it appears that matter serves to conceal spirit and not to reveal it. It is more a case of spirit throwing off its shackles rather than a case of spirit manifesting itself through the medium of matter.

As other instances of the author's inadequate

understanding of Advaita Vedanta, we may quote the following: 'A world of change cannot be derived from a changeless Absolute. Hinduism has no real explanation why the fully satisfied Brahman should have allowed the whole business of unpleasant, illusory life to develop at all' (p. 196). The simple answer is that the Absolute of Advaita Vedanta does not go forth at all into the form of 'unpleasant, illusory life'. It remains intact and owing to the operation of foundational ignorance we see the unpleasant universe where we ought to see only Brahman.

'Brahmanism allows that the indivisible unity, Brahman, manifests itself in individual soul as Ātman, yet staunchly insists that it has not really become plurality. The Ātman is unity that pervades all plurality. But souls somehow begin to believe that their plurality is real and thereupon experience rebirths until in mystic yoga they can realize that their individuality is illusory and unreal. They then are reunified with Brahman and experience Nirvāṇa which is freedom from the baser reality of individual separateness' (pp. 175-76). The author's understanding of the position is incorrect. Brahman and Ātman are identical. Brahman or Ātman appears as the plurality of individual selves owing

to the operation of ignorance. If the ignorance is overcome, the separate individual selves go back to their source. This is self-realization. As long as ignorance lasts, the selves and the world are quite real. It is altogether a thought provoking book.

SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

THE WORLD OF SPIRIT BY FRANCISCO CANDIDO XAVIER AND WALDO VIEIRA, Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York. pp. 103 Price \$ 3.75.

The two authors of this book are recognized 'Medium' in Brazil, who receive messages from beyond guiding them in their mission of helping humanity. This volume contains a selection from these automatic writings. They are a happy choice and each page has something of value for everybody. To quote a few: (1) Let us correct ourselves before the world corrects us; (2) A vacant head and empty hands betray an idle heart; (3) Irritation is defeat in advance; (4) Meditation is study; work is realisation; (5) Each road gives way to another road; each experience leads to a greater experience.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE GENERAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

FOR APRIL 1967—MARCH 1968
(With some later information)

[We are presenting here a brief summary of the latest report of the 'Ramakrishna Math and Mission' which will give our readers some information about the activities of these twin organizations. The report was issued by the General Secretary in September 1969 from the Headquarters at Belur Math P.O., District Howrah, West Bengal, India.—Ed.]

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Though the Ramakrishna Mission and the Ramakrishna Math, with their respective branches, are distinct legal entities, they are closely related, inasmuch as the Governing Body of the Mission is made up of the Trustees of the Math; the principal workers of the Mission are members of the Ramakrishna Math; and both have their Headquarters at the Belur Math. The name 'Ramakrishna Mission' is, however, loosely associated by the people with all Math activities also.

It is necessary to point out that the appropriation of the name of Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda by any institution does not necessarily imply that it is controlled by the central organisation at Belur.

The Math and the Mission own separate funds and keep separate audited accounts of them. The Math fund consists of subscriptions and donations from friends and devotees and is sometimes supplemented by the sale proceeds of publications, while fees from students, etc. as well as subscriptions and donations from the general public constitute the

Mission fund, grants from the Government and public bodies often being common to both. Both the Math and the Mission funds are annually audited by qualified auditors.

Summary of Activities

Owing to economic and political uncertainties in certain States of India, a general policy of restraint and caution had to be adopted as regards expansion of activities during the year 1967-68. Nevertheless, a continuous chain of extensive relief works had to be conducted throughout the year in different parts of India. Also some past commitments had to be fulfilled and some natural growth had to be allowed. Thus the legal procedures in connection with the taking over of the Vivekananda Ashrama at Raipur in Madhya Pradesh were completed during the year and the Ashrama was formally taken over by the Mission on April 8, 1968.

The new constructions during the year comprised an upper storey of the Mission Dispensary at Belur, a three storeyed Hostel block of the Vidya-mandira, Belur, the Vivekananda School building at Bhubaneswar, a new dormitory at Deoghar, a Library building of the Vivekananda College at Madras, the Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Library building at Kanpur, the Vivekananda Centenary Hall at Narendrapur, and the Biological block of the Sister Nivedita Girls' Higher Secondary School at Jamshedpur. Besides these completed structures, foundations were laid for an extension of the dining hall at Deoghar, a Students' Home at Sakchi, Jamshedpur, and a school building at Along, NEFA.

Under the Math section, the Ramakrishna Math, Baghbazar, Calcutta, started the construction of a new building, the Madras Math raised a building for the Ramakrishna Centenary Primary School and laid the foundation for extending its Dispensary building, the Ootacamund Math erected a memorial to Swami Vivekananda's disciple J. J. Goodwin or Gurudas, as Swamiji called him, the Mysore Ashrama laid the foundation of a Vedanta College, the Bangalore Ashrama opened the Vivekananda Centenary Memorial, the Vrindaban Ashrama laid the foundation of a temple and the Math Headquarters started the renovation of the old Math building, constructed a waiting hall at Belur and built a Kutia at Uttarkashi for *Tapasya* for the monks of the Order.

As in the previous year, our connection with the East Pakistan centres was very tenuous. The four monastic workers of Pakistan nationality somehow carried on the activities with the help of lay devotees and friends.

Our only surviving centre in Burma was the Ramakrishna Mission Society at Rangoon, which was managed as before by some local friends, constituted into a Managing Committee by the Headquarters.

Centres

Excluding the Headquarters at Belur, there were in March, 1968, 112 branch centres in all, of which 50 were Mission centres, 21 combined Math and Mission centres, and 41 Math centres. These were regionally distributed as follows: 2 Mission centres, 5 combined Math and Mission centres and 3 Math centres in East Pakistan; 1 Mission centre each in Burma, France, Ceylon, Singapore, Fiji and Mauritius; 1 Math centre each in Switzerland, England and Argentina; 10 Math centres in the United States of America; and the remaining 42 Mission centres, 16 combined Math and Mission centres and 25 Math centres (83 in all) in India. The Indian centres were distributed as follows: 29 in West Bengal, 11 in Uttar Pradesh, 11 in Tamil Nadu, 7 in Bihar, 5 in Kerala, 4 each in Assam and Mysore, 3 in Orissa, 2 each in Maharashtra and Andhra, and one each in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi, NEFA and Chandigarh. Moreover, attached to the branch centres there were over 23 sub-centres where monastic workers resided more or less permanently.

The foregoing account does not include the following two Mission centres, which were added during 1968-69 bringing the total number of branch centres to 114 on 1.4.1969:

(1) Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Ashrama, P.O. Vivekananda Ashrama, Raipur, Madhya Pradesh: Phone: Raipur 1046.

(2) Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Chhatribari, P.O. Gauhati-8, Dt. Kamrup, Assam; Phone: Gauhati 5621.

Types of Work

Medical Service: Most of the Math and the Mission centres in India and Pakistan conducted various activities ministering to the physical needs of the public in general, irrespective of creed, colour or nationality. Typical of these are the indoor hospitals in Calcutta, Varanasi, Vrindaban, Kankhal, Trivandrum and Ranchi. In 1967-68 there were altogether 10 Indoor Hospitals with 1,208 beds, which accommodated 25,740 patients and 66 Outdoor Dispensaries, which treated 30,35,148 cases, including old ones. Besides, the centres at Salem, Bombay, Kanpur, New Delhi, etc. had provision for emergency or observation indoor wards attached to their dispensaries. The veterinary section of the Shyamala Tal Ashrama treated 1940

animals. The Sanatorium at Ranchi treated T.B. cases alone and a large section of the Seva Pratishthan of Calcutta was devoted to maternity and child welfare work.

Educational Work: The twin organisations ran during the period 4 Degree Colleges at Madras, Rahara (24 Parganas), Belur (Howrah), and Narendrapur (24 Parganas)—the last two residential—with 3,579 students on their rolls. A Pre-university College at Perianaickenpalayam (Coimbatore) with 200 students, 2 B.T. Colleges at Belur and Perianaickenpalayam with 253 students, 2 Basic Training Schools at Perianaickenpalayam and Madras with 234 students, one Post-Graduate Basic Training College at Rahara with 111 students, 4 Junior Basic Training Colleges at Rahara, Sarisha and Sargachhi with 303 students, a College for Physical Education, another for Rural Higher Education, and a School of Agriculture with 107, 288 and 144 students respectively at Perianaickenpalayam, one Agricultural Training Centre at Narendrapur with 87 trainees, 4 Engineering Schools at Belur, Belgharia, Madras and Perianaickenpalayam with 1,519 students, 14 Junior Technical or Industrial Schools with 700 boys and 647 girls, 90 Students' Home or Hostels, including some Orphanages, with 8,882 boys and 983 girls, 4 Chatuspathis with 38 students, 15 Multipurpose Higher Secondary Schools with 6,644 boys and 493 girls, 8 Higher Secondary Schools with 3,126 boys and 1,654 girls, 16 High and Secondary Schools with 6,636 boys and 4,621 girls, 36 Senior Basic and M.E. Schools with 4,764 boys and 3,750 girls, 45 Junior Basic, U.P., and Elementary Schools with 6,846 boys and 3,171 girls and 101 L.P. and other grades of Schools with 5,580 boys and 3,400 girls. The Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta and the Math Hospital at Trivandrum trained nurses and midwives, the number of trainees being 212. Thus there were altogether 49,486 boys and 19,486 girls in the educational institutions run by the Math and the Mission in India, Pakistan, Singapore, Fiji and Mauritius. Besides these, the Institute of Culture in Calcutta conducted a Day Hostel for 800 students, a School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies and a School of Languages for teaching different Indian and foreign languages with 99 and 1,264 students respectively. The Ashrama at Narendrapur also conducted a Blind Boys' Academy with 95 blind students.

Recreational Activities: Some of the Math and the Mission centres have been providing scope for recreational, cultural, and spiritual activities to young boys at stated periods outside their school

hours. The Balaka-Sangha of the Bangalore Ashrama has a fine building of its own. At the Mysore Ashrama also a considerable number of boys take advantage of the various kinds of facilities provided for them.

Work for Women: The Mission has ever been conscious of its duties to the women of India. Typical of the work done for them are the Maternity Sections of the Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta, and the Math Hospital at Trivandrum, the Domiciliary and the Maternity Clinics at Jalpaiguri and Khetri, the women's sections of the hospitals at Varanasi and Vrindaban, the attached Invalid Women's Home at Varanasi, the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras, the Girls' High Schools at Jamshedpur and the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha (24 Parganas). Besides, there are special arrangements for women in other hospitals, dispensaries and schools, and some institutions are conducted especially for them.

Rural Uplift and Work among the Labouring and Backward Classes: The Math and the Mission have all along tried their best to serve their unfortunate countrymen who have fallen back culturally or otherwise. In addition to the more prominent village Ashramas like those at Cherrapunji, Sarisha, Ramharipur, Manasadwip, Jayrambati, Kamarpukur, Sargachhi, Along (N.E.F.A.), Perianaickenpalayam, Kalady, and Trichur, quite a number of rural sub-centres—both permanent and semi-permanent—are run under the Mission branches at Belur, Sarisha, Tiruvalla, Narendrapur and Cherrapunji. Of these special mention may be made of the numerous village sub-centres started for educating the hill tribes in Assam. Our educational and cultural activities in the NEFA region are also proving very useful and popular. In addition to such numerous activities, preaching and educative tours with magic lanterns, films and such other means are also undertaken frequently. For the labouring classes in industrial areas the Mission conducted a number of Night Schools, etc.

Mass Contact: From the foregoing account it will be evident that the organisation's activity is not concentrated in urban areas alone; it is spread over other fields as well. It will be wrong again to suppose that the organisation has no real contact with the masses. As a matter of fact, the message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda is spreading steadily in all parts of India, which is evident from the participation of innumerable people during the annual celebrations. The temples and Ashramas also draw thousands of people throughout the year. Besides these there are a number of medical institutions where millions get free medicines, and

thousands are treated in the indoor departments. In the educational institutions also, a considerable number of poor students get free education, board or lodging. The organisation is also running a good number of Adult Literacy centres located mostly in the rural areas. The publication centres, sometimes sell booklets at nominal prices to suit the pockets of the masses.

Relief Work: The Mission was engaged in continuous and extensive relief activities throughout the year. Compared to the relief operations undertaken during the preceding year the magnitude of relief work almost trebled in 1967-68. A total of Rs. 15,98,311/- in cash was spent during the year as against Rs. 5,87,462/- disbursed in 1966-67.

Drought Relief was conducted in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The Bihar relief, begun in 1966, continued till the end of October, 1967. In Uttar Pradesh, relief was started in April, 1967, in the drought-hit district of Mirzapur and it was continued till September, 1967. In West Bengal similar relief activities were started in June, 1967, in the districts of Purulia and Bankura, and the work was extended to the Malda district in July, 1967. The drought relief work as a whole was closed by the end of October, 1967. The cash expenditure for drought relief during 1967-68 amounted to Rs. 7,23,215.17 in all the States.

The Mission conducted Flood Relief in the Midnapore district of West Bengal from September, 1967, to December, 1967. Cash expenditure for this relief amounted to Rs. 3,05,141.72.

In November, 1967, the Yamuna Flood Relief was conducted by the Delhi Centre on a small scale. In the same month Cyclone Relief was started in the Cuttack district of Orissa and the work continued beyond 31.3.68. Expenditure incurred for the cyclone relief till the end of 1967-68 was Rs. 12,848.49.

Apart from the above, Riot Relief was conducted in November, 1967, at Ranchi, while the Koynanagar Earthquake Relief started by the Bombay centre in December, 1967, was still continuing on 31.3.68.

The total quantity of food grains distributed for these works was 2,398 tonnes 7 quintals, besides 54 tonnes 11 quintals 42 kilograms of milk powder, 91,291 pieces of new clothes and garments, 17,509 pieces of new blankets and 5,004 enamelled utensils.

In almost all these relief works the Mission got substantial help from the various State Governments concerned, as also from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The co-operation of the public with goods and money as well as volunteers was re-

markable, for all of which the Mission is highly thankful.

Work outside India: The monks of the Ramakrishna Math took upon themselves the task of carrying the message of India to distant lands. The various centres in North and South America, Europe and the some countries of Asia bear ample evidence of their labour of love carried on through preaching, publications, etc., as also medical or educational work where necessary.

Spiritual and Cultural Work: Both the Math and the Mission centres laid emphasis on the dissemination of the spiritual and cultural ideals of India, and through various types of activity tried to give a practical shape to the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna that all religions are true. The centres established real points of contact between people of different faiths through public celebrations, meetings, classes, publications, etc. They also conducted Libraries and Reading Rooms. A number of Sanskrit Chatuspathis too were run. At least ten centres published books on religious subjects and ten magazines in different languages. The Math centres at Mayavati, Baghbazar (Calcutta), Madras, Nagpur, Mysore, Rajkot, Bhubaneswar and Trichur, in particular, have to their credit a considerable number of useful publications. Special mention should also be made of the Institute of Culture in Calcutta, which has been trying to bring together eminent men and women of India and other lands in cultural fellowship.

Annual Celebrations: Most of the Math and the Mission centres ceremonially observe the days sanctified by the advent of great saints and prophets. The general features of the celebrations of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda are: Special worship, Homa (making offerings in the sacred fire), chanting of scriptural texts, Bhajan and Sankirtan (devotional music, often in chorus), distribution of Prasad (Sacramental food) to the devotees, feeding of the poor in large numbers, and lectures on the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda by eminent speakers, including Swamis of the Order. Thus the message of Sri Ramakrishna and his associates is steadily spreading, and many young and ardent souls are coming into closer touch with the ideals of the Math and the Mission. In cooperation with the local public some centres celebrate the more popular Hindu festivals, accounts for these being maintained separately.

Our Thanks and Appeal

We express our deep sense of gratitude to all those kind contributors, friends and sympathisers, who by their ready assistance, financial or other, have helped us to carry on our different activities. Our thanks are also due to the editors of various newspapers for kindly publishing our appeals and reports, and also to the gentry, official or non-official, in the relief areas for their timely help. We also express our gratefulness to those local physicians, engineers, lawyers and other friends who kindly volunteered their services to the different centres.

We hope the generous public all over India and abroad will continue to help the Math and the Mission unstintedly, to enable us to respond to the cry of distress, from whichever quarter it may come. All well-wishers of India and friends of the afflicted may find here a golden opportunity to earn the eternal blessings of the Lord by trying to alleviate the sufferings of their less fortunate sisters and brothers.

Our appeal is also to intelligent, high-minded youngmen, who understand and appreciate the life-giving message of Swami Vivekananda, to respond to his clarion call by dedicating themselves to the service of their fellow beings, who are grovelling in ignorance and misery.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADAPITHA

REPORT FOR 1968-69

Saradapitha took part in the Jalpaiguri flood relief work and donated books worth Rs. 3640.58 to flood-afflicted students of the area. Jagaddhatri Puja was performed with due solemnity.

The following is a brief report of the activities of the various departments and institutions run under the Saradapitha: *Vidyamandira*: This wholly residential three-year degree college affiliated to the Calcutta University, had 216 boys on its roll in 1968-69. In the University examination of the college, out of 91 candidates 81 came out successful, of which 9 secured first class, 4 distinction. The students lived under the supervision of monastic members of the Order. They had to go through a regular course of study, work, prayer, games and various other curricular activities. Religious classes were regularly held both in the college and the hostels as an aid to their moral development. Poor meritorious students were given financial help. The college raised a N.C.C. unit under the supervision of two qualified officers.

Sikshanamandira: Sponsored by the Government

of West Bengal and affiliated to the Calcutta University, this institution trains teachers and others for B. T. degree. During the period under review there were 134 students on roll. Number of students appeared for B. T. Degree examination: 131; passed: 129 of which 4 secured first class. The college set up an education exhibition on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birthday and published its annual volume 'Sandipan'. Under the auspices of the College Extension Service Unit, seminars were held for outside teachers on school subjects.

Shilpamandira: This is a Government sponsored polytechnic, recognized by the All India Council for Technical Education. It offers three year courses in Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and prepares students for Licentiate Examination in the said courses conducted by the State Council for Technical Education. Total strength in the year under review: 439; students appeared for final examination: 246, passed: 174 of which 14 secured first division. There were 90 students in the hostel attached to this department under the care of three monastic members of the Order. Students received regular N.C.C. training under the supervision of a qualified officer.

Shilpayatana: This is a free junior technical school intended for boys of 14 years and above to train them in subjects like Humanities, General Science Engineering and Workshop practices. Total strength: 134.

Shilpa vidyalaya: This department imparts free training to deserving students for one to three years in Electric, Auto-Mechanics, Turning, Fitting, Carpentry and Weaving. There were 62 students on the roll; 55 students appeared for the final examination and 42 came out successful.

Janasikshamandira: This section works in the field of mass education and public service. Through 9 night schools 70 adults were literated during the year. A fully equipped mobile Audio-visual Aid Unit exhibited 88 film shows attended by about 58000 people. The free public library had 16,073 books, number of books issued 18,326. There were various educational and recreational functions for the cultural and physical development of the youth community. Nearly 200 children were served with free nutritious tiffin everyday. Daily a total number of 8000 beneficiaries comprising children and under-nourished mothers, were given free milk, supplied by UNICEF, through 46 centres run under the supervision of this institution.

Tattvamandira: Regular scriptural classes for the monastic inmates and weekly discourses on

Srimad Bhagavatam for the public were held. It has a good library on philosophical and sanskritic studies.

Production-cum-Publication: This section is engaged in devising and manufacturing small machines, equipments, metallic photoframes etc. It also runs its own photography department. The publication wing of this section has so far presented sixteen books to the public on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement. It maintains a well-furnished Sales-cum-Show Room.

Urgent Need of Saradapith: The Saradapith which runs so many welfare institution has been in acute financial distress and urgently needs generous donations.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA
SMRITI MANDIR, KHETRI.

REPORT FOR 1967-68

The activities of this centre during the period under review were as follows:

Medical: The centre runs a Maternity Home and Child Welfare Centre. The trained staff deals with outdoor and indoor cases. All the services offered are free. During the year under review 32 indoor and 216 outdoor cases were attended to.

Educational: Sarada Sisu Vihar is conducted on kindergarten lines. It caters for the children between 3 to 7 years of age. There were 76 boys and 26 girls on roll of which 16 boys and 7 girls were Harijans. The Sisu Vihar has its own Children's Library with 375 books and subscribes to 5 monthlies. The children were daily given milk and also vitamin tablets. The Mission runs a public library and reading-room. The library had 3,750 books of which 2,643 were issued during the year. 215 new books were added. The reading-room had 5 dailies, 8 weeklies, 4 fortnightlies and 1 quarterly. Daily average attendance was 40.

Cultural: The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda, as also Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭami, Buddha Pūrṇimā, Christmas Eve, Śaṅkara Jayanti were celebrated.

Immediate Needs: (i) Repairs of the Smriti Mandir Building, (ii) Sarada Vihar School: equipment, furniture, running expenses and paying off the loans. (iii) Books and equipments for the Library and Reading-Room.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA
TRICHUR (KERALA)

REPORT FOR 1967-68

The activities of this Ashrama during the year under review were as follows:

Gurukul: This is the nucleus of the institution. It comprises two hostels, one for the boys and another for the girls, studying in the respective high schools run by the Ashrama. It aims at bringing up the children in the traditional ideals of Hindu life and conduct, under the direct supervision of monastic workers and residential teachers. With this purpose in view, weekly religious classes are conducted for them, and they are trained to perform daily worship and taught *bhajans* and chanting. Also, the birthday anniversaries of saints and sages are celebrated in which they take prominent part. Special attention is paid to their physical fitness. Periodical film shows and excursions to various places give the inmates of the Gurukul information as well as entertainment. There were 112 boys and 84 girls in the respective hostels, of whom 16 boys and 16 girls were free boarders. Of the latter, 7 boys and 12 girls were Harijans.

Lower Primary School: Total strength at the end of the year under review: 692.

Vidyamandiram Boys' High School: Total strength: 692. Number of candidates who appeared for S.S.L.C. examination: 81; passed: 46.

Sarada Girls' High School: Total strength: 580. Number of candidates who appeared for S.S.L.C. examination: 73; passed: 33.

On an average 396 children were daily fed at noon with the food materials supplied by CARE.

Sri Sarada Hostel for College Girls: Under the supervision of the Sarada Mandiram, a hostel for college girls, which was started in Trichur in 1964, had 48 inmates in 1967-68.

Harijan Welfare Work: In addition to the training and education imparted in residential section and in the High school, the Ashrama maintained a welfare centre in the colony of Adat, mainly devoted to social education and relief work among Harijans.

Outdoor Dispensary: The dispensary was opened in 1946 to serve the needs of a dozen villages around. The total number of patients treated: 27,680 (new cases: 13,701; repeated cases: 13,979). Minor surgical operations: 412.

Indoor Hospital: The hospital was opened in 1961. It has accommodation for 11 patients. Total number of patients treated was 277.

Poor and Destitute Relief: An amount of Rs. 252.16 was spent for this purpose during the year under review. On an average three beggars and pilgrims were served with food.

Child Welfare Activities: The *Śiṣuvihāra* (Creche) for the children under five years of working mothers was opened in 1954. The children are looked after during the day. Besides attending to their physical needs, they are taught singing, counting, writing and reading, through fun and play, in the nursery section, started in 1959. 40 children were taken care of in the Creche during the period under review. Average daily attendance at the nursery school: 40.

Vivekananda Vijnana Bhavanam: This institution, started in 1945 in Trichur town, runs a library and reading room. It is the centre of preaching activities on educational and cultural lines. Daily worship and prayers are conducted in

its shrine and prayer hall. 56 classes were conducted indoor and 22 outdoor during the year under review. Total number of books in the Library: 4360; number of books issued 628. The reading room received 3 dailies, 4 weeklies and 10 monthlies. Average daily attendance: 18.

To popularize the study of Sanskrit, teaching classes were started in 1967 and affiliated to Sanskrit Viswaparishad of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. Number of candidates who appeared for Prarambha and Parichaya respectively: 25, 14; passed: 37, out of which 22 secured first class with distinction.

Publications: Besides *Prabuddhakeralam*, which entered its 53rd year in 1968, 4 reprints and 6 new books were published. The scheme to publish Sri Ramakrishna Vachanamrita in Malayalam, in 3 volumes has been undertaken. The first volume is in print.

OBITUARY

SWAMI ASHOKANANDA

We record with deep sorrow the demise of Swami Ashokananda a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

Swami Ashokananda, aged 77, passed away due to heart-failure in San Francisco on December 13, 1969 at 12-45 p.m. (U.S.A. time). The Swami joined the Order at Bhubaneswar in 1920 and received *Sanyāsa* from Swami Shivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramkrishna, in 1923. From Bhubaneswar he was sent to Madras. After five years of stay at Madras, he was sent to Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. At Mayavati he successfully edited the *Prabuddha Bharata* from 1927 to 1930. During his editorship the Journal registered considerable improvement.

He took charge of the Vedanta Society of Northern California in San Francisco in 1932. But for a brief visit to India in 1935, all through these years to the last breath of his life he worked in San Francisco with single-minded devotion, as a result of which the Vedanta movement grew steadily and impressively in Northern California. Today,

besides the San Francisco Centre, the Vedanta Society of Northern California has two branch centres at Berkeley and Sacramento, and also a retreat at Olema.

Swami Ashokananda was a forceful writer and speaker and a fervent preacher of Vedanta. As the old temple of the Vedanta Society was found inadequate to hold the growing congregation, he built a beautiful, larger new temple in San Francisco. During his nearly thirtyseven years of intensive ministry, the Swami had been helpful to a good number of earnest seekers of that country. He was also mindful about the spiritual training of children. So he started a Sunday School for the children of the members of the congregation. Under his guidance a monastery, the nucleus of which was present since many years past, took permanent shape with several young men taking to the life of renunciation. Inspired by him several women aspirant have become renunciates.

Our heartfelt sympathies go to all the members of the congregation of the Vedanta Societies of San Francisco, Berkeley and Sacramento who will have sorely felt bereaved by the passing away of Swami Ashokananda.

May his soul rest in peace.