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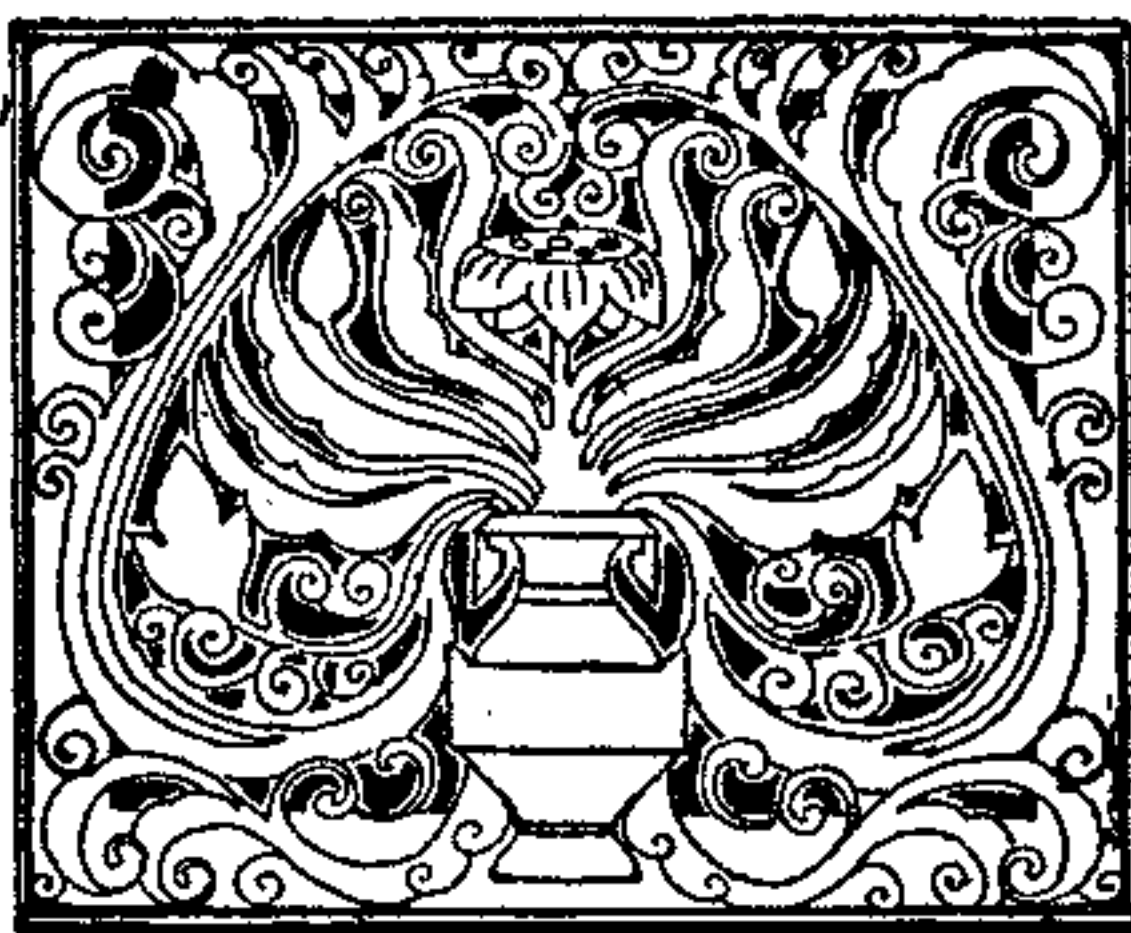
JULY 1971

Prabuddha Bharata

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Prabuddha Bharata

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Prabuddha Bharata

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No. 7

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ANSWERS

Question (asked by M): 'Is it possible to see God ?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Yes, certainly. Living in solitude now and then, repeating God's name and singing His glories, and discriminating between the Real and the unreal—these are the means to employ to see Him.'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'Dasya, the attitude of a servant toward his master. Hanuman had this attitude toward Rama. He felt the strength of a lion when he worked for Rama. A wife feels this mood also. She serves her husband with all her heart and soul. A mother also has a little of this attitude, as Yasoda had toward Krishna.

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

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

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

ONWARD FOR EVER!

What makes you weak? What makes you fear? You are the One Being in the universe. What frightens you? Stand up then and be free. Know that every thought and word that weakens you in this world is the only evil that exists. Whatever makes men weak and fear is the only evil that should be shunned. What frightens you, who holds you down? Only ignorance and delusion; nothing else can bind you. You are the Pure One, the Ever-blessed. ...

What can frighten you? If the suns come down, and the moons crumble into dust, and systems after systems are hurled into annihilation, what is that to you? Stand as a rock; you are indestructible. You are the Self, the God of the universe. Say "I am Existence Absolute, Bliss Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, I am He," and like a lion breaking its cage, break your chain and be free for ever. Is not the whole universe you? Where is there any one that is not you? You are the Soul of this universe. You are the sun, moon, and stars, it is you that are shining everywhere. The whole universe is you. Whom are you going to hate or to fight? Know, then, that thou art He, and model your whole life accordingly; and he who knows this and models his life accordingly will no more grovel in darkness.

Shivanath

THE LIGHT THAT IS WITHIN

EDITORIAL

I

A prominent leader of the Brahmo Samaj, Shivanath Sastri was a great pundit, a contemporary and friend of Sri Ramakrishna. In one of the Brahmo services, Shivanath had asserted *ex cathedra* that a man would become 'unconscious' by thinking of God excessively. He meant that a sincere lover of God would 'lose his head' by constantly thinking of Him. This was, in all probability, an oblique dig at Sri Ramakrishna who was then attracting the attention of the people of Calcutta with his frequent trances and ecstasies. When Sri Ramakrishna met Shivanath subsequently, he said to him: 'What? Can anyone ever become unconscious by thinking of Consciousness? God is of the nature of Eternity, Purity, and Consciousness. Through His Consciousness one becomes conscious of everything; through His intelligence the whole world appears intelligent.' But Shivanath persisted and argued that some Europeans had gone insane, that they had 'lost their heads', by thinking too much of God. Sri Ramakrishna rejoined, 'In their case it may be true; for they think of worldly things.'¹

Sri Ramakrishna was considered by many as insane. He was insane, one may admit, in the sanity of God-consciousness. He had a charmingly disarming retort to such critics: People say that I am mad. It is their opinion that I have become insane by thinking of God day and night while they themselves are perfectly sane thinking constantly of 'woman and gold'!

For us the world is very real. We clutch it to our bosom, study and analyse it, become men of knowledge, and sneer at those who refuse to do likewise. While there is an abundance of facts in our heads, our hearts remain dark, dry, and dreary. The

¹ 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras 4, 1947), pp. 582-3.

so-called knowledge—science, scholarship, and specialization—only makes the darkness more blinding. Why? As C. E. M. Joad says, 'It (science) only studies the shadows with great exactitude. Of the reality behind the shadows science can give us no knowledge.'² It is more likely a man loses his head thinking of the shadows than thinking of the reality behind the shadows.

Men like Sri Ramakrishna turn away from this make-believe and passing show. They seek one-pointedly the light of knowledge 'that scatters the darkness in the heart'. They struggle breathlessly, as it were, without rest or recreation. No wonder, they succeed in attaining a light 'more brilliant than a million suns' and become inwardly illumined. Thereby they 'lose their heads', do they? Blessed are such madmen for they are the salt of the earth!

That brings us pat to the question: How and where does a man get the light of Truth? The answer of the pundits is, 'By studying the world outside.' The answer of the sages is, 'By turning away from the world and looking within. By seeing that inner light alone does a man become truly wise and enlightened.'

II

Bṛhadāraṇyaka is one of the profoundest of the Upaniṣads. The part which is usually referred to as 'Munikāṇḍa', dominated by the sage Yājñavalkya, reveals to our view deep and dazzling secrets of the Ātman and Brahman, the individual self and the Supreme Self. This contains an interesting dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Janaka, its theme being the 'antarjyotis' or the inner light. We summarize a part of it below:

Yājñavalkya arrives at king Janaka's court. Janaka starts the conversation. He asks, 'Yājñavalkya, what serves as light for

man?' 'The light of the sun, O Emperor', said the sage, 'for with the sun as light he sits, goes out, works, and returns.' 'When the sun has set,' asks Janaka, 'what serves as light for man?' The sage answers that it is the moon that serves as his light. The dialogue continues with Janaka eliminating the moon, fire, and speech (sound), and finally Yājñavalkya says, 'The self indeed is his light, for with the self as light he sits, goes out, works, and returns.' 'Which is the self?' asks Janaka naturally. The sage replied: 'The Puruṣa (the infinite entity), which is identified with the intellect and is in the midst of the organs, the light within the heart (intellect). Assuming the likeness of the intellect, it wanders between the two worlds; it thinks, as it were, moves, as it were. Being identified with dreams, it transcends this waking world which represents the forms of death, namely, ignorance and its effects.'³

Dwelling as we do on this spinning satellite of the sun, we are hopelessly sun-centred. Without him we cannot conceive of any terrestrial life. So it is natural for us to think that we see and learn, live and move in his light. At night we depend on the moon, which means an indirect dependence on the sun. We also get some light from the Milky Way and the innumerable receding galaxies. Then there are the fire and the modern artificial light-sources like electricity. When we do not have the help of even these, as on a night of thunderstorm, we move with the aid of sound or smell or touch. When even these are denied, as in dreams and deep Sleep, it is the self that acts as light. The sun, moon, fire, or sound can only serve as lights for sensory purposes but not for experiencing dreams and deep sleep. Surely the mind also cannot act as the light, for it is material and non-self-luminous; it only reflects the consci-

² *Guide to Modern Thought* (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1933), p. 79.

³ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, IV. 3.

ousness of the self. All its waking and dream activities are carried on by borrowed light. In deep sleep, of which we have a recollection in the waking state, the light experienced is admittedly that of the self.

The external lights are variable in luminosity and get extinguished too. Even the sun, who is considered as self-luminous, will eventually turn into dark cinders. But the luminosity of the self, the witness consciousness, knows neither dimming nor death. A stanza in one of the famous Vedāntic treatises describes the undying and ever-constant light of the self thus:

'Through all months, years, yugas, and cosmic cycles, through all (divisions of time) past and future the consciousness remains the same and self-luminous. It neither rises nor sets.'⁴

Whatever beauty and glory we find in the external world, it is projected from the self only. An incident in the life of Swami Vivekananda is worth remembering here. On his second visit to the West, the ship in which he was voyaging entered the Straits of Messina. It was dusk and soon the moon rose in the summer sky. On one side frowned the dark crags of the Italian coast, on the other, the island was touched with silver light. 'Messina must thank me!' he exclaimed to Sister Nivedita. 'It is I who give her all her beauty!' As a sage who had realized the light within he knew the real source of the moonlit glory of Messina. And similarly of the whole universe.

III

Thanks to the twentieth century physicists, they have rid man of the age-old tyranny of the senses. What was thought to be a rigid, hard and fast reality 'out there', graspable by the senses—a whole world strictly governed by inflexible laws—

has been reduced to a mere chimera. The substantiality of the material world has been entirely negated. Quoting the authority of Eddington, Prof. Joad says:

'Physicists, says Prof. Eddington, "have chased the solid substance from the continuous liquid to the atom, from the atom to the electron, and there they have lost it". "Substance", then, is not something which is discovered by the physicists in the external world; yet "substance" certainly belongs to the world of our everyday experience. The inference is inescapable; substance belongs to the everyday world because mind has put it there; it is "a fancy projected by the mind into the external world".'⁵

The really truth-seeking among them have not halted here. They have exposed the inability of physics itself to know the nature of the external world. Higher physics, in fact, becomes entirely symbolic, mathematical, and subjective. The only unvitiated, direct knowledge possible for man, the physicist says, is the knowledge of his own self. Observes Prof. Joad:

'There is, as Prof. Eddington points out, one kind of knowledge which is exempt from the disabilities which attach to our knowledge of the external world. This is the knowledge which we have of ourselves. "Clearly", he says, "there is one kind of knowledge which cannot pass through such channels, namely, knowledge of the intrinsic nature of that which lies at the far end of the lines of communication".'⁶

Eddington calls that 'which lies at the far end of the lines of communication' as the 'Inner Light'.⁷ Here he is unmistakably, possibly unknowingly, echoing the words of the Upaniṣadic sages.

⁵ C.E.M. Joad: *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science* (Unwin Books, London, 1963), p. 20.

⁶ C.E.M. Joad: *Guide to Modern Thought*, p. 93.

⁷ C.E.M. Joad: *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science*, p. 150.

⁴ *Pañcadaśī*, I.7.

Some of those physicists who have immortalized themselves in the annals of modern science have expressed themselves boldly in favour of mysticism or religion as the only valid approach to Reality. This Reality, according to them, is not material or mental but spiritual. Consciousness is the very nature of this reality. The speculations of Erwin Schrodinger, Max Planck, R. A. Millikan, to mention a few, come startlingly close to Vedāntic conclusions. In fact, Schrodinger does not conceal the fact at all.⁸ Says he:

'The only possible alternative is simply to keep to the immediate experience that consciousness is a singular of which the plural is unknown; that there is only one thing and that what seems to be a plurality is merely a series of different aspects of this one thing, produced by a deception (the Indian Maya); the same illusion is produced in a gallery of mirrors, and in the same way Gaurisankar and Mt. Everest turned out to be the same peak seen from different valleys.'⁹

In an interview with J. W. N. Sullivan, Prof. Planck is reported to have said:

'I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we postulate as existing requires consciousness.'¹⁰

IV

Modern Western psychology has quite an accurate understanding of perception in terms of nervous and cerebral processes. But being weighed down with an austere

empirical approach to cognition and conation, it is highly deterministic. As long as introspection does not become an accepted mode of psychological investigation, issues of a spiritual entity and consciousness independent of matter will remain beyond its scope.

Study of perception and its processes occupies an important place in Western philosophy. It is the idealistic schools in it that come close to the truth of a conscious and imperishable entity behind the individual's knowing apparatus. But they never get to it. As Western philosophy has remained mostly speculative and intellectual, the concept of an unchanging, spiritual self is not arrived at by the idealistic thinkers. Again, self as recognized by Vedānta does not find a place in idealism. If anything similar to it is posited, it is generally confused with the ego, soul, mind etc., and never identified as the unchanging witness consciousness.

Perception has been an important theme with the Vedāntic thinkers also. Though they have gone deeper into the states of dream and deep sleep, the waking experience is not neglected. For example, the opening verse of the *Dr̥g-dr̥śya-viveka* very accurately analyses the concepts of the perceiver and the perceived:

'The form is perceived and the eye is its perceiver. The eye is perceived and the mind is its perceiver. The mind with its modifications is perceived and the witness (the self) is verily the perceiver. But the witnessing self is not perceived by any other.'

Loosely speaking, the eye is the perceiver. But, in fact, it is the mind, receiving the light stimuli, becomes aware of the objects. If the mind remains detached as in sleep, stimuli being present, no perception takes place. What is true of the eye is true of all other sense-organs. The mind no doubt responds to sense-stimuli, thereby

⁸ Vide: Erwin Schrodinger: *My View of the World* (Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 18-22; pp. 95-7.

⁹ Erwin Schrodinger: *What is Life?* (Doubleday Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company Inc., New York, 1956), p. 87.

¹⁰ *Observer* dated 25.1.1931 (quoted in *Guide to Modern Thought*, pp. 94-5).

bringing awareness of the external world. But the mind, being insentient and changeable, needs a co-ordinating, unchangeable and conscious background. And that background is the self. The Upaniṣads speak with one voice that it is the subject Self that activates the mind with Its own intelligence.

As has been already said, analysis of perception in Vedānta is not confined to the waking state only. It is extended to other states of consciousness such as dream and deep sleep. When Yājñavalkya conclusively proves the reality of the Ātman, king Janaka too apprehends it. This Ātman is the light within and also the light of the whole universe. By realizing it one becomes immortal and fearless. Janaka attains to that 'fearlessness' as had Yājñavalkya, the teacher.

V.

Śaṅkara, in *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, elucidates this analytical process. In the dialogue which serves as the framework for the whole book the teacher instructs the disciple about the material nature of the five sheaths covering the self and how to isolate the self from them. Further he tells the disciple:

'What remains as the culminating point of the process of elimination is the Witness, the knowledge absolute—the Ātman. The self-luminous Ātman which is distinct from the five sheaths, the witness of the three states, the real, the changeless, the untainted, the everlasting Bliss—is to be realized by the wise man as his own self.'¹¹

The disciple, being an adept in discrimination, faithfully follows the instruction but comes to see a void! He complains to the teacher about it. The teacher congratulates him on his analytical ability but asserts:

'That by which all these modifications

such as egotism as well as their subsequent absence (during deep sleep) are perceived, but which itself is not perceived, know thou that Ātman—the knower—through the sharpest intellect.'¹²

Here the teacher makes a significant reference to the sharpness of the intellect necessary to know the self. This sharpness is a result of purification and concentration of the mind. These are repeatedly recommended by the Upaniṣads for all seekers of truth. Self-control is the very foundation of purification. The *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* says emphatically:

'Not he who has not desisted from evil ways, not he who is not tranquil, not he who has not a concentrated mind, not even he whose mind is not even composed can reach the self. It is realized only through the knowledge of Reality.'¹³

The 'Bhṛgu-vallī' of the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad* declares that 'tapas' or austerity (with control and concentration) is the key to the knowledge of Brahman. Śaṅkara, in commenting on this section, pithily summarizes its import in a memorable sentence:

'Therefore, the significance of the context is that anyone, desirous of knowing Brahman, must practise the supreme 'tapas' of pacifying the internal and external organs (the mind and the senses).'¹⁴

Describing the self as a 'smokeless light', the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad* says that this self intuits the waking and dream states. It also teaches the meditation leading to its realization:

'The wise man should merge his speech in his mind; the latter he should merge in his intellect. The intellect he should

¹² *ibid.*, 213-4.

¹³ *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*, I. 2.24; also *vide*: *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, IV. 4.23.

¹⁴ तस्माद् ब्रह्मविजिज्ञासुना बाह्यान्तःकरण-समाधान-लक्षणं परमं तपः साधनमनुष्ठेयमिति प्रकरणार्थः । III. 6.1.

¹¹ *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 210-11.

merge in the Cosmic Mind. That, again, he should merge in the Tranquil Self.¹⁵

According to Śaṅkara, the 'speech' in this statement signifies all the five senses. As the mind rules the senses and is distracted by them when not in check, the aspirant after self-realization should bring them under the mind's control. As the 'buddhi' or intellect is superior to the mind, the latter must be merged in the former. Then results an amount of mental steadiness. The intellect, which is in fact a part of the Cosmic Mind, must be united with that and made as pure. Even this great Cosmic Mind, the Upaniṣad says, is to be transcended, and the aspirant should merge in that Supreme Self, the innermost, the Witness of all mental modifications, attributeless and changeless. Then the aspirant becomes illumined and sees to his unbounded joy that the light that is within is the light that shines through all the terrestrial lights and celestial luminaries.

VI

A verse of the *Kena-upaniṣad* has a great

¹⁵ *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*, I.3.13.

truth embedded in it. The verse states that 'Brahman is known when It is realized in every state of mind'.¹⁶

It is asserted here that Ātman and Brahman are identical. That by which all states of mind, in all beings, are illumined and perceived like objects is the non-dual Ātman. Being pure intelligence and the Witness, the Ātman shines through each and every experience of the mind, the dream and deep sleep states not excluded. Knowing this effulgent Ātman is immortality, and ignorance of It is death, says the verse further. There is no other way to conquer death. Real strength to overcome death comes only through the awareness of the Ātman. Strength gained through wealth, friends, magical words, medicine, mortification, or yoga cannot overpower death because such strength is derived from causes which are themselves perishable.¹⁷

Thus knowing the self, the inner light and the essence of consciousness, a man does not become 'unconscious', but immortal, illumined, and blessed.

¹⁶ प्रतिबोधविदितं मतम् । II.4.

¹⁷ Śaṅkara's Commentary on *Kena-upaniṣad*, II. 4.

A PRAYER

O Merciful Jesus, enlighten Thou me with a clear shining inward light, and remove away all darkness from the habitation of my heart. Repress Thou my many wandering thoughts, and break in pieces those temptations which violently assault me. Fight Thou strongly for me, and vanquish the evil beasts, I mean the alluring desires of the flesh, that so peace may be obtained by Thy power and that thine abundant praise may resound in Thy holy court, that is, in a pure conscience.

Command the winds and tempests; say unto the sea, Be still; say to the north wind, Blow not; and there shall be a great calm.

—THOMAS A KEMPIS
(From *The Imitation of Christ*)

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Kasi,
6.11.1914.

Dear—,

I am glad to receive yours of the first instant. I am very pleased to learn that nowadays your health is slightly better. Happiness and misery persist in this world. When did you ever find any one remaining completely free from the clutches of these? This just cannot happen. This transmigratory existence is beset with the dual throng. Embodied beings can become free of the dual throng only through adoration of the Supreme Spirit. That is to say: it is not that there will be no happiness and misery, but by the Lord's grace these will be unable to perturb them. So the Lord says: 'Endure them'.¹ Mark that He did not say that there would be no happiness and misery; on the other hand He did say that from the contact of the senses with the sense-objects happiness and misery arise, therefore endure them. If there were any other way but enduring them the Lord would have most certainly instructed His dear friend and disciple Arjuna about it.

Therefore Sri Ramakrishna has also said: Śa, Śa, Śa²—endure, endure, endure. It is as if he is telling us most emphatically that there is no other way but this; for he says again, 'He who forbears, endures; he who does not is destroyed.' So we shall have to endure. To endure alone makes for excellence. Affliction and miseries are inevitable—then what is the good of lamenting?

Rather, when we get into the habit of enduring we are freed from lamentation. Therefore, Tulasīdāsa the great man of knowledge and devotion, says:

On assuming the body one must suffer afflictions irrespective of being a man of knowledge or ignorance. But here lies the difference: the man of knowledge endures affliction calmly knowing full well that it is inevitable and unavoidable; and the ignorant man not knowing so, wails and laments and thus makes himself miserable.

Always remember these words of Sri Ramakrishna: 'Let affliction and the body mind their own affairs; O my mind, you remain in bliss.' Then you will never be overwhelmed by miseries.

SRI TURIYANANDA

¹ Reference here is to the following verse of the *Gītā* (II. 14): 'Notions of heat and cold pain and pleasure, are born, O son of Kunti, only of the contact of the senses with their objects. They have a beginning and an end. They are impermanent in their nature. Bear them patiently, O descendant of Bharata.'

² In Bengali the three letters are pronounced in almost the same way, viz. as 'Sha'. And the colloquial imperative of the root 'Sah' in Bengali is also 'Sa' pronounced 'Sha' which means 'forbear'.



PROFILES IN GREATNESS

THE SERVANT SUBLIME

'Servant' is one of those terms, nay human institutions, of rare significance and noble beauty which, somehow have been either shunned as derogatory or cynically misused by unworthy people.

The genuine 'Servant-Master' relationship is a rich and uplifting one, fulfilling certain deepest human urges, and working for the betterment of the individual as well as society. It is this aspect of human adventure that the immortal epic-poet Valmiki has sought to delineate in his 'Ramayana' through the character of Hanuman, also known as Maruti and Mahavir (the mighty hero).

There is nothing in this relationship which smacks of the tyrant-slave or exploiter-exploited link. No doubt the master leads and commands and the servant joyously obeys; but it is no strained relationship. It is the happy result of the interplay of certain noble human qualities—of protecting strength and self-giving submission, of tender affection and reverent adoration. The worldly master and servant, forcibly brought together by ambitious greed or cringing fear, can never understand the beauty and appeal of the real relationship.

Hanuman appears for the first time as the envoy of exiled king Sugriva to Rama, himself a prince in exile, voluntarily though.

Rama's beloved wife Sita has been kidnapped away by Ravana, the king of Lanka, and as a result he is drowned in sorrow and frantically in search of her whereabouts. Thus both Rama and Sugriva are living and moving in their respective worlds of grief and anger, suspicion and doubt, apprehension and anxiety. Hanuman, as he approaches Rama, who is a total stranger, is understandably all care and caution; he is naturally nervous as regards the consequences of the contact.

But, somehow, even as he draws near and they meet, a strange psychological revolution occurs; an inexplicable mutual trust springs up between them. Throwing caution to the winds Hanuman proceeds to confide in Rama all about himself and his king Sugriva; and Rama, too, reciprocates likewise. Hanuman is magnetised by Rama's personality and presence and the latter is all admiration for Hanuman's refinement and culture. It is a classic instance of 'love at first sight'. They have a free talk, a mutual sharing of joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. The outcome of it all is that Hanuman becomes then and there dedicated to the service of Rama and is accepted by him as such. Somehow Rama feels that Hanuman has opened up the way for the recovery of his beloved Sita.

From now on is born the ideal servant Hanuman, with his mission of yoking everything else suitably to the service of his divine Master.

Soon the organised search for Sita begins and Sugriva relies mainly on Hanuman to take up and discharge the responsibility of recovering the lost princess. Rama, in turn, feels so much confident about Hanuman that he actually gives him his signet ring which may serve as the credential when he meets Sita! 'May you bring Sita and me together again' is his poignant yet expectant message. It is the deep reverence with which he accepts the sacred trust and his unshakeable resolve never to fail his Master that makes Hanuman the ideal servant of immortal glory.

The love, devotion and loyalty to his master endows the servant with a courage, strength and energy, intelligence and resourcefulness seemingly impossible otherwise. Inspired by the mission, he crosses the sea, overcomes many an obstacle—some by intelligent foresight, some by valour and some by humour. Nothing of the magnificent might or sights of Lanka, Ravana's grand capital city, can deflect him from his single-minded purpose; not all the wealth and feminine loveliness there can distract this pure and resolute messenger.

Yet the search for Sita is not easy of accomplishment; for Ravana has hidden her away in his fully-guarded pleasure garden. Alternating between despair and hope, resolving to succeed and again to give up his life in the quest, Hanuman at last does behold her—Sita, the image of purity and beauty, emaciated by continual sorrow. The captive of merciless and crafty demons, she is constantly exposed to fear and danger but somehow has been keeping her body and spirit alive by the expectation of Rama coming to rescue her. It is all touch and go, and one false step may put her life in jeopardy, either at the

hands of rapacious Ravana or at her own hands panicked into despair.

It is under these circumstances, fraught with danger and extremely delicate, that the qualities of this servant come forth—understanding and judgement, skill and energy, fearlessness and strength. Not only does he establish contact with Sita, convince her of his bona fides and convey to her Rama's message, not only does he bring hope and comfort to her despairing heart but also inspires in her profound confidence and affection, trust and friendship towards himself. He is even ready to effect her rescue right away, on his own, but Sita prefers it to be done by Rama himself in a way befitting his own position and prestige.

With great imaginativeness, Hanuman decides that something also must be done meantime to put courage into her heart and instil fear into Ravana's so that he may not trouble Sita for some time at least. His servant's mission endows him with a rare valour—almost reckless yet confident—through which he gives the lords of Lanka a taste of his terrific capacity for destruction. Proudly proclaiming the glory of Rama, through word and deed, he speeds back to convey the glad tidings of the mission accomplished and message delivered. Yet, all along, he has no thought of himself or his own importance. If he is great, it is because of Rama's greatness; if he has accomplished anything, it is because of Rama's grace. We find him telling Ravana and others, dazed by his deeds, that he is but among the least of Rama's hosts. When finally, the expeditionary group returns to Rama to report of success, this hero who single-handed had performed the task chooses to stay back behind others, never inclined to push himself forward into the Master's presence.

And, in the end, he does give his report, and Rama, listening to his narrative with his eyes and heart overflowing, bursts forth

into a grateful tribute to this heroic friend and envoy: 'The deed done by Hanuman none else in the world could even conceive of attempting—crossing the sea, entering Lanka protected by Ravana and his formidable hosts and accomplishing the task set by his king not only fully but beyond the fondest hopes of all.' He feels very sad that he cannot right at the moment reward Hanuman adequately for the supreme joy he has brought. 'O Hanuman, let this embrace of mine stand as an acknowledgement of all that my heart feels of gratitude for your great service to me.' So saying while his whole being thrills with grateful love he takes Hanuman into his arms and clasps him to his breast. 'Hanu-

man has indeed wrought a wonder. He entered Lanka so strongly guarded; he has discovered Sita and, by consoling her, preserved her life. Bringing back good news of her, he has saved my life also.'

It is no wonder that Hanuman is also the recipient of the tearful gratitude and affection of Sita who is at last rescued. 'How can I repay my debt to you, my son! Your wisdom, your valour, your prowess, your patience and your humility are all your own. None in the world can equal you'—such is the fitting tribute.

—EXPLORER

Source: *Ramayana*: Sri C. Rajagopalachari.

HOW TO CONDUCT OUR INNER STRUGGLE

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

I

Only two persons in the world have no inner struggles: the moron and the saint. In the case of the moron, his mind being in an underdeveloped state, his struggles have not yet started. The saint, after going through much inner struggle, has finally won victory. Saintliness presupposes a hard inner struggle fought to the finish.

All other human beings have inner struggles, especially if they are trying to live a spiritual life. These struggles will not be the same in detail from person to person. All the same, all have struggles of a more or less similar nature; or rather, struggles issuing from the common human nature. Those who deliberately strive for spiritual self-betterment feel the rigours of this battle more than those who are devoid of spiritual aspirations.

Even among spiritual aspirants, some are

involved in these struggles suddenly with total unpreparedness and suffer a great deal, like being beaten in a dark room by invisible hands. They, confounded by sudden blows, fail to find any way out. After a vain struggle for a while they give in, battered by those forces which they did not know how to control or counteract.

Some spiritual aspirants, after an initial reverse, somehow learn the battle rules and gradually get the upper hand over the evil forces within. They learn through trial and error, through a lot of wounds; but they learn well. Others, through the grace of God and Guru, pass through these struggles more or less easily. Then, when they feel somewhat smug, they find themselves all on a sudden in the vortex of an undeclared battle.

Inner struggle being inescapable, it is necessary for every spiritual seeker who

wants to reach the goal of life to know how to conduct himself in this 'unseen warfare'.¹ The question may be asked: since we are already involved in struggles, what then has to be learnt about them? The answer is: it is one thing to be somehow involved in a battle and quite another to know how to fight. If we are involved in it knowing how to fight well, we have fair chances of victory. Otherwise defeat is inevitable.

II

How do we prepare ourselves for the battle?

(1) In the first place we require to keep the whole phenomenon of inner struggles in perspective and to develop a proper attitude toward them.

(2) Inner struggles being facts of spiritual life, they have to be accepted as such in a non-sentimental, matter-of-fact manner; and we must clearly understand the character of the forces in operation.

(3) We must remember that no one can wish away or permanently avoid inner struggles. They cannot be ignored ostrich-fashion.

(4) Inner struggles will have to be faced. One of the ways of getting the upper hand in inner struggles is to face them squarely and dexterously.

(5) There is no way of flying away from inner struggles by change of place or situation in life. Wherever we go they will follow us, nay, we carry them inside us all the time.

(6) As inner struggles cause us much suffering, they are very often looked upon as curses. That is a totally wrong view of inner struggles and a self-defeating one.

There is nothing pernicious in inner struggle, but something very precious. The unanimous verdict of all the mystics of the world is that they are to be deemed potent blessings of God. Many among us may not yet be persuaded to accept inner struggles as blessings. In that case we may accept them as meaningful and powerful challenges to our manhood or womanhood, challenges which as true spiritual aspirants we are bound to accept.

(7) We must also remember that it is not a compromise or a kind of harmony with our lower nature that we are aiming at, but conquest, complete conquest. If we know the technique of fighting, given the required patience, our victory is certain.

(8) These battles have to be accepted and gone through not only for surviving, not only because they cannot be avoided, but also because there is no other way of growing up in spiritual life.

III

The question may be asked: why at all have we to suffer this inner strife when our intentions are so good, and our aspirations for spiritual life are so genuine, sincere, and irreproachable?

This question may be answered from two different points of view: psychological and religious. In general terms the psychological explanation is this: man is a curious amalgam of dust and deity, of animal and divine, of the forces of darkness and the forces of light. Hence in every human being there are two natures: lower and higher. The lower nature of man is a fact of experience; the higher nature of man is also a fact of experience. The lower nature tries to assert itself and drag us downward; the higher nature also tries to assert itself and pull us upward.

What we are trying to do when we deliberately take to spiritual life is to assert the deity over the dust, the divine over the

¹ The reference here is to *Unseen Warfare*, being the Spiritual Combat and Path to Paradise of Lorenzo Scupoli, translated from Russian by E. Kadloubovsky and G.E.H. Palmer, Faber & Faber, London.

animal, and the forces of light over those of darkness. This causes the inner strife. When we live the life of ever-increasing compromises and always submit to the demands of our lower nature, our strife is not so great, or may be totally absent, because then our higher nature is more or less screened off from our awareness.

But our extremely powerful lower nature, being all the time well fed and cultivated, never gives up without a terrific fight to the bitter end. This is why at one stage the greater the intensity of the life of the spirit the more fierce become the inner struggles. There is no cause for surprise or alarm if, after taking to spiritual life, you have found that your inner struggles have increased! This is as it should be. The more the struggle, the greater the awakening, provided we live through these struggles dexterously. A truly awakened seeker will welcome his inner struggles as logical concomitants of his efforts to reach the goal. To resent inner struggles is a wastage of mental energy and it hampers progress.

IV

Now, let us consider the religious view in regard to our inner struggles. The Holy Mother said :

‘Everybody says regretfully, “There is so much misery in the world. We have prayed so much to God, but still there is no end of misery.” But misery is only the gift of God. It is the symbol of his compassion.’²

In these words the Holy Mother sounds the keynote of the religious view of the afflictions and struggles we have to face in life. All the mystics of the world speak in one voice on this matter. They say that God first allures, then oppresses, and finally reveals His grace.

St. Francis de Sales sets out³ a definite scheme of the struggles and sufferings in the life of a spiritual aspirant :

(a) In the first stage, to those who enter newly the precincts of spiritual life, God grants some foretaste of heavenly joy, in order to withdraw them from earthly pleasures and encourage them in the pursuit of divine life. God, says St. Francis de Sales, is like a mother who, to allure the babe to her breast, applies honey.

(b) In the second stage, according to His wisdom, God withholds from them the milk and honey, the sweetness and joy, of spiritual life; and surrounds them with darkness and tribulations, with the temptations and tortures of spiritual life. In this season of extreme dreariness and sterility they feel themselves completely forsaken by God and even by their own inner goodness and strength.

This is the most difficult period of spiritual life which comes to every earnest seeker. It is not as if this stage comes upon us undeserved from the hands of a God who is not bothered by a sense of justice. St. Francis de Sales points out that if we examine the sources from which this situation has developed with us, we shall find that ‘we ourselves are often the cause of our sterility and dryness’. In analysing how it is so he makes six points:⁴

- (a) ‘As a mother refuses to give sugar to a child that is subject to worms, so God withholds consolations from us when we take a vain complacency in them and are subject to the worms of presumption.’
- (b) ‘When we neglect to gather the sweetness and delights of the love of God at the proper season, He removes them from us in punishment of our sloth.’
- (c) ‘...The Spouse of our soul comes and

² Swami Tapasyananda, *Sri Sarada Devi—The Holy Mother*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1958, p. 356.

³ *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Double Day & Company, Garden City, New York, 1962, p. 263.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Book IV, Chapter 14.

knocks at the door of our heart and prompts us to return to our spiritual exercises. We put Him off, because we are unwilling to quit these vain amusements and to cut ourselves off from these false satisfactions. For this reason He departs and leaves us to wallow in our idleness. Afterwards, when we desire to seek Him, it is with great difficulty that we find Him.'

- (d) 'The double-dealing and the subtlety that we use in our confessions and spiritual communications with our director (spiritual teacher and counsellor) may also produce spiritual dryness and sterility.'
- (e) 'You have glutted yourself with worldly pleasures and it is no wonder that spiritual delights disgust you. When doves are glutted, they find cherries bitter, runs the old saying. "He hath filled the hungry with good things", says Our Lady, "and the rich he hath sent away empty." Those who are rich with worldly pleasures are not capable of spiritual delights.'
- (f) 'Have you been careful to preserve the fruits of the consolations that you have received? If you have, you shall receive new ones. To him who has, more shall be given, but from him who has not kept what was given him but has lost it through his fault shall be taken even that which he does not yet possess. That is, he will be deprived of the graces that were prepared for him.'

If on self-examination we find that our spiritual struggles are issuing out of any of such causes we should be thankful to God, for, 'the evil is half-cured when the cause is known', says St. Francis de Sales. But if on proper inquiry we fail to find any such particular cause, we should not trouble ourselves about making any more curious inquiries but in simplicity of heart proceed to take the following five measures:

- (a) Humble yourself very much before God in recognition of your own nothingness and misery.

(b) Call upon God and beg comfort of Him.

(c) Go to your confessor; open your heart to him; display to him all the recesses of your soul; take the advice he will give you with utmost simplicity and humility.

(d) After all this, there is nothing so profitable, nothing so fruitful, in such states of dryness and sterility as not to long for or too strongly desire to be delivered from them. Not that we must not even wish for deliverance, but that we should not set our heart upon it.

(e) Finally,...in the midst of our spiritual dryness and sterility, let us never lose courage, but wait with patience for the return of consolation, continuing always on our accustomed way. Let us not omit any of the exercises of devotion, but, if possible, let us multiply good works.

The meaning and purpose of being thrown into such a period, according to mystics who have gone through such travails—as the monks Callistus and Ignatius point out in their directions to the Hesychasts—are that:

(a) Being thus weaned away from softness and self-assurance, we may learn to feed on the more dry and solid bread of a vigorous devotion, being exercised by trials and sufferings:—if we have been weak, so that driven by the sheer urge of survival, we may be forced to discover the sources of our strength;—if we have been asleep, so that we may be awakened; if we have been away, so that we may be drawn nearer to God and be safer.⁵

(b) The question may very well be asked: why is it that even those who are not weak, asleep, or away, are also required to go through such periods? The mystic says, 'Those who are of God's own household, as it

⁵ *Philokalia* (Writings from the *Philokalia* on Prayer of the Heart), translated from the Russian text *Dobrotolubiye* by E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer, Faber and Faber, London, 1951, p. 189.

were, that they may abide in Him with daring.'⁶

(c) Finally comes grace. In the famous book *Philokalia*, which records the spiritual experiences and precepts of the saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Holy Fathers Barsanuphius and John teach:

'That you suffer is a good sign. Do you not know that sufferings and temptations become multiplied when the Lord prepares His mercy?'⁷

From his own experience, St. Paul gives a great assurance in a letter to the Corinthians:

'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but *God is faithful*, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation, also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'⁸

It is true of all our inner struggles that we are led to the sweetness of health through bitter remedies. There is no doubt about the fact that inner struggles, in whichever form they may present themselves, are extremely bitter. But there is no other known way to get a strong constitution of soul except by going through these afflictions.

Again, left to ourselves, it would be hardly possible to withstand these afflictions. 'How could perishable clay withstand the action of water unless divine fire makes it strong?' ask the monks Callistus and Ignatius.⁹

God's way of nurturing in spiritual life is to infuse in us the required strength to go through the inner struggles, through the struggles themselves. These inner struggles should not therefore be blindly resented but wakefully accepted. Struggles will be there all the same; but if we resent them,

we shall profit nothing. We must try to obtain from them as much spiritual profit as possible.

Having entered the spiritual life, if one has been long without inner struggles, then there are reasons to worry. But not the other way about. Inner growth will invariably be preceded by inner strife. There is no way of growing in spiritual life except through fire and tears. What you do not pay for is not precious. So to expect to realize the highest without paying one's maximum in all possible ways is a vain hope. In a song the great Indian mystic Ramprasad says, addressing his mind:

'O my mind, if you intend to attain the blessed feet of the Divine Mother, give up all ideas of happiness....

'Do not get annoyed if I tell you this simple truth, that in happiness is sorrow, and in miseries is happiness....

'That is a vain hope if you aspire for the highest through counterfeit devotion. The Divine Stickler for strictness is going to extract the last penny out of you!'

Like a soldier on the battle-front, an aspirant involved in inner struggles, if he wants victory, must not expect a soft life, but only hardships and ever more hardships.

V

It may be said in truth that a war is not won on the battle-front but in the camp where the soldier is trained and made battle-ready. The greatest secret in regard to waging the inner struggle, or rather in regulating it, is in knowing the fact that the inner struggle is not won by giving a mad fight in the critical periods of our life, but by what we think and do in our daily lives to keep ourselves battle-ready.

Complacency is the direst enemy of spiritual life. God has no darlings! Let no one imagine that he will for all time escape inner struggles by some sort of cleverness. Inner struggles of a bitter type may last

⁶ Ibid., p. 189.

⁷ Ibid., p. 355.

⁸ 1 Corinthians, X. 13.

⁹ *Philokalia*, p. 189.

quite a long time. They may come at any period of life. Living an untroubled life for long is no guarantee against getting into difficulties at an advanced age.

All serious aspirants should therefore know how to be battle-ready and also do regular spiritual exercise in their daily life. If a man thinks that he will learn how to operate the fire-extinguisher after the house is on fire, we do not think much of his intelligence.

What exactly is battle-readiness for inner struggles?

One morning at Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Order, Swami Brahmananda, the great disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, met a young monk on the lawn and said: 'Come, let me visit your room.'

'Will you kindly come a little later, Maharaj?' cringingly said the embarrassed monk, instead of being happy at this unexpected gesture of kindness from the President of the Order.

'Why?' asked Swami Brahmananda.

'I have not kept my room tidy. I shudder to have to receive you there.'

'My son,' said the great Swami, 'you should be expecting me always!'

This was one of the most important spiritual lessons the young Swami received in his life. What Swami Brahmananda conveyed to him by those few casually-spoken words was that God was to be expected every moment in one's life. We have to live our daily life in expectancy of the divine, as though God might appear before us at any time.

How do we really know that God may not come to us today? This attitude of life is the foundation on which we shall have to build our battle-readiness for inner struggle.

But who can have this attitude? Only he who is convinced, after due reflection on, and proper examination of, all the values of life, that God-realization or the attainment of illumination is the be-all and

end-all of his existence, the ultimate objective of human life. Intellectual conviction alone will not do. He must become emotionally so imbued with the idea that it should course through his veins and tingle in his blood-stream. It must become the dominating urge of his soul.

Such a conviction, theoretical though it may appear, will serve a great practical purpose as far as battle-readiness is concerned. In simple words, it will help us shape our minds. And battle-readiness for inner struggle means nothing but moulding the mind so as to be able to face all the temptations and tribulations of life. All our bondage and suffering, conflicts and defects, happiness and victory, are felt in the mind only. Moulding the mind is therefore the primary task. And nothing is more helpful in moulding the mind than the constant cherishing of the idea that all we do in daily life is preparation and readiness for a divine encounter.

A fight is not only delivering a mortal blow on the enemy, but clearing an impediment on the way to where we want to go. So, always remembering where we want to go will be the most important part of successful fighting. To this end, while seeing to it that the mind is slowly and surely moulded by the idea that the attainment of illumination is the ultimate end of human life, we shall have to do some direct operations on the mind too. We shall have to remove whatever poison we have already accumulated in our minds, and also see that we do not take in any fresh contagion from without. Moreover, the power-resources of the mind will have to be unlocked. All the powers that we require for waging the inner struggle are within ourselves.

In inner struggles two types of operations will always be needed: (a) defensive measures, and (b) aggressive measures.

How do we remove the poisons that are already within our minds? What are these

poisons? These poisons are our sinful tendencies. Whence do they arise? A deep-going self-analysis will show that they all arise from our will to enjoy the temporal. And they are fed, aided and strengthened by subtle deceptions of our mind, many of which arise from the subconscious.

From the will to enjoy arises clinging to life. From clinging to life arise all attachments and aversions, likes and dislikes. Of course, at the root of the will to enjoy things phenomenal, is our ego-sense, which is rooted in our ignorance of the Ātman.

Even our religious aspiration may be only an expression of our will to enjoy. Just as we want a little sauce to enjoy our favourite dish, so a little of the sauce of religion makes the enjoyment of the world more delectable. Religion of this sort is not likely to cause us much inner struggle.

But when we seek to convert our hedonism into spirituality by living a different kind of life, we are in for trouble. And for this reason: although our will to enjoy remains strong, we are trying to follow a way of life which calls for the giving up the enjoyments. So we give up and give in; we give in and give up. In this way the see-saw struggle continues. If this has happened to you, you are on the way. It must be so with a normal person, but a normal person is not necessarily a spiritual person. If we get stuck in this giving-up-and-giving-in game of inner life, we may outwardly be in religious life for any number of years without making any progress. If we want to get out of it we must vigorously attack our will to enjoy the phenomenal. In a world where the pursuit of happiness is considered to be a legitimate objective of life, it requires boldness to say that we must give up our will to enjoy.

But we have to remember the context. We are trying to find out ways of victory in inner struggles. These disciplines are meant only for those who are serious about

spiritual life. Others are free to enjoy as much as they want and also to take whatever goes with it. Those, however, who want victory in inner struggles, must give up the will to enjoy the phenomenal.

How can they do it? By two methods:

(a) *Abhyāsa* (practice) and (b) *vairāgya* (dispassion).

(a) *Abhyāsa* or practice of what? Habitual practice of discrimination or right thinking.

(b) *Vairāgya* or dispassion means substituting the will to freedom from all bondage for the will to enjoy the phenomenal. Freedom from the bondage of the phenomenal is what constitutes the highest bliss. No enjoyment on the phenomenal level is possible without inner and outer bondage. So Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*: 'All contact-born enjoyments are sources of misery.'¹⁰ Spiritual aspirants must learn to aspire for that joy which is not contact-born.

We are apt to think: I am enjoying only some innocent pleasures and that can very well go with my spiritual aspiration. But what have we found out from experience? Has that way of thinking and acting minimized our inner struggles? Certainly not.

There are good reasons for this. One innocent pleasure will lead to another less innocent pleasure. Continuing in this way we shall find ourselves involved in pleasures which are not innocent at all. Eventually we shall find that while superficially appearing to be living a religious life, which is expected to lead us from bondage to freedom, we have continued to forge new fetters for ourselves.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* there is this revealing passage:

'As the ocean is the one goal of all waters, so the skin is the one goal of all kinds of touch, the nostrils are the one goal of all smells, the tongue is the one goal of all savours, the ear is the one

goal of all sounds, the mind is the one goal of all deliberations, the intellect is the one goal of all (forms of) knowledge, the hands are the one goal of all actions, the organ of generation is the one goal of all (kinds of) enjoyment, the excretory organ is the one goal of all excretions, the feet are the one goal of all (kinds of) walking, the organ of speech is the one goal of all the Vedas.' ¹¹

The organ of generation being the one goal of all kinds of enjoyment, the will to enjoy may easily lead one to sex. And sex-enjoyment is said to be the most concentrated of physical or phenomenal enjoyments. Therefore bondage created through this enjoyment is also likely to be the strongest.

We have to remember constantly that as spiritual seekers our goal is to attain liberation of the spirit, which comes with the realization of the Ātman. One must transcend one's body-consciousness before one can realize the Ātman. Attachment to one's body and mind itself is sufficient bondage. When through sex one becomes attached to another body and mind, bondage becomes all the more strong. This explains why Sri Ramakrishna says:

'“Woman and gold” alone is the obstacle to yoga.' ¹²

'Man can realize God if he wants to, but he madly craves the enjoyment of “woman and gold”. The snake has a precious stone in its head, but it is perfectly satisfied to eat mere frogs.' ¹³

'Come outside the house of Māyā, give up “woman and gold”, and the sun of knowledge will destroy ignorance.' ¹⁴

As readers of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* know, Sri Ramakrishna was not a hater of woman. On the contrary, he was a lifelong worshipper of the Divine Mother, he accepted a woman as Guru when practising

Tāntrika disciplines; he worshipped his wedded wife as the embodiment of the Divine Mother; and even in prostitutes he saw the Divine Mother.

He used the word 'woman' to symbolize 'sex', and 'gold' to symbolize all 'possession and possessiveness'. Sex stands for the psychic bondage and gold for the material bondage of man. These two cover all phenomenal bondage of the soul. And all this bondage arises from our will to enjoy. These are statements of fact. We have to face these facts in a realistic manner.

How are we, as spiritual seekers, to face this problem? This is the question. If we do not know how to face it we can create for ourselves endless inner struggles.

We shall not go further into detailed discussion of this particular issue but shall indicate certain principles of conduct which come to us from the wisdom of the scriptures and the spiritual masters. These are a few of the inviolable rules for spiritual seekers :

(a) There should be no sex-life whatsoever for virgins, celibates, and widows or widowers.

(b) Sex-life is permitted by scriptures and sages only to the wedded husband and wife; but even for them moderation is advised. And husband and wife must be faithful to each other.

(c) Even for the wedded couple, after the birth of two or three children, the advice is to give up sex-life by mutual agreement and through the help of prayers.

We are here concerned only with the inner struggles of serious spiritual aspirants. If any spiritual aspirant violates these laws, he will be working for the increase of his inner difficulties. All scriptures and sages agree with St. Paul who said, 'It is better to marry than to burn.' The life of the householder is a spiritually sanctioned and

¹¹ II. 4. 11.

¹² 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, New York, 1942, p. 113.

¹³ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 583.

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 7.9.

honoured state of life in which practices for attaining perfection can be carried on conveniently.

But it is also said that the best thing is to reach the altar of God like a fresh flower, pure, unsmelt and uncontaminated. If we cannot do this let us not be disheartened. Let us do the next best thing. Sri Ramakrishna himself says: 'Is renunciation possible except in the fullness of time? The time for renunciation comes when one reaches the limit of enjoyment.'¹⁶ The embodied soul must see through it all in order to give it up. But let him see through wisely. Hence these injunctions in the scriptures.

The reason why an austere life is recommended for spiritual seekers is that such a life keeps at bay all kinds of subtle influences and evils which, in a life of pleasure, insinuate themselves in such a way as eventually to tie us up in the hardest type of bondage. By means of an austere life we can gradually subdue our sinful tendencies. The weaker our sinful tendencies become the less will be our inner struggle.

But what are we to do about our committed sins, which also foment our inner struggle? Let us remember this all-time truth of spiritual life: there is no unforgivable sin except the unrepented sin.

Repent and sin no more. We have to pray that God may help us not to sin any more. Doing this also increases our will-power to keep our promise. We must not, however, forget that many passions lie hidden within our minds. They crop up under favourable situations. Therefore one must not trust oneself overmuch, but stay awake and vigilant.

An enemy supply-base, so to say, in our inner struggle, is our own subconscious mind. The subconscious is like a dark hole in the basement, the depth and contents of which are unknown. From the psychologi-

cal standpoint it is a storehouse of our good and bad tendencies, formed by past thought and action. Hence it influences our inner struggle, often adversely, while remaining undetected.

If we do not know how to clear the subconscious of the inimical forces which accentuate our inner struggle in a mysterious way, we cannot really make headway toward victory. The control of the subconscious is an absorbing subject in itself. For our present purpose it will suffice to mention one method of destroying the harmful forces that may arise from the subconscious.

The simplest method of clearing the subconscious of all evil is to have the memory of God treasured in one's heart like a priceless pearl. 'St. John Chrysostom says that mental contemplation of God is by itself sufficient to destroy the spirits of evil.'¹⁷ According to the mystics of both East and West, God's name is like fire. Earnest repetition of the Lord's name along with mental contemplation on God is an authentic method of cleansing the mind of all evil.

But in the initial stage, out of this very practice an impediment may arise. This takes the form of increased turbulence of mind. There comes a period in the inner struggle when the enemy fights madly, as it were, because he has been stirred up. At such times, one must not only not get frightened, but call up all one's strength and skill, and keep one's balance. At such a time, Sri Ramakrishna says, one should be extremely cautious and alert like the boatman who, while passing a dangerous bend in a river, stands up and takes firm hold of the helm.

These few measures will take care of the poison that is already within our mind, conscious and subconscious.

(To be continued)

¹⁶ Op. cit. p. 1014.

¹⁷ Writing from the *Philokalia*, p. 323.

ADVAITIC MYSTICISM

DR. A. RAMAMURTY

Brahman-in-Itself, which is essentially non-dual and is no other than the true being of the knower, cannot be known objectively through any of the sources of knowledge, including scriptures. The various sources of knowledge, which are based on a distinction between the knower and the known, can reveal a reality which is other than the knower. The 'other' that is revealed through them is necessarily conditioned by the categories of human understanding; and what Reality is in Itself cannot be known through them. Scriptures, which operate within the empirical sphere of ignorance or relativity and have their significance for a knower, can reveal Reality indirectly as 'That', which until It is realized directly is looked upon as something other than the knower.

Thus rejecting the possibility of attaining an objective knowledge of Brahman-in-Itself, Advaita philosophers admit that direct and immediate experience of It (*Aparokṣānubhūti* or *Brahmānubhava*) is possible by being It. Such an immediate experience is the only and unique way of knowing what Brahman-in-Itself is; in no other way can a non-dual reality be comprehended. *Brahmānubhava* is known variously as *Brāhmīsthiti* (the state of being Brahman), *Brahmanisthā* (the state of being established in or as Brahman), and *Brahmanirvāṇa* (the blissful state of being Brahman which is the highest and perfect state of human realization). The different words like 'anubhūti', 'avagati', 'avabodha', 'anuvedanā', 'samyagdarśana' etc., are used to express it. Its attainment, according to Advaita philosophy, is the ultimate goal of a metaphysical inquiry and also the supreme fulfilment of human life. The avowed purpose of the Upaniṣadic teachings that deal

with the supreme reality, like 'That thou art' and 'I am Brahman', is to make one experience Brahman directly (*avagati-nisthā*).¹ Brahman-experience is not an unattainable spiritual ideal, but a possibility which all can have, for it is to realize one's own true being or Self. Besides Upaniṣadic evidence, its possibility has been attested historically by the experiences of the sages like Vāmadeva and Triśaṅku. Janaka, the emperor of Videha, had attained it by realizing his oneness with Brahman. Commenting on the *Vedānta-sūtra* (3.2.24), Śaṅkara states that Brahman in Its true nature can be experienced directly during 'samrādhana', the state of perfect conciliation or trance. He also presents a vivid description of it in his *Vivekacūdāmaṇi* (481-5 and 488).

The purpose of the present study is mainly to discuss the real significance of Brahman-experience, after presenting a brief description of it. This study is mainly based on the writings of Śaṅkara, the representative thinker of Advaita.

Brahman-experience is peculiarly unique, and differs fundamentally from empirical experience. Experience, in its empirical sense, is not possible without a distinction between the knower and the known, and involves the activity of knowing. An object is known only when it is revealed through a knower, and the knower becomes self-conscious while revealing something which may be an external object or an internal feeling or idea. Even self-consciousness is not without an object; for the notion of 'I' is its object. Thus, according to Advaita, the existence of each one

¹ Śaṅkara's Commentary on *Brahma-sūtras*, III. 2.21.

of these factors is dependent on or conditioned by the other and hence they are relative; ignorance is the basis of their validity. Moreover, intellect has no consciousness being constituted of fine matter, and Self, which is pure consciousness, is devoid of activity. The activity of knowing, therefore, does not belong to neither of them. But, empirical experience, which rests on the activity of knowing, is a fact and needs explanation. According to Śaṅkara, it is based on ignorance, because of which one fails to discriminate rightly between the nature of Self and that of intellect.² Non-discrimination leads to superimposition, whereby the nature of one is transposed to the other. Self then seems to have become a knower and intellect appears to be conscious. Empirical experience is thus conditioned and relative, and being based on ignorance, it has no objective (*vastu*) validity.

Brahman-experience is freedom from ignorance, the source of differences and multiplicity. It transcends empirical experience and is free from subject-object duality. Nevertheless, it is an experience, in the sense, it is pure experience or experience itself (*anubhūtiṣvā*), as opposed to empirical experience which is always of an object. It is absolute knowledge (*kevala-jñāna*) or knowledge in itself (*jñāna-mātram*). The absence of knower-known duality, that is characteristic of empirical experience, does not remove the possibility of experience. As pure consciousness, Brahman-experience is the source and ground of all experience. Every experience invariably testifies to or presupposes its existence; in its absence no experience is possible. Fire becomes revealed when it burns something and remains in itself in the absence of things to be burnt, for which reason its non-existence cannot

be inferred though its existence cannot be ascertained directly. Similarly, pure consciousness, which becomes revealed, during empirical experience, while revealing something, exists in its pure and undifferentiated condition when there is nothing to be revealed. Brahman-experience is this pure knowledge, which in its empirical predicament is known *inferentially or indirectly, that is, in relation to an object*. Brahman-experience has no object, for it is realization of Brahman which is one without a second. One can experience something when there is something outside one's Self, but not when everything is realized to be Self. Realization of pure knowledge is possible only by being it. There can be no objective knowledge of it for want of a subject to experience it, and consciousness by its very nature precludes the possibility of its becoming an object of experience. At the same time, it is not Self knowing Itself, for it is redundant to attribute self-awareness to a reality which is pure consciousness by nature. It also presupposes a split in the nature of Self into subject and object which is not possible. Fire will not burn itself in the absence of things to be burnt. To sum up the whole argument, during Brahman-experience, Self is neither conscious of Its individual existence nor is It aware of Brahman, as if It is an object. It is pure consciousness which is simple and undifferentiated.

Brahman-experience is direct and immediate. As realization of one's own true nature, it is unmediated. A mediating principle is required only if something other than one's own Self is realized in Brahmanubhava (experience of Brahman). Realization of Self as Self is uniquely direct. It is similar to the awareness that one is the same person as that for whom one was searching before. Empirical experience, on the contrary, comes through the mediation of the senses and mind, and the object of experience is distinct from the

² *ibid.* Introduction

subject that experiences. Even self-luminous objects like sun and fire depend on some conscious principle to get themselves revealed. This dependence is inevitable as long as the objects of experience are different from the subject that experiences. In this sense, even scriptural knowledge is empirical, for it comes through mediation and the reality known through it is indirect.

Another essential characteristic of Brahmanubhava is its ineffability. The description of it is well-nigh impossible. Description of an experience is possible only when the object of experience is distinct from the subject that experiences, but not when the object of realization is subject itself. Brahmanubhava defies expression simply because of its undifferentiated nature, wherein the subject-object duality is completely absent. Within the empirical realm, any experience, however subtle it may be, can be described through some appropriate medium of expression, because the experiencer does not lose his identity in an empirical experience. Whereas, during Brahmanubhava, Self loses Its individuality, so that there remains no distinct subject to give a description of it. Besides, as the source and ground of human thinking, Brahmanubhava cannot be within its comprehension, just as the capacity to see cannot be seen. Thought and language are inseparable, and wherein one fails the other too will fail. Language is constituted to communicate an experience that has certain characteristics, but not Brahmanubhava which is devoid of attributes. Even the words 'Brahman' and 'Ātman' do not convey it. They can at best indicate it. To ascertain that it is non-dualistic is not to attribute anything to it positively, but to prevent a possible wrong conception of it. Description of such a non-dualistic consciousness is possible only through negation, but the supreme way of describing it is by way of silence. The description of it as pure consciousness,

pure bliss, pure existence etc., as presented in the Upaniṣads, according to Śaṅkara, is possible and significant only from the standpoint of ignorance, that is, when Brahman is considered to be an object of realization or when It is looked upon as something Other (*anya*) than the experiencer, but not when It is directly experienced as one's own Self.³

Brahmanubhava should be distinguished from experiences which are apparently similar to it, such as Samādhi of Yoga, swoon, deep sleep, and death, in all of which one is neither conscious of oneself nor of something other than oneself. In other words, the sense of individuality is completely absent.

According to Yoga,⁴ mind is the source of human bondage and suffering. It causes bondage to Self by obscuring Its pristine purity and independence. Regainment of Self's lost perfection and independence by way of dissolving the mind (*laya*) through gradual control of it is the goal of Yoga. Contrary to this viewpoint of Yoga, Advaita maintains the non-existence of anything different from Self, in reality, and as such Its realization does not depend upon the dissolution of something. Mind has no real or objective existence, being a product of ignorance. The highest realization of Advaita, therefore, has nothing to do with the dissolution of mind, but depends on the destruction of basic ignorance. Moreover, according to Yoga metaphysics, Self is different from Īśvara and Its individual identity is never lost; only Its lost purity and independence are regained during Samādhi. As against this, Advaita teaches the absolute oneness of Self and Brahman,

³ Śaṅkara's Commentaries on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, II. 3.6; *Kena-upaniṣad*, II. 2.

⁴ Śaṅkara rejects Samādhi of Yoga as having anything to do with Advaitic experience in his commentary on Gauḍapāda's *Kārikā*, III. 40-6.

which when realized destroys Self's individuality.

Swoon is an accidental phenomenon caused either by drugs or by stunning. It is purely transient, unwanted, and injurious and has nothing to do with Self-realization which is all bliss and is the *summum bonum* of man.⁵ During deep sleep, ignorance is not destroyed, but reverts to its potential state of existence; it re-manifests itself when the deep sleep is over. If Reality is wrongly perceived during waking state, It is not apprehended during deep sleep. Self may seem to attain a disembodied state of existence during death, and for that reason, some may consider death to be freedom from the limitations and finiteness caused because of Self's association with body. But the embodied condition of Self is itself an illusion and unreal, given rise to by non-discrimination between Self and body. As such, the question of Self's attainment of Its disembodied state of existence does not arise; and death has nothing to do with Self-realization which can be attained while one is alive.⁶

These states of experience, in general, represent an intense passivity of the mind or psyche, which may be due to its withdrawal from the world of experience or the stopping of its function. There is no awareness in these states that the mind and the experience of differences caused because of it are unsubstantial and have no real existence. Instead of achieving an awareness of oneness of everything with Self or the realization that there is nothing different from Self or Brahman, which culminates in perfect bliss, we observe in these states the absence of awareness of things. The approach of Yoga is negative, in that the mind which is the means of attaining

knowledge is dissolved, so that the painful experience of differences is avoided instead of realizing its illusory nature. There is no place in these states for right discrimination and right knowledge through which alone the highest experience of Advaita is attained. Moreover, *Brahmānubhava* is natural and uncaused, while all these states are caused and hence have a beginning and an end.

Advaita is primarily an inquiry into one's own true nature by way of penetrating through the various states of experience into their source. The goal of such an inquiry is to realize directly the ultimate nature of the inquirer (*vedituh-svarūpa*). According to Advaita, the knowledge that does not comprehend the real nature of the knower is incomplete. It is the inner Self that is presented in Vedānta as the highest Reality to be inquired into, declaring 'I am Brahman', but not anything other than Self, stating 'That is Brahman'. To realize the innermost Self as Brahman is perfect knowledge. On the contrary, anyone who thinks that Brahman is something other than one's own Self is not a knower of truth. Brahman and Ātman are used as synonyms in Advaita, and nowhere Self-Realization (*ātma-sākṣātkāra*) is discriminated from *Brahmānubhava*.

Self-realization does not mean knowing the empirical self, which is known through introspection and empirical analysis, without the aid of revelation. What is thus known is not the Self in Its true nature, but as It is conditioned by the various factors of superimposition. It is the Self in Its empirical predicament, which being a projection of ignorance, is relative and has no objective existence. Thus empirical self is nothing but the Self viewed from the standpoint of ignorance or viewed in relation to non-self. Therefore, to realize the real and unconditioned nature of empirical self is Self-realization. This is the purport

⁵ Śaṅkara's Commentary on *Brahma-sūtras*, III. 2.10.

⁶ *ibid.*, I. 1.4.

of the Upaniṣadic statements like 'That thou art' and 'I am Brahman' which teach Self-Brahman oneness. The avowed purpose of these statements, according to Advaita, is to make one realize that the words 'thou' and 'I' which stand for the empirical self, and the words 'That' and 'Brahman' which represent Reality viewed as an object of realization, in their implied sense, point out to one and the same reality of which no objective determination is possible. Nevertheless, It is the substratum on which the notions of 'That' and 'thou' are superimposed. When viewed objectively as the matrix of all that is experienced, It appears as Brahman or 'That', and It is known as Self or 'I' when viewed subjectively as the essence of one's being. Although the existence of both 'That' and 'thou' depends upon the fact of superimposition, the attributes superimposed in each case differ, and as such they are not identical directly. As 'I' or in Its empirical predicament, Self is not one with Brahman or 'That'. In other words, unless Self is stripped of the sense of 'I' or individuality, It cannot realize Its oneness with Brahman. When ignorance, the cause of empirical differences and distinctions is destroyed, Brahman-in-Itself or what the terms 'That' and 'thou' imply is directly experienced. Thus, ontologically, Self-in-Itself is not different from Brahman-in-Itself, so that in realizing Itself, Self does not either identify Itself with Brahman, as if Brahman is distinct and yet identical with Itself in substance, or merge Its reality within a greater reality, that is, Brahman. 'Identity' and 'oneness' do not indicate any relationship between Brahman and Self, but only mean their non-difference.

The most important aspect of Brahmānubhava is its all-inclusive nature. To realize Self's oneness with Brahman is to realize, at the same time, the oneness of all (*sarvam*) that is, the differentiated universe,

other selves etc., with Self.⁷ Prior to Brahman realization, one thinks wrongly that all is not Brahman, as one thinks oneself to be different from Brahman, which makes one think that Self is not all. But as 'I' is not absolutely real, the 'all' is also not real ultimately and when the ignorance that one is not Brahman is destroyed, one realizes one's oneness with Brahman, and this realization removes, at the same time, the wrong notions that all is not Brahman and Self is not all. Thus to realize Self-Brahman oneness is, at the same time, to realize all-Brahman and all-Self oneness.

The real significance of Brahmānubhava is negative. There is no positive gain in Brahmānubhava, nor does something that is not already attained is attained in it. What is realized during Brahmānubhava is a self-established and self-evident reality, that is, Self. Self by Its nature is an ever realized reality, and the attainment of anything presupposes its attainment. Nevertheless, the truth of Its realization is obscured, as it were, by the presence of ignorance. As ignorance is the cause of Its seeming non-attainment, the attainment of It is meaningful only in terms of the removal of ignorance. The uninterrupted existence of Self in Its true nature, which is an ever-accomplished fact, becomes self-revealed, as it were, on the destruction of ignorance. This removal of ignorance is figuratively known as Self-realization, and is significant from the standpoint of ignorance or from the previous states of non-realization.⁸ From the standpoint of higher realization, there is no significance, whatsoever, for the presence or absence either of ignorance or knowledge. However, to an individual,

⁷ Śaṅkara's Commentaries on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, IV. 3.32; *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, II. 1.1.

⁸ Śaṅkara: (a) Introduction to the Commentary on *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, (b) Commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, I. 4.7, (c) Commentary on *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, II. 1.1.

who has not realized that fact, presence of ignorance is bondage and freedom from it by way of knowledge is liberation. Self in Its real nature is never bound and the bondage which it seems to endure is valid only from the standpoint of ignorance. To remove such an illusory bondage or to realize the fact that Self is ever-free is liberation. Thus, the real significance of liberation is also negative and lies in what is discarded than in what is gained. This should not be taken to mean that *Brahmānubhava* is mere negation of ignorance, for Self is a positive reality whose realization, though has no ontological significance, is liberation to an individual. *Brahmānubhava*, as a matter of fact, is not limited to any particular state of experience. *Turiya* (the super-conscious state) is considered to be a separate state or the final one only when it is viewed from the other three states of ignorance. As pure consciousness, Self is present throughout, but owing to the removal of ignorance, It appears as if It is revealed during *Turiya* or as *Turiya*. During waking and dream states of experience, Self appears as if It is conditioned and seems to depend for Its revelation on knowing things other than Itself, while in *Turiya* It shines in Its own unconditioned nature.

Part II

The Advaitic experience can be understood in two different ways. According to one, in *Brahmānubhava* everything becomes naught and all the differences are literally abolished. *Brahmānubhava* may accordingly be identified with the indeterminate trance (*Samādhi*) of Yoga in which there is no awareness of differences. This state, which is similar to the states of deep sleep and swoon, may seem to be the highest realization for those who want to escape themselves from the limitations and suffering caused by the experience of differences. It has a beginning and an end. So,

it is possible for one who has it to interpret everything in terms of non-duality even after passing from that state into normal consciousness of differences. As such, according to this view, non-duality is only an interpretation of an experience of which nothing positive can be known while one was in that state, but not a well established truth while one is in normal waking state. Thus in terms of an indeterminate experience of which nothing can be said, except in recollection, as in the case of deep sleep, everything is interpreted non-dualistically. If *Brahmānubhava* is such a short-lived and indeterminate state of experience, there seems to be no valid reason why similar states of experience like swoon and such other states that can be induced by drugs, should be rejected as having nothing to do with Self-realization. In all these states there is no freedom from ignorance, the fragmentary and conditioned knowledge of things, nor does one feel that one is liberated.⁹ Non-duality is literally attained whether one is aware of it or not. Moreover, attainment of such an experience need not depend on a sound knowledge of Advaita doctrine, but can be induced by drugs. Whereas, it seems to be sounder to maintain that if non-duality is not a subjective truth or interpretation, but an established and objective truth, its realization should not be short-spelled, but must be uninterrupted and one should be aware of it always.

According to the other view, which I think is the correct understanding of Ad-

⁹ The absolute distinction of Advaitic experience from those of Yogic *Samādhi*, swoon etc. has been already discussed in the first part by the learned author. That all difference and multiplicity are annihilated in the Brahman-experience is stated categorically by such Upaniṣadic passages as *Māṇḍūkya* 7, *Chāndogya* VII. 24.1, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV. 2.4 etc. This experience of *Turiya* is not stultified even when the *Brahma-jñānī* comes down, as it were, to the empirical level.—Ed.

vaita and for which evidence is there in Advaitic tradition, during Brahmānubhava, differences and multiplicity do not actually disappear; only their unsubstantiality is realized.¹⁰ They are not absolutely true and ultimately real, as Brahman is. A Brahmajñānī will be aware of things such as the differentiated universe, other selves etc., but not as different from Self or Brahman. He realizes their oneness with Self. Similarly, his awareness of himself is not annihilated; only the sense of individuality or the wrong knowledge that he is not one with Reality is discarded. To experience an all-inclusive and non-dual reality is to see it everywhere, that is to realize that things, which appear to be different from one another and also from Brahman, are not really different from It and are of one nature. Such a realization will be incomplete if one does not also realize one's identity with Reality. Before or after anyone's realization, Reality remains what It is, as a rope remains as such during and even after the removal of its illusion as a snake; only there will be a change in our understanding of It. What appears as world, that is full of differences, and as the source of bondage and suffering to an ignorant person is the absolute reality, complete and perfect to a Brahmajñānī. The differences are due to one's wrong understanding of Reality and when that wrong understanding is completely destroyed,

¹⁰ One has to understand this statement very studiously. It is accepted on all hands that the Advaitic experience, being beyond the pale of subject-object relation, cannot have any differences and multiplicity—none whatsoever. How, then, to explain the so-called normal life of the Jñānī or the Jīvanmukta in the empirical world? It is indeed difficult, if not impossible, to explain the Jñānī's position then, from an intellectual point of view. We should then go by the words of the Jñānīs themselves.—Ed.

there will be no scope for seeing It as many. Many is the distorted view of the One. Thus, it may be said that Brahmānubhava means a complete change or transformation of one's outlook. The vision of differences and distinctions is discarded and an integral vision of oneness is attained. In the words of Śaṅkara, 'One should see the universe as filled with Brahman (*Brahmamāyā*) by way of transforming the vision of differences into one of knowledge.'¹¹ In achieving it, the empirical reality is neither ignored, nor a value is superimposed on it, but it is known as having no objective reality, being a distorted view of Reality.

It is not possible and at the same time highly inappropriate to determine the nature of such an all-inclusive experience. It is not an intellectual understanding through which universals and abstract ideas are intuited. Though intellect plays an important role up to the moment of Brahmānubhava, it is transcended the moment Brahman is directly experienced. It is not a mystic experience, in the sense of experiencing a divine object intimately and intuitively, nor is it an emotional and subjective state of imagination. In so far as it is inward, it is similar to the experience of pain and pleasure, sure and certain to the individual who has attained it. It is wisdom, as opposed to intellectual understanding. 'Realization (*anuvēdāna*) means the supreme consummation or ripening (*paripāka*) of scriptural knowledge.'¹² It is a liberating enlightenment having its basis in scriptural knowledge. It is freedom from ignorance, the fragmentary and conditioned knowledge of things. It is an integral experience in which the whole personality participates and gets transformed.

¹¹ *Aparokṣānubhūti*, 116.

¹² Śaṅkara's Commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, IV. 4.8.



ILLUMINATING DIALOGUES FROM INDIAN LORE

KAPILA AND DEVAHUTI

Devahūti had good reason to be proud of her beloved son Kapila. He was born a free soul and a natural teacher of mankind, and he became the founder of the school of Sāṃkhya philosophy. She herself had an innate yearning for the highest knowledge, and it was naturally her privilege to discuss philosophy and religion with him. One day she said to him :

My son, you are very dear to me. Will you not tell me of that knowledge through which I may find freedom from the bondage of the world ? Since taking on the duties of family life, I have become more and more attached to the world. In my youth I learned much from your beloved father, Kardama ; now in my old age would I gladly learn wisdom of his son.

Kapila : O Mother, one finds complete cessation of misery by following the yoga that teaches unity with the divine Self. This yoga brings the highest good to humanity. I taught it to the saints of yore in my previous incarnations, and I will now teach it to you.

Mind alone is the cause of bondage or freedom of the soul. By the attachment of the mind to the world we become bound ; by the devotion of the mind to God we become free.

Give up all ideas of 'me' and 'mine', for

thus alone is the heart purified, and so freed from lust, greed, and delusion. In a pure heart are manifested knowledge and love ; and the true Self, which is divine, self-luminous, pure, and free, is realized.

The wise truly say that attachment to the things of the world is the cause of bondage and suffering. Yet attachment brings freedom when directed toward devout men. These are they who are self-controlled, forbearing, loving, and friendly to all. They dwell in the consciousness of God ; their hearts are united with God. No sorrow or grief, therefore, can agitate their minds, or disturb their equilibrium. They are free from all attachment.

All who associate with such men, and love them, become pure. By living in a holy atmosphere, by hearing the praises of the Lord daily, they develop faith in God and reverence for him. Finally, they take delight in the thought of him, and find love for him filling their hearts. Then assuredly they meditate upon him and become entirely devoted to him.

When a man has had such an experience, there is no longer any attraction for him in the pleasures of sense. He is freed from the meshes of ignorance, his heart becomes illumined, and, even in this earthly life, he realizes the kingdom of heaven.

Devahūti : Tell me how I may love God. Teach me that love which would easily bring freedom. Also tell me about the yoga of meditation.

Kapila : Our senses, O Mother, draw us to things because we love the world. If we direct our love toward God we find divine knowledge and absolute freedom. But there are souls who find such great joy in love and in the service of the Lord that they have no concern for their own salvation. Even so divine love ultimately brings freedom to them also.

Those who love God as dearly as themselves ; those who have affection for him as for their children ; those who trust him as their beloved companion, and reverence him as the teacher of all teachers ; those who love him as their dear friend, and worship him as God—theirs is eternal life.

Blessed indeed are they that steadfastly devote themselves to the worship of God, for they shall attain to absolute freedom.

Devahūti : Tell me more about the religion of love, for it is not possible to practise the yoga of meditation without love for God.

Kapila : Love is divine. But love is expressed differently and in different degrees according to the evolution of the individual human soul.

There are people who still have hatred, jealousy, anger, and pride in their hearts. To such, God is above, beyond, and apart. They also may love God, but their love is selfish. This love is *tāmasic*.

That, too, is a low form of love by which people love and worship God as a separate being, and pray to him for the fulfilment of their material desires. Such love is known as *rājasic* love.

But the love which seeks God for the sake of love alone and by means of which we offer ourselves whole-heartedly to him—this love we call *sāttwic* love.

But when the love, the lover, and the beloved have become one, when we see God and love him as the innermost Self in all beings, and when there is a continuous current of love flowing in the heart, then is it that we realize divine love.

When such divine love fills the heart, we transcend the three *guṇas* and become united with Brahman.

In order that the heart may be purified and divine love may increase, one should obey the following precepts :

Perform the duties of life, but work without thought of reward. Work must be turned into worship.

Offer worship to God regularly. Chant His name. Sing His praises and dwell more and more in the thought of Him.

Learn to see God in all beings. Revere the great sages. Be kindly to the poor and the destitute, and friendly to all.

Thus may one attain the kingdom of heaven.

God dwells as the innermost Self in the hearts of all beings and all things, although He is not manifest in the same degree in all. He is most manifest in the pure in heart, and in Him who has realized the unity that is in the midst of diversity.

Devahūti followed so faithfully the teachings of her beloved son that she soon found God manifest within her own heart and in the hearts of all beings.

Source : *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam : The Wisdom of God*, tr. by Swami Prabhavananda, Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4.

A TRAVELLER LOOKS AT THE WORLD

(Continued from the previous issue)

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

Question: Where are the marked affinities and differences in the modes of struggle of the underprivileged people of other countries, such as the Negroes in U.S.A. and the underprivileged in India, such as the Harijans?

Answer: The situation is practically the same. After all, the underprivileged in India and the underprivileged in the U.S., both constitute vast masses of people who have suffered heavily from the existing social order in the two countries. If a Negro has suffered oppression, enslavement, and even physical torture, our own lower classes in India have suffered no less. But in the way these problems come to the surface, in the way they have been tackled by the nation as a whole, or by its underprivileged section, there is a world of difference between the U.S. and India.

One great difference is that in India the people are one. You cannot deny it. The lower classes or the underprivileged, and those who are at the top, they come from the same stock and are largely indistinguishable. In America, on the other hand, there is a glaring contrast between the underprivileged and the privileged because of the glaring difference in racial stock and colour. It is not an easy thing to unite the white and the black, because the contrast is so obvious. Whereas in India, this gulf does not exist. We only have to change our attitude and realise that the underprivileged are our own people kept down by social discrimination and economic domination. We have only to extend to them economic and educational opportunities side by side with educating our privileged classes in ethical sense and political wisdom. That makes matters simpler.

That is why in India the situation did not develop into a harsh militant confrontation between the underprivileged and the privileged. There are two facets to this:

The first is the teaching of the great spiritual teachers and socio-political leaders of the last and this century, who were the pioneers of India's modern renaissance. They admitted the weaknesses of Indian society, its tyranny, oppression, and injustice, and called upon the upper classes to make amends for it, to go down and bring up their underprivileged fellowmen. In powerful accents, Swami Vivekananda, for example, exhorted the Indian people to 'wipe off this blot' from their society. So did Gandhiji. Such was the profound effect of this approach upon the educated, upon the intelligentsia, of the time, that a movement among the upper classes to go down to the lower classes and bring them up took place in India; behind this was genuine sympathy for, and real understanding of, the social situation. It was not widespread enough, but it was significant enough to constitute a powerful movement for equality and equal opportunity set going by the upper classes themselves. This attitude and movement was nourished and sustained by the powerful influences proceeding from Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi.

The second is this: There arose great leaders among the underprivileged themselves, Sri Narayana Guru of Kerala, for instance, who initiated powerful spiritual movements, far-sighted and creative, to raise the social and economic level of their underprivileged fellowmen, who were already rich in a spiritual sense; for though poor, they were not criminals.

In the case of the U.S., the founding

fathers had not recognized this problem when independence came to America in 1776. But within less than a century, the problem became very acute, leading to the Civil War. There were great leaders who recognized that a great evil had been perpetrated on the underprivileged, especially the Negroes, and they tried to make amends. America remained united as one nation in spite of the threat of secession from its southern confederacy. The fiercely-fought long Civil War was entirely devoted to this question of human equality which is the basis of the American Constitution. In that Civil War, this great subject was the issue which developed into a tremendous conflict between one group and the other, the progressive and the reactionary. But the underprivileged were represented in this struggle not by the underprivileged themselves, namely the Negroes, who were largely passive witnesses of this struggle for human rights on their behalf, but by the progressive liberal people among the whites themselves against their own reactionary fellow-whites.

That was the great idealism behind the Civil War. But it was a misfortune that after the successful completion of the Civil War, the American nation forgot this problem. For decades, the fate of the Negro was nobody's concern, and it was this that cumulatively created a tense situation during the eight decades following the end of the Civil War.

The Second World War generated great hopes among all the underprivileged of the world for a new era of economic and cultural opportunity for themselves; and the Negroes in America were no exception; they looked forward to the dawn of freedom and equality. A tremendous movement for extending political and social rights and privileges to the Negroes became the order of the day. After the conclusion of the Second World War, there has been the Civil Rights movement in the U.S.A., in

which both the blacks and the whites have been participating and it has thrown up powerful leaders. From 1950 onwards, the pace of extending civil rights to the Negroes has been accelerated by several federal enactments which, when challenged by white-dominated southern states, have been upheld by progressive Supreme Court judgements.

These things in America are indications of a consciousness among the privileged people, the educated progressive sections among them, that the struggle to bring about a truly egalitarian society in the U.S., in line with the declaration in its own Constitution, can and should no longer be delayed. But the movement itself was very slow, and there was strong resistance from various segments of the whites or the privileged section of the population. It was this lag between mounting aspirations and slow implementations, in the post-war context of irrepressible human hopes, that made for the movement of the underprivileged developing a militant character. One of the more important features of the post-war U.S. society is the militancy of the black population.

This black militancy has really become a serious problem to the U.S. today. It affects even the civil rights movement. We don't want civil rights, the black militants say; we want to remain separate from the whites. In fact, there is a real separation movement among the blacks there: 'we don't want to be part of a white society at all, equal or unequal; we shall be entirely independent; we shall have nothing to do with the whites.'

That is one aspect of the black movement. We cannot but be deeply impressed by the energy, dynamism, fearlessness, and self-dedication evident in the black-militant movement in the U.S. It is posing a serious problem to the wisdom of the American people: how to destroy this virus of mili-

tancy with its hatred and bring about real equality and integration of the American people? America is passing through that phase just now, and I could see several aspects of it during the fifteen months I was in there.

One of the great black militant leaders, as I have pointed out previously, was Malcolm X. He was extremely militant and hateful of the whites in the beginning; but towards the end, he mellowed. In the beginning he said that blacks and whites could never live together. At that time he said, every white man is a wicked rogue; he cannot be trusted. Towards the end, he slightly mellowed: he admitted that there were some good people among the whites. That was a considerable change in Malcolm X, whose autobiography is a widely read book; it is a masterly book. Even as literature, it is a remarkable book.

In that book we can sense, we can feel, the anger, the hatred, the shame exploding into a book, the tremendous explosion of a whole race which has been subjected to insult and tyranny for centuries by the white man. All these found a focal point of explosion in Malcolm X and in every page of his autobiography. The introduction to the book written by a distinguished white intellectual says that many whites find themselves unable to read the book without fear and a sense of guilt coming over them. They cannot stand it because most of what he says in the book is true, too true. Some of the passages, as I have said previously, are very revealing of the black mind.

Says one passage: The whites came from England and landed at Plymouth Rock. (Plymouth Rock on the east coast, near Boston, is the place where the English first came and settled). So he puts it: you came and landed at Plymouth Rock; but we were brought as slaves from Africa; and *Plymouth Rock landed on our heads!*

That is how he puts it. Such language is plentiful in the book. The truth is told with such bluntness, with such passion, that it creates acute fear in the whites who read the book.

It is difficult to predict when this racial problem in U.S.A. will be solved. I should say that a solution will come through both sides working together—the whites going down to bring up the blacks and the blacks slowly beginning to think that there may be good whites, that all whites are not that bad. This positively is revealed from the black side in the evolution of the personality and ideas of a leader like Malcolm X. If this noble attitude goes on growing, eventually there is bound to be an integrated American society. But because of a real gulf between the white and the black even physically, and because there is no spiritual wisdom, beyond the political and the social, available to the nation, the problem of the underprivileged becomes much more intractable for America.

It is here that India has certain advantages. The first advantage is the one I referred to earlier, that the underprivileged and the privileged belong to the same human stock. Neither colour nor any racial factor is present to complicate the social situation. Secondly, and what is most significant, we have the guidance of a rational philosophy, Vedanta, which goes beyond the political, beyond the social, with respect to man and all inter-human relationships, and which does not look at man merely from the outside. It looks at man from the inside also and teaches the spiritual truth of the essential divinity of man, of *all men*.

This is a teaching that cuts across all external evaluations of man such as black or white, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, and the social distinctions proceeding from them. It alone can really help to establish an integrated social order, whether in

India, America, or elsewhere. And this teaching is very ancient in India; yet we have to confess that in India itself it has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance. But that teaching has found a tremendous expression in modern India through her great spiritual teachers like Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. In the political field, great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi also implemented it. Not only is there in modern India a great vision of human equality beyond the physical, beyond the political, beyond the social, a truly spiritual vision of man and his excellence, but there is also the inspiration of great teachers, and the powerful movements emanating from them, which guarantee the implementation of the vision through persistent social education and legislative action.

So India has a great spiritual resource generated in the distant past as well as in recent days for tackling this problem of the underprivileged. And the Indian Constitution is definitely on the side of the under-

privileged. It has banned all types of special privileges, all kinds of exclusiveness such as caste and untouchability. Along with such provisions in the Constitution and the strenuous endeavours of the Indian political state, there is also the awakened social conscience produced by the dynamic and rational spiritual message of practical Vedanta to sustain all such progressive endeavours. The state has banned untouchability. It may still be prevalent here and there, but its back is broken by social education and legislative action. Its elimination from Indian society is only a question of time. Common democratic education, common social life, common political processes—when a generation or two of our people will pass through this common experience, these barriers will quietly become things of the past. That is why there is rational basis for greater hope of overcoming these social distinctions in India than in some of the Western countries.

(To be concluded)

“Know the truth and be free in a moment.” All the darkness will then vanish. When man has seen himself as one with the Infinite Being of the universe, when all separateness has ceased, when all men and women, all gods and angels, all animals and plants, and the whole universe have melted into that Oneness, then all fear disappears. Can I hurt myself? Can I kill myself? Can I injure myself? Whom to fear? Can you fear yourself? Then will all sorrow disappear. What can cause me sorrow? I am the One Existence of the universe. Then all jealousies will disappear; of whom to be jealous? Of myself? Then all bad feelings disappear. Against whom can I have bad feeling? Against myself? There is none in the universe but I. And this is the one way, says the Vedantist to knowledge. Kill out this differentiation, kill out this superstition that there are many. “He who in this world of many sees that one, he who in this mass of insentiency sees that one Sentient Being, he who in this world of shadows catches that Reality, unto him belongs eternal peace, unto none else, unto none else”

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



THE CHALLENGE OF THE EVACUEE PROBLEM

When a problem starts controlling a nation, and not the nation the problem, the nation may be swept into a whirlpool of history from which coming out will be extremely difficult. Beware, the evacuee problem exported from the East to India has already started controlling the country. India must brace herself up and master the problem. A nation becomes great by heroically facing and conquering a crushing problem. How is this to be done? Such are the imperatives of the challenge:

1. Look at the problem boldly with wide open eyes, to measure it up properly.

2. Consider it wholeheartedly as a national problem, nay a national emergency. It is not the problem of border States or the Central Government alone, but of the entire Indian nation. The whole nation is required to mobilize its resources on war footing, for it is really a war on a sudden invasion of human suffering. All the States of India must shoulder the burden and fully cooperate with the Central Government in handling the problem in a planned and concerted manner. Let no State erroneously feel itself distant from the border lands and hence securely stay indifferent. If this problem is not properly solved through the exercise of wisdom and dexterity of the whole nation, a conflagration may sweep

entire India. India's devotion to the service of these suffering millions will awaken the conscience and inspire the heart of humanity. Mankind will then come forward to take a greater share of the burden and make it possible for the evacuees to return home early.

3. Do not pass petulant, thoughtless and uncharitable judgements on the nature and character of international help. Be sincerely grateful for every help that is being received. Publicize properly how the received help is being utilized. Keep relief operations open to international inspection.

4. Do not make politics of the problem of evacuees. By common agreement among political parties this problem should be kept above politics. Otherwise this one can not only not be solved but generate numerous explosive problems.

5. Disperse the evacuees from border States to other States, as equitably as possible so that no State may be over-burdened and house them in large camps so that they may be easily repatriated when circumstances permit. Do not allow them to get scattered and create cells of problem all over the country.

6. Build camps with creative imagination, saving them from becoming unnecessarily dreary places where human beings can only

degenerate. Camp life should be regulated through compassion, discipline and work. Human beings caught between the terror of the past and dread of the future, should be treated with respectful compassion. But compassion should not degenerate into sentimentality. Evacuees must live disciplined lives following the routine of the camp. And they should be trained to manually participate in doing all the work needed for running the camps. There should be no servants in the camp. Through interesting audio-visual programme practical education should be imparted on living a helpful community life. Cleanliness and sanitation rules should be particularly taught. Teachers and students of the Institutes of Social Work in the country can move into these camps, in these vast human laboratories, and do some human engineering on well-tested lines for uplifting drooping hearts which have experienced worst of human tragedies to face the challenge of life again in a bold manner. Make the camp life as cheerful as possible providing wholesome entertainments at a stage when possible.

7. Hold the evacuee problem in the strong arms of national austerity and generate out of it the power for handling it.

8. Conserve every grain of food and produce as much food as the country's land can yield. See that money has not to be spent for importing food.

9. Let not the wheels of industry stop

from moving, for the country now needs the highest rate of production so that extra money daily needed to the tune of some crores for maintaining millions of evacuees may be produced daily and also more. So, there should be as perfect an understanding between labour and management as possible.

10. Rule the unscrupulous unpatriotic profiteers with an iron hand. They always try to mint money by creating artificial scarcity of things, as a result of which price level goes up creating the inevitable necessity for demanding more money everywhere. This leads to economic instability. Labour force of the country should remember that this is the time to use their unquestionable bargaining power with moderation and restraint, for the misuse of it may jeopardize the services of the nation to the evacuees.

11. Do not cherish the illusion that a war is an easier way for solving the problem. War will be not only more expensive but also unsettle everything in the country and the hemisphere without settling the evacuee problem. So there should be no loose talks about war with the neighbour.

12. Never for a moment doubt the nation's capacity to master any problem that confronts it, for that is not the way of even survival, much less conquest.

June 7, 1971

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Questions and answers are from : M : *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, 1959. Questions 1, p. 7; 2, pp. 38-9; 3, pp. 41-2.

The passage quoted in 'Onward For Ever!' is from: *The Complete Works*, Vol. II (1963), pp. 236-7.

Man loves light. But he seeks it in the wrong direction. The Upaniṣads tell him to seek it within himself. The Editorial tries to draw the reader's attention to this hidden but ever-shining light.

In this Essay on Applied Religion, 'How to conduct our Inner Struggle', Swami

Budhananda writes on a theme which concerns almost all human beings in an intimate manner. In dealing with this subject he depends only on authentic sources of information and inspiration: the lives and teachings of the saints of East and West; because only the illumined, who became golden after going through the fire themselves, can really guide us in conducting our inner struggle.

Brahman-experience *per se* is surely beyond speech and mind. All the same, the great Advaitic teachers have tried to interpret it to others. Dr. A. Ramamurty, M.A., Ph.D., Lecturer, D. M. College, Manipur, writes on 'Advaitic Mysticism', with citations from Śaṅkara, the greatest of Advaitic teachers.

FACING THE EVACUEE PROBLEM IN INDIA

At the time of writing, the number of evacuees from East Bengal in India has reached nearly six million. Nobody knows how many more millions will come. And the Government of India seems to have decided to follow the open-border policy to the last. In other words, as many refugees as come will be received. Nobody will be barred from seeking shelter in India. This policy is in keeping with India's age-old tradition of never denying shelter to the persecuted from across her borders.

Such a policy makes it necessary for the nation to face the problem in the context of two major uncertainties: not knowing how many more millions will come, and not knowing how long they will have to be maintained on Indian soil. A problem of this magnitude and characterized by these uncertainties can be handled efficiently only if the whole nation is imbued with an

invulnerable unity of purpose. This unity of purpose can be expected to develop when the Government formulates a clear scheme.

The physical problems connected with efficiently running the refugee camps are very many. Like a major military operation, success greatly depends on attention to detail and cool, practical thinking. Once the necessities have been attended to, there will be the problem of keeping up the morale of the evacuees.

When able-bodied people have nothing to do all day long and live on food which they do not earn, their minds tend to become restless. This is one of the problems of camp life for a protracted period. If the adult evacuees can be given some productive or constructive work, and the children given some elementary schooling, finding teachers from among educated evacuees,

this will be for their benefit and help to safeguard discipline and morale.

A stupendous problem and national emergency like this cannot be adequately handled by the Government alone. The whole-hearted and concerted participation of the entire people and of the voluntary organizations of the country is needed. The people's willingness to shoulder this burden will not only encourage Provincial Governments to co-operate to the full, but may also prevent some of them from straying into self-centredness. It is for the people to make their Governments understand that they do not want their respective States to be found shamefully wanting in this emergency.

As expected, many voluntary organizations have come forward to play their part. They have been working to their utmost capacity under almost unbearable strain because of the terrific influx of evacuees. With better co-ordination of their work to avoid overlapping, they will be able to render greater service in the days to come.

It is heartening that many nations have responded generously to India's appeal for help in what is fundamentally an international problem and task. Dedicated workers from overseas have also joined in serving the evacuees. India is grateful to these nations for the help they have sent and will be sending. The best way of expressing her gratitude will be to see that the supplies given are promptly cleared from the airports and pressed into the service of the evacuees without delay, waste or wrong use.

Caring for the evacuees, imperatively necessary as it is, is like treating only the symptoms of a disease. Until the world powers stop 'subsidizing' the cause of the evacuees' coming to India, a cure will not have been found. Now, who will awaken the conscience of the powers concerned? Only the people of those countries can do it. Will they do it? Will they do it before the disaster assumes even greater dimensions?

June 20, 1971

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

JOHN LOCKE, EMPIRICIST, ATOMIST, CONCEPTUALIST, AND AGNOSTIC By JOHN LOUIS KRAUS, Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10016, pp. 202, 1968, price \$ 4.50.

In his 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' Locke's main thesis is that at the start the human mind is a *tabula rasa*, a 'dark and unfurnished chamber' into which light enters for the first time through the windows of the senses. All knowledge is therefore empirical. The theory of innate ideas is a myth. Sensation and reflection are the only two sources of knowledge. 'The mind is fitted to receive the impressions made on it either through the senses by outward objects or by its own operations when it reflects on them. The objective cause of simple ideas of sensation are the qualities, powers,

or properties of material substances; all such qualities flow from the real essence of material substances. The real essences of material substances are atomic structures. The atom is an insensible particle of matter qualified by extension, solidity, and figure.' There is no question of a unifying or vitalizing principle holding the atoms together. An organism is an aggregate of atoms with a texture which enables it to perform vital activities.

The immediate object of perception is the idea. We do not know things immediately but only mediately through ideas. This is his theory of representative perception. But on this theory we can never feel certain that our knowledge of things is correct. To compare the idea with the object, both must be present to the mind directly and immediately. If we know only the ideas directly and immediately we are not in a position to compare

them with things and ascertain whether the former resembles the latter.

Knowledge is not to be identified with bare sensations. It consists in perceiving the connections between them. These connections are discovered by the mind. In this process of bringing out the connections inherent in the sensations, the mind must not import anything *ab extra*.

Things are reducible to atoms, but what exactly is the nature of the atom, Locke is unable to say.

He is thus an empiricist in as much as he maintains that there are no innate ideas and that all knowledge comes from without; he is an atomist in as much as he thinks that corporeal bodies are ultimately reducible to atomic structures; he is a conceptualist in as much as he maintains that universal ideas are produced by the mental processes of comparing, compounding, analyzing and abstracting; he is, finally, an agnostic in as much as he is unable to throw any light on the real nature of the atomic structures.

How the mind can do all the work of comparing, compounding, analyzing and abstracting if it were a mere passive entity without any initial equipment passes our understanding. By denying innate ideas Locke denies any initial equipment even in the form of the laws of thought. If, as Locke maintains, the mind is a *tabula rasa* to start with, then no knowledge could ever arise. Even supposing that it somehow arises, we could never feel sure that it represents the real nature of things. Thus Locke completely stultifies his own position.

The book presents a clear account of Locke's empiricism and its limitations. It is fully documented by means of quotations from the writings of Locke. The general get-up and printing leave little to be desired.

SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

BENGALI

SRI 'MA' DARSHAN (FIFTH PART): By SWAMI NITYATMANANDA, Published by General Printers & Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 119 Dharamtala Street, Calcutta 13, 1968, pp. 331, price Rs. 5/-.

Sri 'Ma' is the pen-name of Sri Mahendra, a devout follower of Sri Ramakrishna. He has left for posterity *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, the valuable repository of the immortal message of that great and elevated Soul. Swami Nityatmananda, a close associate of Sri Mahendra, very faithfully recorded the day-to-day conversations and events

round Sri 'Ma' in his diary. The present work is an edition of that diary. Four parts of this edition have already been published.

The work is important in many ways. Firstly, it is a mirror of contemporary society and records useful facts of important persons and devout followers who came in touch with Sri 'Ma'. Secondly, the conversation that the Sadhus and others had with Sri 'Ma' is spiritually deep, morally elevating, and philosophically sound. In this volume Sri 'Ma' appears as a Rishi of the days of Upanishads, which is the chief distinction between this volume and the previous ones.

Although it will not surely be an easy task to render a work of this type into English or other languages—successfully conveying the real spirit of the work—if any one can do it, he shall render to humanity no less a service than Swami Nityatmananda has done.

We recommend this valuable work as a key to the solution of many of the ills of the present society.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

Books received

ISWARCHANDRA VIDYASAGAR: By HIRANMAY BANERJEE, Published by Sahitya Akademi, Rabindra Bhavan, 35, Feroz Shah Road, New Delhi-1.

TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE—A Unesco Symposium on Gandhi, edited by T. K. MAHADEVAN, published by Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco, New Delhi-1.

BIOGRAPHICAL VISTAS: By C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, published by Asia Publishing House, Calicut Street, Ballard Estate, Bombay-1. Rs. 15/-.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PSYCHOLOGY, edited by A. K. P. SINHA, H. K. MISRA, A. K. KANTH, K. S. RAO, published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay-1 Rs. 30/-.

BOVARYSM: By JULES DE GAULYIER, Tr. by GERALD M. Sping. published by Philosophical Library 15 East 40th St. New York, N.Y. 10016 U.S.A. Price \$ 8.75.

VINOBA HIS LIFE AND WORK: By SRIMAN NARAYAN, published by Popular Prakashan, 35 C Tardeo Road, Bombay 34 WB. Price Rs. 36/-

MISSION OF MAN: By AARON HILLEL KATZ, published by Philosophical Library, New York, N. T. 100016 Price \$ 5.00.

NEWS AND REPORTS

VIVEKANANDA STATUE UNVEILED AT THE GATEWAY OF INDIA IN BOMBAY ON MAY 31, 1971

Bombay has been enriched by yet another significant landmark, a towering bronze statue of Swami Vivekananda.

The 12-foot statue majestically stands on an 18-foot stone pedestal near the historic Gateway of India, at a stone's throw from the equestrian statue of Shivaji.

It is the fulfilment of a dream of the Ramakrishna Mission, which had planned to raise a suitable memorial to the Swami during his birth centenary celebrations, seven years ago.

The statue, which lay covered by cloth for about a week, was unveiled by Chief Minister V. P. Naik, at a simple solemn ceremony amid a heavy down-pour. Nearly 3,000 people attended the function.

The statue occupies a 30-foot by 30-foot plot of land allotted by the Municipal Corporation, with the entire statue in bronze weighing 1,250 kilos. More land has been allotted by the Corporation for a garden around the statue.

Mr. Naik observed that there was the unique propriety in unveiling the statue because it was on this day, 78 years ago, the Swami had left the shores of Bombay to participate in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago.

The patriot-saint of modern India, as the Swami was acclaimed, lived a brief but rich life from 1863 to 1902, he said.

"Today we have to reiterate the Swami's love for India. We should look upon ourselves as Indians first. We should shed our lesser loyalties of caste and language, which weaken the unity of the country," Mr. Naik said.

Dr. P. B. Gajendragadkar, President of the Managing Committee of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, in his welcome address to the large gathering said "the presence of Swamiji's statue here will inspire the present generation and the generations yet to be born. The statue is sure to convey to everybody the message for which he lived. His brilliant speeches eloquently expound and his life symbolises the basic concept of Hindu way of life. Hinduism does not believe in running away from life. Escapism is not its belief. Hinduism believes in the service of mankind without regard to caste, creed, sex, colour or nationality. That is the ideal which Swami Vivekananda gave us and that is the ideal with which the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has lived through all these years".

Swami Hiranmayananda, President, Ramakrishna Mission and Ashrama, Bombay, in his introductory speech said, "a stable society can be built only on the basis of spiritual life. That is what India had to give. People some times speak about Swami as a humanist, as a lover of man. I remember in one place Swamiji has said that a Hindu philosopher had been to Greece. There he met a Greek philosopher. The Hindu philosopher asked the Greek philosopher what was the subject of his study? He said: "Why, man". Then the Hindu philosopher said "How can you study man if you do not study God". That is it. We have lost all sense of God and that is why everywhere, all over the world, we are suffering. To this Swami Vivekananda drew our attention and that is why we have to study Swamiji, understand him and in that way only we shall be able to reconstruct our society, our nation".

Srimat Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, released a souvenir brought out by the Ramakrishna Mission in commemoration of the installation of the statue. He blessing the occasion observed: "We are here today to pay homage to an illustrious son of India, Swami Vivekananda. May the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, his great Master be on all of us who have assembled here to pay homage to his illustrious disciple. Swami Vivekananda left the shores of India on this date, 31st May in 1893 taking the message of India, message of harmony and goodwill to the nations of the West. He wrote in a letter from America saying: I have a message for the West as Buddha had a message for the East. He told the people in the West to separate the grain from the chaff. He declared that religion is not mere belief in principles, virtues or dogmas. But religion is realisation, direct experience of God".

Swami Gambhirananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, proposed a vote of thanks.

Noted singer and Marathi music director Sudhir Phadke rendered bhajans in praise of the Swami.

Nearly eighty Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order from all over India came to participate in the function. The unveiling ceremony of the 31st May, 1971 was preceded by the annual celebrations of the birth-day anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda at the Ashrama premises from 28th May to 30th May. Swami Gambhirananda, Swami Kailashananda, and

Swami Ranganathananda presided over these functions. Many Swamis from different centres spoke on these occasions. All these functions were attended by a distinguished audience.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NEW DELHI

REPORT FOR 1968-69

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

Religious Work: Regular religious classes and discourses were held on Sundays in English and Hindi to stimulate the spiritual aspirations of the people. The effect was visible in the active participation of the public in large numbers in the celebrations of the birthdays of the great Teachers, Bhajans, worship and Ramanam Sankirtanam on Ekadasi days, and weekly Tulsi Ramayana Katha in Hindi.

Medical Work: Tuberculosis Clinic: The number of beds in the observation ward was 28, equally divided between male and female patients.

The Clinic is fully equipped for general treatment and also for surgical operations. There is also a laboratory for clinical bacteriological work. Milk and tiffin were supplied free to all free-ward patients. Costly medicines were also supplied free to indoor and outdoor patients whose monthly income was less than Rs. 300/-. Number of patients treated: 1652.

The number of outdoor cases treated was 1,13,507 of which 1699 were new. In addition 248 indoor cases were treated in the observation ward.

Under the Home Treatment Scheme doctors and Health visitors were deputed to allotted areas to establish contact, educate suspects in health rules and give treatment to those who are unable to attend the Clinic in person.

Outdoor Homoeopathic Dispensary: The dispensary is serving the people of the locality, especially its poorer sections, since its inception in 1929. During the year under review 51,948 were treated of which 6,298 were new.

Celebrations: The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and also of Sri Ramachandra, Sri Krishna, Christ, Buddha, Guru Nanak, Tulsidas, Ramanuja and Sankara were observed with due solemnity, worship, Bhajan, readings from the scriptures and discourses.

Library: During the period under review daily average of visitors to the reading room was 391.

1393 books were added making the total number 20830 including children's section. Number of books issued: 19017. The reading room received 14 newspapers and 132 periodicals.

The University Students' Section of the Library registered a steady progress during the year. The daily average number of students was 150. No. of books issued: 2943. Total 865 students used the library.

Flood Relief: During the year the Mission participated in the flood relief work in Jalapaiguri (West Bengal) and Surat (Gujarat). A sum of Rs. 4615/- was spent on relief and garments packed in 10 gunny bags including blankets were despatched for the flood victims.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

EAST BENGAL EVACUEE RELIEF WORK—1971

A brief report of work from 14.4.71 to 31.5.71

The Mission serves 1,15,000 people through six centres. Jamsheerpur camp in Nadia was closed on 25.5.71 reducing the no. of camps to six.

Meghalaya Border (2 centres)	No. of evacuees
(1) Dawki near Shillong ..	15,000
(2) Shella near Cherrapunji ..	14,000
Assam Border (1 centre)	
(1) Karimganj ..	2,480
West Bengal Border (3 centres)	
(1) Sakati near Berubari, Jalpaiguri ..	19,000
(2) Dalimgaon in West Dinajpur	45,000
(3) Gaighata in 24 Parganas ..	20,000

NATURE OF WORK:

Regular distribution of dry doles of foodstuff; also cooked food in some of the relief centres: clothes, blankets, utensils, powder milk, baby food: free treatment, medicines and diet for the sick: in addition to the quota of foodstuff supplied by the Government the Mission is providing in cases of special need flattened rice, molasses, and loaves etc.

The Mission has so far spent Rs. 2,32,904/- for this work. We still need enough funds to carry on the work efficiently and to be of service effectively to the growing number of evacuees.