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Cover :

Kanchenjanga from Sandakphu

Photo: Bimal Dey



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No. 3

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA REMINISCES

'One day at that time I was sitting under the Panchavati—not meditating, merely sitting—when an incomparable, effulgent female figure appeared before me illumining the whole place. It was not that figure alone that I saw then, but also the trees and plants of the Panchavati, the Ganga and all other objects. I saw that the figure was that of a woman; for, there were in her no signs of a goddess, such as the possession of three eyes, etc. But the extraordinary, spirited, and solemn expression of that face, manifesting love, sorrow, compassion, and endurance, was not generally seen even in the figures of goddesses. Looking graciously at me, that goddess-woman was advancing from north to south towards me with a slow, grave gait. I wondered who she might be, when a black-faced monkey came suddenly, nobody knew whence, and sat at her feet and someone within my mind exclaimed, "Sita, Sita who was all sorrow all her life, Sita the daughter of king Janaka, Sita to whom Rama was her very life!" Saying "Mother" repeatedly, I was then going to fling myself at her feet, when she came quickly and entered this (showing his own body).¹ Overwhelmed with joy and wonder, I lost all consciousness and fell down. Before that, I had had no vision in that manner without meditating or thinking. That was the first vision of its kind. I have been suffering like her all my life perhaps because I saw first of all Sita, who was miserable from her birth.'

*

'Haladhari followed the path of knowledge. Day and night he used to study the Upanishads, the *Adhyatma Ramayana*, and similar books on Vedanta. He would turn up his nose at the mention of the forms of God. Once I ate from the leaf-plates of the beggars. At this Haladhari said to me, "How will you be able to marry your children?" I said: "You rascal! Shall I ever have children? May your mouth that repeats words from the *Gita* and the Vedanta be blighted!" Just fancy! He declared that the world was illusory and, again, would meditate in the temple of Vishnu with turned-up nose.'

¹ The *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P., 1964, p. 83) in relating this same event, adds, quoting Sri Ramakrishna, 'with the significant remark that the smile on her lips she bequeathed unto me'.

*

‘During the day-time Haladhari used to meditate on God with form, and at night on the formless God.’

*

[Haladhari, angered by Sri Ramakrishna’s fearless criticism of certain unworthy tendencies of his, laid a curse on him, that blood should come from his mouth. Shortly afterwards, this actually occurred:] ‘The colour of that blood was like that of the juice of kidney-bean leaves. It was so thick that a portion of it fell away from the mouth, and a portion coagulated within, and was hanging like the aerial roots of a banyan tree from the lips near the front teeth. I tried to stop the bleeding by pressing a piece of cloth against the palate but the bleeding could not be stopped. I was much afraid to see it. All came running when they heard of it. Haladhari was performing the service in the temple then. He also was apprehensive and came quickly when he heard of it. When I saw him I said to him with tears in my eyes, “Cousin, just see the condition you have brought on me by your curse.” He also wept to see that sorrowful condition of mine.

‘A good Sadhu had come that day to the temple. He also came there when he heard the noise and, examining the colour of the blood and the spot within the mouth through which it was coming out, said: “There is no fear; it is very good that the blood has come out. I find you practised Yoga. As the result of that practice the mouth of your Sushumna opened and the blood of the body was flowing to the head. It is very good that, instead of flowing to the head, it of itself made a channel leading to the mouth and came out. Had this blood reached your head, you would have been in Jada-samadhi which could by no means have come to an end. The Mother of the universe has some especial purpose to accomplish with your body. That is why, I think, She has saved it.” Hearing these words of the holy man, I was, as it were, brought back to life.’

ONWARD FOR EVER!

Have you realized that you are spirit? When you say, 'I do', what is meant by that? This lump of flesh called the body—or the spirit, the infinite, ever blessed, effulgent, immortal? You may be the greatest philosopher, but as long as you have the idea that you are the body, you are no better than the little worm crawling under your foot! No excuse for you! So much the worse for you, that you know all the philosophies and at the same time think you are the body! Body-gods, that is what you are! Is that religion?

Religion is the realization of spirit as spirit. What are we doing now? Just the opposite, realizing spirit as matter. Out of the immortal God we manufacture death and matter, and out of dead dull matter we manufacture spirit....

Again, we must consider, religion is a [matter of] growth, not a mass of foolish words. Two thousand years ago a man saw God. Moses saw God in a burning bush. Does what Moses did when he saw God save you? No man's seeing God can help you the least bit except that it may excite you and urge you to do the same thing. That is the whole value of the ancients' examples. Nothing more. [Just] signposts on the way. No man's eating can satisfy another man. No man's seeing God can save another man. You have to see God yourself.



MATHEMATICS OF INFINITY AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

EDITORIAL

I

It is said that to the native of Polynesia infinite numbers are all those which he cannot count on his ten fingers. Irrespective of such naive conceptions of numerical infinity, infinite numbers do exist in mathematics. Greek philosophical thinkers and ancient Hindu sages had some clear conceptions of the infinite. Western mathematicians and thinkers like Leibniz and Galileo discussed the problems of infinite numbers. A seventh century A.D. Hindu mathematician, Brahmagupta, arrived at the arithmetical idea of the infinite in his attempts to divide a finite number by zero. However, it was the German mathematicians Richard Dedekind and Georg Cantor who in the last century boldly tackled the problems of mathematical infinity and satisfactorily solved them.

Counting is possible in finite collections of numbers and always gives us what mathematicians call ordinal numbers. But in regard to an infinite collection or number, counting is impossible. Cantor of course recognized this simple fact but yet boldly proceeded to define an infinite number. He also recognized the significance of another seemingly superficial observation, that if we have two sets of objects such that each object in the first class corresponds to one and only one in the second, and conversely, then both sets must contain the same number of objects. It is obvious that to reach this conclusion it is not necessary to count the number of objects in each set.¹ Therefore, following a suggestion of Bernard Bolzano, a professor of philosophy and a notable predecessor of Cantor in the develop-

¹ vide: Morris Kline: *Mathematics in Western Culture* (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1954), pp. 397-8

ment of the theory of infinite classes, Cantor defined an infinite set to be one that can be put into one-to-one correspondence with a part of itself, which cannot be done with a finite set. Thus the set of positive integers is infinite because there is a one-to-one correspondence between the whole class and the even numbers, which are only a part of the class.² Cantor designated the number that represents the quantity of terms or objects in these particular sets or classes, as 'aleph-null'. It is called a transfinite number.

Though it may appear paradoxical and contradictory to the common-sense view, a part of a transfinite number is equal to the whole. We are accustomed to think and believe that a part can never be equal to its whole. While this is true with regard to finite numbers and quantities, it is not valid when dealing with infinite numbers or quantities. Therefore no contradictions confront us here, but merely the fact that as to certain aspects of their nature, infinite sets and numbers differ from finite numbers and sets. On careful thought it is seen that most numbers are infinite, and if a number is infinite we may add ones to it as much as we like without in the least disturbing it. 'That we cannot form any idea of an infinite Number', asserts Dr. G. Frege, 'is of absolutely no importance; the same is equally true of finite Numbers.'³ It can be shown with soundly logical arguments that infinity added to or subtracted from itself, remains still infinite. What is true of infinite numbers is also equally true of time and space. In the words of Bertrand Russell:

'There are infinitely more infinite numbers than finite ones.... There are probably more points in space and more moments in time than there are finite

numbers. There are exactly as many fractions as whole numbers, although there are an infinite number of fractions between any two whole numbers. But there are more irrational numbers than there are whole numbers or fractions. There are probably exactly as many points in space as there are irrational numbers, and exactly as many points on a line a millionth of an inch long as in the whole of infinite space.'⁴

The famous paradoxes posed by Zeno of Elea are bound to be familiar to students of philosophy and logic. Zeno, who Russell says may be regarded as the founder of the philosophy of infinity, 'invented four arguments, all immeasurably subtle and profound, to prove that motion is impossible, that Achilles can never overtake the tortoise, and that an arrow in flight is really at rest'.⁵ For over two millenniums philosophers have wrestled with these paradoxes without any success. What were considered as problems in philosophy actually turned out to be problems in mathematics. Without going into any details of the interesting arguments, we may simply say that the Eleatic's paradoxes were finally resolved by the nineteenth century mathematicians when they rejected the infinitesimal and propounded the theory of infinite classes. Accordingly, we may now at last safely remain in the comfortable belief that something in motion is just as truly where it is, as a body at rest. Motion consists simply in the fact that bodies are sometimes at one place and sometimes at another, and that they are at intermediate places at intermediate times.⁶ Motion is a series of rests. It is nothing more than a correspondence between positions and instants of time, the

² vide: *ibid.*, p. 400

³ Dr. G. Frege: *The Foundations of Arithmetic* (tr. from German by J. L. Austin, Pub. by Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1950), p. 97

⁴ James R. Newman (com. & notes by): *The World of Mathematics* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1956), Vol. III, p. 1585

⁵ vide: *ibid.*, p. 1580

⁶ vide: *ibid.*, p. 1582

positions and instants each forming an infinite set. At each instant of the interval during which an object is in 'motion' it occupies a definite position and may be said to be at rest.⁷

We are however here concerned more with the religious and mystical implications of the mathematics of infinity than with the mere logico-mathematical.

II

Truth or Reality presents Itself to the senses and mind in one way through the space-time phenomena, and in an entirely different way to inner, mystical realization. If modern mathematics and other branches of science have approached the problem of infinity analytically, the Upaniṣadic sages had long ago made their own discoveries about the nature of the infinite. However, their approach was not through sense-perception or logical processes. It was an approach which put them directly into touch with the infinite absolute, and their findings about the paradoxical nature of the infinite are notably expressed thus:

'Infinite is that Brahman, infinite is this manifested universe. From the Infinite proceeds the infinite. When the infinity of the infinite universe merges in the infinite Brahman, there remains the Infinite Brahman alone.'⁸

Many paradoxical deductions arrived at by mathematicians in their logical expeditions into the infinite are briefly and clearly expressed here, though of course the sages' experience further embodies the highest generalization about Reality. Brahman or the Ultimate Reality is nondual and infinite. It is all-pervading. From that Infinity emerges this phenomenal universe. But the surprising fact is that neither Brahman nor the phenomenal universe thereby loses its infinite nature. It is very similar to the mathemati-

cal discovery that when infinity is deducted or separated from infinity, it still remains the infinite. What is said above of the manifested universe is also applicable to the indwelling self in man. The infinite nature of the self is declared by the Upaniṣads in such statements as 'This Self is Brahman', 'That thou art', and 'I am Brahman'. Because this universe and this self are never bereft of their infinite nature, there is no destruction for the universe and no limitation or bondage for the self. Vedānta asserts that the perception of destruction or limitation is only apparent and due to a deep-rooted ignorance. Once a person is able to get rid of the influence of ignorance through renunciation, sense-control, and *samādhi*, he sees not multiplicity, he sees not limitation—he 'sees' only the infinite, above and below, in front and back, to the left and to the right.

As one who had experienced the infinite, as the Upaniṣadic sages did, Swami Vivekananda once remarked that 'the whole universe is to us a writing of the Infinite in the language of the finite'. He explained more than once the apparent multiplicity of individual souls by the analogy of the reflection of the whole sky in each of the myriads of dewdrops. According to Vedānta, he said, 'this universe is infinite in space and eternal in duration'. From the vantage point of a sage with the perspective of the infinite, he once explained the paradoxical human situation in these revealing words:

'What is this? Where is weakness? Who is strong? What is great and what is small? What is high and what is low in this marvellous interdependence of existence where the smallest atom is necessary for the existence of the whole? Who is great and who is small? It is past finding out! And why? Because none is great and none is small. All things are interpenetrated by that infinite ocean; their reality is that infinite; and whatever there is on

⁷ *vide*: Morris Kline: op. cit., p. 404

⁸ *Bṛhadāhanyaka-upaniṣad*, V. i 1

the surface is but that infinite. The tree is infinite; so is everything that you see or feel—every grain of sand, every thought, every soul, everything that exists is infinite. Infinite is finite and finite infinite. This is our existence.’⁹

Modern physics, according to Einsteinian postulates, asserts that the universe is finite, though without limits. But one of the basic assumptions of Einstein is seriously challenged by some physicists in recent years. Einstein made the speed of light the ultimate velocity attainable by any physical particle in this universe. But these physicists assert that there are particles which have greater-than-light velocity. If this proves true the Einsteinian concept of a finite universe will have to be completely overhauled.

Maurice Maeterlinck, the Belgian writer-philosopher, argues convincingly against the concept of a limited universe in space and time. Though he admits the inexplicability of the nature of the physical universe, his argument favours a limitless infinite universe. He says:

‘The quantity of matter contained in the universe must necessarily be infinite. Who or what could limit it? On the other hand, the space enclosing it is equally infinite. There always seems to be more space than matter, nevertheless; for space without matter would not be called space. This means that there are two infinities, one of which will always be greater than the other. Is this explicable? But is not everything inexplicable?’¹⁰

Hans Hahn, a renowned Austrian mathematician of the present century, favours an interpretation of the physical world ‘in an entirely different kind of mathematical space—that is to say in an infinitely extend-

ed space’.¹¹ He argues further, bringing up the viewpoint of those whom he calls ‘confirmed finitists’:

‘They are free to take this view if they wish, but they must not imagine thereby to have altogether rid themselves of infinity. For even the infinitely extended Riemann spaces contain infinitely many points, and the mathematical treatment of time is such that each time-interval, however small, contains infinitely many time-points.’¹²

Howsoever we may try to study and understand the manifested universe, we remain captives of our own thought-modes. ‘It is not possible for thought to know anything greater than itself’, observed William Blake. The Upaniṣadic sages long ago realized that mental limitation. For ignorance has entered deep into man, and it colours everything that he thinks. It is only by knowing his own infinite dimension that man knows the infinity of the manifested universe and comes to perfect rest. Even though he continues to act after gaining the perspective of infinity, he is always at rest. In the case of such men the mathematical truth of the statement that ‘motion is a series of rests’ finds a mystical analogy. In the life of the Buddha we come across an incident which bears witness to this fact. The Buddha hears about the inhuman and ruthless tyranny of Aṅgulīmāla, a wicked marauder, dwelling in a mountain-cave. Despite attempts at dissuasion by his disciples and friends, he goes forth to meet Aṅgulīmāla. As the Buddha nears the cave, Aṅgulīmāla is terribly enraged at the audacious intrusion of the yellow-clad monk, and shouts ‘Stop!’ The Buddha replies significantly, ‘I *have* stopped and now it is you that need to stop’, and quietly moves towards the brigand!

III

Sri Ramakrishna was another such illu-

⁹ *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. II (1963), p. 399

¹⁰ Maeterlinck: *The Great Beyond* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1947), p. 159

¹¹ Newman: *ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 1610

¹² *loc. cit.*

minated sage who had come to rest in the Infinite. But certainly not by following any mathematical trails! As a schoolgoing boy, he enjoyed being with his friends more outside the four walls of the classroom than inside. He certainly had remarkable parts and talents. He could paint very well, model beautifully small images of the deities, sing, playact, and mimic. But mathematics bewildered him! 'While I was in school', he revealed later in life, 'arithmetic would throw me into confusion....' Nevertheless he possessed a high degree of intelligence and an extremely retentive memory. In boyhood as well as manhood, even scholars and professors were amazed at his intellectual sweep and penetration. Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest intellects that India has produced, felt dwarfed in the presence of Sri Ramakrishna. He likened the intellectual brilliance of Sri Ramakrishna to that of Śaṅkara, one of the greatest philosopher-sages of all time.

Though arithmetic threw him into confusion, nonetheless Sri Ramakrishna was fascinated by the mystery of the infinite. With his whole heart and soul he plunged into It, staking all—even his 'sanity'. He remained preoccupied with it day and night for many years. At last he came to live constantly on the threshold of Infinity, whence the relative, the finite, was perceived in its infinite dimension. In his own peculiar but expressive terminology, he called that threshold state *bhāvamukha*. Referring to his excursions into the Infinite, he once said: 'In that state I feel as if I were possessed by a ghost. I cease to be my own self. While coming down from that state I cannot count correctly. Trying to count, I say, "One, seven, eight", or some such thing.' Narendranath who was then present there, interposed, 'It is because everything is one.' But Sri Ramakrishna, well versed in the mathematics of infinity where counting is out of place, said, 'No,

it is beyond one and two.'¹³

On another occasion Sri Ramakrishna was explaining to a group of devotees the profundity of *Brahmajñāna* or knowledge of the infinite, indivisible Reality. He said: 'Each ego may be likened to a pot. Suppose there are ten pots filled with water, and the sun is reflected in them. How many suns do you see?'

A devotee: 'Ten reflections. Besides, there certainly exists the real sun.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Suppose you break one pot. How many suns do you see now?'

Devotee: 'Nine reflected suns. But there certainly exists the real sun.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'All right. Suppose you break nine pots. How many suns do you see now?'

Devotee: 'One reflected sun. But there certainly exists the real sun.'

Sri Ramakrishna (to Girish): 'What remains when the last pot is broken?'

Girish, well grounded as he was in the mathematics of the finite, answered, 'That real sun, sir.' But Sri Ramakrishna who was trying to explain the experience of the Infinite, rejoined: 'No. What remains cannot be described. What *is* remains. How will you know there is a real sun unless there is a reflected sun? [*i.e.*, in the ego, etc.] "I-consciousness" is destroyed in samadhi. A man climbing down from samadhi to the lower plane cannot describe what he has seen there.'¹⁴ That is an experience beyond words and numbers—the union with the Infinite.

Confirming the opinion of the Upaniṣadic sages about calculating with the infinite, Sri Ramakrishna—an expert nineteenth-century knower of the infinite, far beyond ordinary mathematicians—said:

¹³ 'M' *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600004, 1947), p. 870

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 757

'Many views, many paths—and I have seen them all. But I don't enjoy them any more; they all quarrel.

'No one else is here, and you are my own people. Let me tell you something. I have come to the final realization that God is the Whole and I am a part of

Him, that God is the Master and I am His servant. Furthermore, I think every now and then that He is I and I am He.' ¹⁵

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 535

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Kasi
6/5/21

Srīmān—,

Yesterday I received a long letter of yours. As in your previous letter, in this one too exists your same old story in all its details. Nevertheless you write that, after getting my letter, the benefit you derived by my instructions cannot be adequately intimated in writing. However, I could not at all understand what benefit you were able to get. I in fact see that all the former complaints and lamentations remain in the very same manner. How shall I understand by this that you have been benefited? All work is to be learnt through practice. But I see that you do not at all accept the need for practice with respect to religious disciplines or mind-control. You all want to turn out to be great meditators or outstanding devotees (*bhaktas*) by closing your eyes for two days or by doing a little *japa* (repetition of a *mantra* or the divine name) for four days. You are prepared to exert yourselves and wait for results regarding everything else, but in spiritual matters you don't brook the slightest delay—you become overly impatient. Howsoever, to be sure, it is only when you practise [disciplines] life after life that the character gets shaped a little. But, without comprehending this fact, you want to grab it all in just three days. What else shall I say? You certainly have not read my letter with full attention. If you had, you would not have questioned me again in the same old fashion. Is it such a simple thing to steady the mind? Do you want to do it without exerting yourself in the least? I think I have written you everything in my previous letter. Now I have nothing more to write. My health is no good at all. I had felt very much distressed on reading your letter. I see that I no more have the capacity to listen to or answer all such things. If I happen to have some strength infused into my body, then I shall try to reply to such letters. If you do not at all listen to what I say or do not in the least try to follow it up—in that case what can I say but that all this instructing is futile?

I am glad to hear that all of you are well. Here it has become very hot. Day and night the heat is constantly there. All are feeling great discomfort. Everyone is well in both the Ashramas (i.e., the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama and Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Kasi or Varanasi). My good wishes, etc. to you all.

SRI TURIYANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE TO WESTERN YOUTH

DR. LETA JANE LEWIS

Although facets of Swami Vivekananda's dynamic spirituality, universality, and compassion unquestionably left their indelible effect upon American culture from the time of his memorable appearance at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, only a small minority in the United States know his name today. But if searching, discontented Americans, especially young Americans, were to discover how rewarding, enriching and real his answers to their life's problems can be, the spiritually sincere would surely feel drawn to him for help.

When they begin to mature and think seriously of life before them, thoughtful young Americans ask such fundamental questions as:

Who am I?

On what shall I found my life?

How can I achieve genuine, lasting happiness?

and begin to look for the answers.

Some are involved in painful identity crises. Either they do not believe that they know who they are, in which case they feel miserably confused, or they do not like the persons they think themselves to be and are profoundly unhappy and self-condemnatory. Others are confusedly seeking a reliable set of values upon which to base their lives. Honest, independent, and self-motivated, they resent society's apparent expectation that, in forming value judgments (especially those concerning ethics and morality), they ought to be guided by herd pressure motivated by outdated custom. Questioning the traditional basis for ethics and morality, they refuse to settle for anything less than a demonstrably existent truth by which they can honestly conduct themselves. Although these young people are generally wary of materialism

wherever it takes the form of wealth and social prestige, they do not always perceive that sense indulgence is no less materialistic than the avaricious accumulation of stocks and bonds. Many are intuitively aware that the life of the senses can become a spiritual drag, but some, in an essentially harmless reaction to unreasoned puritanism, challenge the older generation's insistence upon self-restraint. For the majority, 'love' is the magic word which can give solace and comfort in an otherwise cold world. But since everyone's experience of love is limited in many ways, their interpretations of what it really is, differ widely. A few identify love almost exclusively with 'eros' (physical or romantic love) including only a trace of 'caritas'; while others, especially the somewhat philanthropically inclined, identify love more with 'caritas' and less with 'eros' giving little or no consideration to 'agape' (unmotivated brotherly love). Few know the true meaning of 'agape'. But whatever their interpretations of love, most thoughtful people are pained at the sight of suffering and injustice in the world and would like to become involved in attempts to eradicate them.

In search of a reality upon which to found their lives, discerning young Americans reach out to Western philosophy only to find it too hypothetical to be convincing. They sadly note the somewhat ironical fact that since the Western philosophical systems are primarily speculative rather than experiential, the very philosophers who conceived them were not absolutely certain that they believed in them. Furthermore, youthful idealists are disillusioned to find that there is nothing in the West to insure the most brilliant philosopher or philosophy against materialism.

Nor do discriminating young Americans find the absolutely credible reality content they seek, in the creeds and doctrines of the orthodox churches. The comfortable compromise between spirit and matter which the ordinary church-goer exhibits convinces them that the latter believes more certainly in matter than in spirit and so cannot have experienced profound spiritual truth.

As a young man in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Swami Vivekananda (who, of course, was then known by his pre-monastic name Narendranath Datta) likewise sought to found his life on a reality which would be verifiable by personal experience and consistent with his highest ideals. A voracious reader, he eagerly acquainted himself with the best Western philosophers including Mill, Hume, Kant, Spencer, and Schopenhauer, only to discover that none could satisfy his longing for a profoundly spiritual, knowable truth. He joined the progressive Brahmo Samaj in his native Calcutta but was not completely content with its essentially orthodox doctrine of a formless personal God, whose supposed goodness he could not reconcile with the obvious evil in nature and in man. He believed that a divine principle, personal or impersonal, could affect one's life meaningfully only if it could be experienced. So beginning with the venerable Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, he went from one prominent religious leader to another boldly asking, 'Sir, have you seen God?' No one gave the satisfactory affirmative answer until Narendranath went to Dakshineswar to visit Sri Ramakrishna. Of this meeting the Swami himself wrote:

'I crept near to him and asked the question which I had asked so often: "Have you seen God, sir?" "Yes, I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense." "God can be realized, he went on, "one can see and talk to Him as I am doing with you. But who cares to do so? People shed

torrents of tears for their wife and children, for wealth or property, but who does so for the sake of God? If one weeps sincerely for Him, He surely manifests Himself." That impressed me at once. For the first time I found a man who dared to say that he had seen God, that religion was a reality to be felt, to be sensed in an infinitely more intense way than we can sense the world. As I heard these things from his lips, I could not but believe that he was saying them not like an ordinary preacher but from the depth of his own realizations.'¹

Narendranath was at once attracted by the love, purity, and imperturbable bliss he saw in Sri Ramakrishna's radiant spiritual personality, but, at first, he did not intellectually acknowledge this amazing man to be the great saint and sage he intuitively took him to be. Since finding the truth and being absolutely sure that he had found it were the most important things in his life, he felt compelled to test the authenticity of Sri Ramakrishna's unusual spiritual experiences as long as he doubted it, thus foreshadowing twentieth-century youth's insistence upon applying exacting standards of logic and common sense to people and ideas before accepting them. Sri Ramakrishna, for his part, so appreciated Narendranath's fine intellect, to say nothing of his warm, compassionate heart and strong character, that he took no offence at the young man's sincerely challenging him intellectually and even questioning his sanity. On the contrary, he indulgently permitted and encouraged Narendranath to come to his own conclusions naturally and without compulsion. So gradually, over a period of several years, Narendranath, the modern young sceptic, became convinced on the basis of his own critical judgment that

¹ His Eastern and Western Disciples: *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashram, Mayavati, Swami Vivekananda (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt., Pithoragarh, U.P., 1949), p. 47

his first intuition had been correct, that Sri Ramakrishna was a rare holy man for whom the highest states of consciousness were a matter of everyday occurrence. Then, since he no longer doubted but could follow his natural inclinations, he surrendered himself heart and soul to Sri Ramakrishna, his adored model and guide.

For Narendranath, close association with Sri Ramakrishna meant the constant communion with God. So intense was this experience of the grace of the guru that the practice of spiritual disciplines became relatively easy for him. So it was not very long before he discovered that the divine spirit which he loved so much in Sri Ramakrishna was also within himself and pervaded the universe as the Self of all.

Thus, by the grace of the guru, young Narendranath discovered what sincere young Americans are looking for: an experienced Reality on which to base a happy, fulfilled life in accord with one's highest ideals. He later could tell the victims of the identity crisis that since they are innately divine, they should never look upon themselves as miserable, sinful, or weak. Speaking from his own experience of man's ultimate identity as Satcidānanda, that is, as divine Existence, divine Wisdom, and divine Bliss, he taught that if there were such a thing as sin, the only real sin would be to deny the divinity of man either in one's self or in others. He repeatedly and emphatically stated that the idea of man as a sinner is based on ignorance of the true Self; and that thus self-hatred and self-condemnation—those painful symptoms of the identity crisis—like the concept of sin itself, have no foundation in actual fact.

In those sublime states of consciousness where he perceived the identity of his self with all other selves, Swami Vivekananda experienced 'agape', which he found to be infinitely more profound, unselfish, and re-

warding than either 'eros' or 'caritas'. Direct perception of the supreme identity taught him that we must love our neighbours as ourselves both because they are of the same essence as the Godhead and because they are our very selves. Thus, he declared the human body to be the worthiest temple of all, and work done for love of God in man to be as holy as, if not holier than, sacred ritual. As a *karma-yogī* devoted to the service of man, he especially sought to help those who needed him most, the poor and downtrodden. 'Seeing God everywhere, thus do your work,' he admonished his brother monastics.

'...and may I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls—and above all... my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.'²

Western young people, since they are sincerely concerned about suffering and injustice, and seeking involvement with solving these problems of the underprivileged will find Swami Vivekananda a model to emulate. While travelling throughout India over a period of several years as a wandering monk, the tender-hearted Swami was shocked and horrified to witness widespread suffering from plague, famine, flood and other natural causes as well as from humanity's inhumanity to man; and, later, when he came to the West, he sorrowfully observed here the sad effects of our materialistic culture. His consequent refusal to spare himself in his determined effort to bring the help that was needed when and where it was needed, undoubtedly undermined his health and contributed to his

² *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama), Vol. V (1959), p. 136

death at the early age of thirty-nine. But the work of such a farsighted prophet could not stop with his death. Swami Vivekananda left a growing legacy to humanity in the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, which, under the leadership of devoted monks and nuns, continues today to do its utmost to relieve suffering in India by means of disaster relief, hospitals, schools, etc., and in the West by sending holy men to awaken the spirituality latent there.

In spite of the fact that they would almost certainly react enthusiastically to Swami Vivekananda's overwhelming empathy for the ill, the impoverished, and the discriminated against, many Western young people would be wary of his emphasis upon renunciation, which, to them, has puritanical overtones. They might not see that, although he held renunciation to be the *sine qua non* of spiritual life, he, nevertheless, disapproved of the puritanical fallacy that the normal life of the senses is intrinsically wicked. Yet one glance at his warm, kind face (even as preserved in photographs) glowing with the love and joy of a knower of Brahman should convince even the most hardened sceptic that Swami Vivekananda was no cold, masochistic puritan. On the contrary, the great Swami maintained that sense pleasure with discrimination (as well as the modest accumulation of property and the acquisition of a respected place in the community) is a legitimate aim in most people's lives. However, he made it clear that the individual in his effort to attain property, pleasure, and status must always put his duty to family and community *ahead* of his own selfish interest. He felt that such seekers should grow slowly by practising appropriate spiritual disciplines while satisfying normal desires within the framework of the

society in which they live until such time as, seeing the worthlessness of all egotistical pleasures, they would be ready to make the final great step of total renunciation. He recommended monasticism only to those very few who were ready to renounce even 'normal' desires.

Swami Vivekananda would have rejected the excuses made by those young people who, not wishing to conform to the sexual and other moral codes laid down by society, protest, 'What I do with my life is my own business. I'm not hurting anyone.' He would have countered with the explanation that lack of self-control not only reinforces the ego identification which inhibits spiritual growth but, in addition, harms society by strengthening the appeal of destructive standards of conduct.

If they can become acquainted with Swami Vivekananda's great spiritual personality, contemporary Western youth will find the truth of the divinity of man which they are unconsciously seeking as a basis for their lives and discover that this truth with its great potentiality for fulfilment and beatitude exceeds all ordinary human expectations. Fortunately for them, vivid biographies and biographical sketches are available, which clearly reveal the Swami's warm, compassionate heart, profound spiritual attainment, and brilliant intellect, and seem almost to bring him to life again. His lectures and written works likewise convey the message of one, who, having attained the highest transcendental experience, translated it into memorable words and action for everyday life. His clear, logical writings not only show an astonishing grasp of Eastern and Western philosophy but they carry the conviction of one who knows from undeniable immediate experience what all of us are seeking.



ILLUMINATING DIALOGUES FROM INDIAN LORE

THE CROWNING OF PARVATI'S TAPAS (AUSTERITY)

Pārvatī, baffled in her hopes by Śiva, who burnt Manmatha, the god of love, in her presence, cursed her beauty in her heart: for beauty should have for its guerdon good fortune as regards one's beloved. She therefore decided to make her beauty fruitful by austerities, which could lead to *samādhi*. How also could she secure these two things—a love that would make Śiva respond, and a husband like Śiva, after marrying whom one cannot experience widowhood? Menā,¹ hearing that her daughter who had set her heart on Śiva was resolved to practise penances, clasped her to her bosom and said, trying to dissuade her from the difficult vow of asceticism:

'In the house are all such gods as your heart could desire. My dear, how widely different are these two—penance and your body. The delicate *śirīṣa*-flower² can bear the tread of a bee, but not that of a bird.'

Menā, though thus exhorting her daughter, could not dissuade her from her resolution—could not restrain her from her undertaking. Who can turn back a mind firm in its resolution to achieve a desired

object, or water rushing toward low ground? Therefore on a suitable occasion that steady-minded girl asked a close friend to her father, who knew her desire, permission to dwell in the forest in order to perform religious austerities till their fruition.

Being granted permission by her father who was delighted at a persistence worthy of her, she with her friend repaired to a peak abounding in peacocks, which afterwards came to be known by her name, Gaurī-Peak (Gaurī being one of the names of Pārvatī), among the people. Of unshakeable disposition, having given up her ornaments and royal dress, she wore a bark-garment and matted hair. But the ascetic dress could not hide her beauty: a lotus does not look beautiful only when swarmed by bees, but even in its union with moss.

Sages came there, desirous of seeing her who daily used to take a sacred bath, offer oblations to the fire, recite sacred texts. Age is no consideration in the case of those whose spiritual attainments are high. The grove where she stayed, too, acquired a purifying holiness: the natural enmity between warring beasts was abandoned, guests were gratified by the desired fruits which the trees offered, and a sacred fire maintained in the newly built hut of leaves.

When Pārvatī saw however that the desired objective was not attainable by all

¹ Wife of Himalaya, the King of the Mountains. Pārvatī was their daughter. In her previous incarnation as Satī, Pārvatī had been the daughter of Dakṣa and wife of Śiva.

² *Śirīṣa* is the name of a tree whose flower, in Sanskrit poetry, is considered the ultimate in delicateness and softness.

such penances, then disregardful of her body, she began extraordinary penances. In summer, sitting in the midst of four blazing fires, she would gaze at the sun without looking at anything else. Only the rainwater that came without any effort on her part, and the rays of the moon, full of nectar, would break her fast. The nights, the witnesses of the severe penances of her who slept on a bare stone slab in the open, in the midst of unceasing rains and winds, watched her, as it were, with their glances in the shape of lightning-flashes. Determinedly standing immersed in water, she passed the nights of the cold season when the winter winds scattered masses of snow and sleet all around. The sternest severity of austerities lies in subsisting on leaves fallen from the trees, but that also she spurned. Hence she was named *Aparṇā* (lit., one who abstains from eating even leaves) by those conversant with history. By this and other kinds of penances she left far behind all the austerities practised by other anchorites with hardened frames.

Then a certain ascetic, wearing a deer-skin and holding a staff, burning as it were with brāhmic lustre, entered the penance-forest, appearing as the embodiment of all the virtues of the *brahmacarya* ideal. *Pārvatī*, kindly disposed towards all guests, went forth to receive him, offering worship with great reverence: even though they are same-sighted, the steady-minded behave toward other worthy persons with extreme reverence. Having accepted her hospitality and being refreshed, he began decorously to speak, looking at *Umā* (*Pārvatī*) with innocent eyes.

Ascetic: 'Are sacrificial wood and *kuśa* grass easily obtainable for holy rites? Is the water suitable for your bathing? Do you practise austerities proportionate to your strength? For the body is the primary instrument needed in religious life. Are the young leaves of these creepers,

planted and watered by you, thriving? Is your mind pleasingly disposed toward the fawns when they take *kuśa* grass from your hand? O mountain-born lady, the remark that beauty never leads to a sinful course of life is not false, since your conduct has become worthy of imitation even for the ascetics. O lady of pure intentions, in view of your conduct, *dharma* (righteous conduct) strikes me as pre-eminently the best of the group of the three (*dharma, artha, kāma*), since you have selected and followed this only, with a mind from which all thought of *artha* (wealth) and *kāma* (sensual enjoyment) has been cast out.

'It does not behove you to regard me as a stranger, to whom you accord special hospitality; for the friendship of good people is declared to be formed after seven words have been exchanged between them. Hence, a curiosity is aroused in me and I am desirous of asking something of you. If it be not a secret, you will kindly give me a reply.

'You are young, beautiful, and born of a high family. Say, what blessings other than these can be the reward of penance? Why is it that having abandoned ornaments, you have in youth put on bark garments suitable to old age? If you seek heaven, your effort is vain, since the regions of your father are the land of the gods. And if you desire a suitable husband, cease from your austerities; for a jewel is sought after and has not to seek. O *Pārvatī*, how long will you torture yourself? I too have religious merit accumulated. You will get your desired husband by its power. But I desire to know him.'

Pārvatī, thus addressed by the *Brāhmaṇa* who had as it were entered the inmost secret of her heart, could not in her modesty speak out the desire in her mind. So she looked to her friend standing by her side. Her friend said:

'O Sage, know you then if such is your

curiosity, him for whom this lady is practising penances. Disdaining all the lords of the four quarters—the great Indra and others—of exalted dignity, she seeks a husband in Śiva who is not to be conquered by charms. Since the day Śiva burnt Manmatha, the maiden, powerfully affected by love, never felt at ease in her father's house. And Śiva, whose picture this simple girl painted with her own hands, was upbraided in private with the words: "You have been considered all-pervading by the wise; how then do you not know me, a slave to your love?" At last, when she could find no other way to win the Lord of the universe—though she searched long and well—she has come with me to this sacred forest for practising austerities. I do not know when He, difficult to be secured though sought after, will favour our friend, worn by penance, whose appearance brings tears to our eyes.'

Ascetic (to Pārvatī): 'Is it so?'

Pārvatī: 'O Brāhmaṇa, who are chief among those who know the Vedas, you have heard the truth. This person [that is, herself] is ambitious of attaining the highest post. These austerities are the means of getting that; nothing is inaccessible to desire.'

Ascetic: 'Śiva is well known and yet you have a yearning after him! Knowing him as possessing a love for inauspicious things, I cannot approve of your desire. You have fixed your mind on a worthless object; how can your hand with nuptial string around the wrist, bear the first clasp of Śiva's hand decked with coiling snakes? Then again another humiliation will await you—great men will begin to smile on seeing you who are fit to be borne by a lordly elephant, riding Śiva's old bull, after marriage. His body possesses monstrous eyes, his parentage is not to be found out, and his wealth is shown by his nudity. Whatever is expected in a husband, is that—even in part—to be found in Śiva? Turn your

heart from this desire.'

Pārvatī (with quivering lips and knitted brows): 'Indeed you do not know Śiva aright since you talk thus to me. The dull-witted find fault with the course of life of the magnanimous, which is not in common with that of other people and the motive of which is difficult to divine. Only one who is anxious to ward off calamities or to attain prosperity, need resort to auspicious things. What has He who is the protector of the world and has nothing to wish for, to do with those things which corrupt the functions of the soul by generating desires? Himself poor, yet He is the spring of wealth; living in the cremation-ground He is yet the Lord of the three worlds; being of terrible form, He is still called Śiva (of gentle aspect). None are there who know what He really is. Indra, having for his vehicle the rutting elephant, touches the feet of that wealthless God who goes about on a bull. Although wishing to speak only of the faults of the Lord, you have said one good thing about Him. How can He, who is considered the parent of even Brahmā, the creator, have His origin known?

'Enough of disputation: let Him be, without any reservation, what you have heard Him to be. My heart, however, pervaded by the one sentiment of love, is set on Him. One who wants to act as one likes, does not care for criticism.

'O friend (addressing her confidante), stop this boy who seems desirous of saying something more. Not only he who talks ill of the mighty, but also he who listens to such talk, is a sinner. Or rather, I myself will go from this place.'

So saying, Pārvatī started to leave; but the ascetic revealed His own form as Śiva, and held her with a smile.

Śiva: 'Henceforth I am your slave. I have been bought by your austerities.'

SOURCE: Kālidāsa: *Kumārasambhavam*

Tr. by M. I. Kale

VIVEKANANDA IN GERMANY AND HOLLAND, 1896

SWAMI VIDYATMANANDA

In the summer of 1896 Swami Vivekananda took a vacation trip on the continent of Europe. He left London on Sunday, 19 July, and was back again in London on Thursday, 17 September. The first two weeks were spent in Geneva, and the French Alps. The next four weeks in Switzerland. The following two weeks in Germany. Then three or four days in Holland on the way back to England.

Swamiji was the guest of three English devotees, Miss Henrietta Müller, Captain J. H. Sevier, and Mrs. Charlotte Sevier. Although Swamiji is reported to have taken an interest in the planning of the trip, it seems likely that his English hosts worked out most of the details as to where to go and what to see. Thus the itinerary was presumably in accordance with what Britishers of the period going to the Continent considered significant. The preferences Swamiji expressed were, first, that he should have a period of calm, reminiscent of his old days as wandering sadhu. This occurred during the two weeks' halt at Saas-Fee, Switzerland. A second wish of Swamiji's was that he should meet Paul Deussen, who had cordially invited him to visit him at his residence in Kiel. He had already established a warm relation with Max Müller, Sanskrit scholar at Oxford. Professor Deussen, Professor of Philosophy at Kiel University in northern Germany, was the second Sanskrit scholar of importance in Europe.

A step-by-step account of the first six weeks of the journey was given in my article on 'Vivekananda in Switzerland, 1896' published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of March and April, 1973. The present article will encompass the party's progress through the last three weeks, from 29 August to 17

September.

As was explained in the article about Switzerland, considerable supposition is involved in establishing the itinerary of the party. The most substantial sources of material available are sixteen letters written by Swamiji while on the trip (and references in two or three other letters written by him before and after the trip) and Chapter XCI of the original authentic biography of Vivekananda, issued in four volumes at Mayavati a few years after the Swami's death.¹

The letters, of course, contain indications essential in establishing dates and places. We may have, also, considerable faith in the biography. Although the chapter on the Continental journey has been found to contain some inaccuracies, it was probably written with the collaboration of one of the persons who made the tour, namely Mrs. Sevier. She herself wrote an article, published first in the *Prabuddha Bharata*, September 1905, and reprinted in the biography, describing the day spent with Professor Deussen. The bulk of the biography was written by an American devotee, Frank Alexander, who worked at Mayavati, where Mrs. Sevier was living at the time.

Swamiji himself wrote an article mentioning his contact with Paul Deussen, although this is more of an appreciation than a reporting of facts; one finds it in his published *Works*.² And in his autobiography, *Mein Leben*, Deussen devotes two pages to Swamiji's visit to his home and their subsequent voyage together to Hamburg.

¹ His Eastern and Western Disciples: *The Life of the Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. III (1915)

² *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama), Vol. IV (1962), pp. 272-7

Bremen, and Amsterdam, and on over to England.

Due to the Second World War, what traces of Swamiji's party one could have expected to find in Germany have disappeared. In some German cities up to 80 per cent of the old quarters were destroyed by bombing. Efforts to find traces of the party in old newspaper columns, city archives, and hotel registers, although conscientiously pursued, were on the whole devoid of success.

To flesh out the bare details given in the sources mentioned, we are thus reduced to citing probabilities, based on known travel habits of the period. What the voyagers probably did can be hypothecated on the basis of the recommendations given in the great travel guides of the epoch, loyally used by most English voyagers, the Baedeker Handbooks for Travellers. In the descriptions that follow, thus, I have relied on Baedeker's *The Rhine*, 1886; *Southern Germany*, 1895; *Northern Germany*, 1893; and *Belgium and Holland*, 1897. It is more than likely that these very volumes formed a part of the Seviere's baggage.

During the days in the French Alps and in Switzerland, the travel had been rude. Stagecoaches were the only means of transport in many places, and in going to the Little St. Bernard hospice and to the village of Saas-Fee, travellers were forced to use mules or horses, or to walk. This probably created little difficulty for Swamiji. As a wandering sadhu in India only three years before, he had been accustomed to travel by foot. We know also that in India two years after the Continental trip he rode horseback in Almora; he made also, partly on foot, the taxing pilgrimage in Kashmir up to the Himalayan shrine of Amarnath. Such difficulties seem to have matched Swamiji's mood. He was delighted with their two weeks' quiet stay at Saas-Fee as he felt there that he could imagine himself for

a time an unknown *sannyāsin* (monk) back in India.

But when crossing over into Germany, all that was left behind. By 1896 the rail system in Germany was well developed. During the next three weeks the Seviere and Swamiji (Miss Müller went back to England at the end of the Swiss part of the journey) moved ahead as typical tourists, 'doing' the Rhine and taking in the main sight-seeing attractions of eight important European cities.

Perhaps Swamiji would have been just as happy to have stayed longer at Saas-Fee; on the other hand, he was anxious to get on to meet Deussen. Also he was interested in observing Germany and judging its mood, as we learn from his observations on this country recounted in his long essay 'Memoirs of European Travel'.³ We may suppose also that considerations as to the Seviere's wishes played a part in the decision to move on and 'do' Germany as thoroughly as time allowed. They were paying for the trip and naturally must have been anxious for all to gain as much from it as possible.

Swamiji and party seem to have been in Lucerne, Switzerland, on 26 August. From there they went to Schaffhausen for a day or two to see the Falls of the Rhine. About Saturday, 29 August, the three travellers crossed over into Germany. They probably went by rail from Schaffhausen to Stuttgart, a matter of 123 miles and five or six hours. Here they would have changed trains and proceeded to Heidelberg sixty-nine miles farther.

Now the party was in romantic Germany, a land famed for picturesque castles, fairy-tale villages with their Baroque churches, healthy, hearty people, and a heritage of Teuton legend. The most romantic spot of all was Heidelberg, whose tales of student

³ *ibid.*, Vol. VII (1958), pp. 297 ff.

life—blond youths in uniform, singing, drinking, duelling—were well known. (It is interesting that this picture has existed in the American psyche almost up to the present. Before World War I good families sent their sons to German universities, believing that opportunities for education abroad were better than those at home. Even during World War II, Heidelberg was still regarded with such affection by Americans that it was the one German city not marked out for bombing. The U. S. Army command had determined to make its headquarters there during the Occupation, and did so.)

This is what the original biography of Swamiji says about the stop at Heidelberg:

'From Schaffhausen the three tourists went to Heidelberg, the centre of one of the greatest German universities, where two days were spent. A visit to the university was made. The Swami was much surprised at the great culture of the Germans, and saw from the general character of the university curriculum what splendid opportunities for education the German students enjoyed. A visit was also paid to the castle above the city, where there is a cellar containing the largest cask in the world.'⁴

The site of Heidelberg is slightly reminiscent of that of Rishikesh, being a place where a river—the Neckar—emerges from a backdrop of hills. The city occupies a narrow strip alongside the stream, heights rising steeply behind. A few hundred feet up stands the old castle, overhanging and dominating the city. Mark Twain in his *A Tramp Abroad* admired the castle looking down upon 'the compact brown-roofed town. I have never enjoyed a view which has such a serene and satisfying charm about it as this one gives'.

The wine cask that Swamiji saw in the castle is generally called the Great Tun. It was constructed in 1751 and has a capacity

of some 50,000 gallons. In 1896, as today, a grotesque wooden figure stood beside the tun, of Perkeo, a court jester, who is supposed on one occasion to have drained the entire contents singlehanded. The castle is still a popular tourist attraction, as it was then. One can go up to the castle by rack railway today; in Swamiji's time one walked up or took one of the town's two-horse cabs.

The university of Heidelberg is considered the cradle of science of southern Germany. It was founded in 1386 and has received students continually during the nearly six hundred years since. Following the Reformation it became the chief intellectual seat of humanism—that is to say, of Renaissance ideas about the intrinsic worth and educability of man. In 1896 Heidelberg university had about a thousand students.

The biography goes on: 'From Heidelberg to Coblenz! Here a halt was made for one night.'

It is likely that the group took a train from Heidelberg via Darmstadt to Mayence, a matter of some sixty miles. From Mayence one continued by train to Coblenz another sixty miles farther north. It is possible that they passed through Wiesbaden, then as now a renowned health resort, where some forty years later Swami Yatiswarananda was to establish a beginning Vedānta work in Europe.

Coblenz, a walled city at the confluence of the Moselle and Rhine rivers, must have seemed very old-world German. Baedeker says, 'Few towns on the Rhine can vie with Coblenz in beauty of situation, standing as it does at the junction of two of the most picturesque rivers in Europe, and commanding charming views in every direction.'

The next morning, possibly Tuesday, 1 September, the party, according to the biography: '...boarded a steamer to journey up the far-famed Rhine as far as the

⁴ *Life*: Vol. III, p. 39

city of Cologne. The trip occupied from two to three days, during which the Swami showed great enthusiasm over the pretty scenery and peopled the old castles with the stories current in the German folklore.'

The Rhine River trip was one of the renowned excursions of Europe, and is just as popular as ever to the present day. However, the biographer has made two errors in the account. From Coblenz to Cologne one travels down, not up, the Rhine. And, the trip being only sixty miles, it required, according to Baedeker, about five hours by steamer. Probably what is meant is that the day on the river plus the sightseeing in Cologne occupied from two to three days. or Mrs. Sevier's memory may have tricked her.

On both sides of the river one saw forests, vineyards, and old hamlets with their ancient churches. On the heights above, crumbling watchtowers, castles, convents, some constructions going back to Roman times. Bonn, the present capital of West Germany, then a city of some 35,000 population, appeared on the left bank.

At Rolandseck ruins of a castle and convent recall the legend of Roland and Hildegunde, which, being mentioned in Baedeker's *Rhine* of 1886, may be one of the Rhine folktales Swamiji had read about. Roland, one of Charlemagne's knights, scouring the Rhine in search of adventure, found himself the guest of Count Heribert, Lord of the Seven Mountains. Roland and the count's beautiful daughter, Hildegunde, fell in love and became affianced. The knight was called away to war and was gone a long time. Hildegunde awaited him, then heard that he had been killed 'in battle with the Infidels'. Inconsolable, she entered a convent. But Roland had only been wounded, and came back to Heribert's castle to claim his bride. There he found that she was forever lost to him. In despair, he built a castle not far from the convent, and

here he lived alone, content to catch an occasional glimpse of Hildegunde going to and from her devotions in the convent chapel. One day he missed her. The tolling of the chapel bell told him she had died. Roland never spoke again. Soon he too was dead, found with his dead eyes turned in the direction of Hildegunde's convent.

The biography account continues:

'At Cologne the travellers left the steamer to spend several days in that interesting city. The Swami marvelled at the great cathedral and attended a service there, and also visited its sanctuary and treasury, rich in gold plate, jewelled crosses and religious vestments, almost unparalleled for their artistic fineness and wrought altogether by the hands of nuns and noble ladies.'⁵

From a distance, and especially when approached by steamboat, Cologne with its numerous towers (in addition to the cathedral, there were at least thirteen other major churches) presented an imposing appearance, but most of the old streets were narrow, gloomy, and badly drained. Many of them, however, contained interesting old houses going back to the thirteenth century. Later, of course, much of this was destroyed by the heavy bombardments of the Second World War.

The cathedral, which largely escaped damage in 1940-45, is a marvel of gothic art, begun in 1248. Baedeker calls it 'probably the most magnificent gothic structure in the world'.

To have attended Mass at Cologne Cathedral would have been an impressive experience. The interior is 400 feet long and 145 feet high. It is not clear what the biographer means by 'sanctuary', but probably the choir, at the end of which stands the high altar. Baedeker tells us that the walls behind the choir stalls were covered with

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 39-40

tapestry worked by the ladies of Cologne—presumably the ‘noble ladies’ of the biography account.

The chief treasure in the cathedral’s treasury is a golden reliquary of very ancient date, supposed to contain the bones of the Magi, the three oriental kings who visited the infant Jesus. This is probably the ‘gold plate’ mentioned in the biography. Guarded in the church’s treasury are also ‘jewelled crosses and religious vestments’ in profusion.

It was now the 3rd or 4th of September. The telegram that Swamiji had received from Paul Deussen on 9 August at Saas-Fee had set their rendezvous at Kiel for 10 September. What happened next is explained by the following passage from the biography: ‘Mr. and Mrs. Sevier had planned to take their guest from Cologne direct to Kiel, but he was anxious to see the great city of Berlin. His hosts, eager to please him, made a large detour, intending not only to visit Berlin but Dresden as well.’ (Dresden was presumably chosen because of its artistic associations.)

Detour it was. It is about 450 miles from Cologne to Kiel. To go from Cologne to Berlin and Dresden and thence to Kiel nearly doubles the distance.

From Cologne to Berlin is 360 miles. In 1896 express trains made the run in about twelve hours. Again the biography:

‘Every mile that the train journeyed onwards, found the Swami occupied with German subjects. He was struck with the general prosperity of the country and with the large number of its cities built after the modern style. When he arrived in Berlin he granted that he now understood the greatness of the German people. The city, with its wide streets, fine monuments and beautiful parks, made him draw a favourable contrast even with Paris itself. During their three days’ stay the Swami’s friends took him to every place of historic and intellectual importance. As for the German soldiery, he said, “What fine bearing and

real military appearance they have!”’⁶

When Swamiji visited Germany it was a country that had been vigorously on the rise for some fifty years. It felt a rivalry with France, its neighbour to the west, and had indeed defeated her in 1870-71. After that, Germany was bent on surpassing not only the French but mighty England as well, which ambition was a major contributing cause of the war of 1914-18 and was influential in causing yet another terrible conflict twenty-five years after that.

What Swamiji saw in 1896 was a young giant rapidly gaining in strength. His travels on the Rhine had shown him the old Germany of happy burghers and romantic legends. The journey from Cologne through Dortmund, Hanover, and other industrial centres on the way to Berlin, and Berlin itself revealed Germany’s new tough, aggressive side.

The capital, having in 1896 some 1,660,000 inhabitants, was the showcase of this dynamic young empire. As the biography says, Berlin had been ornamented with wide avenues, imposing buildings, monuments, and public parks. Hotels, restaurants, wine houses, and beer gardens were numerous. In addition to the Royal Opera House, a dozen other theatres were operating. The guidebook lists fourteen museums and four picture galleries. There was a botanical garden and a zoological garden. And everywhere, splendid uniforms.

In his ‘Memoirs of European Travel’, written in 1899 and 1900, Swamiji reveals some of his feelings about Germany. He admired the country’s high rate of literacy. But in comparing Berlin to Paris, he found German architecture heavy, lacking in taste. In contrast to the French, the German appeared hardworking but stolid. And everywhere in Europe, most noticeable in Germany and Austria, there rose in his nostrils

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 40

—at least fourteen years before the fact—the pervasive smell of war.⁷

In Berlin, explains the biography, 'when he was informed that their next destination was Dresden, he hesitated, saying, "Professor Deussen will be expecting us. We must not defer our visit longer."' Accordingly, Dresden was omitted from the itinerary, and the party proceeded directly the 230 miles to Kiel. They got there on Tuesday, 8 September, and put up at a hotel, spent all day, 9 September, at the home of Professor Deussen, and on the 10th went sight-seeing. These dates are confirmed by the article of Mrs. Sevier, who speaks of spending the whole day at the Deussen residence the day after the arrival at Kiel, and going sightseeing on the following day; and a letter from Swamiji written to Mr. E. T. Sturdy from Kiel on 10 September saying that 'yesterday' they had spent the whole day with Deussen.

We know a good deal not only about Paul Deussen and Swamiji's attitude toward him, but also about what happened on that Wednesday, 9 September. In the *Prabuddha Bharata* article entitled 'A Day in Kiel' Mrs. Sevier told in detail of the Deussen-Vivekananda encounter. Swamiji himself tells something of the meeting in the 10th September letter and in an article written later about Deussen. And Deussen refers to his contacts with Swamiji in his autobiography.

Paul Deussen was born in 1845 and died in 1919. He was thus about fifty at the time of his meeting with Swami Vivekananda. He had been a school friend of Nietzsche, who had interested him profoundly in Schopenhauer. Deussen studied Sanskrit with Christian Lassen at Bonn. He taught in Geneva, Aachen, and Berlin, and

in 1889 became Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kiel. He wrote numerous books on philosophy, particularly on the philosophy of India. He made a German translation of the *Vedānta-sūtras* with Śaṅkara's commentary in 1887, of Sixty Upaniṣads in 1897, and of philosophic texts from the *Mahābhārata* in 1906. From the beginning he considered all religions as authentic, and Indian philosophy as equal in importance to any other. He preferred the idea that man errs through ignorance rather than, as Christianity claims, through sin. He accepted the idea of the Ātman and felt that Christianity could be strengthened through the acceptance of Vedāntic ideas.

From November, 1892, to March, 1893, Deussen and his wife visited India. We know what happened on this trip from a book Deussen wrote about his experiences: *Erinnerungen an Indien*. It was a real voyage of research. Deussen was delighted to meet pandits and discuss with them in Sanskrit numerous questions relating to Indian philosophy. At the close of the visit, in Bombay, he delivered a lecture on Vedānta before the Royal Asiatic Society; this was at the same time a farewell address to his Indian friends. He had the lecture printed in English in advance, together with a poem 'Farewell to India', and was able to distribute these at the lecture, as well as to send them to the friends he had made on the trip. The lecture concluded with: 'And so the Vedānta, in its unfalsified form, is the strongest support of pure morality, is the greatest consolation in the sufferings of life and death—Indians, keep to it!'

These are the bare facts of Deussen's life and professional career. But in *Mein Leben* Deussen tells many human things about himself that reveal him as a sweet and sympathetic figure—worthy of Swamiji's liking and admiration.

Deussen was from the beginning an en-

⁷vide *The Works*, Vol. VII, p. 389; also Romain Rolland: *Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel* (Advaita Ashrama, 1947), p. 171

thusiastic and hard-working seeker of knowledge. He was a real scholar, and at the same time a thoughtful man who tried to understand the meaning of what he was learning. He came from a strict Protestant background. His father was a minister, and his mother was from a minister's family. He himself took the pulpit at times in his father's church. Yet Deussen loved Plato from an early age and was stirred by the wisdom of Greek philosophy. He did his university thesis in Greek philosophy. Later he became an ardent admirer of Indian thought, and long before it was fashionable to do so, he placed Hindu wisdom on a par with Greek and Christian philosophy. Incidentally, Deussen was not a nationalist. He found the war of 1914-18 stupid.

Deussen nearly wore himself out studying. In addition to German, he knew Russian, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, English, and Sanskrit, and he understood Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Arabic. On his trip to India in 1892 he succeeded in communicating in Hindi, as well as in Sanskrit. He did not find occasion to marry until he was forty-two years old.

In his *Mein Leben* Deussen relates an incident that gives us a picture of him at a congress of orientalists in Sweden in 1889. Max Müller also was present. Max Müller was supposed to give an address, but could not think of any subject to speak about. Deussen suggested the 'Creation Hymn' from the Rg-Veda as a subject. 'But', said Müller, 'I don't have the text of it with me.' 'But I know the hymn by heart,' responded Deussen. He dictated the hymn immediately. At the meeting Müller spoke about the poem in a general way. An Indian delegate chanted it in Sanskrit. And Deussen commented on it. He spoke at length about the Highest Being as identical and immanent in all things. There was wild applause from many in the audience, but,

relates Deussen, the theologians present shook their heads. The Prince of Sweden, who was the President of the meeting, congratulated Deussen.

Mein Leben was published in 1922, three years after its author's death. It contains an epilogue by Deussen's daughter, Erika, twenty-five years old at the time of publication. She tells about her father's last days. Again we see the intrepidity of this man. He died of tumour of the kidney on 6 July 1919.

Yet on 3 July he had lectured at Kiel University, as usual to a full auditorium. He was as interesting as ever, and the audience was as enthusiastic as always. Next day he tried to keep his regular schedule. By the end of the day he was shaking with chills. The following day, a Saturday, he said, 'I'll be all right on Monday.' He had no thought of death. But that night he went into a coma and the following day he died. His ashes were placed beside the remains of his father and wife in the churchyard of Oberdreis near Cologne.

No sooner had Swami Vivekananda's party reached their hotel than Deussen sent a note asking them to come to breakfast the next day. They arrived at his house at 10 a.m. and were subsequently persuaded to stay for lunch and then to tea. The family consisted of Deussen, his wife, and their daughter Erika, who happened to be celebrating her second birthday anniversary that day. Mrs. Sevier describes Erika, whom she mentions, incorrectly, as having turned four that day, as being hostess at a child's birthday party at which 'amongst much chat and merriment' she dispensed 'tea and cakes to her youthful guests'.

From the first moment Swamiji and Deussen struck it off well. Swamiji wrote later in a September 22nd letter to Alasinga Perumal: 'I had a beautiful time with Prof. Deussen in Germany.... We have become great friends.' At Kiel that

day they talked steadily the whole time, of Indian scriptures and philosophy, probably some of the time in Sanskrit, for Swamiji remarked later in a letter to Mary Hale that 'Deussen always insists on talking to me in Sanskrit'. 'He is', Swamiji wrote to Sturdy in his letter of the 10th, 'a warring Advaitist. No compromise with anything else. Ishwara is his bugbear. He would have none of it if he could.'

According to the biography:

'During the day the Professor found Swamiji turning over the pages of a poetical work. He spoke to Swamiji, wishing to draw him into conversation, but failed, as he got no response from him. When Swamiji came to know of it afterwards, he apologized, saying that he was so absorbed in reading that he had not heard him. The Professor could not feel satisfied with this explanation until in the course of conversation Swamiji went on quoting verses from the book and interpreting them in places. Dr. Deussen was dumbfounded and . . . asked Swamiji how he could accomplish such a feat of memory. Thereupon the conversation turned upon the subject of concentration of the mind practised by the Indian yogi, with so much perfection that, the Swami said from personal knowledge, in that state he would be unconscious even if a piece of burning charcoal were placed on his body. The Professor remarked that he could now easily believe that.'⁸

In the article on Paul Deussen which he wrote for the *Brahmavadin* in the autumn of 1896 (later incorporated in his *Complete Works*), Swamiji paid homage to the pioneering Sanskrit studies of Müller. Then he went on:

'If Max Müller is thus the old pioneer of the new movement, Deussen is certainly one of its younger advance-guards. Philological interest had hidden long from view the germs of thought and spirituality to be found in the mine

of our ancient scriptures. Max Müller brought out a few of them and exhibited them to the public gaze. . . . Deussen . . . took up the cue and plunged boldly into the metaphysical depths of the Upanishads, found them to be fully safe and satisfying, and then—equally boldly declared the fact before the whole world. Deussen is certainly the freest among scholars in the expression of his opinion about the Vedānta. . . . The greater is the glory therefore to Max Müller and to Deussen for their bold and open advocacy of truth!'⁹

Earlier in the same article Swamiji had written:

'...Paul Deussen—or, as he prefers to be called in Sanskrit, Deva-Sena, and the veteran Max Müller, have impressed me as being the truest friends of India and Indian thought. It will always be among the most pleasing episodes of my life—my first visit to this ardent Vedantist at Kiel, his gentle wife who travelled with him in India, and his little daughter, the darling of his heart—and our travelling together through Germany and Holland to London, and the pleasant meetings we had in and about London.'¹⁰

During the tea Professor and Mrs. Deussen described in an animated way their recent trip to India. They had loved many things about the country but deplored the poverty that they had seen there.

There was an exhibition in Kiel at that time. So after tea Deussen took Swamiji and the Seviars to the exhibition where:

'...some time was spent in studying the various arts and industries of Germany. Partaking of a light refreshment there, the party returned to the hotel where Swamiji was staying. The Professor suggested that the Swami should see the objects of interest in and about the city and it was decided that on the next day they should all make an excursion

⁸ *Life*: Vol. III, p. 45

⁹ *The Works*, Vol. IV (1962), pp. 276-7

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 274

to some of the outlying districts, notably to the famous harbour of Kiel opened only a few days previously by the Kaiser [William II]. It is needless to tell that the Swami and his companions enjoyed the day . . . and appreciated the uniform hospitality and kindness of their hosts.¹¹

Kiel, at the end of a fortified inlet from the Baltic Sea, was the chief war harbour of Germany and the headquarters of its navy. A concentrated build-up of the German naval war potential was already under way, emphasized by the dedication in 1896 by the Kaiser himself of new installations at the base. As the biography indicates, the harbour was the most interesting thing to see in Kiel. Sightseeing steamers cruised the area. It is conceivable that Deussen and his guests boarded a warship, since Baedeker says that visitors were welcome aboard men-of-war.

From Professor Erich Hofmann of the University of Kiel I learned that all the old hotels of Kiel had been destroyed during World War II; consequently it was unlikely that I should be able to identify where Swamiji and the Seviers had stayed. But Professor Hofmann supplied the address of the old Deussen residence, Beseler-allee 39, adding that the house too had been bombed. Since the war a private medical clinic has been built on the site.

I approached Deussen's publisher, F. A. Brockhaus of Wiesbaden, in an effort to contact Erika Deussen should she still be alive, or other descendants. From his data and referrals, I was able to contact Deussen's daughter-in-law and her son, now in the U.S.A., and also a daughter of Erika's who is in Canada and who supplied a photograph of the Deussen family home at Beseler-allee, Kiel (herewith reproduced). She further wrote that Erika's other daughter, a doctor, was also settled in the States,

and that Erika, herself a medical doctor and married to a doctor, had emigrated to India in 1935—presumably to escape the Nazis. By a strange fate her husband had then been interned, in India by the British during World War II, and died before release; Erika finally moved to the U.S.A. in 1953 and died three years later.

The biography continues:

'About six weeks [actually nearly eight] had now been spent in holiday touring and the Swami felt that he could now take up his London work with renewed vigour. Accordingly, he asked Mr. and Mrs. Sevier to make plans for returning thither immediately. Dr. Deussen had hoped that the Swami would prolong his visit so that he would have opportunities to discuss many philosophical matters with him in the quiet retreat of his own residence, where his treasure-room of learning and of books would have added much to the interest of their discussions. He therefore tried to induce the Swami to stay there at least for a few days more. But when the latter told him that he was anxious to put his work on a solid basis before returning to India which he intended to do soon, the Professor understood and said, "Well, then, Swami, I shall meet you in Hamburg, and thence, *via* Holland, we shall both journey to London, where I hope to spend many happy hours with you."

'Leaving Kiel Mr. and Mrs. Sevier and their guest made Hamburg their next stopping-place, where they visited the famous Zoological Gardens.

'Three days passed when Professor Deussen arrived, to the great pleasure of all concerned. His family had remained at Kiel, although Mrs. Deussen had hoped to accompany her husband and to meet the Swami again, for she was likewise greatly interested in Vedanta. She spoke English fluently and was thus privileged to come into immediate intellectual contact with the Swami. The party, with its additional member, now journeyed to Amsterdam, remaining in that historic city for three days, during

¹¹ *Life*: Vol. III, pp. 45-6

which time they visited the art galleries, the museums, and other places of interest. The Swami was specially delighted with the strange appearance of the cities of Holland with their canals for streets.¹²

There are some discrepancies here. In *Mein Leben*, Deussen says that he met Swamiji and the Seviars at Bremen on 12 September and that on that day they went together to Amsterdam. If this is so, and if, as the biography says, the group spent three days in Amsterdam, then the stops in Hamburg and Bremen must have been limited to one day each. Deussen says clearly that Swamiji and the Seviars spent one day in Hamburg.

Kiel to Hamburg is sixty-six miles, Hamburg to Bremen sixty-three miles, and Bremen to Amsterdam something over two hundred miles.

Hamburg had more than half a million inhabitants in 1896, and next to London, Liverpool, and Glasgow was the most important commercial city in Europe. It was and is a great port. As to the zoological garden, Baedeker describes it as one of the most extensive and best organized in Germany, the most interesting points being the elephant house, the dens of the beasts of prey, the cascade grotto, the aquarium, and the terrarium.

Amsterdam is still the same delightful city Swamiji saw, with its tall old houses looking down on tree-shaded canals. The Central Station, completed in 1889, where the party would surely have alighted from the train from Bremen, is still in use. The director of the Amsterdam city archives feels sure that the 'big hotel across from the railroad station' where the travellers stayed is the Victoria, opened in 1883. It is still in operation, although considerably modernized. It was not damaged during the War, but as the manager told me, all

the old guest registers were destroyed. (The Dutch destroyed many records during the War to prevent the occupying force from tracing wanted people.)

As for the art galleries and museums, the outstanding one is the Ryks, or Royal, Museum, home of the Rembrandts and Vermeers, one of the great art collections of the world. In his travel guide on Belgium and Holland, Baedeker devotes twenty-five pages to the description of the contents of this museum. We may be sure that Swamiji gazed upon Rembrandt's famous 'Night Watch', as in 1896 it hung prominently at the end of the central hall.

Now the Continental trip was almost over. Probably on the evening of Wednesday, 16 September, the four friends embarked for England on the night boat. Professor Deussen said that they left from the Hook of Holland. From there steamers crossed the North Sea every night to Harwich on the east coast of England. It was, according to the biography, 'a most unpleasant voyage which fortunately was soon over'. A timetable of the period shows the train leaving Amsterdam at 8:37 in the evening and arriving at the Hook an hour and a half later. The boat sailed at 10:30 p.m. Arriving at Harwich early in the morning, travellers shifted to the train, which got them into the Liverpool Street Station in London at 8:45 a.m. On Thursday, 17 September, Swamiji wrote to Mary Hale, 'Today I reached London.' Although his letter bears the heading, Wimbledon, he was probably at the Seviars' home in Hampstead.

It had been a long, complex, and costly journey. They had covered at least two thousand miles; and translated into present-day currency values, the total outlay for the three could not have been less than four or five thousand dollars. But as the biography says, 'His devoted hosts relieved

(Contd. on p. 109)

¹² *ibid.*, pp. 46-7



PROFILES IN GREATNESS

HE LIVED TRUTH

'There he comes!' Exclaiming thus, the residents of the place would all respectfully stand up as the Man walked up the street. And when he was seen at the local pond, the people there would immediately become all attention, and in hushed tones would start inquiring among themselves, 'Has *he* finished his bath?' The Man must finish his bath first and only then would the others go in, not before!

Who was this Man who inspired such a deep respect, almost awe, among the people? A mighty monarch or a military hero? A man of immense wealth who could buy the whole place? A powerful religious teacher? No, he was none of these. He was but a simple resident of that simple village.

No doubt, he had a tall figure, a stalwart body, fair complexion, and pleasing looks. But he had neither wealth nor position, not even that learning or cleverness which could lead him on to affluence and worldly power. His real assets—assets which needed no declaration—were truthfulness and contentment, renunciation and faith in God: that real wealth through which alone individuals and nations can truly prosper, but again that wealth which lies mostly unclaimed!

The Man was a simple orthodox brāhmaṇa, a householder with his own family to look after, and some ancestral property

to provide the means. He attended to the duties and responsibilities of his family life as best as he could, but at the same time he was very steadfast in his moral and spiritual life. With meticulous care he would perform his devotions, and would not even touch any food before the worship was finished. For him, God took priority over personal needs, and truth took precedence before monetary and social considerations.

His steadfastness in the path of truth and virtue invested his simple life with a quiet strength and fearlessness. He took the life of a brāhmaṇa very seriously and tried to fulfil its requirements in all its details, irrespective of any worldly consequences. The code of conduct for his group of brāhmaṇas required that they be 'non-possessive' and accept gifts from only certain specified sources, not from all and sundry. Many were the prohibitions; and whenever there was offer of gifts from such forbidden sources, he would not only refuse them himself, but also would socially boycott any compeers of his who stooped to them out of greed. If any brāhmaṇa took money for giving his progeny in marriage, he would not even accept water from the hands of such a person. A natural and successful *Satyagrahi*! Yet none dared to criticize him for caste or class-arrogance. Truth and

the spirit of renunciation were his disarming armour. The villagers, therefore, instead of being offended by his 'exclusive-ness' and orthodoxy, held him in genuine love and respect.

*

A truthful and righteous life makes man fearless and respected, but such a life is certainly no bed of roses. Those who want to keep their 'backbone' strong and upright have to choose hard beds. It did not take long for our Man to discover this fact.

The chief landlord of the village, the man most feared by the tenants, was really a tyrant. Though his wealth was not very much, he made up the lack by his abundant anger and vengeful spirit. At the slightest provocation he would not hesitate to strike the tenants and even deprive them of their possessions. In the course of one such bout of anger, he instituted a false case in the court against his victim with a view to appropriating his property. But he badly needed some reliable 'witness' to support him, a witness whose reputation among the people was unassailable. And suddenly it struck him that the right choice would be our Man, the respected brāhmaṇa of the village. So he made the request, which was of course more of a demand, that he appear in court and give evidence in his favour.

To the Man, this naturally came as a bolt from the blue. For one thing, he had a marked aversion for courts and litigation, and of his own accord would not have recourse to them even for the sake of a just cause of his own. And now, he was to give false evidence! Of course not. But—what of the consequences? The wicked landlord, when thwarted in his designs, would certainly strike at him like a wounded serpent. Nonetheless, the Man's life was truth and he could never agree to testify falsely. And so the inevitable happened. With bitter animosity the landlord now proceeded to file another false suit, this time

against our Man who refused to 'co-operate'. Collecting his own false witnesses in support, he won the case too. Triumphant he had all the property of the defendant auctioned, with not one square inch left to him to call his own.

All the property the Man had inherited from his ancestors and all the property acquired by himself over the years now vanished at one stroke like a cloud dispersed by the winds. The people of the village were all sorrow and sympathy, but were too nervous to help for fear of antagonizing the wicked tyrant. Understandably they were more concerned with saving their own skins. But for the Man, truth and faith in God were not merely the surface skin but his very flesh and blood, nay the very marrow of his bones, his very soul. No worldly calamity could make him abdicate his uprightness. He unhesitatingly stuck to truth and took refuge in the Lord who is the essence of truth. Eager to be away from the wicked landlord once and for all, he bade good bye to his parental homestead and village.

*

Who was this unknown hero, who could sacrifice all his possessions for the sake of truth and righteousness, trusting in God? And how did his trust in his God work out later on?

He was Kshudiram Chattopadhyaya (familiarily known as Chatterjee) of the village of Dere in the West Bengal Province of India. This incident took place about 1815, when Napoleon too lost his empire and everything at Waterloo and was being exiled to St. Helena—but for different reasons. While Napoleon discovered too late that the greatest of conquests is self-conquest Kshudiram had all his life accepted that self has to be subordinated to truth: that 'Truth (or God) alone triumphs'—(*satyameva jayate*). He worshipped God as *Raghuvīra*, another name for *Śrī Rāma*.

candra, the Hindu Divine Incarnation, who gladly went into long years of exile in the forest on the eve of his coronation, sacrificing all the power and pleasures of kingdom for the sake of truth and righteousness, Kshudiram was surely a true devotee since he too followed in life the ideal of his Raghuvīra and did not remain content with pious worship only. How could the Lord let down such a tried and tested devotee? He inspired a kindred spirit and friend of Kshudiram, one Sukhlal Goswami of the nearby village of Kamarpukur, to become the friend in need. Hearing of Kshudiram's misfortune, Sukhlal immediately vacated some of his own thatched huts and with sincere love invited him to settle down there for good. Very thoughtfully he also made over a bit of his own small portion of land for the maintenance of Kshudiram and his family.

Strangely enough, this small bit of land proved adequate to Kshudiram with his minimum needs and enabled him to live in peace and simple dignity. He now became a permanent resident of this new village of Kamarpukur. In one brief period of time, he had deeply experienced the dual aspects of life in their extremes—jealousy and greed, hatred and anger on the one hand, and love and affection, generosity and mercy on the other. The harsh blows the world gave only served to deepen his faith in the Lord and his devotion to Him.

*

Kshudiram's truthfulness and spirit of detachment were so much a part of his nature that they became manifested not merely to worldly advantages but to things of the other world too.

One day as he was going on foot to another village on some business, he became tired and lay down by the roadside under the shade of a tree. Very soon sleep overcame him and a dream followed—a very special dream. In it he saw standing

before him his chosen Ideal, Śrī Raghuvīra, in the form of a divine Boy of captivating beauty. Pointing to a particular spot nearby, the Boy said, 'I have been left lying here for a long time, uncared for. Take me to your home. I want to be served by you.' What a chance—the very thing for which devotees aspire after! Kshudiram too was thrilled but his truthfulness and honesty prevailed even in the face of the Lord's own gift. 'O Lord, I have very little devotion and I am very poor. In my poor hut I cannot render the service befitting you. There are bound to be many flaws and that would be wrong of me. Why do you put me into such a difficult predicament? Please don't!' A divine self-abnegation indeed.

However, the Lord had His own way and graciously comforted Kshudiram saying: 'Don't be afraid. I shall not be offended by any such shortcomings. By all means take Me with you. I want to be with you.' Only then did this truthful devotee bow down to the divine wish.

*

The same truthfulness made Kshudiram behave in a similar way at Gaya also, where he went on pilgrimage some twenty years later. He had gone there to propitiate the spirits of his departed ancestors through worship to the Lord Gadadhar (Viṣṇu) there. After performing all the necessary ceremonies and worship to his heart's content, as he lay down that night with a thankful and contented heart, he had another celestial dream. He was in the holy temple, in the act of offering worship to his forefathers at the divine feet of Lord Gadadhar. With great feeling and devotion he was bowing down at their feet when something marvellous happened. The temple was filled with an unearthly, incomparable effulgence. All his forefathers were now standing, with folded hands, reverentially adoring a wonderful Divine Person, seated on a

beautiful throne. Looking at Kshudiram, with benign, affectionate eyes, He beckoned to him. Hardly conscious of what he was doing, Kshudiram approached the throne in awe. Thrilled with devotion he burst into hymns of praise and fell at His feet. In a sweet voice, the Divine Being addressed him: 'Kshudiram! Your extraordinary devotion has made me happy beyond measure. I bless you; I will be born as your son and will receive your loving care.'

The supreme privilege of having God as one's own son was something which went beyond all but the wildest dreams of any devotee. But again the honesty and detachment of Kshudiram prevailed. 'O Lord! I am not worthy of such a privilege. Your vision and wish are enough for me. How can I, a poor man like me, serve You properly at my home...?' But the Lord became more graciously insistent and said, 'Have no fear, My dear Kshudiram! I will be happy with whatever you do for Me. Allow My wish to be fulfilled!' Kshudiram had no alternative but to accept the affectionate divine command. And then he woke up.

And that was how the Lord incarnated in

Kshudiram's home as 'Gadadhar', who later on became celebrated as Sri Ramakrishna—the incomparable God-man of his age—the same Ramakrishna who later spoke of his father in glowing terms: 'When my father walked along the lanes of the village wearing his wooden sandals, the shop-keepers would stand up out of respect and say "There he comes." When he bathed in the Haldarpukur tank, the villagers would not have the courage to get into the water. Before bathing they would inquire if he had finished the bath. When my father chanted the name of Raghuvir, his chest would turn crimson'; the same Ramakrishna who gave the world the message: 'It is said that truthfulness alone constitutes the spiritual discipline of the Kali-yuga (Iron age). If a man clings tenaciously to truth, he ultimately realizes God. Without this regard for truth, one gradually loses everything'; 'If a man leads a householder's life, he must have unflagging devotion to truth. God can be realized through truth alone.'

—EXPLORER

SOURCES:

Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master
by Swami Saradananda.

The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
by 'M'.

(Contd. from p. 105)

him of all the incidental responsibilities of travel. Their one desire was that he should enjoy himself.' These sentences reflect in a small way their spirit of love, devotion and service to their guru, in view of which it is no wonder that Swamiji felt the death of Captain Sevier four years later at Mayavati as a severe blow, and that despite the discomforts of Himalayan travel in winter, he went up to the Advaita Ashrama as soon as he could after his return to India, to console the Captain's widow.

'Reflecting over his experiences on the Continent,' the biography continues:

'The Swami expressed himself as highly

gratified. He was always the student and a keen observer, and on this tour his eyes were opened to many new facts in European culture. He was much improved in health and felt that he could now face the demands upon his time and personality with renewed energy and with a new spirit. Every phase of human activity, and every department of knowledge, had interest for Swamiji, and his mental attitude of cheerfulness and kindness combined with his fine intelligence and personal charm, made him the most delightful of travelling companions.'¹³

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 40

SOME MODERN TRENDS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS IN THE LIGHT OF VEDANTA

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

Contemporary psychoanalysis is passing through a crisis. The visible symptoms of this crisis are: a notable decrease in the number of students applying for training in psychoanalytic institutes, and secondly, in the number of patients who seek help and cure from the psychoanalyst.

Among the causes of this crisis must be mentioned the change of emphasis that obtains in the world of psychoanalysis, from a radical to a conformist theory. Originally psychoanalysis was a radical, penetrating, liberating theory. It slowly lost this character and stagnated failing to develop its theory and practice in response to the changed human condition after World War I. Instead it retreated into conformism, 'bureaucracy', and the search for respectability.

Psychoanalysis is a living science; and to combat this crisis, as it were, there arose, among other currents, the psychoanalytic 'left'. This trend tried to develop the system of the radical Freud on one side and to create a harmony between the views of Freud and the sociological and psychological views of Marx on the other. Among the builders and promoters of this psychoanalytic 'left', mention must be made of names like S. Bernfeld, Wilhelm Reich, and Erich Fromm, who tried for a synthesis between Freudianism and Marxism. Marx's central concern for man has been interpreted and canalized into political fields; his contribution to psychology has not received much recognition.¹ For Freud, sexuality is a pivotal passion of man. In the centre of Marx's concept of human relations we find

not sexuality but Eros, of which sexuality is one expression. By Eros is meant here the fundamental attraction in all living substance, manifesting most notably in male-female attraction. The destruction of illusions and the analysis of consciousness, that is to say, awareness of the reality of which man is not conscious are for Marx conditions for social change.² Man should become 'a disappointed man who has come to his senses in order that he may move around himself and thus around his real sun'. Awareness of reality as a key to change is for Marx one of the conditions of social progress and revolution, as it is for Freud the condition for the therapy for mental illness. Marx was not interested in problems of individual therapy and so did not speak about awareness as a condition for individual change of which Freud speaks. For the latter this awareness is invested in man and can be awakened not by technical reason, but by 'reason ecstatic'.

A very important trend that has come into existence to stem the tide of degradation and crisis in the world of psychoanalysis is the existential approach to psychoanalysis. This article is mainly an effort to study some aspects and relationships of this approach.

Existentialism, in short, is the endeavour to understand man by cutting below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedevilled western thought and science since shortly after the Renaissance. This cleavage is the cancer of all psychology up to now. Existential thinkers like Kierkegaard appealed to a reality underlying both subjectivity and objectivity, or underlying

¹ *vide* Erich Fromm: *Crisis of Psychoanalysis* (Pelican Books, U.S.A., 1970)

² *ibid.*, p. 83

both man and his experience. What is essential is not only to study a person's experience as such, but even more, to study the man to whom the experience is happening, the one who is *doing* the experiencing. These thinkers insist that 'Reality or Being is not the object of cognitive experience, but is rather "existence", is Reality as immediately experienced, with the accent on the inner personal character of man's immediate experience'.³ The man to whom the experience is happening is not simply the hidden man (which was the concern of psychoanalysis in just previous times) but the veritable man. 'Psychology and psychotherapy', writes Ludwig Binswanger, the chief spokesman of existential psychiatry, 'are admittedly concerned with "man" but not at all with mentally *ill* man, but with man as such'.⁴

Man, to the existentialists, is a phenomenon that emerges, a constant becoming. The term 'existence', coming from the root *ex-sistere*, literally means to stand out, to emerge.

To exist, is to be ; existence refers to coming into being, becoming. Being should be understood in this context (not at all as a term charged with any philosophical significance), to mean *potentia*, the source of potentiality. Being is the potentiality by which the acorn becomes the oak or each of us becomes what he truly is. So then, to bring about the dynamics of this becoming, to use the term 'being-becoming' would be more correct. The values of human life never come about automatically. They are actualized by human choice. The human being can lose his own being by his own choices ; a tree or stone cannot. Affirming one's own being, one creates the values of life. Individuality, personal worth and

dignity are not given us as bounties by nature, but allotted to us as responsibilities which we ourselves must justify. Courage opens the way to being. If we do not have the courage to be, we lose our own being. So then the existential approach to psychoanalysis stands out for defining neurosis in terms of what destroys man's capacity to fulfil his own being.⁵ Its ultimate concern is to restore to man this courage to be by making the patient experience his own being, his 'I'. What is irreducible in man is this 'I', in all contexts, that of illness and 'whole'ness. Only, in mental illness the 'I' is conceived and experienced as a product of its associates and not as the 'I' which is the ground of all experience.

How the act of experiencing this 'I' in the case of a sick person can restore to him or her 'whole'ness and autonomy is narrated in the case history of a Negro woman who was an illegitimate child. We owe this account to Rollo May's article 'Contributions of Existential Psychotherapy'.⁶

This woman of 28 years age was going through the fourth month of therapy. Her mother used to tyrannize over her often and even threaten to kill her, as she was an illegitimate child. She lost her mental balance and was being treated. In the fourth month she had a dream and on the next day an exceedingly important experience. It is reported here as she wrote it down from memory and notes two years later.

'I remember walking that day under the elevated tracks in a slum area, feeling the thought, "I am an illegitimate child." I recall the sweat pouring forth in my anguish in trying to accept that fact. Then I understood what it must feel like to ac-

³ *EXISTENCE: A New Dimension in Psychiatry and Psychology*, (Basic Books, Inc., 1958), p. 14

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 4

⁵ Cf. If here on earth, in this physical body, we attain to our true existence, to the becoming, (i.e., realize our true nature), then we are saved. If not, our loss is great'. *Kena-upaniṣad*, II. 5.

⁶ *EXISTENCE* ..., p. 43

cept; I accept the fact that I am an illegitimate child! But, "I am not a child any more." So it is, "I am illegitimate." That is not so either: I was born illegitimate. Then what is left? What is left is this, "I Am." This act of contact and acceptance with "I am" once gotten hold of, gave me (what I think was for me the first time) the experience, "Since I Am, I have the right to be."

"What is this experience like?" she continued. It is a primary feeling, it feels like receiving the deed to my house. It is my saying to Descartes, "I Am, therefore I think, I feel, I do." (Descartes said, 'I think, therefore I am'.)

'It is like an axiom in geometry—never experiencing it would be like going through a geometry course not knowing the first axiom.... It is like a child in grammar finding the *subject* of the verb in a sentence—in this case the subject being one's own life span. It is ceasing to feel like a theory toward one's self.'

We shall call this the 'I am' experience. This agreeably reminds us of the famous passage in the Old Testament of the Bible where God (Yahveh) being requested by Moses to tell his name, answers 'I am that I am'. (Exodus, 3:14.) Here is a sentence of great power, because God is saying that the quintessence of divinity is the potential to be. The patient in the case history did not know of this sentence but unconsciously stumbled on the great truth.

Students of Vedānta cannot help remembering the Upaniṣadic parallel to this 'I am' experience, the *ahamgrahopāsanā*, or meditation based on self-identification in which the individual seizes his own self as the totality of existence, as Brahman. The Upaniṣad says: 'This (self) was indeed Brahman in the beginning. It knew itself as "I am Brahman". Therefore it became all. And whoever among the gods knew It also became That; and the same with

seers and men.'

Seizing one's own self, realizing that as Brahman, is an immediate realization. One has not to walk into one's self to grasp it; neither time, nor effort, nor an intermediary is required to accomplish this already accomplished fact of personal identity. It is only a recognition of the oneness of the self with Brahman, the All, of the macrocosm with microcosm.

At least three helpful conclusions flow from this 'I am' experience, a glimpse of which the patient in question got.

First, the certitude of being which unveils itself in this 'I am' experience cuts through all the views of others about the person having that experience. The authenticity of this experience which restored wholeness to the tormented patient is 'beyond good and evil' and is free from all social validation.

Second, though the 'I am' experience is not in itself the solution to a person's problems, it is an essential pre-condition for their solution. The patient in question spent two years thereafter working through specific psychological problems. All along she felt that the road she trod was essentially the unravelling of the conviction she gained in the primary experience of 'I am'.

Third, the 'I am' experience is not to be confused with the functioning of the ego. The ego is essentially passive. It is a relatively weak part of the personality. The being experienced in the 'I am' experience includes non-being, and so is not affected by it. Being produces what is useful; but it is non-being that makes it effective—this Taoist saying is fully applicable to the Being touched in the 'I am' experience. The ego is the subject in the subject-object relationship; the sense of being occurs on a level prior to this dichotomy.

It is supremely interesting to find the *ahamgrahopāsanā* (meditation based on self

⁷ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, I. iv. 10.

identification) of the Upaniṣads, irrigating with new waters the arable fields of life.

We shall now discuss two other trends of therapy that are widely practised in the United States and which are in substance close to the existential psychotherapy. They are Logotherapy and Gestalt Therapy.

Logotherapy: literally, cure by *logos*. In this school the *logos* (meaning 'Word', comparable to the Hindu *vāk*) is equated with 'meaning'. This reminds one of the opening of St. John's Gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word.... And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...' ⁸ The founder of this school, Victor Frankl, is a specialist from Vienna now settled in the States. According to him life is a search for meaning (*logos*). For Freud, life was a search for the pleasure-principle; for Jung, it was a search for integration; for Frankl, man's task is a constant effort to find the unique meaning of his own life which, without this search, remains meaningless. There can be subsidiary meanings and a supreme meaning. Once we give meaning to life by a certain pursuit, even if death intervenes (as for those who died in the concentration camps with which Frankl was so sadly familiar) the meaning abides. In India we speak of the four *puruṣārthas* (ends of human life), *dharma*, *artha*, *kamā*, and *mokṣa*,⁹ whose pursuit gives meaning to life and brings it to fulfilment.

Gestalt therapy: *Gestalt* is a German word for which there is no exact English equivalent; it can mean configuration, structure, structural relationship, or meaningful organized whole. To see a meaningful organized whole, presupposes the organizing power of awareness. For example, most of us do not see three isolated points

as such; we tend to make a triangle out of them. According to the Gestalt school it is a basic tendency of the human organism to complete any situation or transaction which for it is unfinished. So then, instead of being afraid of conflicts or avoiding them, it is advisable to stir up such conflicts as may be necessary in order to achieve in the end a unitary functioning of the whole man. Gestalt therapy holds that one can be helped to bring out and work through the resistances, the conflicts, themselves. To this end the self has to be mobilized and its energies and inherent activism manipulated. Awareness has its many uses. It has techniques to bring disharmony into harmony. So then the patient is not asked to attempt the almost impossible task of 'relaxing', but to become aware of the elements of conflict or of neurosis. Then awareness begins to work. One is reminded of the Indian dictum, 'Man can raise himself by that which may degrade him'!

The last trend we are going to outline is called the *Ego psychology*. 'Ego' has a special connotation for this school, which according to Erich Fromm has become today the most influential and prestigious in the psychoanalytic movement.¹⁰ H. Hartmann and R. M. Loewenstein are its founders. Ego psychologists get their name from the fact that they turn their attention to the Ego, or more specifically to what they call the conflict-free ego, rather than to the *id*, which for Freudians is the mine of irrational passions that motivate man and yet are unconscious to him. The division of the inner world of man into unconscious and conscious was supplemented by a finer and subtler division—*id*-ego-super-ego. This classification presupposes that the ego has the power to convert the unconscious irrational passions into sublimated expressions which can be acceptable to the super-ego.

⁸ St. John: I. 1, 14.

⁹ *dharma*, righteousness; *artha*, wealth; *kāma*, fulfilment of desire; *mokṣa*, liberation.

¹⁰ Erich Fromm: op. cit.

The Ego psychology derives its inspiration from the pivotal position of the ego. Its central thesis is that adaptation to environment, maturation processes etc., do not necessarily involve a conflict. It postulates that there is a zone in the ego apart from the conflict-zone, where learning processes and maturation occur. This is precisely the zone that provides the ego with the necessary energy to exercise its functions, including willing for the higher. The 'desexualized' libido and 'de-aggressived' destructive tendencies of man are the principal tributaries that empty into this conflict-free zone.

The conflict-free zone of the ego psychologists compares closely with the ideas contained in the first aphorisms of Patañjali: 'Yoga is restraining or calming the modi-

fications of the mind'; and 'When the modifications are restrained the seer rests in his own unmodified state'. The zone which the yoga-aspirant touches when he restrains the modifications, is analogous to the conflict-free zone. The students of Patañjali, however, might well call it the conflict-free zone of the mind or of the *antah-karana* and not that of the ego.

Our effort in this article has been to allow the Vedāntic spirit to light up the avenues of modern psychoanalytic research and practice. The eternal universal Spirit renews itself by colouring anew the many domes of its manifestation, and psychology in its true sense, being the mansion closest to the soul, receives the maximum of the eternal Spirit's white radiance.

SERMONETTES AT ST. MORITZ

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Religion is realization, experience. Experience of what?

Swami Vivekananda defined religion as 'the eternal relation between the eternal Soul, and the eternal God'.¹ The task in spiritual life is to discover this connection. Finite entities that we are, we must find our connection with the infinite divine Existence.

Each soul is marching towards the Goal. The task is to find out the link between the past and the future and know where we stand. Everything depends upon our present state of consciousness. Spiritual life is the transformation of one's ego-consciousness into the awareness of the soul as a part of an infinitude of Existence.

We become tired of our limited existence. Our ego is a bubble. The bubble is not satisfied with its bubble-consciousness. If one bubble just clings to another bubble they always come to grief. First the bubble must come in touch with the ocean and then, through the ocean, it must establish its relationship with other bubbles.

We pass through different stages of spiritual existence and perception. In the Bible we find Christ speaking of God as the Father in Heaven. Later we find him speaking of the kingdom of God within us, and again, 'I and my Father are one.'

*

We cannot get rid of the cause of the restlessness of our minds and find peace unless we turn to God and attain genuine spiritual experience.

Do not believe in running away from

¹ *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. IV (1962), p. 209.

problems. Do not believe in the wrong type of asceticism.² See that you bring a new perspective into your life. Ordinary life is deficient. A new element of spiritual experience should be introduced into it to make it full. Spiritual experience gives stability to one's personality.

Mere reading without any spiritual practice does not take us far. Studies are necessary aids to spiritual life but the main emphasis should be on realization. If we really want peace and blessedness our whole being must be transformed. There is too much of talk about religion, creeds and doctrines, and too little of actual practice.

*

Every aspirant must have an axial or central thought to which all other thoughts are to be subordinated. See that you connect all other thoughts with this central thought.

What is this central thought?

It is the urge to realize the Divine. Let this burn in your heart like a flame. Let every thought and action be lit up by this light of the soul.

We should long for the goal. There should be a soul-hunger within us—a hunger which nothing worldly can satisfy. The Infinite alone can bring sustenance and satisfaction to the soul. 'I am the food of the full grown: Grow and feed on Me'—said the voice of God to St. Augustine.

The first condition of spiritual life is this soul-hunger. This is true *bhakti* (love of God). The *jñānīs* (followers of the path of knowledge) call it *mumukṣutvam* (lit., desire to be free).

*

The second condition is the right type of 'food'—in the beginning, simple ideas and simple spiritual practice like prayer and *japa* (repetition of the divine name). Then comes meditation. Increase the period

you devote to meditation gradually. Otherwise there will be reactions. Do not be too greedy. There is also a false appetite. Then comes the choice of food. The Lord will place a lot of food before you, His child. Out of the mass of spiritual ideas that reach you, take those which you can best assimilate.

*

What is most important is steadiness, regularity, in the practice of spiritual disciplines. If you break off the practice in the middle it will be difficult to re-establish it. If you stop practice you feel restless. Practise prayer, *japa*, and meditation systematically every day. This doggedness needs a great exercise of the will.

The will must be strong. Concentration frees enormous amounts of mental energy. You should know how to control it and direct it towards higher channels. Some people are turbulent by their nature. They must fight with the passions, for a long time.

*

Are sense-control and concentration then dangerous? Yes, they can be. They can be dangerous for one who does not know the path, who does not proceed in the proper way. There can also be a devotion which is abnormal, which is out of tune with the laws of one's being. Our spiritual emotions should be in tune with our inherent capacity. One should know the laws of mind governing sense-control. One should learn to open up the higher centres. There must be a higher outlet for the stored-up energy. If this cannot be found, the soul gets caught in the swirl of mental forces and a breakdown may be the result, immediate or delayed.

Every plane of existence has its own laws. We live mostly in the psychological plane; therefore we should know the laws of mental life and should not go against them in a violent, foolish way. Real striving is

² vide *Bhagavad-gītā*, XVII. 5-6; XVIII. 19-20.

a sort of spiritual warfare. First of all, be normal, and then train the body and mind slowly and regularly in a systematic way.

*

But if there is no real yearning, no soul-hunger, you will not get the spiritual food you need. There is a law of supply and demand on the spiritual plane also. Christ and Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna were born to supply the spiritual wants of humanity. Where there is real demand, there the Great Ones fulfil it.

*

The normal duties of life should not, however, be neglected. The duties of life differ according to our social and domestic status. Whatever your occupation, divinize all your actions. Cultivate the spiritual outlook on life. Bring the higher into your ordinary life also. A devotee should consciously set an example to others. He should be balanced and alert about what is happening around him. Silently should he live the life. Let him preach through his life. Do not waste your time on useless talking. Radiate peace, purity, and strength.

Try to sweeten your home with your spirituality. Goodness, purity, sincerity, and devotion are to be expressed through your actions. Set an example to your children. No use of sermonizing if you yourself do not practise the virtues. Do not vex your children needlessly. Spirituality can be imparted to children through silence. They pick it up quickly if you give it to them that way. You kindle the fire,

they will gather round for its natural warmth.

*

It is a great pity that only a few people strive for spiritual realization. But if these few strove intensely they could make this world a better place. They could promote the spiritual welfare of others also. Helping, serving others should become an inseparable part of every man's life. Of all the various forms of help, spiritual help is the highest. It is this that the world needs most today. We should look upon it as our duty to render spiritual ministration to those who need it. If we are unable to do it, we can render intellectual or material help to others. Pray for others. This in itself is not a small help if your prayer is sincere.

*

Of course all people cannot become spiritual all of a sudden. Moreover, as I said, you must first of all become spiritual yourself if you want to render spiritual service to others. First remove the causes of discord within you and establish rhythm, balance, harmony, within you. The soul must be in harmony with the Divine. The body and mind must be in harmony with the soul. The mind must be thoroughly overhauled by reconstructing your thinking, feeling and willing patterns. Even the body can be changed through proper training and diet. The inner harmony must be expressed in the body, in your actions. A good teacher is always a good student.



BERGSON'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION: A PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM

DR. S. SUBHASH CHANDRA

In a sense, Bergson's philosophy of evolution seems to have shared the fate of Spengler's philosophy of history. Crowned with world-wide success, both have incited a ponderous body of comment and criticism. However, most of the criticism seems to rest upon a profound misjudgment. Thus, many of the critics seem to have overlooked the basic fact that both Bergson (1859-1941) and Spengler (1880-1936) are first of all philosophers and only thereafter respectively biologist and historian. Both have developed philosophical appraisals of nature and history. Hence, it is imperative that they be understood and criticized as philosophers and not as biologist or as historian. Unfortunately, we have too many critical accounts that seek to prove that Bergson was no sound biologist and that Spengler was a clumsy historian. The present article, an attempt at a philosophical criticism of Bergson's philosophy of evolution, seeks to rectify the aforementioned misjudgment. It is my intention to offer a summary of the main aspects of Bergson's theory of evolution and then undertake a criticism of them.

The Bergsonian theory of evolution, though intrinsically related to his metaphysics of pure duration (*durée*), has autonomous roots. Unlike duration, won as it was by intuitive self-introspection, the theory of evolution and its fraternal notion of *élan vital* were worked out by Bergson by laborious enquiries into the results attained by biologists towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Originally inspired by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and marked by several reasonable affinities with Schopenhauer (1788-1860), Bergson seems to have been more

particularly impressed by the enquiries of August Weismann (1834-1914).¹

The notion of *élan vital* represents verily the foundation of the Bergsonian understanding of the phenomenon of evolution. According to Bergson, the *élan vital* or vital impulse is an inner thrust inherent in life itself. It is the primordial force that, in opposition to the descending movement of matter, has catapulted life into the world. Bergson was convinced that, but for this inner thrust characteristic of life itself, no evolution would at all occur. Such formulae as 'struggle for existence' or 'survival of the fittest' are later developments; indeed, they presuppose an original yearning for existence innate in life. In other words, the struggle for existence is but an expression of the primeval impetus, and the fittest by their very survival testify to the victory of *élan*. Matter embodies the opposing trend

¹Thibaudet *Trente ans de vie française: le bergsonisme*, La nouvelle Revue française, Paris 1923), Vol. II, pp. 51, 212, 29 is the most well known among those in France who recognized the affinities between Schopenhauer and Bergson. Jankélévitch, *Henri Bergson* (Alcan, Paris, 1931), pp. 212, 191-2 too was impressed by similarities between the French thinker and his German predecessor. However, both Thibaudet and Jankélévitch are sceptical about any direct borrowing of Schopenhauer's thoughts by Bergson. For understandable reasons, German Schopenhauerians are quite eager to prove all that Bergson has 'purloined' from the great pessimist. Antal, Bönke, and Knudsen have made interesting contributions on this topic to the *Jahrbuch der Schopenhauer Gesellschaft* for 1914, 1916 and 1929. Baillot, *Influence de la philosophie de Schopenhauer en France* (Vrin, Paris, 1927), pp. 117-29 is illuminating on this problem. Personally I am doubtful of any conscious borrowing of Schopenhauer's thoughts by Bergson.

that impedes the self-unfoldment of the life urge. The vital impulse, endowed as it is with a limited thrust, is incapable of surmounting all the hindrances that matter lays on its route; it is often compelled to force its way over circuitous paths, have recourse to deviations, split itself in fragments in order to pass through the openings that it finds in the resistant matter. However, in spite of ever so many reverses and partial successes, the *élan vital* remains basically optimistic.²

Bergson was wont to compare the self-unfoldment of the *élan vital* to an exploding shell that gets split into fragments, which in turn become explosive shells on their own and get split into further fragmentary shells and so on for an extremely long span of time. Each of these fragments embodies a species on its own partaking of the primordial impulsive force. The outstanding feature of the Bergsonian theory of evolution is, therefore, that the self-expression of life occurs in a series of dissociations that are ultimately rooted in the common life impulse. The species emerge not by a convergence of preceding species but emanate from the divergence of

the preceding trends of evolution. Bergson sees herein the main explanation for the harmony that prevails between the species. This harmony is not primarily the result of subsequent reciprocal adjustments, but is to be traced back to the identical original life impulse wherefrom all the species spring. Thanks to this common 'ancestor', all the manifold divergence and the countless struggles for existence fail to undo the basic harmony manifest in the evolution of species.

The primordial reality, holds Bergson, is supraconsciousness, the 'pure duration' being nothing but another name for it. The original matrix of all that exists as it is, the supraconsciousness embodies as the primeval shell that is catapulted by the thrust of its own *élan vital*. Soon this primordial reality breaks into the two outstanding directions of evolution, namely, intuition and intelligence. After some time instinct emerges as a subsidiary expression of intuition. We, therefore, have two primary *directions* of evolution, that is, two directions wherein the original shell bifurcates itself. Now it is along these two directions that the evolutionary shell further divides itself into three different *lines*, namely the plant life, the instinctive life, and the rational life. The two *directions* constitute the cosmic trends of the evolution; the three *lines* elucidate the forms the two directions have taken. The latter may be said to incarnate the transcendence of evolution; the three lines articulate the immanence of the evolutionary 'shell'. At the level of the *directions*, evolution expresses two possibilities of self-unfoldment; the three *lines* express the specific forms the evolution may attain—still in the domain of possibilities, but we have here concrete possibilities pregnant with still latent species of living beings. Bergson here pinpoints his fundamental difference from other philosophical and biological understandings

²In his *L'évolution créatrice* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1966), pp. 103, 269, 254-5 Bergson enlarges upon the *élan vital*. *L'énergie spirituelle* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1964), p. 19 testifies to a deepened understanding of the *élan vital*. However, it is in his last and final work *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), pp. 144-6, 115-20 that Bergson provides a lucid account of all the traits of his *élan vital*. E. Le Roy, *Une philosophie nouvelle, Henri Bergson* (Alcan, Paris, 1922), p. 96 refers to *élan vital* as a 'dynamic continuity' and as an 'effort of perpetual invention'. Mossé-Bastide, *Bergson et Plotin* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), p. 304 sees in *élan vital* an intimate awareness of our own freedom. Ian W. Alexander in his *Bergson, Philosopher of Reflection* (Bowes & Bowes, London, 1957), p. 45 refers to the affinity of the *élan vital* with individual consciousness.

of evolution. According to him, the major error of all philosophical appraisal of evolution since Aristotle had been to interpret the plant, animal and human lives as three *successive stages* or degrees of one and the same trend. The process of evolution, maintains Bergson, consists not of successive stages but of *contemporaneous but divergent lines*. Plants, animals, and human beings do not represent a progress by degrees in a single line, but three divergent directions of evolution. These three main forms of living reality are related to one another by contemporaneity and not by any order of succession. Hence, in these three forms of animate reality, we do not have a difference of degree but of kind. And of course the multiple species or races of these three outstanding directions of evolution embody the ever increasing number of fragments falling from the cosmic shell of supraconsciousness.³

These are the most prominent features of Bergson's philosophy of evolution. Let us now undertake a critical examination of it. Bergson likens the process of evolution to the projection of a shell by a cannon. We have here a patent analogy. We would search in vain for any supporting evidence in favour of evolution being a shell launched by a cannon. Bergson makes a rather dogmatic assertion of it. That it is a picturesque analogy does confer upon it a seductive force but does not impart any cogency to it. An analogy is no proof, but just an

illustration. Bergson, however, seems to advance this analogy as a proof in itself. Further, we have here an incomplete analogy. Bergson provides us no description of the cannon, nor of its explosive charge, nor of the combustible material used to ignite it. We do not know whether the cannon is self-operative or requires a gunner to make it function. If it needs a gunner, then would Bergson agree to ascribe this role to God or to some other being? As far as the cannon is concerned, we do not know whether it is an infinite projector or a finite one, whether it is within time and space or antecedent to them. Bergson leaves us in obscurity as to the sort of relationship existent between the cannon and his 'pure duration'. If they are identical, then why have recourse to the analogy of the missile at all and why not just affirm that the pure duration evolves itself into multiple forms? And of course if the evolutionary catapult is different from the pure duration, then Bergson ought to have been descriptive of this difference. It all shows that, aside from the inexact use as an argument of what ought to have been an illustration, Bergson is unclear about many aspects of his analogy.⁴

According to Bergson, the original shell of evolution itself splits into several shells each having its own trajectory. In the course of time, these shells themselves disintegrate into new shells, which in turn get

³ *L'évolution créatrice*, pp. 99, 136. Léon Husson, *L'intellectualisme de Bergson* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1947), pp. 119, 103-4 is suggestive in his interpretation of intuition, instinct and intelligence. Jean Guittou, *Profils parallèles* (Fayard, Paris, 1970), p. 425 refers to the Bergsonian analogy of evolution as a shell launched by a cannon. J. Chevalier, *Bergson* (Plon, Paris, 1926), pp. 206-7 lays stress upon the non-dogmatic character of the Bergsonian 'hypothesis' of evolution. Personally I find Bergson rather too dogmatic.

⁴ L. Adolphe, *L'univers bergsonien* (Vieux Colombier, Paris, 1955), p. 79 holds that Bergson's thesis has 'rather seduced than convinced' his readers. A. Robinet, *Bergson et les métamorphoses de la durée* (Seghers, Paris, 1965), p. 164 makes an unsuccessful attempt at relating instinct and intelligence as 'two lines' of evolution to duration. H. Gouhier, *Bergson et le Christ des évangiles* (Fayard, Paris, 1961), p. 124 rightly points to the absence of God in the writings of Bergson up to *L'évolution créatrice* published in 1907. In my opinion, even in his last book *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, published in 1932, Bergson is blasphemously superficial about God.

fragmented into numerous new shells and so on for a long time to engender finally innumerable species that populate our earth. If this were true, then it enables Bergson to espouse the theory of distinctive and not evolutionary origin of species. Each species would become a fragment, something unevolved from any other fragment of reality. We would then have an origin but no evolution of species. As it is, in this enlarged form, the shell analogy is beset with difficulties. If the original cosmic shell gets split into new shells, then Bergson ought to have described at least these primordial fragments of the universal shell. Would he agree to consider these primordial fragments as space and spatialized time, or would he rather envisage them as expressive of some other form of reality? Bergson is silent about the nature of numerous intermediary shells. As we have seen, he leaves many aspects of his cosmic shell unaccounted for. Now we find that there is a dearth of description as far as the intermediary shells are concerned too. Further, it is legitimate to ask whether each of these intermediary shells too would not require a new projector to launch it.

Bergson can of course rejoin that all these new shells represent falling bits from the original cosmic thrust. If this were true, then the Bergsonian evolution would consist of falling debris. Each species would then be as dead as falling debris. Indeed, all species would then have no link with their own line of evolution nor with supraconsciousness any more than scattered fragments of fired ammunition are related to the trajectory of the original thrust or to the cannon. Besides, such falling debris would be capsuled beings having only extraneous rapports with one another. Each species would constitute a catapulted totality unrelated to other species be it by a direct link or be it by evolutionary growth out of them or into them. Further, since

all species would be catapulted as totalities, they would be incapable of self-evolution. There would be just quantitative growth, some superficial progress but no qualitative evolution of species. It shows, therefore, that if the species were falling bits from the cosmic shell, then we would have a 'static progress' rather than a 'creative evolution'.

[11]

The position of matter in the Bergsonian pattern of reality needs clarification. It would seem that matter denotes an inversion of consciousness. However, matter being diametrically opposite to consciousness, Bergson does not seem to realize that a simple inversion is incapable of explaining the total transformation that consciousness would have to suffer in order to become matter. Though like most western philosophers Bergson seems to pay little attention to the question, still it is inevitable that if pure consciousness is to become matter, then it would have to traverse several intermediary stages of transformation before a part of it gets extinguished into inert being. Further, matter as inversion of consciousness introduces into Bergson's philosophy the notion of involution. Now many distinguished Bergsonians—among them Edouard Le Roy and Jacques Chevalier—have referred to involution as a facet of Bergsonism. Surprisingly enough, neither Bergson nor his disciples have enlarged upon the diverse aspects of the implied involution. In my opinion, if the implications inherent in the concept of involution had been worked out, then they would have confronted Bergson with at least two problems. Firstly, the involution of consciousness into matter would complicate the analogy of the shell launched by a primordial cannon. For now we would need at least two cannons: the first to project consciousness deep within itself till it gets

inverted into inert matter; the second cannon would then launch the evolutionary shell, which in turn would get fragmented into numerous shells that would finally get settled upon matter as their supporting base. As it is, Bergson never refers to any such involutory shell. Secondly, the Bergsonian thought seems to entail a see-saw of reality. Such a see-saw of involution and evolution would necessitate a cyclical time. It is, however, well-known that Bergson's *durée* is anything but cyclical.⁵

As far as *élan vital* is concerned, we have at best here a hypothetical reality. Bergson himself presents *élan vital* as a hypothesis to explain some baffling aspects of evolution. He is courageous enough to admit that alternative explanations are possible to such problems of evolution. In the shell analogy, it is difficult to say whether the *élan vital* is itself the igniting spark, the exploding shell or just the thrust that catapults the shell. Or could it be that the *élan vital* is a disintegrating, explosive force that causes the primordial shell to burst into several shells and then fragments these too into numerous small shells? If the *élan vital* were to be envisaged as an inner current of evolution, then it is reasonable to ask whether the splitting up of the original shell into innumerable minute shells would not cause the *élan vital* too to get fragmented. Further, no sooner would the evolutionary shell get split up than the *élan vital* would have to adjust itself to the numerous species. Bergson being an advocate of the immutability of the species, his *élan vital* runs the risk of becoming a prisoner of this immutability. Since the species get dropped *in toto* from the falling

bits of the evolutionary shell and then remain basically immutable, it is difficult to see the role that *élan vital* could here play. At best, the *élan vital* would serve to remove some obstructions or disentangle some complications. In that case, the *élan vital* would play only the negative role of elimination and adjustment and no positive one of creation or fecundation. To many it may seem that within such a species as the human, great progress and creativity have occurred. But Bergson deals with evolution of species as species and not as individuals. I do not think he would accept that 'man' as individuals has evolved: he would rather interpret the creative work, or fecundation, of man as the self-multiplication of the basically immutable human species.

The alleged optimism of the *élan vital* remains suspect. Since most of the writings of Bergson emerged before the First World War, I have a feeling that he seems to have over-imbibed the optimism prevalent towards the beginning of the twentieth century. I wonder whether he would have painted his image of things in the same joyful colours, if he had worked out his philosophy between the two World Wars. In any case, the pessimistic traits of the writings of Spengler and Heidegger (who developed their works during and after the First World War) seem to suggest that Bergson could hardly have espoused the sort of triumphant optimism that we find in *L'évolution créatrice*. As a matter of fact, in his last work *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, published in 1932, Bergson is perceptibly less sure of his optimism. Quite apart from the relevance of historical vicissitudes in the furtherance of his optimism, it is curious that Bergson seems to have been unaware of the pessimism inherent in the twin doctrine of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. In fairness to him, it must be

⁵ P. Jurevics, *Henri Bergson: Eine Einführung in seine Philosophie* (Karl Alber, Freiburg, 1949), p. 178 maintains that matter is nothing but consciousness become dormant.

stated that nowhere does Bergson explicitly accept these two doctrines of Darwin. On the other hand, nowhere does he explicitly repudiate the struggle for existence and the resulting survival of the fittest. On the whole, in my opinion, he seems to accept these two doctrines by implication. For he does take into account the competitive element and even refers to the instinct of war. Indeed, he even rejoices at highest success being attained by those who take the maximum of risks. Now it is a matter of opinion whether the highest success is really attained by those who take the greatest risks. Since those who have perished in taking the greatest risks can never talk of their dismal failures, any statistical evidence in favour of Bergson's viewpoint would remain open to doubt. Further, even if it were true that those who take the greatest risks do attain the highest success, this would not necessarily be an argument in favour of optimism. For such dare-devils can very well incarnate forces of hatred and destruction and their success would rather be a reason for gloom and despair than for joyful acclamation. Everybody would agree that Hitler surely took the greatest risks, but few would have rejoiced to see his malignant gamble succeed. In any case, Bergson would not have been among these few to congratulate Hitler.⁶

Aside from the dubious relationship between the extent of risks and of the success ensuing therefrom, Bergson does not seem to be aware of the pessimism implicit in the very competition for survival. For such a struggle for existence would

make out of his cosmic shell a bad father who begets more children than he can provide for and then callously lets his progeny eliminate the weaker among themselves in the course of their evolutionary fratricide. Let it not be forgotten that the species wanting in required strength for survival are also fragments fallen from the shell of supraconsciousness. It may be that some of these exterminated species lost their fight for survival due to their own fault. But at least some of the vanished forms of life were also deficiently equipped and were, therefore, disfavoured in their struggle for existence. The injustice done unto such unlucky species would surely belie any fair optimism.

It is well known that Bergson rejected any final goal for his creative evolution. He believed in a meaningful reality but in no pre-established end. And precisely herein is to be pinpointed the outstanding difference between Bergson and the vitalists like Hans Driesch and Reinke, on the one hand, and the *nisus* (striving towards goal) of Samuel Alexander, on the other hand. By his rejection of a final goal, it would seem as if Bergson had opened unlimited and unforeseeable possibilities to his *élan vital* and thereby made out of it an agent of unrestrained optimism. It is, however, reasonable to ask whether an *élan vital* without a final goal would not become a blind urge akin to Schopenhauer's 'Will' and would, therefore, rather justify a pessimistic outlook than a joyous one. I have a feeling that Bergson was wary of a final goal, for he feared it might fetter his *élan vital* and favour a deterministic view of things. In my opinion, such misgivings concerning a final goal rest upon a misunderstanding that we would have here a neatly defined end in advance. As it is, the final end itself has to unfold itself and, as far as its details are concerned, it is pregnant with unlimited possibilities. Besides, we have

⁶ J. Wahl, *Bulletin de la société française de philosophie*, January-March, 1960, p. 51 refers to a profound dread inherent in Bergsonism, an anxiety rooted in the possibility of the total collapse of the *élan vital*. G. Deleuze, *Le Bergsonisme* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1966), p. 96 refers to the self-dividing trait of the *élan vital*, but fails to deduce the pessimism flowing herefrom.

a long way to traverse before any such final end is attained and, in our movement towards this end, we naturally have numerous possibilities open to us. Hence, a final goal would rather guide right choice from among numerous alternatives and be thereby conducive to freedom. As it is, Bergson's *élan vital* has neither the eyes of Alexander's *nisus* nor is it blind and aimless like Schopenhauer's Will. It seems to be a compromise notion, almost a hybrid reality.⁷

It is time now to present some critical reflections concerning the core of Bergson's theory of evolution, namely, the three directions of evolution known as intuition, instinct and intelligence. Bergson presents these three as if they were self-existent realities. Indeed, it is only as self-existent realities that intuition, instinct and intelligence could possibly embody directions of evolution. As it is, these three are but *a posteriori* phenomena. Thus, we have intelligent beings, but nowhere do we encounter intelligence as such; instincts are characteristic of diverse species, but we would search in vain for anything like instinct in itself; we have intuitive persons but never intuition as such. The main source of our perplexity here of course is to be located in an ambiguity of meanings. *Prima facie*, intuition, intelligence, and, though to a lesser extent, instinct, are faculties of knowledge. Bergson makes out of them three directions of evolution and thereby fastens upon them a new sense. Unfortunately, Bergson himself often confuses

these two senses and one is not always sure whether he is interpreting them as faculties of knowledge or as lines of evolution. Besides, as directions of evolution, Bergson seems to make out of them roads, stretched-out lines. As a result, intuition, instinct, and intelligence become rather spatial than dynamic realities. It seems as if diverse species—as ejected bits from the shell of supraconsciousness—just fell upon one or the other of these three directions of evolution.⁸

Further, Bergson offers us no explanation as to why some of these falling fragments land upon the direction of intelligence and why others descend upon the line of instinct. It seems that it was by sheer chance that some of these fragments of supraconsciousness fall upon the direction of intelligence and thereby constitute the human species. By a similar hazard it appears that other bits of supraconsciousness land upon the line of instinct and thereby become various forms of animal life. Such bits of supraconsciousness as become human species have, it seems, no merit to cite to justify their landing upon the direction of intelligence. Conversely, the fragments falling upon the direction of instinct have no misdeed to account for that would justify their having become animals rather than human beings. We are all fragments of supraconsciousness and it is but chance that has made out of some of these frag-

⁸ J. Delhomme, *Vie et conscience de la vie* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1954), pp. 161, 181, 190 elucidates intuition solely as a faculty of knowledge. A. Steenbergen, *Henri Bergsons intuitive Philosophie* (Eugen Diederichs, Jena, 1909), p. 25 wrongly holds that intuition grows out of instinct. As we have seen, intuition is the primary direction that begets instinct. R. Ingarden, 'Intuition und Intellekt bei Henri Bergson', *Jahrbuch fuer Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* (Max Niemeyer, Halle, 1922), Vol. V, p. 375 aptly distinguishes between intuition as faculty of knowledge and as a direction of evolution.

⁷ Bergson makes a rather cursory mention of Driesch and Reinke in *L'évolution créatrice*, p. 42. Unfortunately, in his Gifford Lectures, Hans Driesch, *The Science and Philosophy of Organism* (Aberdeen University Press, 1908) p. 305 also makes just a passing reference to Bergson. S. Alexander is more descriptive of what distinguishes his philosophy from that of Bergson. See his *Space, Time and Deity* (Macmillan & Co., London, 1920), Vol. I, pp. 140-43.

ments human beings and of others insects. It is obvious that a philosophy that would make out of sheer chance the referee to decide whether one is to become a human being or an insect, can hardly encourage anybody to optimism.

There is yet another problem that remains. It is to be supposed that differences of the three directions and, therefore, of species belonging to them, are not present in the supraconsciousness itself. For, if all the varied forms of existence were present in the supraconsciousness, then we would have a pantheistic reality. I am sure that Bergson would have been surprised at the mere suggestion that his philosophy entails pantheism. Besides, the shell analogy itself indicates that the three directions of evolution and the innumerable forms of existence do not get evolved within but are catapulted *without* the supraconsciousness. It is important to know when exactly these fragments of supraconsciousness get transformed into diverse species. We have just pointed out that they could not possibly have evolved within the supraconsciousness, without condemning Bergson to pantheism or to a contradiction of his shell analogy. It is inevitable, therefore, that these fragments of supraconsciousness get transformed into diverse species either at the very moment of their being expelled from the mouth of the primordial cannon, or when they happen to land upon one or the other of the three main directions of evolution, or during their passage from the mouth of the cannon towards the three directions. Unfortunately this problem seems to have escaped Bergson's notice. Hence we have here another lacuna in his thought.

Bergson talks of three lines of evolution. But it is curious that he is very cursory in his explanation of plant life. He refers to the 'vegetable torpor' and even concedes that plants too have their instincts. However, he offers no detailed analysis of plant

life, nor does he try to relate it to his understanding of human and animal life. Bergson surely knew that there are carnivorous plants that seem to belong to animal life; further, we also have worms born in mud and excretions, which seems to prove that we have here a link by affinity between plant and animal lives. It is, therefore, to be regretted that Bergson does not integrate botanical reality in his theory of evolution. Besides, such phenomena as carnivorous plants seem to prove that the difference between plant and animal lives in any case is one of degree and not of kind. Bergson seems, therefore, mistaken in his outlining of a difference of kind and not of degree between plant and animal lives. And of course as far as human life is concerned, it is a matter of opinion whether we have a difference of kind or of degree between it and that of higher animals like anthropoid apes. As soon as such borderland phenomena as carnivorous plants and anthropoid apes come on the scene to prove that we have here rather a difference of degree and not of kind, then the Bergsonian classification of plant, animal and human lives as three distinct lines of evolution becomes abstract and invalid. Further, it is easy to show that Bergson himself recognizes many of these borderland phenomena; e.g., in the second chapter of his *Creative Evolution*, 'There is no manifestation of life which does not contain, in a rudimentary state—either latent or potential,—the essential characters of most other manifestations.' This only shows that Bergson like many other great thinkers can fall into contradictions with his own data.

An outstanding tenet of Bergson's philosophy of nature is that the human life has not evolved from the animal one: that we have here two distinct fragments of the shell of evolution. Now it is noteworthy that Bergson equates the origin of the human species with the manufacture of the

earliest tools. It must be stressed that Bergson insists not just on the capacity to create instruments but on the actual manufacture of the earliest tools as the 'date' of the 'appearance of man on the earth'. Hence, no matter what other forms of life may have then existed upon the earth, human beings were non-existent prior to the manufacture of the earliest tools.⁹ If this were true and if the Bergsonian theory that the human species embodies a fragment fallen from the evolutionary shell were also true, then it would mean that human beings fell along with the earliest tools from the cosmic shell. It is obviously an untenable viewpoint. Bergson can, of course, hold that he is here distinguishing between animal life capable only of using its own limbs or some rudimentary objects like sticks or stones as instruments, and human beings who alone manufacture artificial tools. If this were true, then there would be a continuity between animal life and the human. Insects use their own limbs as tools. Higher animals like apes are capable of using instruments other than their bodily parts, but they cannot construct them. Human beings alone can manufacture tools. We have here a continuity in three stages, a progress in a single line. In a word, we have here an evolution from insects to human life with higher animals like apes as the intermediary stage. It

shows, therefore, that either Bergson must search for some other criterion than the manufacturing of the earliest tools as the 'date' of the origin of human species, or he must accept that there is no distinct origin, but evolutionary emergence of human life from the animal one.

The basic mistake of Bergson seems to have been to make out of intuition, instinct, and intelligence different *directions* instead of *stages in a single line*. In other words, what Bergson deprecates in all philosophers since Aristotle, namely, making out of plant, animal and human lives stages in a single line, seems to be the only solution to his own difficulties. Thus, involution would be a descent in a single line consisting of intuition, intelligence, instinct, vegetable torpor, and inert matter. On the other hand evolution would be a movement in the reverse but single direction comprising of inert matter, vegetable torpor, instinct, intelligence, and intuition. In both cases, intelligence would not be opposed to but would become the link between intuition and instinct. And in both cases, intelligence (that is, human life) would be superior to instinct (that is, to animal life): in the involutionary descent, intelligence would be nearer to intuition than instinct; in the evolutionary ascent too intelligence would be higher than instinct and also nearer than it to intuition. By the way, this solution would also enable Bergson to avoid all too big a leap from supraconsciousness to inert matter: we would now have a progressive compression of supraconsciousness into luminous intuition, lucid analytical intelligence, blind but infallible instinct, then vegetable torpor and inert matter.

Bergson was convinced that there is never a total divorce between instinct and intelligence and that we encounter both of them in mixed forms in varying proportions. Since instinct is supposed to be compressed intuition, it would seem that indirectly there is

⁹ *L'évolution créatrice*, pp. 143, 138, 166, 169. We have here an affinity with pragmatism of which William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1912), p. 156 seems to be well aware. Péguy, *Note sur M. Bergson et la philosophie bergsonienne* (Gallimard, Paris, 1935), p. 41, however, is sceptical concerning any affinity between Bergson and pragmatism. J. Wahl, *Bergson* (Centre de documentation universitaire, Paris, 1965), p. 131 too opines that Bergson is 'essentially anti-pragmatist'. I should say Bergson has divided loyalties here. His head urges him to espouse pragmatism, but his heart spurns such an alliance.

never a complete divorce between intuition and intelligence either. However, a careful study of Bergson's writings proves that there is a more direct and intimate relationship between these than one would imagine. Thus, we learn from an important letter of Bergson, dated 16 August 1935, that for a long time he had hesitated before he opted for the term 'intuition'. He admits that he could have dispensed with 'intuition' by ascribing two different senses to 'intelligence' or to 'thought'. However, in that case, it would have been at the expense of 'clarity' and 'convenience'. Hence, he preferred two words, namely, intuition and intelligence, instead of one word 'intelligence' used in two distinct senses.¹⁰ It is true that Bergson does not tell us whether he is using the words 'intuition' and 'intelligence' as forms or faculties of knowledge or as directions of evolution. But, then, this dichotomy of meanings and the resulting ambiguity is manifest in all the writings of this French thinker. What really matters here is the fact that Bergson came very near to using the word 'intelligence' for 'intuition'. Let us suppose for a while that 'intuition' had not become a term of Bergsonism. In that case, Bergson would have used only the word 'intelligence' in different senses and instinct would have become simply compressed intelligence. We would then have

¹⁰ Bergson, *Ecrits et paroles* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1959), Vol. III, p. 489. It seems that even in 1902 Bergson preferred 'true intelligence' to 'intuition'. *Ecrits et paroles*, Vol. I, pp. 177, 175. Indeed, even in *L'évolution créatrice*, p. 178 Bergson talks of the 'pure intelligence'. On the whole, however, from 1903 to 1907, 'intuition' becomes one of the main terms of the Bergsonian terminology. J. Chevalier, *Entretiens avec Bergson* (Plon, Paris, 1959), pp. 121-2 provides a welcome confirmation in this connection. G. Pflug, *Henri Bergson* (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 1959), p. 357 holds that towards the end of his life Bergson reverts to intuition as a faculty of knowledge.

had just one direction consisting of pure intelligence, analytical intelligence and instinct. No sooner do we postulate but one direction than we would have a difference of degree and not of kind between the intelligent and instinctive lives. Bergson had avowedly decided to import the word 'intuition' in the interests of clarity. In my opinion, the apparent clarity has in fact engendered a profound and abiding confusion. No sooner were two different words accepted than the danger arose that they would come to denote two distinct realities expressive of a difference of kind and not of degree. If only Bergson had eschewed the term 'intuition' and rather chosen to ascribe two different meanings to 'intelligence', then it would have become difficult for him to envisage two different directions of evolution. He would then have seen that after all so many thinkers since Aristotle did not err in considering human, animal and plant lives as three stages of a single evolutionary movement. The decision to introduce 'intuition' alongside of 'intelligence' seems to have been an error.

With that, I come to the end of my critical examination of the outstanding facets of Bergson's philosophy of evolution. Apart from some of its affinities with Hans Driesch and S. Alexander, the Bergsonian interpretation of evolution is often related to more or less kindred trends of thought in Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) and Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955).¹¹ Whether one may agree or not with Bergson, his is a bold and pervasive interpretation of evolution that will always elicit respectful admiration from everybody.

¹¹ Madaule-Barthélémy, 'Henri Bergson et Pierre Teilhard de Chardin', *Les études bergsoniennes* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), Vol. V is suggestive on the topic. More recently, J. Guillon devotes an illuminating chapter of his *Profils parallèles* (Fayard, Paris, 1970), pp. 401-57 to 'Teilhard de Chardin et

Bergson'.

Born a Jew, Bergson later on came to see in the Catholic Church the most authentic expression of the Semitic tradition. Since he was resolved to remain faithful to his Jewish brethren menaced by Hitlerism, Bergson did not formally convert himself to the Catholic tradition. Perhaps his philosophy of nature aimed at a reconciliation of the theory of evolution with the Catholic theology. It is true that his understanding of evolution lays stress upon the immutability of the species and makes room for the theory of special creation. As it is, Bergson, not unlike Teilhard de Chardin, remained suspect in the eyes of the Catholic hierarchy and his writings came near to being placed on the Index. Thoroughly steeped in the Scholastic tradition as

he was, J. Maritain, *La philosophie bergsonienne* (M. Rivi re, Paris, 1930) is scathing in his renewed denunciation of Bergsonism. Maritain, however, concedes that the Bergsonian theory 'is the only possible metaphysics' of evolution (ibid., p. 336). Contrary to Maritain, Jean Guitton, an influential member of l'Acad mie fran aise, in his *La vocation de Bergson* (Gallimard, Paris, 1960), is profoundly impressed by Bergson's sympathies for the Catholic doctrine. F. Delattre, *Feux d'automne* (Didier, Paris, 1950), p. 213 sees in Bergson a renewal of rapport with religion, a reintegration of mysticism in philosophy. Some of the reminiscences of G. Maire, *Bergson, mon ma tre* (Grasset, Paris, 1935) seem to attest to the growing influence of religion upon Bergson.

FIRST MEETINGS WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA: KESHAB CHANDRA SEN

SWAMI PRABHANANDA

While he himself was busy in finishing the exploration of the vast expanse of spirituality, Sri Ramakrishna, the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, as he was known in those days, was always eager to see great places and meet great men who had excelled in something or other. It became almost a passion with him. He reasoned, 'According to the *G t * there is the power of God in one who is respected and honoured by many.' Word reached him that Brahmos (members of the Brahmo Samaj) like Devendranath Tagore (1817-1905), his young lieutenant Keshab Chandra Sen, and others prayed to God fervently. He persuaded his disciple Mathuranath Biswas to take him one day, very probably during the annual Brahmo festival in January 1864, to the Brahmo Samaj at Jorasanko. Later he recollected his experience:

'Many years back I had been on one Wednesday to the Brahmo Samaj at Jorasanko. I saw at that time young

Keshab in the pulpit conducting the service and hundreds of worshippers sitting on either side of him. I looked intently and saw that Keshab's mind was absorbed in the Brahman, his float had sunk. From that day my mind became attached to him. The rest in the congregation I found were, as it were, sitting with weapons. Seeing their faces I found that in their mind the attachment for the world, egotism, and passions were very strong.'¹

Keshab was then only twenty-six and belonged to the still undivided Brahmo Samaj.

Beginning in 1828 under the leadership of Rammohan Roy (1772-1833), the Brahmo Samaj movement gained its momentum soon after Devendranath Tagore, Ram-

¹ Girish Chandra Sen, 'Ramakrishna Paramahansa', *Prabuddha Bharata* (hereafter referred to as 'P.B.'), Feb. 1936, p. 90. Similar accounts by Sri Ramakrishna himself are on record; e.g., vide *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, by 'M' (tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 600004, 1947), p. 727

mohan's second successor, took its charge.² Nevertheless, with the quiet entry of Keshab Chandra Sen in 1857 dawned a new era for the movement, with a promise for great possibilities as well as danger of dissensions. Lack of homogeneous ideological identification among the members was less apparent in the beginning, nevertheless it was there. Keshab's formal installation as Ācārya (a preacher) of the Brahmo Samaj on 13 April 1862, brought into the open the currents that were already swirling beneath the surface. While Keshab's charismatic personality drew around him a number of earnest spirits, mostly of his own age, his innovations clashed repeatedly with the traditional outlook of the Samaj and they finally brought a serious fissure, which widened with the passage of time. Devendranath continued to lead the orthodox group under the name of the Adi Brahmo Samaj and Keshab and his youthful friends seceded to found the Brahmo Samaj of India in November 1866.

Born of Peary Charan Sen and Sarasasundari Devi in 1838, Keshab had lost his father when quite young. His family-members were zealous worshippers of Kṛṣṇa. He was educated at the Presidency College and his intellectual training there proved fatal to this faith. Christ had touched his heart and this contact kept nudging him towards Christianity. As an undeclared champion of Christ he brought new elements into the Brahmo movement and this gave rise to much confusion among the rank and file, and also led to dissensions. 'The Adi Brahmo Samaj stuck to the traditions of old Hinduism, and gave itself out as a reforming body of Hindus, whereas the Brahmo Samaj of India professed broad and catho-

lic views, and began to cultivate special communion with the spirit of Christ and Christianity.'³ In 1870 Keshab went to England and impressed the English people with his oratory and his spiritual fervour. On his return he organized social reforms. Units of the Brahmo Samaj were founded in various parts of the country. In 1872 was started a novel institution, 'Bharat Ashrama', where Keshab, his missionaries and a number of leading Brahmos resided with their families. Keshab wanted to lead the community to higher planes of spiritual and moral excellence and exhorted that every worldly relation of the community should be submersed in religious fellowship. Though a noble concept, nevertheless the institution soon developed internal struggles and a disillusioned Keshab retired for some time to the garden house of Jaygopal Sen at Belgharia, a few miles north of Calcutta.

From the year 1876, the Brahmo Samaj of India in its turn was internally divided into two factions, one led by Keshab and his followers and the other consisting of younger members who wanted to introduce constitutional modes of Church government. The latter founded the 'Sadharan Brahmo Samaj' in May 1878 while the former emerged as the 'New Dispensation' in January 1880.

A stoical self-denying rigour formed the backbone of Keshab's genius. He had enforced it upon himself and he wanted to enforce it upon others. Thus in the garden house, Keshab with his intimate followers spent the days in devotions, scripture-reading, meditation, and conversation on esoteric subjects. He began to cook his food under a tree and take it in the open and observe strict rules of discipline for attaining self-mastery and detachment.

While the Brahmo movement launched

² For a concise, appreciative study of the great leaders of the Brahmos, see Romain Rolland: *The Life of Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P., 1947), Chapter VI ('The Builders of Unity')

³ Sivnath Sastri: *The Brahmo Samaj* (Abridged), (Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, 1958), p. 34

social reforms and aroused religious fervour among people of the then capital of India, the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar quietly built up a spiritual tower which radiated waves of spiritual power and faith among all, irrespective of caste and creed, age and sex.

Around 1875 Sri Ramakrishna was seized with a strong desire to meet Keshab Chandra Sen who had then become the most prominent Indian socio-religious leader. Depending as he did always on the Divine Mother, he one day received in a divine ecstatic state promptings that he should meet Keshab. 'He heard from the lips of the Divine Mother that Keshab will assist Her work.'⁴ As he was musing over the idea Sri Ramakrishna saw a vision, which he described later:

'I had seen Keshab before I actually met him—I had seen him and his party in my *samadhi*. In front of me sat a roomful of men. Keshab looked like a peacock sitting with its tail spread out. The tail meant his followers. I saw a red gem on Keshab's head. That indicated his *rajas*. He said to his disciples, "Please listen to what he (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) is saying." I said to the Divine Mother: "Mother, these people hold the views of 'Englishmen'. Why should I talk to them?" Then the Mother explained to me that it would be like this in the *Kaliyuga*. Keshab and his followers got from here the names of Hari and the Divine Mother.'⁵

Thus Sri Ramakrishna sent one of his devotees, Narayan Sastri, to call on Keshab. As the Master recounted the events of that visit:

'Before meeting Keshab, I asked Narayan Sastri to visit him and tell me what he thought of him. Narayan reported

that Keshab was an adept in japa. He knew astrology and remarked that Keshab had been born under a good star. Then I went to visit Keshab in the garden house at Belgharia.'⁶

On the morning of 14 March 1875,⁷ Sri Ramakrishna in the company of his nephew and attendant Hridayram Mukherjee went to the Colootola residence⁸ of Keshab, but came to know that he was just then staying in the garden house at Belgharia.⁹ So he returned to Dakshineswar, and again next morning, in the company of Hridayram, set off in an old hackney carri-

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 448. Sri Ramakrishna added that a few days after their first meeting, Keshab sent three members of the Samaj to Dakshineswar to test him. Prasanna was one. They were asked to watch him day and night and report to Keshab. 'They constantly uttered the word "Dayamaya" [The Compassionate One, a favourite Brahmo term for God] and said to me: "Follow Keshab Babu. That will do you good." I said, "I believe in God with form." Still they went on with their exclamations of "Dayamaya!" Then a strange mood came over me. I said to them, "Get out of here." I didn't allow them to spend the night in my room. So they slept on the veranda.

⁷ Upadhyaya, Gour Govinda Roy: *Ācārya Keshabchandra* (Bengali), p. 1041. Ramachandra Dutta's statement (*vide Sri-Sri Rāmākṛṣṇa Paramahamsadever Jīvanvṛttanta*, (Bengali), Sri Ramakrishna Yogodyana, Calcutta 54, 7th edn.), p. 60, and an account in the *Dharmatattva*, claiming that the meeting occurred in 1872, are not tenable. Among others giving the 1875 date are: *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashrama, 1964), p. 268; Swami Saradananda: *Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master* (Madras Math, 1952), p. 315; and several articles in the *P.B.* for February 1936.

⁸ It was not till October 1877 that Keshab moved from this address to the Lily Cottage at 72, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

⁹ Sevak Priyanath Mallik: 'Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa', *P.B.*, Feb., 1936, p. 93 — 'In 1875 he [Sri Ramakrishna] went to Keshab's house at Colootola, and not finding him at home went to the Belgharia Garden where Keshab was then engaged in *sadhana* (spiritual culture) with his friends. This garden was named by Keshab, *Tapovana*.'

⁴ Chiranjib Sharma (also known as Trailokyannath Sanyal): *Keshab-carit* (Bengali) 3rd edn., 1897, p. 249

⁵ *The Gospel*, p. 815

age¹⁰ for Belgharia. Before entering the carriage he had gone into an ecstatic mood. He was heard muttering, 'Mother, will You go? Will You go to see Keshab?' Such questions were repeated several times, and they were followed by his answer, 'Yes, I shall.' This mood of his persisted even when inside the carriage. Finally they reached Jaygopal Sen's garden house sometime around nine o'clock in the morning.¹¹

Hridayram got out, went inside the garden house and said to Keshab: 'My maternal uncle is fond of songs and discourses on Hari. When he hears them he often enters into *samādhi*. He has heard that you are a great devotee, and he has come to hear you talking about God and His glories. With your kind permission, I'll bring him here.' Keshab of course consented.

Hridayram helped Sri Ramakrishna out of the carriage and led him into the garden. They went first to the garden pond, where they washed their hands and feet at its southwestern bathing ghat. Morning service over, Keshab and his companions (minis-

ters of the Samaj) were seated on the steps of the large bathing ghat on the eastern side. They were preparing for bath. Their attention was now drawn to Sri Ramakrishna, aged about forty, thin almost to emaciation, with a short untrimmed beard and uncared-for hair. He had dressed himself in only a single piece of red-bordered cloth, one end of which, tucked in folds, was hanging over his left shoulder. He had neither a shirt nor a *caddar* to cover his body. He was barefooted. Hridayram, hefty and tall, stood as a striking contrast by his side.

Arriving there, Sri Ramakrishna, as was his wont, humbly bowed low to Keshab and others present. It seems neither Keshab nor his companions returned the salute.¹² However, they offered the visitors carpets to sit on. Evidently Keshab and his friends regarded them cautiously and took Sri Ramakrishna for an ordinary man.¹³

¹⁰ Sri Ramakrishna in all probability did not ride in Viswanath Upadhyaya's carriage as stated by Swami Saradananda (loc. cit.). We should remember that the staunch Hindu Viswanath was strongly antagonistic to the Europeanized Keshab, and it is not likely that Sri Ramakrishna would use his carriage for such a visit! The Brahmo leaders who saw Ramakrishna on this occasion recorded that he had travelled in a third-rate hackney carriage. (cf. *P.B.*, Feb. 1936, p. 89.)

¹¹ Gurudas Burman: *Śrī-Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa-carit* (Pub. by Kalinath Sinha, 13 Nikasipara Lane, Calcutta, 1st. ed.), pp. 148-9. He mentions arrival at '3 p.m.'; Swami Saradananda (loc. cit.) says '1 p.m.' But their common source was Hridayram; whereas Akshay Kumar Sen said '11 a.m.', and the Brahmo leaders Girish Chandra Sen (*P.B.*, Feb. 1936, p. 89), Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, Upadhyaya Gour Govinda Roy, etc., who were present, recorded 'nine o'clock in the morning' or even earlier. Circumstantial evidence corroborates this view (bath, etc.)

¹² Mahendranath Dutta in his *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Anudhyāna* (Bengali) tells us that greeting with deep bowing, etc., was not much in vogue in Calcutta then. Sri Ramakrishna himself narrates his experience of a subsequent visit to Keshab: 'I visited him at his house in Colootola Street. Hriday was with me. We were shown into the room where Keshab was working.... But he didn't salute us or show us respect in any other way. He used to come here now and then... As soon as he and his friends would arrive, I would salute them before they bowed to me. Thus they gradually learnt to salute a holy man, touching the ground with their foreheads.' (*Gospel*, p. 384)

¹³ Pratap Chandra Majumdar: *The Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen*, 1887, p. 357: 'There came one morning... a disorderly looking young man, insufficiently clad and with manners less than insufficient.... His appearance was so unpretending and simple, and he spoke so little at his introduction that we did not take much notice of him at first. But soon he began to discourse in a sort of half-delirious state, becoming now and then quite unconscious. What he said, however, was so profound and beautiful that we soon perceived he was no

Sri Ramakrishna spoke, with a very slight but endearing stammer in rustic Bengali: 'Is it true, gentlemen, that you have the vision of God? I have a desire to know what it's like. That's why I have come to see you.' Keshab's reply, if any, is not available. After some talk, the visitor burst forth in his melodious voice with a well-known song of Rāmprāsād:

'Who is there that can understand what Mother Kali is?

Even the six darsanas are powerless to reveal Her.

It is She, the scriptures say, that is the Inner Self

Of the yogi, who in Self discovers all his joy;

She that, of Her own sweet will, inhabits every living thing....'

Before the audience could grasp the import of the song, the singer became so much immersed in the divine spirit as to lose all perception, of the external world. He entered into *samādhi*. His whole body relaxed and then became slightly rigid. Both his hands lay on his lap with the fingers loosely interlocked. 'Tears of joy streamed down his cheeks. Now and then flashes of smile crossed his face.'¹⁴ He sat motionless, with eyes unmoving. So oblivious was he of the outer world that he seemed not even to breathe. His hair stood on end. It was an extraordinary sight to the on-lookers but they did not regard this state of ecstasy as more than a mere feigning, or something resulting from nervous debility, or perhaps as some magical feat. Presently Hridayram loudly chanted the sacred syllable *aum* into his uncle's ears, and asked the others to join him. As requested, all those present joined in the chanting, and as this created an intense spiritual atmosphere, it helped the Paramahansa return gradually to the world of sense. He, with

ordinary man.' Compare also: Swami Saradananda, loc. cit.

¹⁴ Roy, op. cit., p. 1043

an extraordinarily sweet smile, began to speak, at first in a semi-conscious state, but always in homely and impressive language using metaphors and illustrations taken from life, which held his listeners' attention and stimulated their imagination, convincing them that 'Ramakrishna was a divine person and not an ordinary man'.¹⁵ His words as well as mode of expression cast a spell over his audience.

From this point on, Sri Ramakrishna did most of the talking and the others heard him with reverence.¹⁶ With traces of divine inebriation still lingering, he said:

'Listen to a story. Once a man entered a wood and saw a small animal on a tree. He came back and told another man that he had seen a creature of a beautiful red colour on a certain tree. The second man replied: "When I went into the wood, I also saw the animal. But why do you call it red? It is green." Another man who was present contradicted them both and insisted that it was yellow. Presently others arrived and contended that it was grey, violet, blue, and so forth and so on. At last they started quarrelling among themselves. To settle the dispute they all went to the tree. They saw a man sitting under it. On being asked, he replied: "Yes, I live under this tree and I know the animal very well. All your descriptions are true. Sometimes it appears red, sometimes yellow, and at other times blue, violet, grey, and so forth. It is a chameleon. And sometimes it has

¹⁵ Girish Ch. Sen, loc. cit.

¹⁶ Sen, op. cit., p. 91: 'Keshab...used to sit by the side of this illiterate Paramahansa like a disciple, like a younger brother, in all humility and hear his teachings with reverence (*Shraddha*) and appreciation. He never used to argue with him. He would assimilate well and adopt in his own life all the valuable things in the Paramahansa.'

Priyanath Mallik, op. cit., p. 94: 'At such meetings Sri Ramakrishna almost monopolized the conversation. Keshab Chunder hardly said anything. He only expressed his appreciation by smiles and nods.'

no colour at all. Now it has colour and now it has none."

'In like manner, one who constantly thinks of God can know His real nature; he alone knows that God reveals Himself to seekers in various forms and aspects. God has attributes; then again He has none.... It is the others who suffer from the agony of futile argument.' ¹⁷

Sri Ramakrishna held each religion and creed to represent a step in the soul's progress towards the highest spiritual attainments. He continued:

'One can rightly speak of God only after one has seen Him. He who has seen God knows really and truly that God has form and that He is formless as well. He has many other aspects that cannot be described.

'Once some blind men chanced to come near an animal that someone told them was an elephant. They were asked what the elephant was like. The blind men began to feel its body. One of them said the elephant was like a pillar; he had touched only its leg. Another said it was like a winnowing fan; he had touched only its ear. In this way the others, having touched its tail or belly, gave their different versions of the elephant. Just so, a man who has seen only one aspect of God limits God to that alone. It is his conviction that God cannot be anything else.' ¹⁸

With their attention riveted on the smiling face of the speaker, the Brahmo preachers felt in their heart of hearts how futile it was to try to measure God or His infinite glories. Sri Ramakrishna continued:

'Once an ant went to a hill of sugar. It took one grain of sugar, and that was

enough to fill its stomach. It did not have the capacity to swallow another grain. Similarly, who can master completely the knowledge about God? Besides none can comprehend Him without His grace.' ¹⁹

As time slipped by, the Brahmos eagerly drank in the nectar of Sri Ramakrishna's words. Though not all of them could have comprehended the import of all his sayings, yet they sat listening with rapt attention, gazing at him enthralled.²⁰ Then Sri Ramakrishna's eyes fell on Keshab and he said, 'Have you seen a custard apple made of pith?'

'Yes, sir.'

'As such a custard apple reminds one of a real custard apple, so the clay image of Kālī reminds a devotee of Her—the real blissful Divine Mother.' ²¹ Now drawing Keshab's attention to the spiritual life he said:

'In the beginning of spiritual practices there is much preparation; these activities, however, subside slowly. *Luchis*,²² when put into hot *ghee* (clarified butter), at first crackle, which noise however dies down as they become cooked. Similarly knowledge when ripe sheds its exterior signs and symbols. These are associated with unripe knowledge.' ²³

¹⁹ Burman: op. cit., p. 151; compare: *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 270

²⁰ Compare Rolland (op. cit., pp. 175-6) regarding his general effect on the Brahmos: 'It was above all his living certitude that impressed the onlookers;...as he spoke he lost himself in God, like a bather who dives and reappears dripping after a moment, bringing with him the smell of seaweed, the taste of the salt of the Ocean. Who can rid himself of its tang?.... The greatest sceptic can touch the diver as he returns from the depths of the Dream, and catch some reflection of submarine flora in his eyes. Keshab and several of his disciples were intoxicated with it.'

²¹ Burman: op. cit., pp. 151-2

²² A popular dish in Bengal: a flat cake made of wheat flour and fried in *ghee*.

²³ Roy: op. cit., p. 1043

¹⁷ Burman (op. cit., p. 150) relates the gist of this story as told by Sri Ramakrishna at this point; the text however is quoted from *The Gospel*, p. 79. The same is true of fn. 18; and in fn. 24 similarly, inasmuch as Sri Ramakrishna told these and other stories to different persons throughout the years.

¹⁸ Burman: pp. 150-1; *The Gospel*, p. 125

'...there are two kinds of aspirants. The nature of the one kind is like that of the young monkey, and the nature of the other kind is like that of the kitten. The young monkey, with great exertion, somehow clings to its mother. Likewise, there are some aspirants who think that in order to realize God they must repeat His name a certain number of times, meditate on Him for a certain period, and practise a certain amount of austerity. An aspirant of this kind makes his own efforts to catch hold of God. But the kitten, of itself, cannot cling to its mother. It lies on the ground and cries, "Mew, mew!" It leaves everything to its mother. The mother cat sometimes puts it on a bed, sometimes on the roof behind a pile of wood. She carries the kitten in her mouth hither and thither. The kitten does not know how to cling to the mother. Likewise, there are some aspirants who cannot practise spiritual discipline by calculating about *japa* or the period of meditation. All that they do is cry to God with yearning hearts. God hears their cry and cannot keep Himself away. He reveals Himself to them.'²⁴

The spellbound listeners were unaware that the time for the noon meal had long since passed by. The Saint's words of infinite sympathy and deep understanding made his listeners feel that he was their own, as if a close relation. Appreciating the change in their attitude Sri Ramakrishna remarked, 'If any other animal comes to a herd of cattle, they'll turn on it and attack it with their horns. But, if another cow joins the herd they welcome it as one of themselves and lick its body. That is what has happened to us today.' Those present burst into laughter but everyone felt the truth of it.

Sri Ramakrishna prepared to take leave of Keshab and others. He got up. Pointing to Keshab he said, 'He is the only one who

has dropped his tail.' Those present laughed loudly although most took the remark as rather uncomplimentary. Keshab was quick to interfere: 'Don't laugh. There must be some meaning in his words. Let us ask him.' Thereupon Sri Ramakrishna with a smile, went on to explain his remark:

'The tadpole, so long as it has not dropped its tail, lives only in the water. It cannot move about on dry land. But as soon as it drops its tail it hops out on the bank; then it can live both on land and in water. Likewise, as long as a man has not dropped his tail of ignorance, he can live only in the water of the world. But when he drops his tail, that is to say, when he attains the Knowledge of God, then he can roam about as a free soul, or live as a householder if he likes.'²⁵

'Your mind, O Keshab, has now attained that state in which you can live in the world as also in Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.'²⁶ The light-hearted attitude of the listeners gave way to sombre thought. They were wonderstruck and felt elated at such a revelation about their leader.

Thus after nearly four hours of inspiring talk, Sri Ramakrishna bade Keshab good-bye and re-entered the carriage for Dakshineswar, leaving his new acquaintances, particularly Keshab, to ponder over the mellifluous words that had flowed forth from the saint's heart. Ever blazing as Sri Ramakrishna was with the fire of divine love and wisdom, he could very readily kindle the flame of faith and devotion in the hearts of sincere listeners.

Keshab soon began writing in his newspapers about the wonderful discovery he had made,²⁷ and before long returned

²⁴ *Dharmatattva*, 14 May 1875; *The Gospel*, p. 315

²⁵ *vide The Gospel*, p. 619. This part of the talk was recorded by many others present.

²⁶ Saradananda: *op. cit.*, p. 316

²⁷ For example: *Indian Mirror*, 28 March 1875: 'We met one (sincere Hindu devotee) not long ago and were charmed by the depth, penetration, and simplicity of his spirit. The never-

Sri Ramakrishna's visit. Thus came together two 'opposite' types of minds—the great intellectual and 'Anglophile' Keshab, and the God-intoxicated Paramahansa of Dakshineswar. From this resulted a new impetus to the spiritual renaissance of the nineteenth century. Their relationship was intimate, affectionate, and lasting. So deeply attracted to each other did they become that they could hardly stay apart for more than a few weeks at a time. Sometimes Keshab would come to Dakshineswar; sometimes he would invite Sri Ramakrishna to his house in Calcutta; whenever convenient on such visits he would have him talk to his congregations; occasionally he would take Sri Ramakrishna for outings, such as a steamer-cruise on the Ganges. He spoke often of Sri Ramakrishna, in his sermons, his books, his writings in journals; and thus introduced the Saint of Dakshineswar to the intellectual middleclass of Bengal and beyond.²⁸ On the other hand, Sri Ramakrishna's love and longing for Keshab were touching and deep. As he once told Keshab:

'Whenever I hear that you are ill I become extremely restless. After hearing of your last illness I used to weep to the Divine Mother in the small hours of the morning. I prayed to Her. "O Mother, if anything happens to Keshab, with whom then shall I talk in Calcutta?"

—
ceasing metaphors and analogies, in which he indulged, are most of them as apt as they are beautiful. The characteristics of his mind are the very opposite to those of Pandit Dayananda Saraswati, the former being so gentle, tender, and contemplative, as the latter is sturdy, masculine, and polemical. Hinduism must have in it a deep sense of beauty, truth and goodness to inspire such men as these.'

²⁸ Bhudhar Chatterjee, editor of the monthly *Veda Vyasa* (in *P.B.*, Feb. 1936, p. 97): 'And afterwards it was Keshab Babu that became the chief helper in his (Ramakrishna's) preaching work and gradually extended the sphere of his activity.'

Coming to Calcutta, I offered fruits and sweets to the Divine Mother with a prayer for your well-being.'²⁹

Keshab had at least once declared, justifiably: 'If I am not a prophet I am a singular man. I am not as ordinary men are, and I say this deliberately.'³⁰ Yet he had great humility: Sri Ramakrishna's influence penetrated deep into his heart and extended his mental horizon. Sri Ramakrishna's was a personality that could not but alter, enrich and illuminate the texture of others' thought. Some have repudiated the view concerning the New Dispensation of Keshab's, formally heralded in January 1880, that 'it appears probable that it was a partial acceptance and propagation of the Master's [Sri Ramakrishna's] final conclusion regarding the true nature of all religions'.³¹ They argue that the germ of the New Dispensation could be traced to Keshab's works³² before he met Sri Ramakrishna. But who could deny the benign influence on, and the strong stimulant to, the Brahmos, which Sri Ramakrishna was? Certainly not a sensitive spiritual recipient like Keshab, who adored Sri Ramakrishna. The entry of the latter's spirit into the life of Keshab, and its workings, were imperceptible; but the result proved to be mighty. Very aptly have two of Keshab's staunch supporters observed:

'Paramahansa's simplicity, sweet child-like faith and devotion influenced Keshab's yoga, dispassion, ethics, devotion, and pure religious ideas.'³³ Acharya Deva [Keshab] learnt from him to a greater extent to address God
(Continued on p. 139)

²⁹ *The Gospel*, pp. 266-7

³⁰ Shivanath Sastri: *History of Brahmo Samaj*, Vol. II, p. 103

³¹ Saradananda: *op. cit.*, p. 318

³² Among others, his lecture 'Behold the Light of Heaven in India', 23 Jan., 1875. A careful summary of this controversy is given in Rolland, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-9.

³³ Sharma: *op. cit.*, p. 247



HUMAN TRENDS

RELIGION AND THE MODERN WEST: THE TAIZE MOVEMENT

In the present world-situation the West is doing a lot of searching of heart. The youth, reacting against the establishment, are trying to find their inherent genius in order to stabilize themselves. They are surging with energy and vigour. They are looking for a new purpose and direction in life, and for truth and lasting joy. The picture is not yet clear. Nevertheless the light of God seems coming more into evidence.

There is a desperate effort to brighten up this timeless light by the revivalist movements. People want guidance from the custodians of religious tradition. But the youth are also very earnest in trying to understand for themselves the content of religion. Can it be experienced?—is their question. They are anxious to know the truth. Sometimes in their enthusiasm and maybe in innocence, they make mistakes; but they are learning their lessons. In this situation, many of the youth have turned to eastern religions. Numberless such religions, with their societies and gurus, have come onto the scene to meet the need, creating a situation which is itself bewildering to the serious-minded. Which among the eastern religious traditions can help meet this urgent need?

Meanwhile earnest people in the Christian Churches also are rising up to meet the challenge of youth, and quite a few such move-

ments have come into existence in recent times. One of the most remarkable among them is the 'Taizé Community' in France, where young people in thousands gather every summer. Evidently they feel spiritual satisfaction in assembling and spending their time in the company of their devoted contemporaries of all countries and climes. This year they will be holding a 'Council of Youth' where they expect a gathering of fifty thousand. There is certainly something happening.

This summer (1974) our friends Mr. and Mrs. Hodge, made it possible for me to visit Taizé. After the London Centre's annual spiritual Retreat they invited me to go for a holiday in France and Switzerland. They planned to take me to their beautiful village home in Burgundy, about 150 miles south of Paris, and then on to Taizé which is another three hours journey south in Burgundy. The trip would include visits to a couple of places in Switzerland where Swami Vivekananda had stayed with the Seviars and Miss Muller in August of 1896. Thus the invitation had added attraction for me. According to plan, I flew to Paris and stayed at our Centre at Gretz for three days. This Centre has a fairly large community living there in summer. It has vast grounds, on which vegetables and fruits are grown, and chickens raised. Above all there is a

large-hearted hospitality to accommodate guests. I was met there by the Hodges on the 29th July and taken to their village home. On the 30th we visited a place of pilgrimage, Vezeley, where St. Bernard used to preach : it has a beautiful large cathedral. Romain Rolland was born in this area and lived in this city. We visited his simple grave. On the 31st we started after an early breakfast, for Taizé. Mrs. Hodge had earlier written to Brother Roger Schutz, the Founder-Prior of the Community, about our visit, and had received a reply welcoming us to join their mid-day service.

What is Taizé community ? In 1940, Roger Schutz, a young Swiss student of theology who had been brought up Protestant, settled in Taizé to live a life of austerity and to help the desperate refugees from near-by German-occupied zone. A few friends joined him, but had to flee for life when the Germans moved in, two years later. After the War's end they returned, and in 1949 seven took monastic vows; and the Community, with Brother Roger as Prior, came into being. Although most had Protestant backgrounds, from the first they were dedicated to basic ecumenical attitudes. Their monastic Rule was simple, but included celibacy, community of goods, and 'acceptance of authority'. They refused gifts, and worked at various occupations, often in near-by villages, as well as cultivating their farm land and running a printing press, from which increasing numbers of their publications and pictures flow. Although they were very selective about newcomers, not trying to recruit or 'convert' anyone, their dedicated lives proved highly attractive, to Catholics as well as all other denominations of Christianity. Of the present group of 70 monastics, thirteen are Roman Catholics, of whom some are Franciscans ; some are also Greek Orthodox. In fact Taizé became a spearhead of

the ecumenical movement, with active encouragement from Catholic as well as Protestant authorities. And meanwhile, young people especially, laymen as well as monastics, have been increasingly attracted to the place. At the same time, the monastic Brothers have travelled extensively through the world—working as they went—carrying the message to willing hearers. Many 'cells' have thus sprung up, for instance, Bombay, Rome, London, Stuttgart, and Brazil, and Nigeria.

As more and more people came to Taizé, especially summers, the need for a church was felt. In 1962 a large one was built, called 'Church of the Reconciliation', holding 2,500 people ; but even this had to be enlarged within a decade ! It is a place for community prayer for all the monks, as well as the thousands of youth who gather there. There is also a small older church which has been all along used for silent, personal, private prayers. There is a large book-shop, offering many of the above-mentioned Taizé publications. A large part of the work involved is done by volunteers who come and stay for varying periods. All are motivated by the ideal of encouraging unity among the various groups in Christianity. 'Who is Christ for you ?' The same question comes so often. 'He is the one from whom I am living: yet He is also the one for whom I, along with many others, shall always be searching....' 'Without visible unity among them, how can Christians say things about love ? It is a matter of the credibility of the Church in the eyes of those who watch us live. Ecumenism can only advance if it is borne along by such a dynamics as will oblige it to discover an increasingly universal dimension. How else can its wave spread ever wider from one person to another ?'

Christians are agreed that they have to pray sincerely for unity. Hence prayer is very important. By prayer the spirit has

to be awakened. An aspect of this awakening seems to have been realized at Taizé. It is drawing people, particularly youth, from all over the world. As one moves around the Community one meets these youth, full of joy and friendliness. They have come from many nations and races. Barriers once considered uncrossable have been taken down. And this has happened not through lectures and discussions but by the spirit of God. People seem to gather there to witness the manifestation of this spirit and strengthen their faith.

Ours was a long drive, going through winding roads. We were so anxious to reach the place that the journey seemed interminable, so much so that we doubted if we were on the right road. As we approached Taizé however, we had no more doubt. Cheerful youth were everywhere. Taizé has the atmosphere of a place of pilgrimage, where one meets a lot of young pilgrims converging, all smiling, all friendly and none a stranger. Taizé itself is a small village far removed from modern civilized influences, reached by hot and dusty roads. Nobody seemed to mind any of these things. We saw radiant youth from every corner of the earth—Malaysia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Japan, Ethiopia, and of course all parts of Europe and America.

At the reception desk we met a volunteer who brought to us a kindly looking gentleman introducing himself as Brother Mark, one of the members of the dedicated Community. He was very sweet and welcomed us with great warmth. He told us that he knew the Ramakrishna movement and had visited Belur Math, our Headquarters at Calcutta. He had lived in India to further the cause of the Taizé movement. We settled down under a tree for a little chat. Brother Mark expressed joy at our visiting Taizé and enquired about the nature of our work in the West. On our part we learned about the activities of their move-

ment. As he expressed it, everything there seemed to be happening in a spontaneous way. Indeed it was a pleasure to be in such an informal and holy atmosphere.

Soon we were told that it was time for the mid-day service. Brother Mark guided us into an enormous modern church. We were led into an enclosed area near the altar. Brother Roger, who was already sitting in the centre of the hall, came and met us. This gentle white-robed monk radiated joy and peace. He welcomed us and we exchanged a few words. Then he held my hands in silence for a few moments. As he did not speak English fluently he asked Brother Mark to show us into the hall where we sat for the service. There was not much furniture in this hall. There were some benches and rows of steps on one side, and some small stools scattered around. The floor was carpeted. People settled down freely where they liked, getting into any comfortable posture they could. There seemed no particular rule about sitting or dress. That day there were about two thousand people, most of them young, but quite a number of middle-aged people; some of course were tourists. The central part of the hall was reserved for the monks, who, dressed in their white robes, came in and settled down on the carpet on their knees. The altar is simple: a table with a cross. In the background on the walls were some modern paintings. A number of candles were lit in the niches of the wall.

The prayer 'office' was simple. When we entered, the organ was playing. After a while a short prayer was offered in different languages, followed by a Psalm, then about five minutes' silence. Next another hymn and then Brother Roger spoke a few minutes in several languages. Finally, after another hymn, most of the gathering dispersed. A prayerful atmosphere was very much in evidence and some people continu-

ed prayer in silence. I meditated there for a while, and left feeling very much refreshed. Brother Mark was waiting outside. We presented him with some gifts of food we had brought. He put us in the care of a young lady volunteer who showed us around a little and then took us to the dining hall. This young lady was French. She had come to see this place a year before; impressed by what was happening here, she stayed on. She said she was happy to be here and did not know how long she would stay. She helps the monks with various duties. The Order has acquired plenty of adjoining land, where the visitors camp in large numbers. It looked like a big *mela* or religious gathering, but going on in a free style all year round. There are several kitchens. Volunteers cook. Anyone can go to any kitchen, queue up and take what is served. There is one kitchen for visitors and guests. Even this has a self-service dining-hall. When guests are brought in, some volunteers help in serving them and eat with them. After eating they clean up and go away. Any voluntary service is accepted. The atmosphere inspires everyone to come forward to help. Work did not seem to be a problem. Everyone appeared to be in a cooperative and helpful mood. Food was available in plenty, and variety too. Fruits, cheese, and coffee came at the end. (It may be that, because we were guests, some extras were given us.) The Brothers do not have a separate kitchen: they ate wherever mealtime found them. The visiting young people are supposed to pay about a pound a day for their food. As we did not know where to pay, we discovered a collection box in one corner and put some money into it. Coming out we met Brother Mark, and thanked him for the hospitality; then taking leave of him and the young lady, went into the busy bookshop run by the Brotherhood. It contained mostly French books and picture cards,

some of which we bought. We left, carrying with us happy impressions of a vast town of bright-coloured tents, radiantly joyous youth, a peaceful atmosphere, highly spiritual vibrations in the church—above all feeling happy that we had had the privilege of visiting this community and meeting its saintly founder.

Taizé is a small village near Cluny, which was an important centre of Christianity in the Middle Ages. Cluny monastery, of the Benedictine Order, was founded in A. D. 910, and soon became the centre of an extensive reform in religious life, especially monastic. Within 40 years it had become the principal religious force in the West, after the Pope; and at its height, in the 12th century, it had 314 branch-monasteries (Cluniac) throughout Europe and even in Palestine. It is said there were 10,000 monastic members. Under the headship of seven great Abbots for its first two and a half centuries, it grew in stature both spiritual and intellectual. The Abbots of Cluny commanded great respect. They were advisers to popes and at times perhaps more powerful than the Pope himself; and at least three popes, beginning with St. Gregory VII, were Cluniac monks. The kings of Europe sought the friendship of the Abbots of Cluny, and their help also in influencing the Pope when they were in trouble. People from all over Europe converged on this centre of learning. Before St. Peter's Church was built in Rome, Cluny church was the biggest ecclesiastical building in Europe. The spiritual power of God radiated to the farthest corners of the world from this centre for centuries.

But as time went on, secular power and wealth had accumulated; then began a period of decadence—'wealth accumulated and men decayed'. The monks began to play with kings and money. After the first rapid decline towards the end of the twelfth century, Cluny and its great system slowly

deteriorated, although something lived on, on the basis of the old prestige and glory. At last the congregation was dissolved in 1790, and the French Revolution demolished the traces. The power of Christ that had radiated from this centre withdrew as it were. Yet even today the signs of the past glory are evident there.

Can the power of God ever disappear like that? No. He may withdraw it in unsuitable circumstances. But He has His

own way of fulfilling His plans. Now again the time seems to be ripe for a spiritual resurgence. The spirit of the time demands it. Not far from the ruins of Cluny, at Taizé the power of Christ is re-manifesting. Perhaps one needs an eye of faith to see it. But anyone can see that something is happening: happening for the good of humanity.

—SWAMI BHAVYANANDA

(Continued from p. 134)

with the sweet appellation of Mother like a simple child, to pray to Her and crave indulgences like a child. In spite of the devotional aspect in it the Brahmo religion was more a religion of faith and rationalism. Due to the influence of Paramahansa's life it became sweet to a great extent.³⁴

We may quote another authority, J. N. Farquhar, who was not directly connected with either person. He wrote:

'The truth is that he [Keshab] was dazzled with the glitter of Ramakrishna's idea of the harmony of all religions;

and having once accepted the thought, he proceeded, in confidence in it, to attempt to hold in his own mind, at the same moment, the essential principles of Hinduism, the Christian doctrine of Trinity, and his own old theism.'³⁵

Unable though we are to measure the influences these two great personalities exerted on each other, we cannot however fail to appreciate the import of the fusion of the two mighty thought currents for guiding humanity towards peace and progress.

³⁴ Sen: op. cit., p. 90

³⁵ J. N. Farquhar: *Modern Religious Movements in India* (Macmillan Co., 1915), p. 64

OKAKURA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

YASUKO HORIOKA

(Continued from the January issue)

Okakura extended an invitation to the Swami to accompany him to the holy place of Buddha Gaya, which the Swami accepted. Their departure was delayed, however, due to Hori's sudden stomach-ache on the 25th. Okakura took care of him day and night. Okakura and the Swami left on the eve of 27 January when Hori became much better (Hori's diary).

The Swami wrote to Mrs. Bull from Gopal Lal Villa, Benares, on 10 February, 1902 :

'Mr. Okakura has started on his short tour. He intends to visit Agra, Gwalior, Ajanta, Ellora, Chittore, Udaipur, Jaipur and Delhi.

A very well-educated rich young man of Benares, with whose father we had a long-standing friendship, came back to this city yesterday. He is especially interested in art, and spending purposely a lot of money in his attempts to revive dying Indian arts. He came to see me only a few hours after Mr. Okakura left. He is just the man to show him artistic India (i.e. what little is left), and I am sure he will be much benefited by Okakura's suggestions. Okakura just found a common terracotta water-vessel here used by the servants. The shape and the embossed work on it simply charmed him, but as it is common earthenware and would not bear the journey, he left a request with me to have it reproduced in brass. I was at my wit's end as to what to do. My young friend comes a few hours after, and not only undertakes to have it done but offers to show a few hundreds of embossed designs in terracotta infinitely superior to the one Okakura fancied.

He also offers to show us old paintings in that wonderful old style. Only one family is left in Benares who can paint

after the old style yet. One of them has painted a whole hunting scene on a pea, perfect in detail and action!

I hope Okakura will come to this city on his return and be this gentleman's guest and see a bit of what is left.

Niranjan has gone with Mr. Okakura, and as he is a Japanese, they don't object to his going into any temple. It seems that the Tibetans and the other Northern Buddhists have been coming here to worship Shiva all along.

They allowed him to touch the sign of Shiva and worship. Mrs. Annie Besant tried once, but, poor woman, although she bared her feet, put on a Sari and humiliated herself to the dust before the priests, she was not admitted even into the compound of the temple. The Buddhists are not considered non-Hindus in any of our great temples.¹⁷

On 12 February, the Swami was still at Gopal Lal Villa and wrote to Swami Brahmananda : 'Uncle¹⁸ and Niranjan have gone to Agra. I may get their letter today.'

The Swami reported again on 18 February to Swami Brahmananda, 'Uncle' and Niranjan have written a letter from Gwalior.

In his next letter to the same Swami, Swami Vivekananda writes :

'It is several days since I received a letter from Uncle. The last news was that he had gone to Ajanta.

Give my special love and blessings to Mrs. Bull, Miss MacLeod and all others.'

This letter confirms that both Mrs. Bull and Miss MacLeod were not with Okakura on this trip. According to Hori's diary, the

¹⁷ *The Works*, Vol. V, pp. 173-4

¹⁸ Mr. Okakura was endearingly called 'Uncle' by Swami Vivekananda. 'Kura' approximating to *khura* in Bengali, which means 'uncle'.

Swami arrived at the Math at 9 a.m. on 7 March, 1902. Although Hori's diary does not mention Okakura's return, it tells us that Okakura visited Hori on 9 March. Therefore Okakura must have returned to Calcutta about the same time as the Swami. Okakura and Miss MacLeod visited Hori and told him of Oda's coming to India and their plan to take Oda to Buddha Gaya. Both Okakura and Miss MacLeod were staying at the America Consulate and met Hori at the Math almost every day and discussed their plans for Oda.

Oda arrived at Calcutta on 2 April 1902. On 15 April, Hori accompanied Okakura and Oda to Buddha Gaya and returned to the Math on the 28th. Oda again asked the Swami to come to Japan but in vain. The Swami wrote to Miss MacLeod on 21 April 1902:

'It seems the plan of going to Japan seems to have come to nought. Mrs. Bull is gone, you are going. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the Japanese.'¹⁹

Again he wrote to Miss MacLeod in his letter with no date as follows:

'Your Japanese friend has been very kind, but my health is so poor that I am rather afraid I have not much time to spare for Japan. I will drag myself through the Bombay Presidency even if only to say, "How do you do?" to all kind friends.

Then two months will be consumed in coming and going and only one month to stay: that is not much of a chance for work, is it?

So kindly pay the money your Japanese friend has sent for my passage. I shall give it back to you when you come to India in November.'²⁰

Oda left India on 1 May. Okakura also left for Mayavati. He wrote to the members of the Fine Arts Academy on 18 May:

'This place is 40 miles from the boundary of Nepal and 60 miles from the

Himalayas, and the post office here is located in the farthest north of India. Every day we climb higher and now we are at the height of 7,000 feet above the sea. Snow-covered mountain peaks outside the window look like white folding screens set against a half of the heaven. Mt. Nanda Devi is the highest of all with 26,000 feet above the sea. It looks like Komagatake of Japan, only much bigger and higher. The air is clean and I feel the chill of early winter in the morning and in the evening. Deer often cross the mountain paths, and tigers are heard in the moonlit night. Abirananda [*sic*] and a servant accompany me. The old servant is very faithful and takes good care of me. I am in no want and am in excellent health.'²¹

About the same time, the Swami wrote his last letter to Miss MacLeod:

'I send you the letter of Madam Calvé....

I am somewhat better, but of course far from what I expected. A great idea of quiet has come upon me. I am going to retire for good—no more work for me. If possible, I will revert to my old days of begging.

All blessings attend you, Joe; you have been a good angel to me.'²²

The Swami's poor health must have resulted in some changes in the schedule of the (Belur) Monastery. Hori's Sanskrit lessons were suspended. He developed malaria. When Okakura visited him on 10 June, he found Hori sick and exhausted, and with the help of Surendranath Tagore had him moved to Rabindranath Tagore's Santiniketan. There Hori did not hear about the Swami's death until several days after it had occurred. In 1903 he went on a journey with another Japanese

²¹ *Tenshin to Sono Shokan* [Tenshin and His Letters]: (Ed. by Shimomura, Tokyo, 1964),

²² *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. V (1959), p. 179.

¹⁹ *The Works*, Vol. V, p. 178

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 163-4

and in a collision of his horse carriage with another at a cliff on the south shore of the Jhelum River near Srinagar, he wounded a finger on his left hand and died of tetanus at the age of twenty-seven.

When the Swami died, Okakura was in Calcutta and ready to comfort Sister Nivedita and to help her regain her courage. Since Okakura's acquaintance with Sister Nivedita through Miss Josephine MacLeod early 1902, the two seem to have associated with each other closely. Sister Nivedita helped Okakura with two of his English books, *The Ideals of the East* ... and *The Awakening of the East*.²³ The former was published with a preface by Sister Nivedita. The latter was not published until many years after his death, but the manuscript in the Kirihara Collection, Tokyo, shows corrections in Sister Nivedita's handwriting. The same handwriting on the cover of the manuscript reads: 'Ram Ranjan Dey (Mozumdar) 2nd year class. B.B. College Mozafferpool.' Okakura wrote the third book, *The Awakening of Japan*, immediately after his return to Japan.²⁴

Okakura left for Japan on 6 October, arriving at Kobe, on the 30th of the same month. An Indian youth whose name is Rajen Mallik accompanied him. Rajen came back to Calcutta in February 1903, accompanied by Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunso, leading artists of Okakura's Fine Arts Academy of Japan. The Japanese version of the Parliament of Religions which both Okakura and Oda had planned never took place. There are no records available of how Oda and Okakura handled the guests from India who had gone to Japan with plans to attend the

conference. Neither Surendranath Tagore nor Sister Nivedita went to Japan. Hori's diary reports that both Surendranath and Rajen Mallik received letters from Okakura, but nothing is mentioned regarding the contents of the letters. Okakura's short acquaintance with the Swami ended with the latter's untimely death and so did the plans for the religious conference in Japan.

Although Okakura produced the aforementioned three books in English during and after his trip in India, he wrote none in his mother tongue. The only report of his Indian trip he made in Japanese was his lecture given at the annual meeting of the Academy of History held at Tokyo University on 12 December 1902. According to the summary report of the lecture,²⁵ Okakura spoke for over two hours before the audience of more than 70 historians. He unrolled the history of Indian art with an emphasis on the fact that India and China never lost their interrelation, cultural and otherwise. This is what he repeated again and again in *The Ideals of the East* as he presented the history of Japanese art as uniquely developed under Indian and Chinese influences. He concluded the lecture, urging his audience to visit India at least once. The Swami, when he travelled in Japan in 1893, wished many young Indians to pay a visit to Japan every year.

Again, when Okakura was invited to speak before the Indian friends, he started with 'Brothers and sisters of Asia!' in the manner in which Swami Vivekananda had said 'Sisters and brothers of America!' to his American audience at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Okakura said:

'It is wonderful how little we now know of each other. We blot in all the languages of Europe, which one of us

²³ *The Ideals of the East, With Special Reference to the Art of Japan* (John Murray, London, 1903); *The Awakening of the East* (Kenkyusha, Tokyo, 1939).

²⁴ Published by: Century Co., New York, 1905.

²⁵ *Shigaku Zasshi* [History Journal in Japanese], Tokyo, Vol. XIV, No. 1.

has learned a single Oriental tongue besides his own? Who knows that close affinity of Persian to Celestial life makes Teheran an Islamised Paotingtu? Who knows that inherent identity of Hinduism with the Mahayana that makes Kyoto a Japanized Benares; where Siva is worshipped as Fudo and Sarasvati as Benten?'²⁶

Thus he stressed the continual interrelation of Asian countries, particularly India and China. When he journeyed to Mayavati and looked upon the Himalayas he was convinced that even the Himalayas could not break the tie between India and China. He began his book *The Ideals of the East* as follows:

'Asia is one. The Himalayas divide, only to accentuate, two mighty civilizations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment that broad expanse of love for the Ultimate and Universal, which is the common thought-inheritance of every Asiatic race.'

He said further on that Japan cherished what was brought from India and China and developed it to 'dwell on all phases of the ideals of the past, in that spirit of living advaitism which welcomes the new without losing the old'.²⁷

The word 'advaitism' obviously Okakura inherited from Swami Vivekananda. If the Swami endeavoured to create a healthy synthesis of East and West on the spiritual foundation of the Vedāntic Oneness of existence,²⁸ Okakura stood firm at the intersection of old and new, of East and West, and of religion and science, in the spirit of living advaitism in order to live a 'Life True to Self'. 'A Life True to Self'

was not only a motto by which Okakura strove to live as an individual; it was also the motto of the Tokyo School of Art, and later of the Fine Arts Academy of Japan. He writes:

'But the active individualism of Meiji, teeming with life in other cycles of thought, could not be content to move in those fixed grooves which orthodox conservatism or radical Europeanisation imposed on art. When the first decade of the era was passed, and recovery from the effects of civil war was more or less complete, a band of earnest workers strove to found a third kind of art-expression, which, by a higher realization of the possibilities of ancient Japanese art, and aiming at a love and knowledge of the most sympathetic movements in Western art-creations, tried to reconstruct the national art on a new basis, whose keynote should be "Life True to Self".'²⁹

For Okakura, 'Life lies ever in the return to Self',³⁰ and spiritualization is not some activity above or outside man but 'a burning fire within'.³¹ A 'Life True to Self' has to be sought and followed, because it is 'the ultimate order of advaitism taught by our ancestors'.³²

Although Okakura was not an advaitist nor a neo-Vedāntist, his 'Life True to Self' seems very close to the Swami's concept of Self as 'the abiding and constant consciousness, the standing witness in you, which observes all changes in your body and mind, but is not involved in them, rather it stands above them'.³³

If Okakura's notion of advaitism and 'Life True to Self' is reconcilable, if not identical, with the Swami's, the former's

²⁶ *The Awakening of the East*, Ch. I

²⁷ *The Ideals of the East*, pp. 7-8

²⁸ vide Swami Nikhilananda: *Vivekananda: A Biography* (Advaita Ashrama, 1964), 'Preface'.

²⁹ *The Ideals of the East*, p. 227

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 240

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 169

³² *ibid.*, Ch. 14

³³ V. K. Arora: *The Social and Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda* (Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1968), p. 70

statement in relation to East and West parallels the Swami's.

'Europe, the centre of the manifestation of material energy, will crumble into dust within fifty years, if she is not mindful to change her position, to shift her ground and make spirituality the basis of her life. And what will save Europe is the religion of the Upanishads.'³⁴

'The West is for progress, but progress toward what? When material efficiency is complete, what end, asks Asia, will have been accomplished?'

'America was merely an accidental discovery on the part of Spain in her attempt to reach the coveted wealth of India.'³⁵

Such parallel statements are numerous in the writings of these two men.

Romain Rolland, biographer of Vivekananda, however, indicated the differences of these men in their parting at Varanasi when Okakura left on a trip in 1902.

'The two men, although they loved each other and acknowledged the grandeur of their mutual tasks, recognized their differences. Okakura had his own kingdom, that of art.'³⁶

It is true that Okakura was not a monk as the Swami was, but he received Buddhist instructions from Abbot Sakurai of the Tendai Sect of the Mahayana Buddhism in the summer of 1885 together with William Sturgis Bigelow, a retired medical doctor and benefactor of Japanese art from Boston, and Ernest F. Fenollosa. Okakura also translated 'On the Method of Practising Concentration and Contemplation' by Chiki.³⁷ Okakura's religious viewpoint

may well be summarized in his following statements:

'By religion, as we understand it in the East, we do not mean just what you mean here. The term is understood in a narrower sense among Western nations. With us it does not necessarily imply a form of worship nor does it even imply a notion of God. For that matter, one may be an agnostic and still be religious in our sense. By religion we understand those sets of beliefs which enable one to transcend the mundane, by which one can endure even unto death for higher ideals.'

'You see, from what I have told you, that Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism exist in Eastern Asia side by side.... We rely upon Confucius for ethics, we rely upon Laotsze for aesthetics, we rely upon Buddha for religion. We pursue our daily life in Confucianism, our artistic life is conducted in Taoism, and we die and are buried in Buddhism.'³⁸

In spite of vocational and religious differences between Vivekananda and Okakura, these men seem to have shared the same spirit, namely the spirit of advaitism. With the help of eloquence in the English language and knowledge of the East and the West, they wrote and spoke for Asia. The spiritual movement started by Swami Vivekananda still continues through the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Mission in the West. Okakura did not start any movement nor did he organize any group in the West, yet his life endeavour to introduce Asian art to the West left a permanent mark in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Of his 'disciples', Langdon Warner opened the first course in Japanese art in America at Harvard University in 1912, and his pupils continue to lead the field of Oriental art in the

³⁴ Swami Vivekananda: *The Complete Works*, Vol. III (1960), p. 159

³⁵ Okakura: *The Awakening of Japan*, pp. 97, 102

³⁶ Romain Rolland: *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel* (Advaita Ashrama, 1947), p. 178

³⁷ *The Harvard Theological Review*, XVI, No. 2 (April 1913)

³⁸ *Heart of Heaven* [A collection of writings by Okakura Kakuzo hitherto unpublished in book form] (Tokyo, 1922), pp. 147, 162

U. S. John Ellerton Lodge, another pupil of Okakura's, succeeded Okakura as curator of the Asiatic department of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and later became the first director of the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., leaving his post in Boston to Mr. Kojiro Tomita, another pupil of Okakura's in Boston. Okakura's *Book of Tea* was translated into many languages and it has been reprinted again and again since its

publication in 1906.

Vivekananda worked for a synthesis between old and new, between East and West; and so did Okakura. As Vivekananda's *Prabuddha Bharata* (Awakened India) and Okakura's books, *Awakening of the East* and *Awakening of Japan*, or even his first name Kakuzo (Awakened boy) suggest, were they not among the truly awakened in the awakening period of Asia?

THE ACTIVATION OF HUMAN ENERGY: PAN-CHRISTISM AND THE WORLD TO COME

DR. BEATRICE BRUTEAU

In 'Spiritual Evolution Toward Omega' we said that, for Teilhard de Chardin, the activation of human energy, which is of crucial importance for the future of the world, depends on a believable vision of God-in-the-world. Teilhard proposes that God is in the world as its 'Evolver', moving the great process of *cosmogenesis*, in which the world gradually attains self-consciousness in humankind. Cosmogenesis, or evolution, operates by a sequence of *creative* and *differentiating unions* by which the unorganized multitude of minimally conscious matter is drawn into ever more complex and more conscious unions. We ourselves are at this moment the climax of this process, and by the law of recurrence we may expect that we in turn will serve as elements for the next major advance in cosmic unification.

However, each of us is a reflexively conscious being and a free being. It is this free, reflexive consciousness which must be unified in the next movement of the cosmogenesis. This makes for a very interesting situation, for nothing can simply force unifi-

cation upon us, since this would destroy the very freedom which is to be elevated in the new union. If we are to be unified, then, we must freely unify ourselves. The evolved must become the evolvers and preside over our own future evolution.

We may see the recurrence pattern, as Teilhard proposes it, a little more clearly if we consider that at each level of cosmogenesis the energies characteristic of that level unite by means of an activated *affinity* for one another that is specific for that kind of energy. Atoms have a physical affinity for one another which draws them to share their physical energies and thus to form chemical compounds. Molecules relate to one another in terms of their chemical characteristics and certain of their most complex interchanges of energy are basic to what we call life. Thought, which is a community phenomenon, could never have appeared unless there was an affinity among biological units and a sharing of their behavioral energies. At each level the energy becomes more intense, the structure of the beings more complex, and the sharing more

intimate, as the elements to the union become more interdependent. The union *as such* comes more and more to constitute the very being of the elements which participate in the union. It is the uniting which identifies the new level of being which these elements now compose, and it is the *uniting* itself which makes it both possible and necessary that each participating element continue to be its own particular self. This is what Teilhard means by a *creative* and a *differentiating union*, and it is the pivotal concept for an understanding of what he expects the next level of evolution to be.

Now we must ask what is the characteristic energy of the human being and how we may expect to activate and share these energies so as to form the next higher being.

UNANIMITY

There must be, says Teilhard, 'in formation ahead of us, humanity as the sum of organized persons'.¹ This organization takes place in terms of our peculiarly human energies, which are energies of consciousness and communication. A great deal of this organization is already functioning; we are already sharing our human energies in all our social activities. Everything we do that is specifically *human* is a matter of communication of our consciousness. The exchange of these communications is what composes our social organizations, our community life. The most ordinary conversation is an exchange of consciousness-bits, as we may call them: not only items of information but packets of personal energy, laden with feelings, values, intentions, will-energy. More complex interchanges build up local, national, and international cultures. There

are interchanges across space and (somewhat one-sidedly) across time; more and more now there are attempts at interchanges across cultural, conceptual, and value-system barriers.

Such intercommunication is not an epiphenomenon to our human life. It precisely *constitutes* that life *as human*. Without this sharing of our conscious energies, we would not really be human at all. And by the same token, the more we share our conscious energies, the more human we become; so if this sharing could reach some peak of intensity that still lies ahead of us, we might break through into another level and come to live above ('sur-vive') our present stratum in a state which we can only call, relative to where we are now, 'super-human'. 'Mankind is still embryonic,' says Teilhard; it is 'the *bud* from which something more complicated and more centred than man himself should emerge'.²

What we are reaching for, in Teilhard's view, is some kind of *totalization*, some unity through shared consciousness of the entire human race. If the pattern of evolutionary Nature repeats itself—as it has been doing at every previous stage of the cosmogenesis—some kind of intense and intimate union of all human beings will be the outstanding quality of the world of the future. Teilhard emphasizes *all*: the world to come does not belong to an elite, or to a privileged class, or to some single chosen people. The 'gates of the future', he says, 'will open to an advance of *all together*, in a direction in which *all together* can join and find completion in a spiritual renovation of the earth'.³

¹ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: *The Vision of the Past* (Harper & Row, New York, 1966), p. 229.

² Teilhard: *The Future of Man* (Harper & Row, New York, 1964), p. 280; *The Vision of the Past*, p. 229.

³ Teilhard: *The Phenomenon of Man* (Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1961), p. 244.

But is not 'totalization' dangerous? Is not that just what the various forms of totalitarian government try to bring about? There is an enormous difference between these oppressive social systems and the totalization that he has in mind, Teilhard is quick to point out. The trouble with totalitarian systems is that they do not observe the laws of Nature: they do not form genuine *creative* and *differentiating* unions, and they do not form their unions by the activity of an *immanent principle*. They seek totalization by means of externally imposed uniformity. This never produces an organic union, a new living being, but only a heap of homogeneous elements, '[dragging] the world backwards towards plurality and into matter'. This is exactly *not* the way to the super-human union of the future.

Nature has been to unimaginable pains to evolve the human *person*, each one a unique, incomparable, irreplaceable, self-conscious, free individual of the utmost value. The next stage of cosmogenesis is certainly not going to be anything that will in any way diminish this marvellous achievement. On the contrary, it must raise it still higher. Making the *person* has been Nature's whole intent, Teilhard believes. This is a *personalizing universe*.⁵

How, then, shall we bring into being this new world of super-human, supremely personal unity? Teilhard answers that:

"The first essential is that the human units involved in the process shall draw closer together, not merely under the pressure of *external* forces, or solely by the performance of material acts, but directly, centre to centre, through *internal* attraction. Not through coercion, or enslavement to a common task, but

through *unanimity* in a common spirit. The construction of molecules ensues through atomic affinity. Similarly, on a higher level, it is through *sympathy*, and this alone, that the human elements in a personalized universe may hope to rise to the level of a higher synthesis'.⁶

What really is 'sympathy'? We use the word mostly in connection with 'feeling sorry for' someone. But this not what the word literally means and it is not what Teilhard means. 'Sym-pathy' is Greek for 'feeling' (in general), or 'experiencing', 'together', or 'with' others. It is the way we human beings share our particular kind of energy with one another. It is our 'affinity' for one another, analogous to the affinities that activated all the other unions formed in the course of cosmic evolution. Another name for it is 'love'.

Love is an energy movement, the movement of intention, desire, will. When the movement goes from us to its object and returns to us, with the intention of bringing the goodness of the object into our being so that we may be benefited, we call that love 'eros'. When the movement goes out from us and does not return but gives itself entirely to the beloved with the will that the beloved be benefited, that love is called 'agape'.⁷ Eros love is necessary for the preservation of the individual being on its own level. But agape love is what enables the person to rise above and beyond his individual level of being and find a larger life in the greater Whole. The advance of evolution in human energy terms, there-

⁶ *The Future of Man*, p. 119.

⁷ Teilhard himself does not make this distinction in these terms, but I have found it useful in explaining what is meant by 'love' and in helping people to discriminate between the two energy movements in their own feelings and intentions. In Teilhard's system the terms 'eros' and 'agape' correspond in a certain way to what he calls 'tangential' and 'radial' energy, respectively.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵ See 'Sketch of a Personalistic Universe' in Teilhard, *Human Energy* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1969).

fore, means an increase in the ratio of agape to eros.

Clearly, such an activation of 'intercentric energies'⁸ among us will have the effect of heightening our unique personal characters and our freedom, not of diminishing or oppressing them in any way. When each one wills the good of the others, radiates his personal consciousness-energy toward the others with the desire that all may be well with them, that they may each actualize their own particular potentialities and come to fullness of being, then the whole community draws together into an intense and intimate union whose principle is within itself and which preserves the differentiation of its elements.

And what will be the new Being formed by this union, what will be the 'creative' aspect of it? If we are persons, the new Being must be Super-Personal. Teilhard sees that 'the organization of human energy, taken as a whole... pushes us towards the ultimate formation, over and above each personal element, of a *common soul of humanity*', 'a harmonized collectivity of consciousnesses equivalent to a sort of super-consciousness'.⁹ Somehow we must become one soul, 'unanimous', not in the sense of agreeing with one another or all holding the same opinions, but in the sense of living by one life-principle, sharing a single energy which makes us to be and to be ourselves. As we said above, it is the act of uniting, that is, the sharing of our energies, which identifies the new being and it is the act of uniting, or sharing, which maintains the sharing elements in their own differentiated beings. Teilhard says:

'Reflecting, even briefly, on the state of affairs which might evoke this new universal love in the human heart...we are

brought to the following conclusion: that for men upon earth, all the earth, to learn to love one another, it is not enough that they should know themselves to be members of one and the same *thing*; in "planetizing" themselves they must acquire the consciousness, without losing themselves, of becoming one and the same *person*.'¹⁰

PAN-CHRISTISM

Somehow we are all to become, by sharing our consciousness-energies, or loving one another, the same person, or Super-Person. What can that possibly mean? Can we actually love every other human being in this extremely personal and intimate way? Perhaps not directly, Teilhard concedes, at least not yet. But we could begin to build the 'common consciousness' if all of us loved the same Person.

We touched on this point in the essay on evolution toward Omega and showed how Teilhard argued to the existence of Christ-Omega as a Supreme Person, supremely loving and lovable, real and present, here and now. If each of us loves Him, Teilhard urges, we will be exercising our 'sym-pathy', for we will each experience in ourself what every other experiences in himself, that acme of devotion and adoration for the highest value. Teilhard feels sure of this:

'Only a veritable *super-love*, the attractive power of a veritable "super-being" can of psychological necessity dominate, possess and synthesize the host of earthly loves. Failing such a centre...there can be no true union among totalized Mankind.'¹¹

But since the Super-Person, acting as Centre, *does* love each of us, we will, by loving Him and entering into His experience ('sym-pathy' with God) indirectly love every other human being. And thus gradually

⁸ *The Phenomenon of Man*, p. 263.

⁹ *Human Energy*, p. 137; *The Phenomenon of Man*, p. 251.

¹⁰ *The Future of Man*, p. 120.

¹¹ *The Future of Man*, pp. 286-7.

even our direct love for one another will spread and become broader and deeper and more vital.

In this way Christ-Omega becomes the Centre of centres for the new union of persons, each of them also a self-reflective centre. When Teilhard says that we are all to form 'the same person', we must not imagine that he means that our individual sense of selfhood is going to disappear in some way. That is just what he was concerned to avoid. But he does mean that we will not experience our selfhood as something sustained by a will to be that implicitly excludes everyone else, sets itself in opposition to everyone else, or acts to favour itself by injuring others. Rather, we are to regard ourselves and everyone else as if we were all a single life, a single conscious experience, a single desire for the good of all, so that there is no internal opposition, but the welfare of each element is the welfare of all. A single life is governed by a single principle, as an organism is integrated and becomes one being by the cooperation of all the component parts under one life principle. In the integration of humanity to form the Super-Person, it is not so much a matter of *life* principle (in the biological sense) as of a *love* principle, love being the typically *human* energy. And Christ, as the Supreme Lover, fills the role of governing Principle for this new level of being, because He is the single focus of consciousness-energy through which all the elements' energies flow, as they each love Him and are loved by Him.

But our human level of complexity and consciousness is in turn composed of all the lower levels; each of us is a strand of the cosmic stuff, brought now by the most powerful and coherent energy formation—love¹²—into the ultimate focus on Christ-

Omega:

'The world's history bears the form of a vast cosmogenesis, in the course of which all the threads of reality converge without fusing in a Christ who is at the same time personal and universal.'¹³

Christ is universal as being the supreme Principle of organization for all the elements of the universe, ranked in complex within complex from the highly unified human consciousness through biological entities down to molecules and atoms. Just as the human life principle orders all the cells of which the human body is composed, and thereby the molecules of which the cells are composed, and thus the atoms which constitute the molecules, and in this way is the principle of the *whole* being as a single living union, so Christ is the Principle of the entire universe, the Centre in terms of which all lesser energies are ordered to one another. As Teilhard says, 'Fundamentally ... but one single thing is being made in creation, the body of Christ'.¹⁴ In this sense all is Christ.

Teilhard calls this doctrine of his 'pan-Christism' and distinguishes it from what he conceives to be erroneous doctrines of 'pantheism'. He fears 'the pantheisms of the inanimate' which cling to 'formless energy' as the basis of stability, for their 'perfect universal union ... would give us only fusion and unconsciousness [as] ... the elements of the world vanish in the God ... by which they are absorbed'.¹⁵ He sets his view in diametrical opposition to 'the cult of a great All in which individuals were supposed to be merged like a drop in the ocean or like a

ous and the most mysterious of the cosmic forces.' *Human Energy*, p. 32.

¹³ *Human Energy*, p. 155.

¹⁴ Teilhard: *The Divine Milieu*, rev. tr. (Harper & Row, New York, 1965), p. 104.

¹⁵ *Human Energy*, p. 152; *The Divine Milieu*, p. 116.

¹² 'Love is the most universal, the most tremend-

dissolving grain of salt'.¹⁶ Again, this is why the *differentiating union* is so important for him, and why the universe must be a *personalizing universe*, in which the more the persons are united in the Supreme Person, the more they become themselves:

'Unlike the false monisms which urge one through passivity into unconsciousness,... "pan-Christism"... places union at the the term of an arduous process of intellection. I shall become the Other only by being utterly myself. I shall attain spirit only by bringing out the complete range of the forces of matter. The total Christ is consummated and may be attained, only at the term of universal evolution:... a personalized universe, whose domination personalizes me.'¹⁷

Nevertheless, the sense of the All, of the Whole, is critical for Teilhard. Only the Whole as such has any meaning, he admits.¹⁸ And 'the Whole cannot reveal itself to us without our recognizing in it God And on his side, how can God make

himself manifest to us otherwise than by passing through the Whole?'¹⁹ But the unity of this Whole, the principle of the All, must be sought at the apex of the evolutionary process where the energy of converging complexity finds its densest flux, that is, where personal love energies are in intimate intercommunion. For Teilhard, 'souls mutually transparent to each other in perfect self-possession constitute the only pantheistic fusion that is logically conceivable for self-conscious persons who are not to fall to a lower level of reality when they are united'.²⁰

This is the highest type of unity, in Teilhard's eyes, and the key to the activation of human energy for the future. The 'world to come' will come only if we freely choose to enter into such a union, to give ourselves fully to God and to one another in this way. If we believe in the divine evolution which has brought us this far and if we care enough for life—feel enough for life, love life enough—then, but only then, will we be able to enter into this creative future.

¹⁶ *The Phenomenon of Man*, p. 262.

¹⁷ Teilhard: *Christianity and Evolution* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1971), p. 129.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 57-58.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁰ *Human Energy*, p. 69.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DISCIPLE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN KABUL

[We bring our readers here a very interesting reminiscence of a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, by a Moslem religious, Maula Abul Hadi. This was discovered by the translator in a Persian book by Syed Mohamed Ali Jamal-zadeh, entitled *Sar-o-Tahe-ek-Karbaas* (meaning, 'Of the Same Leaven' or 'Tarred with the same Brush', and published by Kanum Marfat, Tehran, 1334 Hijri Shansi, or A.D. 1955-56).

The translator, who passed the material to one of our senior monks, provides the following background for the narrative:

'In the preface of the book the author says that it is the reminiscences of his childhood at Ishpahan. He left Ishpahan when he was eleven years old, about 1902. He revisited his home about forty years later. There he met his boyhood friend Jwad Aga. The two friends were talking about their past lives. Jwad was a very rich man but very unhappy. He said that at age twenty-four when he was in great mental torment, he had met a Dervish, Sobhan by name. Sobhan sent him to his friend Maula Abul Hadi and advised him to tell him his difficulties. He went to Hadi. When Hadi heard of Sobhan, he got much excited. He had not seen that dear friend for thirteen long years. In a reminiscing mood he began relating how he and Sobhan had been putting up together in Kabul with a fakir from India, a disciple of Ramakrishna. The author writes the incident as he heard it from his friend Jwad, but perhaps many years after and from memory, as best he could recollect it. (It is not known if he maintained any diary.) Naturally, there may be factual errors, but certainly he was very much impressed and wrote of it in considerable detail.'

We are however not aware that any of the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna visited Kabul. Of course, by hints contained in the recollections, such as the knowledge of Persian and the projected visit by the monk to Tibet, we may make an unsure inference about the identity of the disciple. But since we want to be as sure as possible, we would request our readers, if they happen to have come by any such, to provide us with more clues or bits of evidence towards establishing the monastic disciple's identity.—*Ed.*]

In Kabul, Hadi began, we became acquainted with a dervish from India, well known as the Fakir of Kabul. He was wearing a saffron robe and was a disciple of the wise and famous Ramakrishna. Frankly I had never heard of such a name. But Sobhan knew much about this great saint—his life, his teachings, his miracles [*sic*]. The time was ten to fifteen years after Ramakrishna passed away. Sobhan was relating to me many facts about him that prove his greatness. He told me how after the death of Ramakrishna his followers and devotees had their headquarters at Belur, a place near Calcutta in Bengal.

There they built a monastery to spread the message of Ramakrishna. They have their branches not only in India and Burma, but in countries far and wide. They have monasteries, schools, many hospitals, newspapers, periodicals, magazines in different languages. Ramakrishna has millions of followers with great faith in him. On hearing all this, I asked Sobhan, 'Do you think that this Man with this strange name is Jesus Christ reborn in that form and in his age? But tell me in brief what is his message and what do his followers say.' Sobhan laughed and said; 'What shall I tell you about the wonderful land of India ...?

How do you expect me to explain in two words the idea, purpose, message and philosophy of this wise individual and one of the greatest men of that country? In fact, I do not myself know much, but this much I do know, that his main object is to make man perfect. He thinks that to do this you require your whole body, heart, and brain. He further elaborates that you need to develop and strengthen your power of thinking, your fondness for work, and a feeling of love and affection within you.' I told him, 'You are taking this too far: you are carrying it to the point of hero worship; I am afraid you will gradually place him in the position of God.' Sobhan said: 'Rest assured—learned men from India, even whose malleoli (of the ankle) we cannot reach in intelligence, have declared him to be God, when he was barely thirty. He is the manifestation of God and God's spirit has entered his body.'

The monk from Bengal knew Persian fairly well and a great friendship grew amongst us. We used to be together most of the time. Every morning we departed to get our daily bread, and for sight-seeing, around the old and ancient city of Kabul. Every morning the monk used to go out alone; we never knew where. We too would go out and return in the evening. At night, sitting around a tea kettle kept on the fire, we would pass our time in long hours of conversation and discussion. The fakir of Bengal was literally intoxicated with love of Ramakrishna: every time his name was mentioned a glow would light his eyes—the same glow we see in a man's face when the name of his beloved is heard. He would stand up unconscious of the surroundings, and begin to dance saying, 'Rām, Rām', and repeating verses from the ancient Muslim poet Kabīr, who as Sobhan says 'is similar to our own poet Hakim Kasem', and was also a weaver. He [the fakir of Bengal] loved Kabīr's poems very much; he would [on hearing them] get restless and ecstatic, emanating an aura of joy all around which carried away everyone of us along with him.

One night, as usual the talk was about Ramakrishna. Friends all around were listening with rapt attention. I remained unnoticed, but finally got impatient and intervened saying, 'Dear friend, without even knowing him and only hearing from

you, my reverence goes towards this leader of the caravan; but will it not be better if you tell us about the wisdom and philosophy of India, about the philosophers and wise men of that land—especially about the life and teachings of Ramakrishna in greater detail, so that my beggar's bowl does not remain empty from this divine harvest?' Sobhan replied, 'My friend, in this respect my thirst greater than yours, but my knowledge is limited; excuse me for it and ask this revered friend of ours.' And he pointed towards the monk.

The monk nodded his head and said: 'My friends, you know that India is a wonderful land. In that vast flower-garden, the fragrance of only one divine flower has reached me and that is Ramakrishna. The garden until this time has not produced a better flower. Ramakrishna is a blazing flower: its spark ignites whatever it touches; its flame lightens up whomsoever it approaches. What do you expect of me—one who is burnt? Has not your own poet said: "The burnt man has got back his life, but not his voice"? ' In reply I said: 'Do you mean to say that in that vast land of jungle with so much noise, Ramakrishna is the only wise man, the only philosopher? How fortunate and lucky you are to know him, but alas! A thousand times alas to us! We came too late. It is my bad luck today that I cannot reach the caravan where he was. But I am satisfied I can hear that voice of heaven, and I am sure that through your kindness we can pluck a flower from that divine holy ascetic and have a petal for our use.'

The monk replied: 'At the age of fifty, Ramakrishna passed away into Eternity. Half of his life he had his lips tight, silent: he was in trance, in deep meditation, in austere self-discipline. But his short life is like an endless sea, and to measure him with our own cup of spiritual thinking is like digging the mountain with the point of a needle.' I replied: 'From this sea we will be satisfied if we get only one drop. For us to be intoxicated, only half a measure in fact, a thimbleful, is enough.' The monk said: 'Since the talk is about a measuring cup and the sea, I recall one night in the grove of Panchavati. Panchavati is a grove planted by Ramakrishna with his own hands, and named so because of its five trees. Panchavati stands on the

Ganga near the temple where Ramakrishna stayed, and only 6.5 kilometres from Calcutta. We surrounded him, watching the glittering stars above and the muddy water flowing below. Nature's beauty often had its great effect on him: soon he became unconscious, statue-like, in a trance [*samādhi*]. It was long before he came to consciousness again; then one of us asked him where he had been. An enchanting smile parted his lips, and he replied in a calm and melodious voice—a voice which was only his and which will always ring in my ears—, “In reply to your question, I will tell you a story.” All of us shouted, “From head to foot we are all ears for it.” Ramakrishna said: “A puppet made of salt went to measure the sea with a cup in his hand. He stood on the shore of the sea and began to watch the sea. Till that moment he was the salt puppet; but soon his feet touched the water and then he became one with the sea: he dissolved, disappeared, completely vanished. The doll was made of salt that came from the sea, and went back to the sea; it cannot return and narrate the story about the sea and its depth.”

So saying, the fakir of Bengal closed his lips; everyone surrounding him became calm, reflective, giving deep thought to this great story, the great truth lying behind it—its philosophy, its religious implications, and its beauty. They were closely scrutinizing it in their minds, when Sobhan began reciting a couplet in a very melodious voice. It may be translated thus:

‘Who can penetrate through and understand the attributes, the qualities, the inner being of the one who is united with his essence, overwhelmed and submerged into the origin, into the substance and into the nature of his being? When your head is at the bottom of the streamlet, how will you see the surface? Look at a *kūjā* (pitcher) in a brook. It is separating its water from the stream's, but when the *kūjā*-water gushes out into the brook, the two waters mingle: the *kūjā*-water regains its origin, loses its identity, and is saved from the heat of the sun, from dust, and from the wind.’

My eyes fell on the fakir of Bengal. His eyes were closed and he appeared lifeless; even his breathing could not be detected. Silence pervaded everywhere. Then

Sobhan's voice changed; he began to recite Attar (the Persian mystic poet, Farid Uddin Attar, A.D. 1119-1229):

‘Like a drop in the ocean, lose your self; you find your origin, get that bliss, and reach the truth and the Reality. Just as when a drop mingles in the ocean, in its union in a sudden flash it gets the joy and gets its recognition. To Him you will be united like a drop with the sea, and get that bliss and joy. If you dwell in the sea you will *be* the sea; you can understand the self within, just as you know the pearl after breaking open the oyster. You can immerse yourself in the spiritual sea and go into the Reality: the limited drop into the unlimited sea; the man in the end is united to God. The drop, knowing the sea goes back into the sea and becomes the One. It comes from the ocean and back to the ocean it goes.’

Dervish Sobhan became silent, yet there the fakir of Bengal like a statue was still seated, straight and motionless. His hands were on his knees; the fingers indicated a gesture seen only in the hands of the wise yogis of India. He showed no sign of life. I went to him and wanted to shake him and bring him back out of that ‘unconscious’ state. But Dervish Sobhan signalled me with fingers on lips, and said, ‘Don't disturb his trance. He is in a state of bliss. He is in a world of complete fulfilment and full satiety. Anyone going to that state can hardly send back any message; he never comes back.¹ This is the same state we name “Mehraj” and the Hindus call *samādhi*. And about it, Rumi (the great Persian Sufi poet, Jalaluddin Rumi, A.D. 1207-1273) says and very aptly says: “I am on the earth motionless, in one place, but roaming round the seventh heaven like the planet Saturn.” (The Prophet Muhammad is said to have gone to the seventh heaven in his “Mehraj”.) Anyone who found his way there, from him I never heard the saying, “I am”.’

¹ What is possibly meant here is that the worldly ‘ego’ of the yogi does not return. And that seems to be the implication, as borne out by the following sentences in this paragraph. Furthermore we know great saints who attain that state come back to normal consciousness and do great good to humanity.—Ed.

I came back to my place and began to watch that wonderful and astonishing state; and lost myself in an ocean of thought. When I next opened my eyes a faint light of dawn had entered our room. Dervish Sobhan was still sleeping, but there was no sign of the fakir of Bengal. [The other guests apparently had also departed]. I was surprised that he had left so early—I was frightened. In his unconscious state he might have gone out and, God forbid, come across some harm. I placed my hand on Sobhan's shoulder, woke him up and told him: 'Our friend has disappeared; I hope he does not come to any harm. It is well that you get up and we search and

see where he has gone.' All round the city of Kabul we looked for him, but did not find any trace. No one could give any information about him. We returned home completely exhausted. Next day too we got no news. Dervish Sobhan said: 'I am sure he has left the town. He himself told me he intended to go to Tibet on a pilgrimage to the monastery built by the followers of Ramakrishna over there.² May God be with him, and if it be our fate we will meet him again.'

² This is obviously an inaccuracy, for there has been no Ramakrishna Monastery in Tibet then or now.—Ed.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Reminiscences are taken from: Swami Saradananda: *Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600004, 1956); and 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Madras, 1947). References: *Great Master*: No. 1, p. 158; No. 4, pp. 160-1. *Gospel*: No. 2, p. 320; No. 3, p. 171.

The words quoted in 'Onward For Ever!' are from *The Complete Works*, Volume I (1962), pp. 468-9.

David Hilbert, a German mathematician once remarked, 'The infinite! No other question has ever moved so profoundly the spirit of man.' Hilbert was dead right. All science, aesthetics, philosophy, religion, and mysticism are only the results of man's unremitting search for the Infinite. If the approach of science is through logic and experimentation, aesthetics has its own different approach through emotion and appreciation of beauty. While philosophy adopts a rational and analytical approach to the Infinite, religion and mysticism have successfully tried the direct inward ap-

proach. In the Editorial this month we reflect on the theme of the infinite and try to link it up with Sri Ramakrishna's profound realizations. We hope our readers will be especially interested in this subject this month when Sri Ramakrishna's birthday will be celebrated by his devotees all over the world.

Swami Vivekananda and his message alike are without narrow geographical or cultural boundaries. Anyone not blinded by fanaticism or prejudice can see this on reading the Swami's life and works. If he as a truth-seeking young man walked into a welter of scepticism, conflict and agonizing uncertainty, but without despairing pressed forward and arrived at the summit of certainty, tranquillity and God-vision, it was to blaze a trail for hundreds of generations of youth yet to be born. He did not sit down there to enjoy peace and bliss for himself, but moved by love and compassion descended to the plains of common humanity to teach and show the way to others.

Thus he is an ideal both to the East and to the West, especially the concerned, seeking youth.

Dr. Leta Jane Lewis, writing on the basis of deep study and insight, shows in her article 'Swami Vivekananda's Message to Western Youth' how the troubled, groping, but still seeking Western youth can find light and inspiration in Swamiji's life and teachings. Dr. Lewis is, we believe, familiar to our readers by her contributions to the *Prabuddha Bharata* in recent years. She is Professor, Dept. of Foreign Languages, School of Humanities, California State University, Fresno, U.S.A.

'The Crowning of Pārvatī's *Tapas* (Austerity)' has been extracted from the famous poetical composition of Kālidāsa, entitled *Kumāra-sambhavam* or 'The Birth of Kumāra' (also called Kārtika, the war-god.) One of the finest in the 'seventeen canto' poem, the fifth canto depicts the superhuman austerities of Pārvatī to win Śiva as her husband, and the success in her undertaking. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that if one wished to realize God, one must call on Him with that intense love and yearning that Pārvatī had for Śiva, Sītā for Śrī Rāma, or Rādhā for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kālidāsa (circa sixth century A.D.) is considered to be one of the greatest poets, if not the greatest, of Sanskrit literature.

Swami Vivekananda's journey to and vacationing in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland took over eight weeks, from 19 July to 17 September, 1896. The Switzerland trip was the theme of Swami Vidyatmananda's article published in our March-April issues of 1973. Now he covers Swamiji's visit to the other two Continental countries. In 'Vivekananda in Germany and Holland, 1896', the author's effort has been mainly to reconstruct Swamiji's travel and visit day by day through those two

countries and 'to flesh out the bare details' now already available in the published sources. His conscientious search for traces of Swamiji and his party in old newspaper columns, city archives, and hotel registers, was on the whole 'devoid of success' owing especially to the vast destruction which overtook German cities during World War II. However the author has brought the relevant portion of the standard Biography up-to-date and with the help of suitable illustrations has made Swamiji's visits to a large extent come alive before our mental eyes. As most of our readers are likely to know, Swami Vidyatmananda is the Assistant Minister of the Centre Vedantique Ramakrishna, Gretz, France.

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'If you put the merit earned by one thousand *aśvamedhas* (horse-sacrifices) in one pan of the balance', says the *Mahābhārata*, 'and truth (alone) in the other, truth will still be weightier than the one thousand *aśvamedhas*.' Such is the importance attached to truth in human life by the ancient Hindu teachers and scriptures. Because God is truth, an unswerving adherence to it will lead a man to God. The birth of Sri Ramakrishna, who is one of the greatest manifestations of God for many centuries, as the son of Kshudiram, an uncompromising votary of truth, is highly symbolic. It seems to signify the revelation of God in the heart of one who steadfastly worships at the altar of truth. 'Explorer's' subject for the 'Profile in Greatness' this time is Kshudiram Chatter-

jee, whose character-traits were noble, charming and inspiring—most conspicuous among them all having been his truth-abidingness.

It is a truism to say that modern Western psychology is making slow and steady headway towards maturity and adulthood, while leaving behind behaviouristic and Freudian adolescence. In this growth and progress the contributions of Existentialist Psychologists, along with several related schools, are indeed considerable. Psychology, when it is rigorously and uncompromisingly pursued, must point the searcher in the direction of a mind-transcending and spiritual entity. In order not to lose its privilege of being classified as an experimental science however, psychology seems still to be shying away from the concept of the transcendental reality. If science is experimental, it is also equally an uncompromising search for truth, which ultimately must include transcendental truth. By rigorously pursuing truth, psychology will be doing an immense service to humanity, and will also progress towards its own consummation. 'Some Modern Trends in Psychoanalysis in the Light of Vedānta', by Swami Nityabodhananda, is a thought-provoking contribution, pointing out the Vedāntic rationale behind some of the healthy modern trends in psychoanalysis. The Swami is the head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, in Geneva, Switzerland.

'Sermonettes at St. Moritz' is a new serial which we are bringing our readers beginning with this issue. We hope they will benefit by the practice-oriented contents of these 'Sermonettes'. Most of our readers are likely to know that Swami Yatiswarananda, a disciple of Swami Brahmananda, carried the message of Vedānta to Europe—particularly to Germany, France, and Switzerland—and later to the U.S.A. In 1935-36

he stayed and taught in St. Moritz, in south-east Switzerland. The 'Sermonettes' are notes of the class-talks he gave there, and they have been carefully selected to avoid repetition, and re-arranged to give as much continuity as possible without affecting the Swami's style of speaking and wording.

Henri Bergson has been compared to René Descartes, another French philosophical Colossus who has left an indelible mark on western philosophy. Bergsonian philosophy and other related themes have been subjects of Dr. S. Subhash Chandra's previous contributions to this Journal, and they have generally been highly appreciative of Bergson. But in his present article, 'Bergson's Theory of Evolution: A Philosophical Criticism' Dr. Subhash Chandra, M.A. (Osmania), Dr. Phil. (Köln), Dr. Phil. (Paris), turns his critical searchlight on the weak links in Bergson's theory of 'creative evolution'. Yet, despite his erudite, well-documented criticism, the author does admit his admiration for this great French philosopher. 'Whether one may agree or not with Bergson,' concludes the article, 'his is a bold and pervasive interpretation of evolution that will always elicit respectful admiration from everybody.'

Those who have read Keshab Chandra Sen's biography cannot but be impressed by his energy and vision, his powers of intellect and heart, his universality and yet patriotism, and above all his sincere spiritual aspirations. A dynamic and flamboyant leader though he was, he yet possessed a humble student's plastic mind. So when he first met and listened to Sri Ramakrishna, he was at once deeply impressed, and from that day a very intimate and affectionate relationship grew up between them. And thenceforward a slow but perceptible change began to take shape in him. This meeting

and mingling of these two great prophets of renascent India has generated many far-reaching beneficial results which recent history has recorded. A most instructive and informative account of the first meeting between them is contributed to our columns this month by Swami Prabhananda, a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

We often hear that religion is declining, corruption is on the upswing, and youth has turned away from God, traditions and churches. And there is considerable truth in such observations. But what is happening in Taizé is a wordless but stunning rebuttal of all such pessimistic views. The Church of the Reconciliation and its monastic fraternity, led by Founder-Prior Roger Schutz at Taizé in eastern France, are spreading a wave of religious revival which is drawing people and churches closer to themselves and to God, and attracting 'rebellious' youth in thousands. 'God is not dead, but very much alive if you only know how to love Him and see Him'—seems to be the message of Taizé. Another important aspect of this movement is that Roger Schutz and his colleagues are all monks, having bound themselves with the vows of celibacy, community of goods, and obedience. Why should the youth in these days of material affluence, sexual revolution and permissiveness, flock in such large numbers to a monastic community? Well, real spirituality has been always a rare commodity. But when and where it has existed, men and women irrespective of their age, have been irresistibly drawn to it. Today in Taizé the world is witnessing the power and sway of true selflessness and Christ-love, which are the core-values of religion and spirituality.

Swami Bhavyananda, the head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London, visited Taizé last summer and, at our request, has contributed a fine write-up on

'...The Taizé Movement', with an informative historical background.

'Okakura and Swami Vivekananda' is the second and concluding part of the article by Yasuko Horioka (Mrs. Chimyo Horioka) presenting a learned study of the acquaintance of and affectionate relationship between Okakura, the artist-scholar from Japan, and Swamiji, the modern Indian prophet-sage who deeply loved and admired Japan. The first part appeared in our January issue. Mrs. Horioka has thoughtfully sent us a photo-negative of Okakura to accompany this article. This was taken in the court of the Gardner Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, in 1904—only two years after Okakura's meeting with the Swamiji. We are grateful to the authorities of the Gardner Museum for their permission to reproduce it here. Yasuko Horioka is a writer in English and Japanese, being a published author and a frequent contributor to American and Japanese journals.

In 'The Activation of Human Energy: Pan-Christism And The World to Come', Dr. Beatrice Bruteau acquaints us with those ideas of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin which conceive of a 'creative' 'differentiating union' of humanity as the further and final goal of organic evolution. This can be achieved, according to Teilhard, by the unifying unselfishness and love of Jesus Christ. But the 'Pan-Christism' of Teilhard should not be understood by us in the limited sense of universal acceptance of Jesus by all humanity. De Chardin was a devoted Catholic monk, and it was natural for him to hold up Jesus Christ as an unparalleled universal ideal. But other such Christlike souls have been witnessed by history, recent and remote, every one of whom can serve as an equally effective ideal for bringing masses of humanity—and the

whole of it—into vast ‘differentiating unions’. This important point has to be borne in mind while reading this scholarly, condensative essay. Dr. Bruteau’s related essay on ‘Spiritual Evolution Toward Omega’ appeared in our January issue.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

NYAYA RAKSHAMANI OF SRIMAD APPAYYA DIKSHITHENDRA, edited by PANDIT S. R. KRISHNAMURTHI SASTRI, *et. al.* Published by Srimad Appayya Deekshithendra Granthavali Prakasana Samithi, Secunderabad-26 (A.P.), 1971, Pages xiii + 21 + 432 + 73, Price Rs. 20/-

Sri Appayya Dikshita of the sixteenth century was a profound scholar whose versatility won him laurels. Blending in himself Saivism and Vaishnavism, he wrote on all the systems of philosophy besides other works. By most of us he is remembered as the greatest Advaitin after Vacaspati, Prakasatman, and Vidyaranya. Of his 104 works only a few were published and these too are now out of print. It is therefore a praiseworthy venture on the part of this Samithi (a committee) to publish all the works of the great Dikshita. This is the first of a projected fifteen volumes.

The present text offers a stimulating commentary on the first chapter of the *Vedanta-sutras*. Here is an original commentary on the *Sutras* and we find an inimitable mastery of Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Bauddha, Purva Mimamsa and Vedanta systems of philosophy. There are remarkable insights which even his *Parimala* does not show clearly. The dialectical skill of the master is magnificent. It is written in flowing and easily readable Sanskrit. This work is a must for all the students of Indian Philosophy and also for all those genuinely interested in metaphysical and epistemological problems. However, the errata of 20 pages could have been dispensed with by a more rigorous proof-reading.

DR. P. S. SASTRI,
Professor and Head, Dept. of English
Nagpur University

HINDI

NAVANEET SAURABH: COMPILED BY NARAYAN DATTA, Published by Navaneet Prakashan Ltd., Bombay 34, year?, pp. viii + 400, Price Rs. 15/-

The book under review is an anthology of writings and articles by well-known authors, published in the Hindi literary digest, *Navaneet*, within its first two decades. The collection has been made by Sri Narayan Datta, Editor of the magazine. The book runs to 400 pages, including 101 articles on various subjects. As the Director of Navaneet Publications, Sri Gopal Tevatia, has himself observed in the Preface, a choice of 400 pages of substantial matter out of thousands of pages spread through 240 issues over a 20-year period, was no easy task. Indeed it was not possible without a swan-like faculty for discriminating between milk and water—wheat and chaff—on the part of the Editor. Sri Datta has proved equal to the task. He has shown great ingenuity in selecting and arranging the contents of the book out of so rich a diversity. In going through the contents one finds the book as interesting as the magazine itself. The reader never has a sense of monotony: this is always prevented by the changing nature of the topics. Writings on various subjects—memoirs, travelogues, science, fine art, philosophy, religion and life-sketching etc.—are arranged in a manner allowing no boredom. The material, further, is of universal value, from its moral and educative background: this adds to the significance of this work, for which both editor and publisher deserve commendation. The book will prove profitable even to those who have read the articles in *Navaneet*, not to speak of readers in general.

The book is therefore recommended for both private and public libraries.

SRI DHARMENDRA DEV,
Additional District Magistrate
Pithoragarh, U.P.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, RANCHI

ANNUAL REPORT—APRIL, 1972 - MARCH, 1973

Founded in 1927 and affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission in 1930, this Ashrama for many years was the scene of Swami Vishuddhanandaji's intense spiritual practices, as well as regular preaching work and conducting of a small homoeopathic dispensary. From 1952, when the Swami was made Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, the Ashrama work expanded; and in 1966-67 the severe drought in the area brought forth energetic and effective Emergency service from Ashrama staff and devotees. Again in 1967, acute communal riots in Ranchi brought response from the Ashrama, and in 1971, it became extensively involved in relief operations for refugees from East Pakistan and then rehabilitation work in Bangladesh. In these latter, not only was there fine co-operation from the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, which had also helped with drought-relief, but also from some Adivasi boys associated with the Ashrama.

Meanwhile in March 1969, a residential training centre for rural youth in self-help and social service, 'Divyayan', was begun in one large building forming the hostel for twenty farmers, plus class rooms, office, etc. The prompt success of the project led to rapid increase in space available, and soon a regular schedule of 20 trainees each in eight groups annually (six weeks' training for each) was set up. The great majority of trainees are farmers from Scheduled Tribes and Castes, particularly of the surrounding area. Agronomists, poultry experts, social education organizers, and trained village-level workers were employed as instructors and in the extension work. Training includes stress on learning to appreciate the value of the land, while seeing demonstration of efficient methods of improving it. Naturally the subject of farm-financing is also presented.

Divyayan has from the start received much financial aid from outside, though its administration is from the Ashrama. Most notable was the above-mentioned Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, showing steady and generous help from the start. Sri B. K. Dutt, then Managing Director of United Bank of India Ltd., encouraged the plan ever since 1963, with some of his colleagues, and still is actively helpful. M/s Hindustan Charity Trust has been aiding the project since 1969; and several Grants from

the Union government and Bihar State Government are currently prominent, as well as the West Bengal Relief and Aid Committee. As a result, the entire training programme is free of charge to trainees, including food, field-uniforms, etc.

Sri Ramakrishna Sevakendra was further established by ex-trainees and interested friends, as an 'extension' programme to assure continued spread of the methods and principles of *Divyayan*. Working in close collaboration with the latter and the Ashrama, the Sevakendra groups centre mostly in the areas where trainees have settled, using these men as catalysts to continue the spread of the knowledge they have gained. They help other farmers with their financing, supervise marketing, loans and their repayment, help pick out new trainees for *Divyayan*, etc. As result of such co-operative efforts, *Divyayan* itself continues its rapid growth: a storage building for farming essentials was completed in 1971; a large farm (190 acres) was donated, and development begun there; a poultry-farm has grown rapidly from small beginnings; a workshop for farm-machinery-training was set up recently, and a small dairy built; deep wells have been bored; an audio-visual unit set up serving both the trainees and nearby villages, as many trainees have very limited reading-skill and villagers less.

In accord with the wishes of Ashrama members and many of the devoted donors, the Divyayan Institute was dedicated to the memory of Swami Vishuddhananda, in April 1973. Meanwhile it had been blessed by many helpful visits from senior Swamis: Rev. Swami Vireswarananda visited the Ashrama seven times since 1966, with personal attention to the planning and execution of Divyayan programmes; and among others, Swamis Nirvanananda, Dayananda, and Abhayananda have given inspiration and guidance. Two other sets of visitors are noteworthy: a team set up by the Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of India, with representatives of State and Central Governments plus the Ramakrishna Mission, conducted an evaluative Study of Divyayan's training during its first three years; and a second Evaluative Study was sponsored by the Ashrama management.

Other Ashrama activities: A reading room, reorganized in 1969 into a *Library* with textbook section, is maintained; the homoeopathic *Dispensary* continues its service, aided in 1967-70 by a Mobile unit; *Feeding Centres* in nearby

villages have been conducted for decades, more intensely from 1967-72, stressing milk and egg (from Divyayan) distribution for children, with co-operation from tribal volunteers who show commendable initiative. *Preaching* work includes morning and evening prayers of the Divyayan trainees in the Shrine; celebration of birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swamiji both at the Ashrama and in local villages, as well as other festive days at the Ashrama. Regular classes on scriptures in Hindi and Bengali are held twice weekly in the Ashrama, and occasional lectures by the Swamis in and around Ranchi. For *students and children*: regular competitions annually for the Vivekananda birthday celebrations; and annual sports for boys and girls of Sevakendra units near by. *Relief operations* continued this year in Bangladesh (sending funds, clothing, etc.); and for local drought-sufferers, some excavation and renovation of wells.

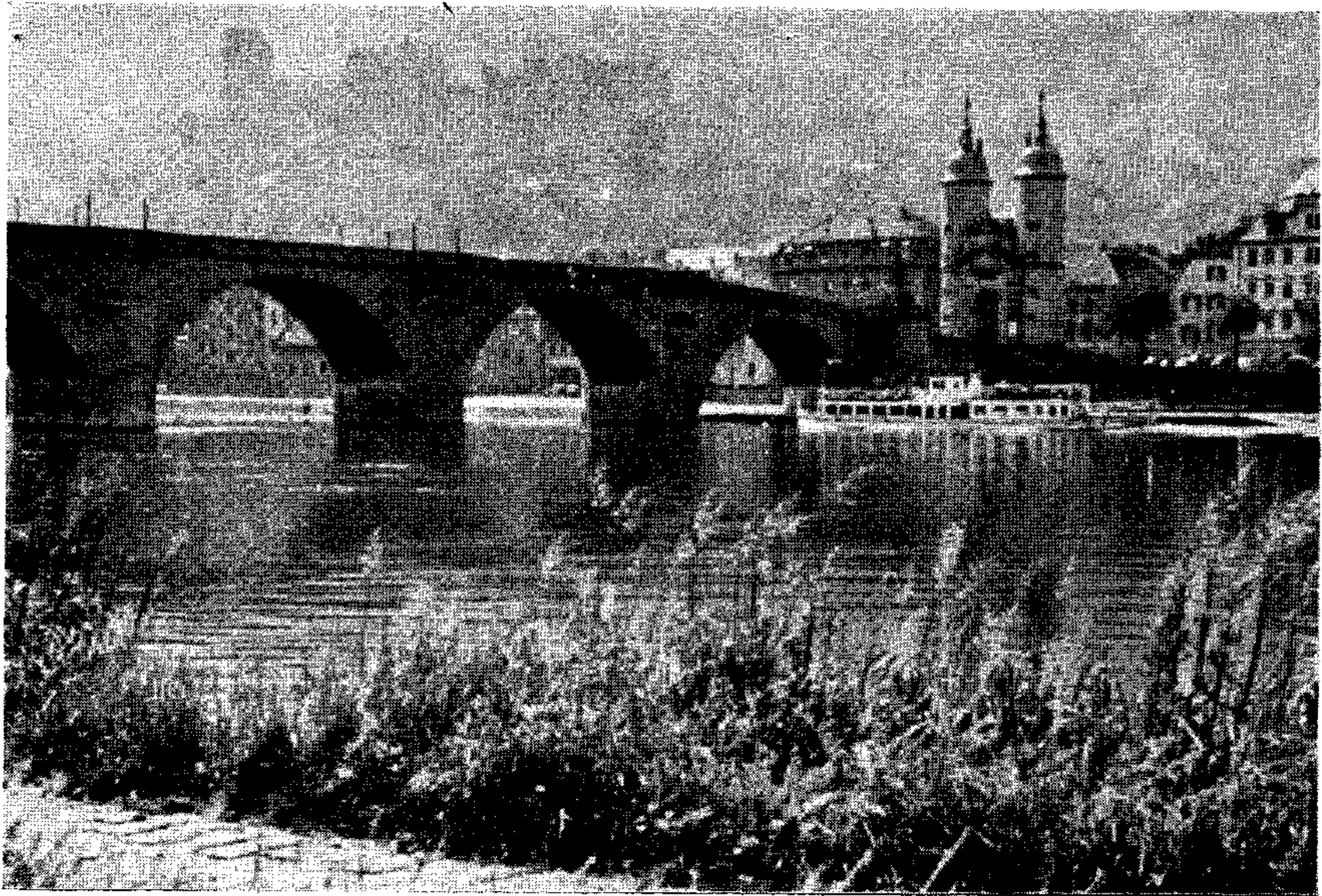
Immediate Needs: For renovation of the *Temple*: Rs. 15,000/- beyond the Rs. 15,000/- already received. For construction of a *monastery building*, necessitated by demolition of the old buildings now housing the monastics: so far only Rs. 10,000/- is available. For development of the *Farm*: funds and/or gifts of farm-machinery. For *trainees of Divyayan*: it costs about Rs. 600/- for each trainee for the six-week period, for food, teaching costs, etc.

ERRATA

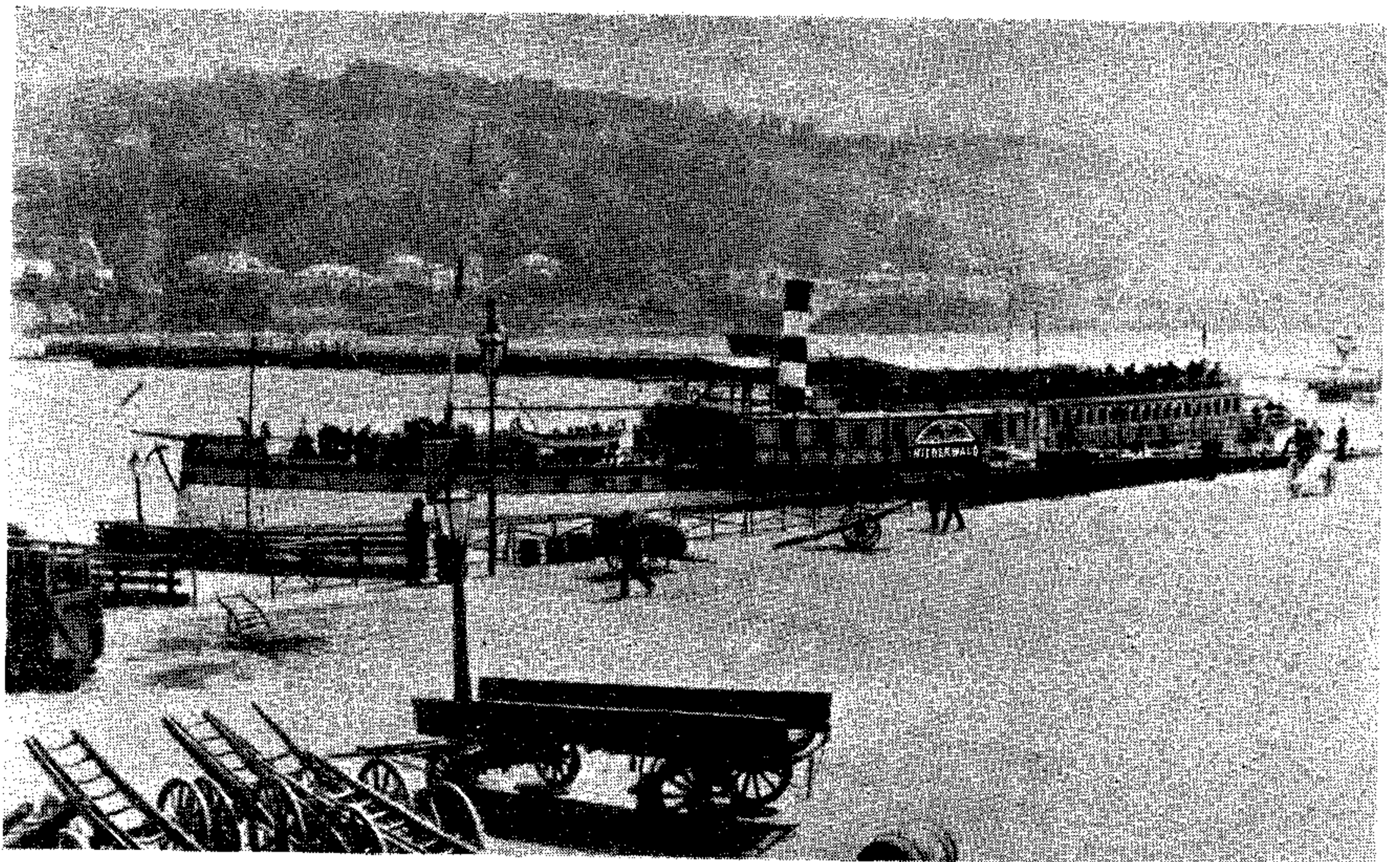
Prabuddha Bharata, January 1975

- p. 19, col. 1: Omit line 25 (which is a duplication).
 p. 36, col. 1, line 9: for Chingo read Chimyo.
 p. 38, col. 1, line 15: for abtruse read abstruse.
 p. 39, col. 1: line 30 should be read after line 49, at the bottom of the column.

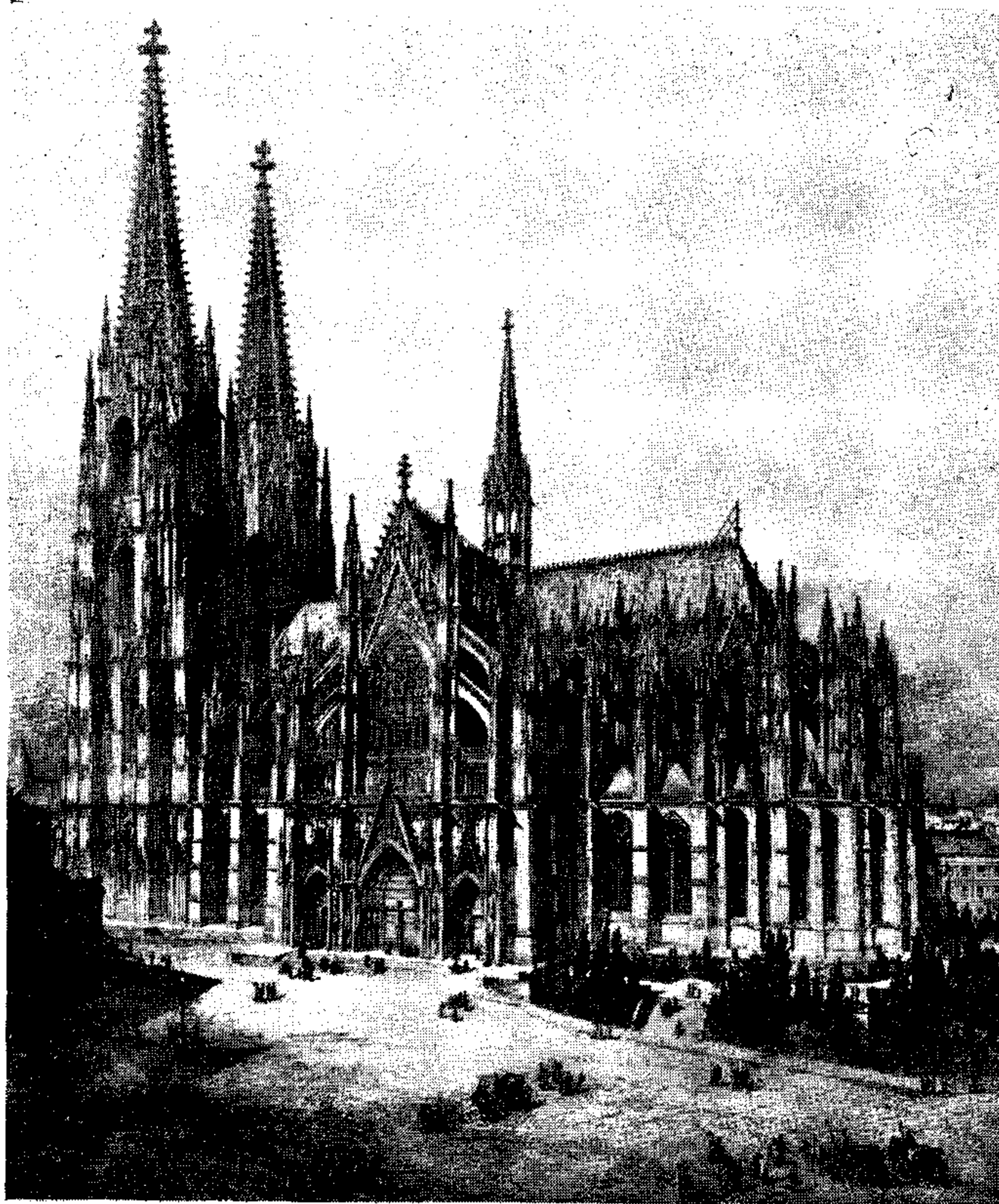
The 'Human Trends', scheduled for publication in the January issue, could not appear, owing to shortage of space. The omission, as well as the errors, are regretted.



Heidelberg : Old Town with Castle above



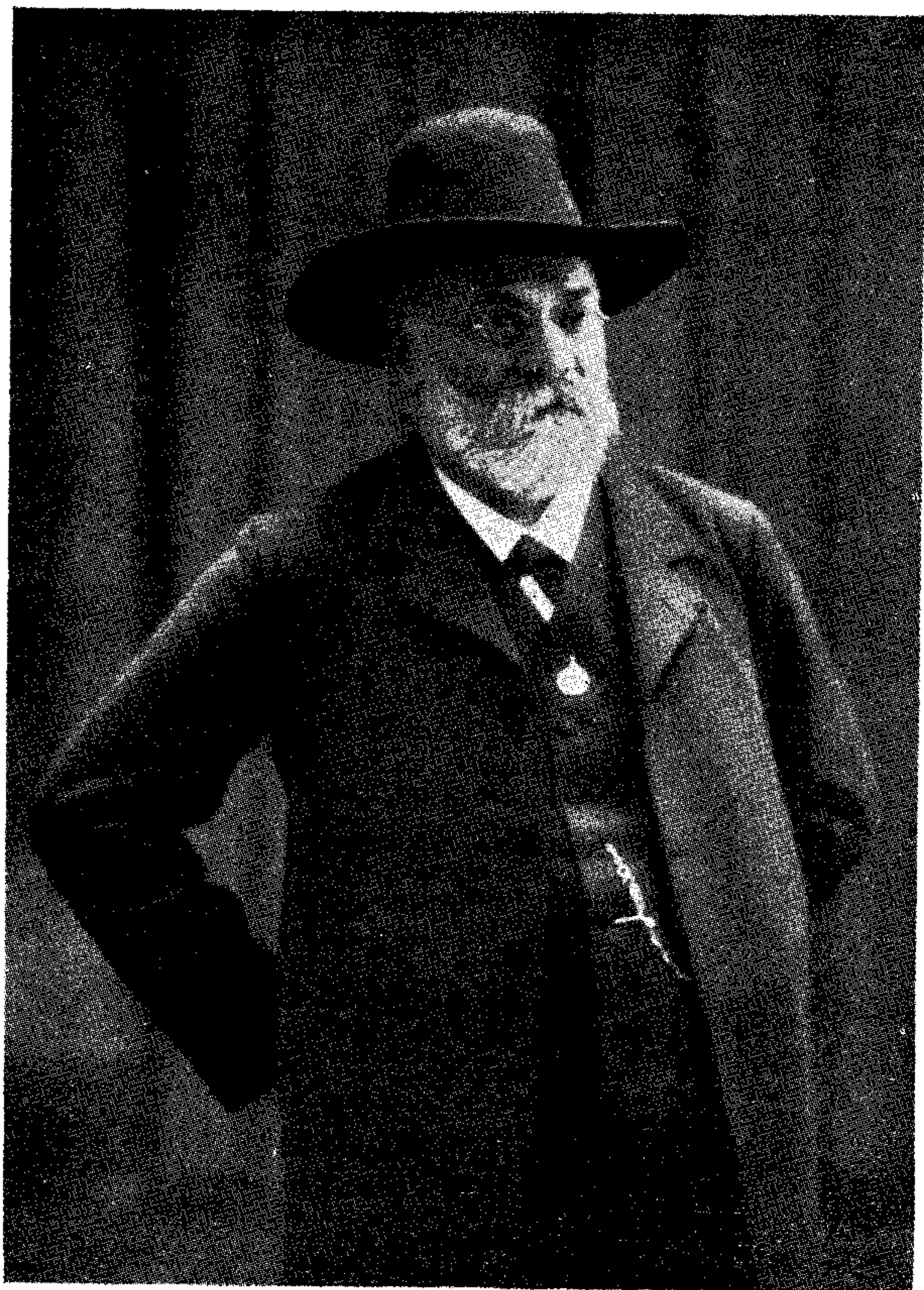
Rhine Steamer at Coblenz, about 1896



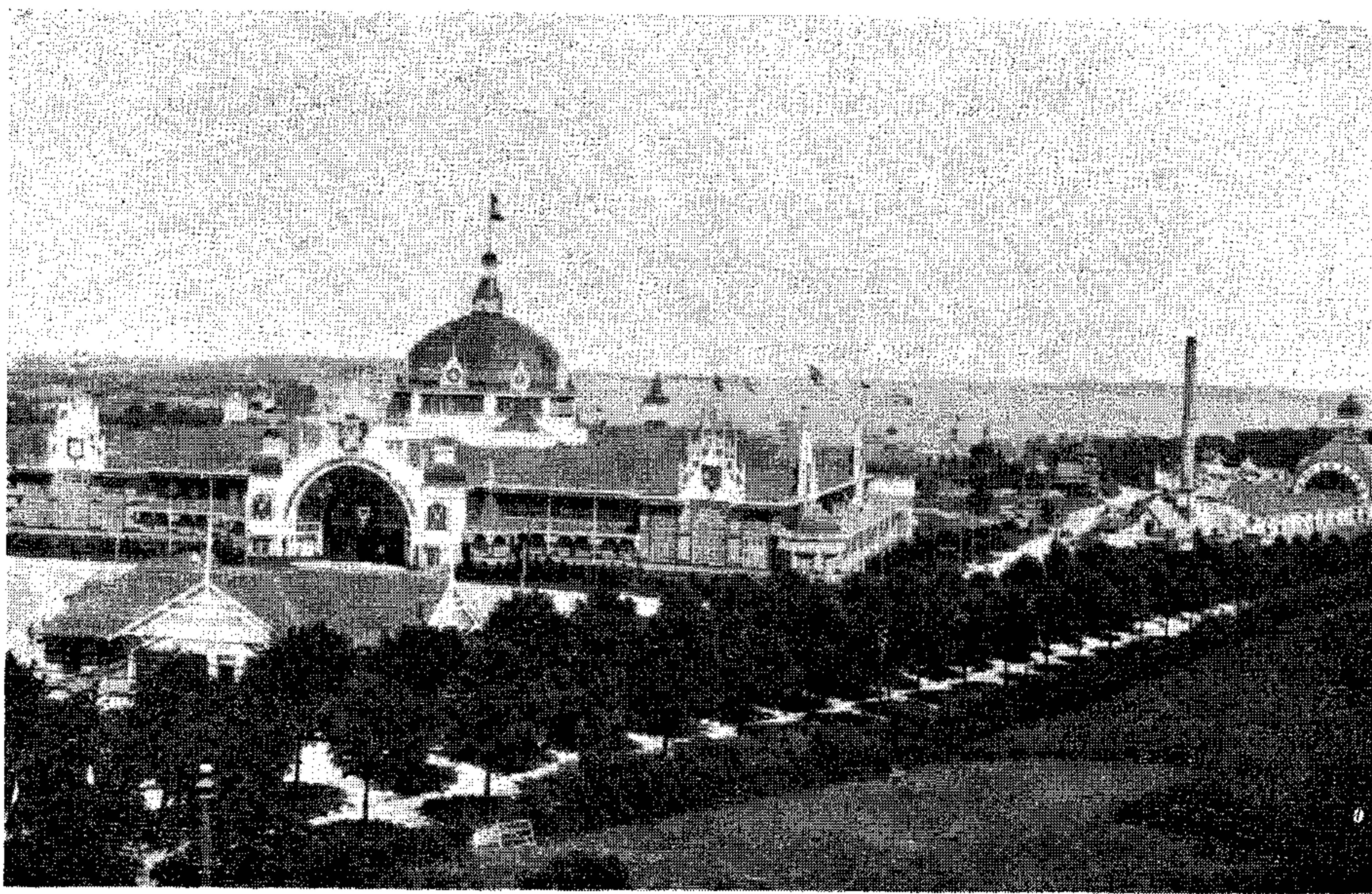
Cologne Cathedral, 1880



Deussen Residence, Beselerallee 39, Kiel.



Paul Deussen in later years



Kiel Exposition of 1896



*Victoria Hotel, Amsterdam,
shortly after its opening in 1893*



Ryks Museum, Amsterdam



OKAKURA KAKUZO