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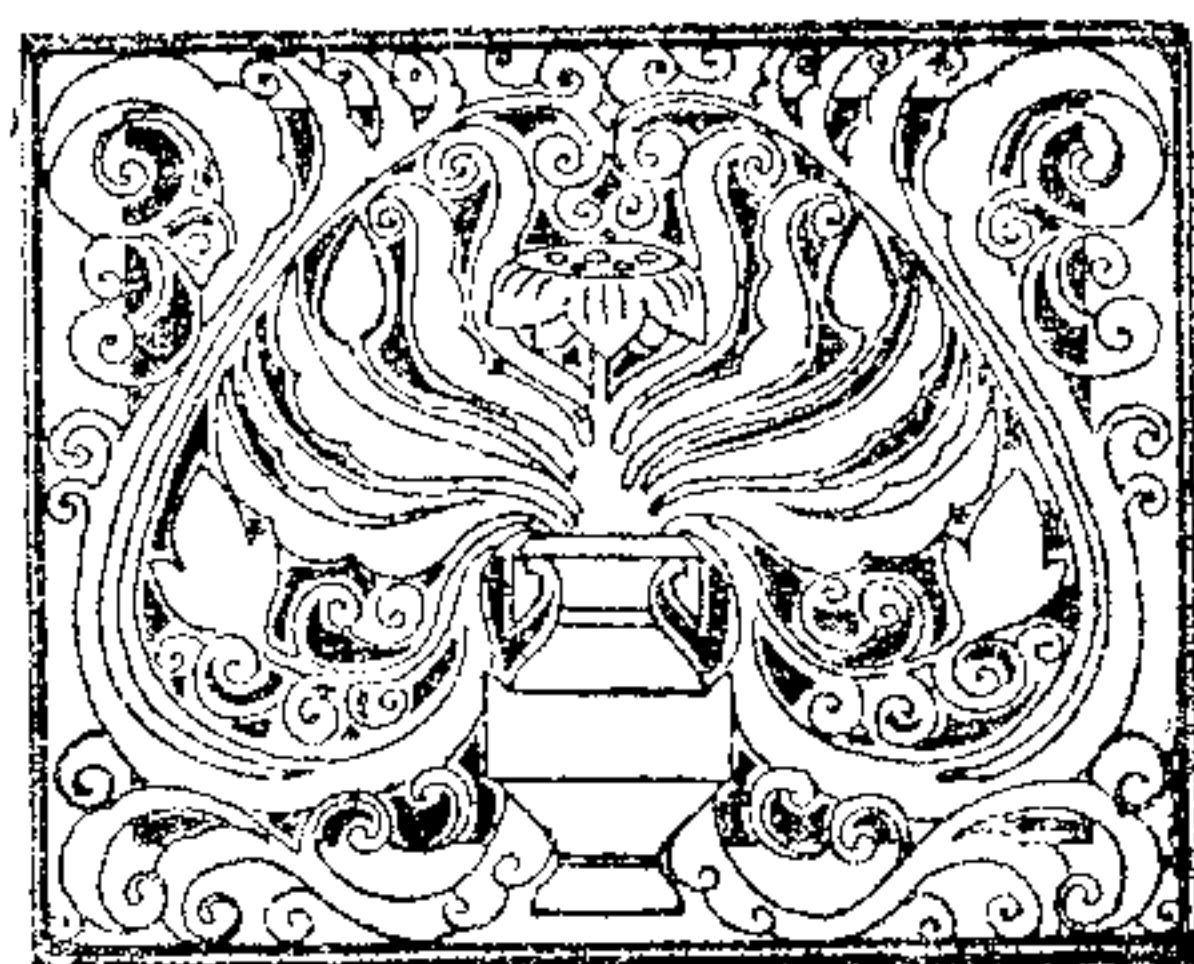
JUNE 1975

Prabuddha Bharata

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Prabuddha Bharata

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RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

JUNE 1975

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Cover :

Kanchenjanga from Sandakphu

Photo: Bimal Dey



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXX

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No. 6

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA REMINISCES

'*Nivritti* alone is good, and not *pravritti*.¹ Once, when I was in a God-intoxicated state, I was asked to go to the manager of the Kali temple to sign the receipt for my salary.² They all do it here. But I said to the manager: "I cannot do that. I am not asking for any salary. You may give it to someone else if you want". I am the servant of God alone. Whom else shall I serve? Mallick noticed the late hours of my meals and arranged for a cook. He gave me one rupee for a month's expenses. That embarrassed me. I had to run to him whenever he sent for me. It would have been quite a different thing if I had gone to him of my own accord.

'In leading the worldly life one has to humour mean-minded people and do many such things. After the attainment of my exalted state, I noticed how things were around me and said to the Divine Mother, "O Mother, please change the direction of my mind right now, so that I may not have to flatter rich people."'

*

'When I attain God I shall attain everything. I renounced gold and silver, saying, "Rupee is clay and clay is rupee; gold is clay and clay is gold." With these words I threw gold, silver, and clay into the Ganges. Then I was afraid at the thought that Mother Lakshmi might be angry with me because I had treated Her wealth with contempt; that She might even stop my meals. So I prayed to the Divine Mother, "O Mother, I want Thee and nothing else." I knew that by realizing Her I should get everything.'

*

'I prayed to the Divine Mother: "O Mother, I don't want name and fame. I don't want the eight occult powers. I don't want a hundred occult powers. O Mother, I have no desire for creature comforts. Please, Mother, grant me the boon that I may have pure love for Thy Lotus Feet."'

*

¹ *Nivritti* and *pravritti* mean, respectively, inwardness of the mind and its inclination to outer enjoyment.

² Sri Ramakrishna was then acting as the salaried priest of the Kali temple.

‘A man visits his father-in-law’s house. I, too, often used to think that I should marry, go to my father-in-law’s house, and have great fun. But see what has come of it!’



‘Marriage is necessary for the sake of *samskara*.³ But how could I lead a worldly life? So uncontrollable was my divine fervour that every time the sacred thread was put around my neck it dropped off. Some believe that Sukadeva also had to marry—for the sake of *samskara*. They say he even had a daughter.’



‘There is a greater manifestation of God in men of pure heart. In former years, when I used to go to Kamarpukur, I would feed some of the young boys with my own hand. Chine Sankhari would say, “Why doesn’t he feed us that way?” But how could I? They led an immoral life. Who would feed them?’



‘Once, while going to Kamarpukur, I was overtaken by a storm. I was in the middle of a big meadow. The place was haunted by robbers. I began to repeat the names of all the deities: Rama, Krishna, and Bhagavati. I also repeated the name of Hanuman. I chanted the names of them all. What does that mean? Let me tell you. While the servant is counting out the money to purchase supplies, he says, “These pennies are for potatoes, these for egg-plants, these for fish.” He counts the money separately, but after the list is completed, he puts the coins together.’



‘The Divine Mother...showed me in a vision the five suppliers of my needs; first, Mathur Babu, and second, Sambhu Mallick, whom I had not then met. I had a vision of a fair-skinned man with a cap on his head. Many days later, when I first met Sambhu, I recalled that vision; I realized that it was he whom I had seen in that ecstatic state. I haven’t yet found out the three other suppliers of my wants. But they were all of a fair complexion. Surendra looks like one of them.’



‘Once a thief broke into the temple of Vishnu and robbed the image of its jewels. Mathur Babu and I went to the temple to see what was the matter. Addressing the image, Mathur said bitterly: “What a shame, Lord! You are so worthless! The thief took all the ornaments from Your body, and You couldn’t do a thing about it.” Thereupon I said to Mathur: “Shame on you! How improper your words are! To God, the jewels you talk so much about are only lumps of clay. Lakshmi, the Goddess of Fortune, is His Consort. Do you mean to say that He should spend sleepless nights because a thief has taken your few rupees? You mustn’t say such things.’

³ According to Hindu religious law, marriage is one of the ten *samskaras*, or purificatory rites, prescribed for the three higher castes, namely the brahmin, kshatriya, and vaisya.

ONWARD FOR EVER!

Two sorts of persons never require any image—the human animal who never thinks of any religion, and the perfected being who has passed through these stages. Between these points all of us require some sort of ideal, outside and inside. It may be in the form of a departed human being, or of a living man or woman. This is clinging to personality, and bodies, and is quite natural. We are prone to concretize. How could we be here if we did not concretize? We are concreted spirits, and so we find ourselves here on this earth. Concretization has brought us here, and it will take us out. ... It is very easy to say 'Don't be personal'; but the same man who says so is generally most personal. His attachment for particular men and women is very strong; it does not leave him when they die, he wants to follow them beyond death. That is idolatry; it is the seed, the very cause of idolatry; and the cause being there it will come out in some form. Is it not better to have a personal attachment to an image of Christ or Buddha than to an ordinary man or woman? In the West, people say that it is bad to kneel before images, but they can kneel before a woman, and say, 'You are my life...' Is it not better to kneel before a statue of Buddha or the Jina conqueror and say, 'Thou art my life?'



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE BUDDHA—II

EDITORIAL

TWO GREAT FOUNDERS OF MONASTIC ORGANIZATIONS AND MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

Students of the long history of Hinduism are likely to be well aware of the fact that renouncers—both men and women—who had given up their all for attaining the highest truths, antedated the Buddha. Monasticism was greatly advocated, revered and practised during the Upanisadic period. The Buddha, it is said, was inspired to renounce his home and worldly relations by witnessing the three typical miseries—old age, disease, and death—and finally, the sight of a monk of calm and blissful countenance. When, soon after, he left his palace at midnight, the Buddha took up the vocation of a mendicant monk, and he never looked back on his decision. A burning spirit of renunciation characterized him throughout the rest of his life; and the religion he taught has renunciation as its foundation. It was this spirit of renunciation in the pre-Buddhistic period which had rescued religion in general and Hinduism in particular from the clutches of ritualism and materialism. And be it said to the eternal glory of the Buddha that he 'breathed life into the dead bones' of the institution of monasticism, and once again rejuvenated religion in India. Though he preached renunciation, 'yet in six centuries she [India] reached her greatest height'¹ of prosperity. Hinduism in later centuries absorbed this monastic zeal of Buddhism, to revivify its own temporarily ebbing traditional spirit of renunciation.

Not only did the Buddha preach renunciation and propagate a religion which laid

¹ Swami Vivekananda: *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.) Vol. V (1959), p. 228

the greatest emphasis on the monastic way of life. He, for the first time in world history, also organized a monastic brotherhood. The guidance he gave for the infant monastic organization and the rules he framed for the conduct of monks, show what a far-sighted organizer he was. He had also other firsts to his credit. It was the Buddha who first commissioned his monks to go and preach to all, the great dharma (doctrine), and thus brought into existence evangelism and missionary work. This work gained in momentum in later centuries, especially during the reign of Asoka, and resulted in the spread of Buddhism to almost the whole of Asia. Furthermore, the Buddha opened wide the doors of monastic discipline and of his Order to women also. In this he showed a liberality of outlook and breadth of heart which froze with shock and amazement the Hindu society of his day. Even today, the Buddha's liberality and unconventional outlook appear amazingly progressive.

'I have a message to the West', said Swami Vivekananda once while in the U.S.A., 'as Buddha had a message to the East'.² In this significant declaration Swamiji gives us the key-hint to understand his own life and mission. The message that Swamiji gave to the West was the essence of Vedānta—of the divinity of the soul, the experimental nature of religion, the spirit of renunciation and universality. This message, of course, was not exclusively meant for the West. Swamiji gave more or less the same message to the East, and in fact to humanity as a whole. Just like the Buddha, Swamiji had to face one of the most powerful tidal waves of materialism ever to sweep over human society. The counter-wave of renunciation, God-consciousness, and spirituality that Swamiji—guided and armoured by his Master

Sri Ramakrishna—set in motion is also one of the most powerful religious renaissances ever to uplift humanity. Renunciation and spirituality rescued human society from the clutches of materialism in the wake of the Buddha's teaching; and once more that same message, delivered through Swamiji to the whole world, is contending with the surging waves of modern materialism. To students of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji it is needless to say that the spirit of renunciation and dispassion was one of the predominant features of the movement started by them. Moreover, just as the Buddha's teaching of renunciation ushered in centuries of prosperity to India—though it may seem paradoxical to the worldly-minded—so too is the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji bringing the start of a general amelioration in this country. Some of the outstanding events of recent decades and recent months, like the achievement of political independence, progress in scientific and technological fields, and the steady improvement in the condition of the masses, seem to us to be the early and unmistakable signs of the future glorious India that Swamiji spoke about.

Guided by the counsels of his Master and by his own intuitions, Swamiji became convinced of the need for establishing a monastic order which would carry on the Master's work. Soon after his passing, the band of young disciples led by Swamiji—then Narendranath Datta—took the final vows of monasticism and founded the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order at Baranagar. 'For one's own salvation and for the good of the world'—this was the motto that guided the young band of monks. Soon Swamiji made history when in May 1893 he sailed for America to attend the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago, as a delegate of Hinduism, thus becoming the first Hindu monk to cross the seas and bear the

² *ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 314

message of Vedānta to alien societies. His letters from the West to his Indian disciples and particularly to his brother-monks at Baranagar reveal what a great organizer he was. To Baranagar he wrote many letters, some containing in detail the rules for guiding the conduct of individual monks and the affairs of the monastery. It is this body of rules and regulations that basically guides the Order even today. In founding a monastic order and in organizing missionary work, again, Swamiji's life parallels that of the Buddha. Swamiji himself once said in reply to a question as to the distinguishing feature of his movement: 'Aggression ... aggression in a religious sense only. Other sects and parties have carried spirituality all over India, but since the days of Buddha we have been the first to break bounds and try to flood the world with missionary zeal.'³ Evidently referring to the humanitarian services then being rendered by his monastic brothers and his own disciples, Swamiji wrote to a Western follower, 'For the first time since the days of Buddha, Brahmin boys are found nursing by the bed-side of cholera-stricken pariahs.'⁴

In thus carrying forward his Master's life and teachings according to his own deeply penetrating interpretation, Swamiji saw that Sri Ramakrishna's message was strikingly clear regarding the need for uplift of women. The Master loved and wept for the poor and the fallen and exhorted one and all to serve them as the Lord Himself. He regarded all women as the embodiments of the Divine Mother, practised spiritual disciplines in the guise and attitude of a woman, accepted a woman as his first teacher, and finally, looking on his own wife as the Divine Mother, he helped her to achieve the

highest spiritual wisdom and left her behind to continue the work of spiritual ministrations begun by him. So the concern for women and their welfare, which was uppermost in Swamiji's mind, made him plan the monastic organization for women centring round the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi. He himself had given monastic vows to at least one American woman and the preparatory vows of *brahmacarya* to a few other Western women disciples. His dream of founding a separate monastic organization for women, similar to the one he had started for men, finally came to be realized in 1954, a little over fifty years after his death. In contradistinction to what the Buddha had said and done—namely, to make nuns subordinate to monks and subject to their guidance—, Swamiji said that the women's organization must be entirely independent and free of men's control. In accordance with his directions, the Ramakrishna Mission helped the founding and organizing of the women's monastic order. But soon thereafter, when this new organization was ready to function on its own, the Ramakrishna Mission completely dissociated itself from that institution.

BREAKERS OF CASTE AND PRIVILEGE

The Buddha rebelled against many of the evils in the existing Hindu society and religion. Just as he fought against the priestcraft, ritualism and sterile intellectualism of brahmanical Hinduism, he repudiated the caste-system and its evils of privileges and tyranny. Though this severe attitude estranged him from the priests and social leaders and aroused their wrath—possibly resulting finally in the disappearance of Buddhism from the land of its birth—, still the Buddha remained uncompromising in his stand. As Swamiji has so incisively said:

'Once a gigantic attempt was made to

³ *ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 225-6

⁴ *ibid.*, Vol. VIII (1959), p. 407

preach Vedantic ethics, which succeeded to a certain extent for several hundred years, and we know historically that those were the best times of that nation. I mean the Buddhistic attempt to break down privilege. Some of the most beautiful epithets addressed to Buddha that I remember are, "Thou the breaker of castes, destroyer of privileges, preacher of equality to all beings." So, he preached this one idea of equality.⁵

On other occasions when he spoke of the Buddha's efforts to break down privileges and artificial barriers, Swamiji called him the 'George Washington of the religious world'. He said that the Buddha 'conquered a throne only to give it to the world, as Washington did to the American people'.⁶

With the insight he had gained by the study of Indian religious history and its various phases, Swamiji observed that whenever the brāhmaṇas started a revival they tended to be exclusive, while the ksatriyas were liberal and inclusive. He said, 'It is a significant fact that the two greatest men ancient India produced, were both Kshatriyas—Krishna and Buddha—and still more significant is the fact that both of these God-men threw open the door of knowledge to every one, irrespective of birth or sex.'⁷ Over and above all this, Swamiji admired most in the Buddha the fact that he did not claim any privileged position as a prophet or an incarnation. About himself the Buddha said, 'Buddha is the name of infinite knowledge, infinite as the sky; I, Gautama, have reached that state; you will all reach that too if you struggle for it.'⁸

Students of Swamiji's life are likely to be well aware that he too saw the evils bred by the age-old caste system which had become decadent and hereditary. He too,

like the Buddha, mercilessly attacked its corrupted forms, and set an example by himself crushing underfoot senseless practices and conventions. But unlike the Buddha, Swamiji recognized that the old caste system had at one time served a great purpose, and if restored to its original status could still be of much service to the Indian body-politic. In his utterances about caste and its implications, we find Swamiji both attacking and defending it. With regard to the meaningless external observances of the higher castes in eating, drinking, and social boycott of the lower castes, Swamiji poured out undisguised scorn and condemned these mercilessly. On the other hand, regarding the wonderful caste-scheme for elevating the people from lower levels to higher and yet higher levels, until they could reach perfection in the pure selfless brāhmaṇa, Swamiji was all praise and admiration. But privilege in any form he denounced wholesale. A knower of Brahman himself, Swamiji saw that every man, woman, and child, in fact every living being, was that Infinite under self-imposed limitation—under a veil of ignorance. So how could any one claim superior privilege over another? But while the Buddha tried, with limited success, to bring about equality by attacking the caste-system as a whole, Swamiji sought only to prune away its excrescences and preserve what was vital, elevating, and transforming. Some of his utterances about the duty of the higher castes towards the lower and the urgent need 'to give back to the masses their lost individuality' reveal a heart as tender and broad as that of the Buddha.

Thus, what Swamiji observed about the phenomenal liberality of ksatriya prophets, applies with equal validity to his own case. As readers of his biography may know, Swamiji himself was born in a ksatriya family.

⁵ *ibid.*, Vol. I (1962), pp. 424-5

⁶ *ibid.*, Vol. VII (1958), p. 59

⁷ *ibid.*, Vol. IV (1962), pp. 325-6

⁸ *ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 136

Despite all his teachings about cultivating strength, courage, and faith in oneself, and his own personal example in that direction, Swamiji was yet like the Buddha one of the humblest of men. His humility was that of a knower of Brahman. Though he attained tremendous success and popularity, nevertheless he felt that he was like anyone else. There was nothing extraordinary in him, he used to say. Once he said in a California lecture:

'I have never seen the man who was not at least my equal. I have travelled all over the world; I have been among the very worst kind of people—among cannibals—and I have never seen the man who is not at least my equal. I have done as they do—when I was a fool. Then I did not know any better; now I do. Now they do not know any better; after a while they will.... We are all in the process of growth. From this standpoint one man is not better than another.'⁹

TWO GREAT COMBINATIONS OF HEAD AND HEART

In the Buddha we come across a thoroughgoing agnostic and an iconoclast. He did not want to discuss ultimate questions as to the existence of God and soul, the origin of the universe, and so on. As he found ritualism and priestcraft revolting, and a moral life feasible without any belief in God, he rejected the Vedas. He reasoned fearlessly and taught in a style which was rigorously logical and absolutely convincing. To his followers he spoke in this manner:

'Believe not because some old manuscripts are produced, believe not because it is your national belief, because you have been made to believe it from your childhood; but reason it all out, and after you have analysed it, then, if you find that it will do good to one and all, believe it, live up to it, and help others to live up to it.'¹⁰

Despite this insistence on rationality, the 'head', the Buddha possessed an unbounded heart, brimming with compassion for every living creature. He was so merciful that he offered on one occasion his own body to king Bimbisāra in place of the goats he was about to sacrifice. The king was so moved and transformed by this celestial compassion that he gave up all violence and became a follower of Buddha. Innumerable such incidents are found in his life, so much so that 'Buddha' and 'motiveless compassion' have become almost synonymous words!

Though Swami Vivekananda passed through the stage of an agnostic, still he ultimately accepted fully the authority of the Vedas. His realizations gave him an unshakeable conviction about the existence of God. No doubt he fulminated against superstition and irrational practices in Hinduism; yet he was in sympathy with its doctrines and traditions. Nevertheless, Swamiji was a great rationalist and very strongly advocated the use of reason in the religious quest. This advocacy is quite in consonance with the teachings of the Upaniṣads and the great teachers such as Śaṅkarācārya. In his lecture 'Reason and Religion', Swamiji says:

'...Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation, which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside, to be applied to the science of Religion? In my opinion this must be so, and I am also of opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigation, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better.... All that is dross will be taken off, no doubt, but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation.'¹¹

⁹ *ibid.*, Vol. VI (1963), p. 48

¹⁰ *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 117

¹¹ *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 367

In another lecture, 'Methods and Purpose of Religion', Swamiji exhorts religious seekers to cultivate reason:

'Why was reason given us if we have to believe? Is it not tremendously blasphemous to believe against reason? What right have we not to use the greatest gift that God has given to us? I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him....'¹²

Swamiji too like the Buddha combined his brilliant intellect with a vast compassionate heart, as we have seen. In him the intellect of Śaṅkara coexisted with the heart of the Buddha. Swamiji himself thus became an example of what he recommended to others (here for the time stressing the Buddha's 'heart' even though he so well knew the keenness of his intellect):

'In Buddha we had the great, universal heart and infinite patience, making religion practical and bringing it to every one's door. In Shankaracharya we saw tremendous intellectual power, throwing the scorching light of reason upon everything. We want today that bright sun of intellectuality joined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful infinite heart of love and mercy. This union will give us the highest philosophy. Science and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends. This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will be for all times and peoples.'¹³

VIVEKANANDA'S TRIBUTES TO THE BUDDHA

How deeply Swamiji loved the Buddha, how intensely he had studied his life and faith, and in what reverence he held him, will become clear to anyone who reads *The Complete Works* of the Swamiji. It

is true that he criticized Buddhism on certain occasions. But very seldom the Enlightened One. 'Far be it from me', he said at one of the sessions of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, 'to criticize him whom I worship as God incarnate on earth.' In one of his finest and most comprehensive lectures on the Buddha's message, Swamiji said:

'The life of Buddha has an especial appeal. All my life I have been very fond of Buddha, but not of his doctrine. I have more veneration for that character than for any other—that boldness, that fearlessness, and that tremendous love! He was born for the good of men. Others may seek God, others may seek truth for themselves; he did not even care to know truth for himself. He sought truth because people were in misery. How to help them, that was his only concern. Throughout his life he never had a thought for himself. How can we ignorant, selfish, narrow-minded human beings ever understand the greatness of this man?'¹⁴

Swamiji's *Karma-Yoga* is justly very popular; so also is his *Inspired Talks*, the scanty notes of his talks at Thousand Island Park recorded by one of his disciples. In both these, the finale refers to the Buddha! That indicates how close to Swamiji's heart was this subject of the Buddha. It is, however, at the end of the last chapter of the former book, that he pays one of the richest tributes to the Buddha and calls him the 'ideal Karma-Yogi'. In an impassioned peroration Swamiji says:

'He was, in the conduct of his life, absolutely without personal motives, and what man worked more than he? Show me in history one character who has soared so high above all. The whole human race has produced but one such character, such high philosophy, such wide sympathy. This

¹² *ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 12-13

¹³ *ibid.*, Vol. II (1963), p. 140

¹⁴ *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 103-4

great philosopher, preaching the highest philosophy, yet had the deepest sympathy for the lowest of animals, and never put forth any claims for himself. He is the ideal Karma-Yogi, acting entirely without motive, and the history of humanity shows him to have been the greatest man ever born; beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested....' ¹⁵

In his lecture 'The Sages of India', Swamiji speaks somewhat at length on the factors which contributed to the decadence of Buddhism. But his homage to the Buddha whom he considered as Śrī Kṛṣṇa reincarnated to show the people how to put into practice the teaching of the *Gītā*, is truly touching:

¹⁵ *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 117

'And from the topmost crest of the wave that deluged India for nearly a thousand years, we see another glorious figure, and that was our Gautama Shakyamuni.... We worship him as God incarnate, the greatest, the boldest preacher of morality that the world ever saw, the greatest Karma-Yogi; as disciple of himself, as it were, the same Krishna come to show how to make his theories practical.... As it were to give a living example of this preaching, as it were to make at least one part of it practical, the preacher himself came in another form, and this was Shakyamuni, the preacher to the poor and the miserable, he who rejected even the language of the gods to speak in the language of the people...; he who gave up a throne to live with beggars, and the poor, and the down-cast, he who pressed the Pariah to his breast like a second Rama.' ¹⁶

¹⁶ *ibid.*, Vol. III (1960), pp. 262-3

LETTERS OF A SAINT

The Ramakrishna Cottage
Almora. 3/11/16

My dear Doctor,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 28th ultimo. Glad to know that your father can sit up now. He may regain his former health gradually.

You need not take to such awful measures to get control over your passions. Such drastic and cruel means are for the Tāmasic—*mūḍha*. Mother will not put you to such violent methods in order to gain mastery over carnal desires. They will go away of themselves when your desire for realizing the Mother would increase, as a man would not care to have treacle after he has tasted candy. So when you get real taste for divine pleasure all craving for sense pleasure will cease to trouble you any more. One thing that is needful for you just now is to think of Mother and Mother alone and to look to nothing [else] for help or guidance. Have absolute faith in Mother that She will protect you and lead you aright, and you will be saved for certain.

Svadharmā in the *Gītā* does not mean Christianity or Hinduism, or any ism for the matter of that, but the duty of one's own status in life. Arjuna was a Kshatriya prince, and his duty was to fight, but he wanted to take to the life of a Brahmin, and give up fighting, and that is why the Lord declared unto

him, 'svadharṁe nidhanam śreyah; paradharṁo bhayāvahah.'¹ However, I admire the spirit of self-restraint that you have written about in the life of the Saint in your letter. That kind of punishing oneself may be necessary and helpful to some. But for you is the path of love and not torture. Love for Mother will take away the love for the flesh from your mind. And that is going to be in your case sooner or later, may it be sooner than later.

What are you doing now? Not trying to secure any post? It is no good sitting idle. I shall be very happy if I hear that you are doing something. My best wishes and love to you as ever.

Yours in the Lord
TURIYANANDA

The Ramakrishna Cottage
Almora - 26-11-16

My dear Doctor,

I have been very much anxious to hear from you, and it was with great satisfaction that I received your so long and beautiful letter of the 19th inst. day before yesterday.

It pleased me so very much to learn that you have been feeling much better these days, and no adverse thought disturbs your peace of mind with regard to spiritual advancement as it used to do before. You need not thank me, but thank Mother, and be grateful to Her if you need be to any. For it is She who blesses us with everything that we want in earnest from Her. Only I am exceedingly happy to note that you think that Mother has made me an instrument to bring some solace to you. I feel so grateful to Her for the same if it is really so. Yes, She made me to understand that yours was the path of love, and not that of self-torture, though the latter may have use for some. I am glad that you keep yourself engaged always and never allow the time to hang heavily on you. Yet I pray that you may have some work for your own provision and for that of others who depend on you. It is well that you are trying for a post, and I trust you will secure one before long. I am sorry your father has not improved much as yet. I am afraid you are quite right when you say that he may not be his old self again. For he is too old for that now. But what could be done? What cannot be cured must be endured, as the adage goes. It is a matter of regret that you could not come to Almora as you wished. But never mind, we shall meet again in proper time by the grace of the Mother. I have been urgently requested by S. [Swami] Shivananda and others to come to Benares, as early as possible. I think I shall have to go down to Benares very shortly. Let us see how the Mother ordains it.

The course of meditation that you are following now is all right. You

(Contd. on p. 258)

¹ 'Better is death in the doing of one's own dharma; the dharma of another is fraught with peril.' *Bhagavad-gītā*, III. 35.

PRACTICE OF DETACHMENT

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

IV

Now, how do we practise detachment, without which neither prosperous well-being nor attainment of illumination is possible?

How does attachment arise?

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains to Uddhava the difference between the bound and the free souls; and incidentally elucidates how attachments arise, and how detachment saves:

‘The Self, eternally free, appears to be bound because of its association with the *guṇas*. The *guṇas* themselves being the product of Māyā, there is, in reality, no bondage of the soul.’

‘The wise man, who is awakened from this dream of ignorance, even though living in the body, knows himself to be apart from it. The ignorant man, who is still dreaming dreams, identifies himself with the body.’

‘The wise man, who is free from attachment to the *guṇas* and their workings, is not, like the ignorant man, bound by deeds. Even though living in the midst of the *guṇas*, he remains pure and unaffected like the clear sky above, of the self-luminous sun, or the all-cleansing fire. With doubts dispelled by the pure light of knowledge, he awakes from the dream of the manifold universe and sees the one self in all beings. Free indeed is he from limitations of the body, though living within it, if his heart be without attachment and without desire.’²⁴

The psychology of attachment may be analysed in the following way according to the Hindu scriptures:

The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* teaches that whatever we consider as ‘me and mine’—to that we are going to be attached, and from that will issue pain and pleasure. The Self feels the pain of the body, because it thinks itself to be the body. It becomes free from the pain of the body when it gives up that idea. Attachment therefore is rooted in the association of the idea of ‘I’-ness or ‘my’-ness with an object.

Patañjali says, ‘Attachment is that which dwells on pleasure.’²⁵ There are certain things, some of which may be queer or weird, in which we find pleasure. To such things our mind naturally flows like an irresistible current. This specific disposition of the mind in relation to pleasurable things is ‘attachment’. What we call the flow of the mind may not be discernible while attachments are hardened and well settled. A wheel moving at a great speed may appear stationary.

But how do we get pleasure? It is through the instrumentality of our body. Therefore, our greatest attachment is to our body. Whatever gives pleasure to our body, our attachment grows toward that thing also. Then with the help of the mind we become aware of the pleasures of the body. Hence whatever things give

²⁴ *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, XI. xi. 1, 8, 12, 13, 14

²⁵ सुखान्तशयो रागः । *Yoga-sūtras*, II. 7

pleasure to our mind, to those also we get attached. Once we experience a pleasure, it is registered in our memory. Remembrance of the pleasure makes us hanker after repetition of the experience. Therefore we desire to possess the thing which provides us pleasures. Whenever we seek to possess a thing—whatever it may be—what has actually happened, perhaps without our knowing it, is that we have become possessed by that thing. In plain words, we have become its slaves. And when and to the extent that we are slaves of things, we are not masters of ourselves.

To these attachments we may give many respectable names, like love, patriotism, loyalty, fidelity, or aesthetic sense. But if these are rooted in attachment, let us know it for certain that they are bondages, and will cause us pain. No doubt a slave also may have his little pleasures of life. But as long as he is a slave, how can he have true happiness, which is only in unqualified freedom? Many of us hug an illusion all our lives. We think that attachment is the source of all happiness. It is only after much suffering that some of us come to realize that attachment is the root of all the miseries and bondages of life. As attachment is the root of most of our troubles, in its turn attachment has its own root too.

What is that root?

Patañjali says that *avidyā* or ignorance in regard to the true nature of the Self or Ātman is the root of attachment.²⁶ The very nature of the soul or Ātman is eternal bliss. It could not be so if the Ātman were not beyond all want, imperfection and incompleteness. But it is the very nature of *avidyā* or ignorance, to get us involved in what is called the *viparita-buddhi* or the wrong views of things. *Avidyā* makes us take the non-eternal as eternal, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasurable, and the

not-Self as the Self. From ignorance arises egoism.

What is egoism? In terms of the Yoga psychology, egoism is the identification of the seer with the instrument of seeing. Who is the seer? The Ātman is the seer, the ever pure, the infinite, the immortal. It is the consciousness in man, which never rises or sets, never increases or suffers decay. Being self-luminous, it illumines everything else. It is the source of all life, light, and joy.

The Ātman has none of the characteristics of any perceived entity. It is the eternal witness of all internal and external changes. Hence the Ātman is called the seer, as distinguished from the seen, which is comprised of all the ever-changing physical and psychical phenomena of the universe, made of various combinations of the three *guṇas*. And 'That thou art'; or, more simply, you are the seer.

What is the instrument of seeing? The mind, intellect, and senses comprise the instrument of seeing. These instruments are for use by the Self of man for perceiving the external world. When instead of using them as instruments, the Self of man, or the Ātman, somehow gets identified with them, there arises the ignorance of egoism. Then one thinks: 'I am the body', 'I am a man', 'I am a woman', 'I am hungry', 'I am happy', 'I feel sleepy'.

Then a person cannot believe, even when told, that he is the ever pure, ever blissful Ātman. The Ātman is the eternal subject. Nothing in the universe can affect it in any way. Yet through the ignorance of egoism, we identify ourselves with the body and mind and think that we feel pleasure and pain. With egoism, or identification of the seer with the instrument of seeing, invariably goes attachment.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches in the *Gītā* how attachment leads us step by step to bondage and ultimately to destruction. The Lord says:

'When a man dwells on objects, he

²⁶ vide *ibid.*, II. 3-5

feels an attachment for them. Attachment gives rise to desire, and desire breeds anger. From anger comes delusion; from delusion the failure of memory; from the failure of memory, the ruin of discrimination; and from the ruin of discrimination the man perishes.' ²⁷

When attachment ripens, its destructiveness becomes quite obvious; but in its origin it is only a thought-wave arising in the mind almost imperceptibly. Therefore thought-control is the most important thing in the practice of detachment.

It is not at all commonly known how insidiously the tentacles of attachment spread through our life, not only creating bondage for the soul in this life, but also determining the course of our future lives in an inimical manner.

In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* there is the story of Jadabharata:

Bharata, son of the royal sage Rṣabha, was a mighty monarch. He was so mighty that this land, which had been hitherto known as Ajanābha, was henceforth called Bhāratavarsa, after his name.

Bharata ruled over his subjects like a kindly father who had the good of all his children at heart. He laboured incessantly for the benefit of all, but with no thought of personal gain; however slight the task, he performed it as a service to the Lord. Every act thus became one of devotion, purifying his heart, freeing him from passions, and finally uniting his consciousness with that of the supreme Brahman.

In his old age, King Bharata divided his kingdom among his five sons and retired into the forest to meditate upon God, hoping thus to break the bonds of karma which held him to life. He knew that all duties and all work are but preparations for the time when all the fetters which bind the soul to matter are forever cut asunder.

On the banks of the river Gandaki, in the forests of the Himalayas, he built

himself a little cottage of reeds, and there, constantly meditating upon the God of love, who resides in the souls of all men, he found that inner peace for which all his life he had striven. Every morning he offered worship with the following prayer:

'May we meditate on the Supreme Light. From it the whole universe has issued. It exists in the hearts of all, and unto it will all go back. It is the intelligence in all beings. It is the guide of all intelligence. In it do we take refuge.'

Thus days, months, and years passed. Then one day a doe came to drink water near the place where the royal sage was meditating. At the same moment, a little distance away, a lion roared. The doe was so terrified that she did not pause to satisfy her thirst but made a sudden jump to cross the river. Since she was with young, this extreme exertion and sudden fright made her give birth to a little fawn, and immediately afterward she dropped dead. The fawn fell into the water and was being swept away by the foaming stream when it caught the eyes of Bharata. Instantly the king rose from his meditation and rescued the new-born animal from the water. He took it to his cottage, made a fire, and with care and attention nursed the little thing back to life. Then the kindly sage took the fawn under his protection, bringing it up on soft grass and fruits. It thrived under the paternal care of the retired monarch and grew into a beautiful deer. Then he whose mind had been strong enough to break away from lifelong attachment to power, position, and family, became attached to the deer which he had saved from the stream. And as he became more and more fond of the deer, the less and less could he concentrate upon the Lord. When the deer went out to graze in the forest and was late in returning, the royal sage would become anxious and worried. He would think, 'Perhaps my little one has been attacked by some tiger, or perhaps some other danger has befallen it; otherwise, why is it late?'

Some years passed in this way. Then

²⁷ *Bhagavad-gītā*, II. 62-3

one day, knowing that death was near, he laid himself down to die. But his mind, instead of being intent upon the Self, was thinking about the deer; and while his eyes were fixed on the sad face of his beloved deer, his soul left his body. As a result of this, in the next birth he was born as a deer. But no karma is lost, and all the great and good deeds done by him as a king and a sage bore their fruit. The deer was born *jātismara*. He remembered his past birth though he was bereft of speech and was living in an animal body. He continually went apart from his companions, and was instinctively drawn to graze near hermitages where oblations were offered and the Upanisads were preached.

After the usual years of a deer's life had been spent, he died, and was born next as the youngest son of a rich Brahmin. In this life also he remembered all his past, and even in his infancy was determined to get entangled no more in the good and evil of life. As he grew up, he was strong and healthy, but he would not speak a word. He lived like one sluggish and weak-witted, from fear of getting entangled with worldly affairs. His thoughts were always on the Infinite, and he lived only to wear out his past *prārabdhakarma*. In the course of time his father died, and the other sons divided the property among themselves. Thinking that the youngest son was a dumb, good-for-nothing young man, they seized his share. Their charity extended only to the point of giving him food enough to live on. The wives of the brothers were often very harsh with him, compelling him to do all the hard work, and if at any time he was unable to do everything they demanded, they would treat him very unkindly. But he showed neither vexation nor fear; neither did he speak a word. When they persecuted him too much, he would stroll out of the house and sit under a tree, hour after hour, until their wrath was appeased, and then he would quietly go home again.

One day when the wives of his brothers had treated him with more than usual unkindness, Bharata went

out of the house, seated himself under the shadow of a tree, and rested. Now it happened that king Rahūgaṇa was passing by, carried in a palanquin on the shoulders of bearers. One of the bearers had unexpectedly fallen ill, and so the king's attendants were looking about for a man to replace him. They came upon Bharata seated under a tree, and, seeing he was strong, they asked him if he would take the place of the sick man.

Bharata did not reply, whereupon the king's servants caught hold of him and placed the pole on his shoulders. Without speaking a word, Bharata walked on with his fellow-bearers. Very soon after this, the king remarked that the palanquin was not being carried evenly, and looking out of it he addressed the new bearer, saying: 'Fool, rest awhile; if thy shoulders pain thee, rest awhile.' Then Bharata, laying the pole of the palanquin down, opened his lips for the first time in his life, and spoke: 'Whom dost thou, O king, call a fool? Whom dost thou ask to lay down the palanquin? Whom dost thou say is weary? Whom dost thou address as "thou"? If thou meanest, O king, by the word "thou" this mass of flesh, it is composed of the same matter as thine; it is unconscious and it knoweth no weariness, it knoweth no pain. If it is the mind, the mind is the same as thine; it is universal. But if the word "thou" is applied to something beyond that, then it is the Self, the Reality in me, which is the same as in thee, and it is the One in the universe. Dost thou mean, O king, that the Self can ever be weary—that it can ever be tired—that it can ever be hurt? I did not want, O king—this body did not want—to trample upon poor worms crawling on the road, and therefore as I tried to avoid them the palanquin moved unevenly. But the Self was never tired, it was never weak, it never bore the pole of the palanquin; for it is omnipotent and omnipresent.'

Then king Rahūgaṇa, who was proud of his learning, knowledge, and philosophy, alighted from the palanquin and fell at the feet of Bharata, saying, 'I ask thy pardon, O mighty one; I did

not know that thou wast a sage when I asked thee to carry me. It is my blessing that I met thee. Pray teach me the knowledge of Self.' ²⁸

This story sounds this warning: Those who wear nylon dress have to be very cautious about fire. Those who are seeking salvation and not just talking about it, must be more cautious about any form or degree of attachment to anything.

V

Now what are the methods of practising detachment?

To be sure, practice of detachment is not an easy task. Swami Vivekananda says, 'To attain this unattachment is almost a life-work' ²⁹ Let no one, however, think that it is an impossible task. Swami Vivekananda also points out that:

'Non-attachment does not mean anything that we may do in relation to our external body, it is all in the mind. The binding link of "I and mine" is in the mind. If we have not this link with the body and with the things of the senses, we are non-attached, wherever and whatever we may be. A man may be on a throne and perfectly non-attached; another man may be in rags and still very much attached. First, we have to attain this state of non-attachment and then to work incessantly. Karma-Yoga gives us the method that will help us in giving up all attachment, though it is indeed very hard.' ³⁰

In order to practise detachment:

(a) First there must be the firm resolution. This resolution should be based on the clear understanding of the reasons why it should be practised. This understanding will be strengthened if we practise what Śrī Kṛṣṇa calls *duḥkha-dosānudarśanam*, open-

open-eyed fact-seeing—the facts of the miseries and blemishes in the world, and in our own lives.

(b) We should not expect to get rid of all attachments in one sunny morning.

(c) As attachments are cultivated daily and deliberately—though we do so unknowingly too—detachment will have to be cultivated daily and deliberately, with equal if not greater earnestness.

(d) Violent attempts at practising detachment will prove ineffective; equally so will be a mere nibbling at it.

In Swami Vivekananda's words:

'Here are the two ways of giving up all attachment. The one is for those who do not believe in God or in any outside help. They are left to their own devices; they have simply to work with their own will, with the powers of their mind and discrimination, saying, "I must be non-attached." For those who believe in God there is another way, which is much less difficult. They give up the fruits of work unto the Lord; they work and are never attached to the results. Whatever they see, feel, hear, or do, is for Him. For whatever good work we may do, let us not claim any praise or benefit. It is the Lord's; give up the fruits unto Him. Let us stand aside and think that we are only servants obeying the Lord, our Master, and that every impulse for action comes from Him every moment. Whatever thou worshipping, whatever thou perceivest, whatever thou doest, give up all unto Him and be at rest. Let us be at peace, perfect peace, with ourselves, and give up our whole body and mind and everything as an eternal sacrifice unto the Lord. Instead of the sacrifice of pouring oblations into the fire, perform this one great sacrifice day and night—the sacrifice of your little self. "In search of wealth in this world, Thou art the only wealth I have found; I sacrifice myself unto Thee. In search of someone to be loved, Thou art the only one beloved I have found; I sacrifice myself unto Thee." Let us repeat this day and night, and say, "Nothing for me; no matter whether

²⁸ Swami Prabhavananda: *Srimad Bhagavatam: the Wisdom of God*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1972, pp. 100-08

²⁹ *The Complete Works*, Vol. I (1962), p. 59

³⁰ *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 101-02

the thing is good, bad, or indifferent, I do not care for it; I sacrifice all unto Thee." Day and night let us renounce our seeming self until it becomes a habit with us to do so, until it gets into the blood, the nerves, and the brain, and the whole body is every moment obedient to this idea of self-renunciation. Go then into the midst of the battlefield, with the roaring cannon and the din of war, and you will find yourself to be free and at peace.³¹

So, broadly speaking, there are two ways of practising detachment, one meant for those who believe in a personal God, and the other for those who do not, but are yet seekers of spiritual Reality. Speaking of the 'much less difficult' method first, (1) the one is the way of Divine Love; (2) the other is the way of Divine Discrimination.

In the way of divine love we are required to divinize our emotions and attachments; that is to say, to transfer our attachment from the things of the world, to God. The more our attachment for God and things godly, the less will be our attachment for the world and things worldly.

In the way of divine discrimination we are required to take the position of the witness in regard to the goings-on in the world, and also in our body and mind—the actions 'of *guṇas* on *guṇas*', as the *Gītā* says.

Let us first consider in some detail the method of practising detachment through divine love. This method is specially suitable for those who believe in God, be they householders or renunciators.

Live in the world, says Sri Ramakrishna, but be not worldly. The boat may stay in water but water should not stay in the boat. As the saying goes, make the frog dance before the snake but let not the snake swallow the frog.³²

³¹ loc. cit.

³² vide *The Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 600004, 1971) nos. 265, 266

How do we accomplish this extraordinary feat?

This is to be done by viewing life in all its ramifications, from the focal point of the reality of God, who, though hidden, is central in our lives. If we accept the reality of God, one implication necessarily follows: that we live, move, and have our being in God's world. Everything in it, including ourselves and what we consider our own, is God's. Everything issues from God, stays in God, and gets assimilated in Him. God is our real home, treasure, and goal of life.

With this idea at the back of our mind, we have to live in the world, as Sri Ramakrishna says, 'as the maid-servant lives in her master's house'. Referring to her master's house, she says, "That is our house" . . . but in her heart she knows very well that it doesn't belong to her and that her own house is in a far-away village. She brings up her master's son and says, "My Hari has grown very naughty" or "My Hari doesn't like sweets." Though she repeats "My Hari" with her lips, yet she knows in her heart that Hari doesn't belong to her, that he is her master's son.³³

In our heart of hearts we have to know that none, nothing, is ours. Everything belongs to God, from whom everything has gone forth. To the extent that God is ours, to that extent only, and by that logic alone, everything is ours too. But we are so wrapped in the illusions of 'me and mine' that it will not be easy for us to hold on to this truth unless once in a while we go into solitude, specially to cultivate this attitude and to feel ourselves utterly alone with God, and to pray intently and constantly for divine love.

Without love of God, practice of detachment for followers of this way is wellnigh impossible. As love of God grows within

³³ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, pp. 409-10

us, proportionately grows detachment too. Therefore, devotional practices like repetition of the Lord's name, prayer and meditation are helpful for developing detachment.

But men of the world have no right on that account to neglect their worldly duties. That much of God's world which has come to their care, they have to hold as a sacred trust and serve as the trustees. They have to do everything needed for their family, dependents and society; but in so doing, must not get inwardly bound, for they are doing everything for God's sake. The method of doing this, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, is: 'Do your work with one hand and hold the feet of the Lord with the other. When you have no work in the world to do, hold His feet to your heart with both hands.'

In this simple precept Sri Ramakrishna teaches us the same doctrine of sacrificial living that was taught by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*:

'Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as sacrifice, whatever you give away, whatever austerity you practise, offer it unto Me.

'Thus shall you be free from the bondages of actions, bearing good and evil results'³⁴

There is no other way of escaping the binding effect of karma. Anyone sincerely living a sacrificial life will in course of time experience for himself the fact that he is an instrument in God's hand, and that God alone is the Doer. To the extent that he gets confirmed in this truth, he will grow in detachment. Perfection of detachment comes when one perceives, as is said in the *Gītā*:

'The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing all beings, by His Māyā, to revolve, (as if) mounted on a machine.'³⁵

This is the consummation of the practice of detachment by way of divine love.

The second way of practising detachment is that of discrimination. The keynote of this method is to remain 'inwardly free' in every place, action, occupation, or relation. We must always remain the rulers of our actions and not their slaves, as befits the high destiny of the Children of Immortality.

Ordinarily, instead of remaining inwardly free in every place, action, and occupation, we tend to become bound in varieties of ways, gross or subtle, and cause no end of troubles to ourselves and others.

In working we get worked upon. In possessing things we become possessed by them. In loving we become swallowed. We start drinking; then we become drunk. In occupation we are seldom without pre-occupation. In giving, we are fettered by expectation of thanks. In piety we are prisoners of dogmas. In patriotism we are enslaved by our own jingoism.

Such though ordinarily our inner situations are, the way to inward freedom always remains open to us. The secret is: *to be the witness*. We have always to remember this basic fact, as Swami Vivekananda points out: 'Nothing has power over the Self of man, until the Self becomes a fool and loses independence. So by non-attachment you overcome and deny the power of anything to act upon you.'³⁶

We have discussed previously how the Self loses independence. When the seer becomes identified with the instrument of seeing, then comes the loss of independence. According to Vedānta, all the goings-on in the world, including what is happening to our bodies and minds, are the interplay of the non-Self on non-Self—of *guṇa* on *guṇa*. The Self, or the Ātman, is the Witness of these goings-on, being totally unconnected to them. When through igno-

³⁴ *Bhagavad-gītā*, IX. 27-8

³⁵ *ibid.*, XVIII. 61

³⁶ *The Works*, Vol. I, p. 90

rance we get identified with them, there arise bondage and attachment.

So when, through the practice of constant discrimination between the Self and non-Self, we succeed in taking the position of the witness, which we really are—perceiving but unaffected—then we cut all attachment at the roots.

To work vigorously, but not to be bound by the expectation of results, is to work like a master who is inwardly free. To take invariably the position of the giver, without expecting any return, is to give like a master, who is inwardly free. To love all in fullness of heart without being hemmed in by the particular, is to love like a master, who is inwardly free. This witness-man, who is not attached to the non-Self, may live surrounded by sinful men. But he will not be touched by sin. He will

radiate joy and peace. His face will show that he lives an Ātman-centred life. He moves about as the Ātman. To see him is a benediction.

These two methods of practising detachment, Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches in short imperatives:

(a) Remember Me always and fight the battle of life.

(b) Fight the battle of life without feverishness.³⁷

Out of these two methods we may choose our own. Even imperfect practice of these disciplines will improve the quality of our lives, release new powers from within us, save us from avoidable miseries, and ensure a type of happiness which otherwise we would not have known.

³⁷ *Bhagavad-gītā*, VIII. 7; III. 30

(Contd. from p. 250)

go on in that line and you will have your object realized therein. Very natural and excellent are your ways. Go on with them till you have become filled. This will purify your heart, and make you see the bottom of it which you want to do. May Mother bless you always. With my best wishes and love to you as ever,

Yours in the Lord,
TURIYANANDA

FREUD'S PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION: AN INDIAN ANALYSIS

DR. R. PULIGANDLA

(Continued from the previous issue)

I shall now consider Freud's treatment of the oceanic feeling which some claim as the source of religion. 'Oceanic feeling' is here to be understood as the feeling of oneness with the universe, the feeling in which all dualisms that constitute the world of everyday experience are transcended. It is also a sensation of eternity, a feeling as of something limitless and unbounded.²⁰ It is obvious that the oceanic feeling is none other than the one reported by mystics of the various traditions. According to Freud, Romain Rolland, on reading *The Future of an Illusion*, wrote that while he fully agreed with Freud's judgement that religion is an illusion, he was sorry that Freud had not properly appreciated the true source of religious sentiments—the oceanic feeling. Further, according to Rolland, 'one may rightly call oneself religious on the ground of this oceanic feeling alone, even if one rejects every belief and every illusion'.²¹ Freud says that while he cannot discover the oceanic feeling in himself,²² he is 'perfectly willing to acknowledge the "oceanic feeling" exists in many people'.²³ However, he wonders 'whether it is being correctly interpreted and whether it ought to be regarded as the *fons et origo* of the whole need for religion'.²⁴ Claiming that the oceanic feeling can be traced back to the all-embracing primitive ego-feeling of infancy and that therefore it cannot be re-

garded as the source of religious needs, Freud writes:

'....After all, a feeling can only be a source of energy if it is itself the expression of a strong need. The derivation of religious needs from the infant's helplessness and longing for the father aroused by it seems to me incontrovertible, especially since the feeling is not simply prolonged from childhood days, but is permanently sustained by fear of the superior power of Fate. I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection. Thus the part played by the oceanic feeling, which might seek something like the restoration of limitless narcissism, is ousted from a place in the foreground. *The origin of the religious attitude can be traced in clear outlines as far as the feeling of infantile helplessness.* There may be something further behind that, but for the present it is wrapped in obscurity.'²⁵

We are then told that the oceanic feeling nevertheless has a connection with religion at a subsequent stage in life.

'I can imagine that the oceanic feeling became connected with religion later on. The "oneness with the universe" which constitutes its ideational content sounds like a first attempt at a religious consolation, as though it were another way of disclaiming the danger which the ego recognizes as threatening it from the external world.'²⁶

Such, then, is Freud's supposedly scientific-genetic explanation of the oceanic feeling. But one would like to ask whether

²⁰ Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 11.

²¹ loc. cit.

²² *ibid.*, p. 12.

²³ loc. cit.

²⁴ loc. cit.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 19 (emphasis added);

²⁶ loc. cit.

there is any observational evidence in favour of it. I submit that there is not a shred of such evidence. Quite the contrary, Freud's genetic account of the oceanic feeling is based on vast metaphysical conjectures disguised as scientific explanations. Let me elaborate upon this point. One of the central metaphysical presuppositions of Freud is that there is a sharp line of demarcation between the ego and the world and that the gulf between the two is ineluctable and unbridgeable. Consequently, the oceanic feeling, in which all distinctions between the ego and the world are collapsed, is a mere subjective feeling of limitless narcissism brought about by infantile regression diametrically opposed to the objective reality of the separateness of the ego and the world. But how does Freud establish his claim that the ego and the world are two distinct entities? Instead of providing arguments, he merely asserts and reasserts that '*towards the outside, at any rate, the ego seems to maintain clear and sharp lines of demarcation*'.²⁷ Or again,

'....An infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from the external world as the source of the sensations flowing in upon him ... one comes to learn a procedure by which, through a deliberate direction of one's sensory activities and through suitable muscular action, one can differentiate between what is internal—what belongs to the ego—and what is external—what emanates from the outer world. In this way one makes the first step towards the introduction of *the reality principle* which is to dominate future development.'²⁸

He then goes on to maintain that the adult's failure to distinguish between his ego and the external world is due to pathological disturbances:

'....Pathology has made us acquainted with a great number of states in which the boundaries between the ego and the external world become uncertain or in which they are actually drawn *incorrectly*.'²⁹

Freud presents no evidence for his thesis that the oceanic feeling is limitless narcissism brought about by infantile regression. All we have here is name-calling and the dogmatic assertion that the oceanic feeling is morbid and pathological because it runs counter to the reality of the 'sharply demarcated ego-feeling of maturity'.³⁰ How circular and question-begging Freud's defence of his view of the oceanic feeling is, can be seen by his use of the term 'incorrectly' above. According to him, one is mature and sane if one recognizes a sharp boundary between the ego and the external world and draws it correctly. But what is meant by 'drawing correctly'? The ready answer is 'drawing according to Freud's metaphysics'. Freud makes the further mistake of thinking that what is pragmatically efficacious is also ontologically true. Thus it is one thing to say that distinguishing between the ego and the external world 'serves the practical purpose of enabling one to defend oneself against sensations of unpleasure which one actually feels or with which one is threatened'³¹ but quite another to say that therefore such a distinction has an ultimate ontological status ('The reality principle' above). It is clear, then, that Freud's supposed explanation of the oceanic feeling as pathological infantile regression is based on a dogmatic dualistic metaphysics and an equally dogmatic and prejudicial conception of what is mature and healthy and what is immature and pathological. We may note in passing that Freud's claim that the unconscious

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 13 (emphasis added).

²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 13-14 (emphasis added).

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 13 (emphasis added).

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 15.

³¹ *loc. cit.*

was first discovered by his psycho-analytic research³² is both gratuitous and false; for even a casual reading of the classic Indian texts on Yoga and Buddhist psychological treatises shows that the unconscious was discovered long before Freud.³³ Be that as it may, Freud's characterization of the oceanic feeling as pathological and regressive is not based on any verifiable scientific observations but on his dogmatic metaphysical assumption that the ego and the external world constitute an irresolvable, ultimate dualism. Unable to provide any independent evidence to his theory of the oceanic feeling, Freud resorts to undisguised question-begging when he says that.

'....The idea of men's receiving an intimation of their connection with the world around them through an immediate feeling [the oceanic feeling] which is from the outset directed to that purpose sounds *so strange and fits so badly* with the fabric of *our* psychology that one is justified in attempting to discover a psycho-analytic—that is, a genetic—explanation of such a feeling.'³⁴

Thus the reason why Freud considers the oceanic feeling as strange, is that it fits so badly with the fabric of his psychology. And when one asks what the fabric of his psychology is, we are told that it is the fabric according to which the ego and the external world constitute an ultimate and irreconcilable dualism. And when one further asks as to what grounds there are for one to accept this thesis of ultimate ontological dualism, the answer is that to

accept it is the mark of maturity and mental health and to reject it is pathological and immature. However, all these question-begging answers are offered in the name of science.

One might wonder as to why I have dwelt so long on Freud's treatment of the oceanic feeling. The answer is that the oceanic feeling is the touchstone of religious experience in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions—the mystical traditions, *par excellence*. It is to belabour the obvious, to point out that the climax of the Upaniṣadic teachings is the realization of the identity of the Ātman and Brahman, where the Ātman is the inmost Self of man and Brahman the unchanging, eternal reality underlying the world of appearances. Wisdom and freedom, according to the Upaniṣads, are attained by transcending the phenomenal world of variety and multiplicity and realizing the oneness of the Ātman and Brahman—that is, that Ātman and Brahman are merely two different labels for one and the same all-pervasive ultimate reality. The heart of the Upaniṣadic teaching is the realization of the truth '*Aham Brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman)'. Whoever knows the self as 'I am Brahman' becomes all this (universe).³⁵ The same idea is expressed when the ṛṣis declare:

'What is within is also without. What is without is also within. He who sees difference between what is within and what is without goes evermore from death to death.'³⁶

'*Tat tvam asi*' ('That thou art') is the theme of the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad*, where the sage Uddālaka imparts the highest wisdom to his young son Śvetaketu. In a similar manner Buddhism teaches that by attaining Nirvāṇa, the state which transcends all dualisms such as the ego and the world, the subject and the object, the seeker and

³² *ibid.*, p. 13.

³³ See H. V. Guenther's *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma* (Buddha Vihara, Lucknow, India, 1957); Lama Govinda's *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* and *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy* (Rider & Co., London, 1960, 1961); and Mircea Eliade's *Patanjali and Yoga* (Funk and Wagnalls, N.Y., 1969).

³⁴ Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 12 (emphasis added).

³⁵ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, I. iv. 10.

³⁶ *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*, II. i. 10.

the sought, one attains peace, wisdom, and freedom from all the fetters of existence. He who attains Nirvāṇa has once and for all overcome ignorance, the source of all suffering and bondage. Thus if the attainment of the oceanic feeling is the *summum bonum* of Hinduism and Buddhism, how are we to understand Freud's claim that the oceanic feeling is pathological regression to infancy? Are we to regard the great mystics, the Upaniṣadic sages, and the Buddha and countless Yogins as immature men who, haunted by a sense of anxiety and insecurity in the face of the threatening forces of the external world, sought refuge in a Father-God by regressing into infancy? Nothing could be more absurd than this thought. Quite the contrary, men who have attained the highest mystical experience of non-duality are exemplars of calmness, compassion, total lack of egoism, and freedom from insecurity, anxiety, boredom, and fear, including that of death. Thus in Hinduism and Buddhism the oceanic experience, far from being regarded as pathological, is considered liberating, in that it brings about a total transformation of personality. Having experienced ultimate reality as bereft of all dualisms, one comes to see that the latter are the product of one's own senses and intellect. Such a seeing radically alters his conduct towards himself and other beings. One is no longer neurotic, driven, anxious, and afraid. Gone is the ignorance and with it the chains of bondage. One is now the fully enlightened man. But himself belonging to a civilization whose major philosophies and religions are thoroughlygoingly dualistic and which despised the oceanic experience and persecuted and burned its own mystics as arrogant, heretical, mad men, Freud displays a singular lack of understanding of the significance attached to the oceanic feeling in alien civilizations and brusquely dismisses it as immature and pathological.

I submit that, contrary to Freud's claims, there is nothing scientific—in the sense of being based on and testable through observation—in his whole psychology of religion. His supposedly scientific theories are simply unwarranted generalizations of the ontological prejudices and presuppositions of the philosophies and religions of his own culture.

It is interesting in this connection to note that Freud has an observation on Yoga. Reporting the views of an unnamed friend of his, whose craving for knowledge drove him to unusual experiments and investigations, Freud says:

'....[He] has assured me that through the practices of Yoga, by withdrawing from the world, by fixing the attention on bodily functions and by peculiar methods of breathing, one can in fact evoke new sensations and coenaesthesias in oneself, which he regards as regressions to primordial states of mind which have long ago been overlaid. He sees in them a physiological basis, as it were, of much of the wisdom of mysticism. It would not be hard to find connections here with a number of obscure modifications of mental life, such as trances and ecstasies. But I am moved to exclaim in the words of Schiller's diver—Let him rejoice who breathes up here in the roseate light.'³⁷

It is ironical that Freud who started out as a neurologist should display such a cavalier attitude towards his friend's conjecture that there might be a close relation between Yogic physiological techniques and non-ordinary states of consciousness. He nevertheless recognizes some connections between Yogic practices and 'obscure modifications of mental life', such as trances and ecstasies. But he quickly quotes Schiller to register his disdain for Yoga and mysticism. Anyone who claims to be a

³⁷ Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 19-20.

scientist should reserve his judgement on a matter so serious as this until after he has objectively studied it. But for one who had sanctified as science the prejudices of his own culture and times, anything alien, no matter how exalted a place it may have in its own culture, must seem as superstition and delusion unworthy of his attention and scrutiny. For is it not the case that even today it is a widespread belief in the West that Yogic practices lead to catatonia and such other morbid states and that Yogic and other Eastern mystics are insane men suffering from incurable delusions and psychosis? Fortunately, however, there are a few inquirers whose work has put to rest such absurd views hitherto paraded as science.³⁸

I come now to Freud's major thesis that religion is an illusion. He says that 'religious ideas in the widest sense are illusions'.³⁹ Again, 'These [religious ideas], which are given out as teachings, are not precipitates of experience or end-results of thinking: they are illusions, fulfilments of the oldest, strongest and most urgent wishes of mankind. The secret of their strength lies in the strength of those wishes.'⁴⁰ Or again:

'....We can repeat that *all* of them [religious doctrines] are illusions and insusceptible of proof. No one can be compelled to think of them as true, to believe in them. Some of them are so improbable, *so incompatible with everything we have laboriously discovered about the reality of the world, that we may compare them—if we pay proper*

regard to the psychological differences—to delusions.'⁴¹

But what argument does Freud advance in support of his thesis that all religion is an illusion? In order to avoid charges of misinterpretation, I shall quote Freud at some length:

'...the terrifying impression of helplessness in childhood aroused the need for protection—for protection through love—which was provided by the father; and the recognition that this helplessness lasts throughout life made it necessary to cling to the existence of a father, but this time a more powerful one. Thus the benevolent rule of a divine Providence allays our fear of the dangers of life; the establishment of a moral world-order ensures the fulfilment of the demands of justice, which have so often remained unfulfilled in human civilization; and the prolongation of earthly existence in a future life provides the local and temporal framework in which these wish-fulfilments shall take place. Answers to the riddles that tempt the curiosity of man, such as how the universe began or what the relation is between body and mind, are developed in conformity with the underlying assumptions of this system. It is an enormous relief to the individual psyche if the conflicts of its childhood arising from the father-complex—conflicts which it has never wholly overcome—are removed from it and brought to a solution which is universally accepted.'⁴²

The argument is so clear that there is no need to explicate it. The pertinent question here is whether there is any evidence for it. Let it be noted again that Freud's contention is not just this or that particular religion is an illusion but *all* religion(s) is illusion. In support of such a claim, Freud should show that *all* religions contain as their integral constituents those notions which, according to Freud, render

³⁸ See 'The Physiology of Meditation' by Robert K. Wallace and Herbert Benson, *Scientific American*, February, 1972, pp. 85-90. *Altered States of Consciousness* (ed. Charles Tart, Anchor Books, Garden City, N.Y., 1972) is a comprehensive collection of articles on the psychophysiology of Yogic and Zen meditations.

³⁹ Freud: *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 18.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 49-50 (emphasis added).

⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

them illusory. It is clear from the above quote that these notions are man's feeling of helplessness and his yearning for the love and protection of the mighty Father-God. But, as has already been pointed out earlier, such notions are to be found only in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam but not in Hinduism and Buddhism. As such, Freud's claim that religion is illusion does not apply to Hinduism and Buddhism. To be sure, Buddhists look upon the Buddha as the inspiring example of perfect wisdom and freedom and refer to him as their Saviour, in the sense that he has taught them the way to enlightenment. But this does not mean that Buddhists regard the Buddha as their Father-God whose love and protection they seek.

'...Buddha could accurately be viewed as a kind of savior, and when so conceived he has had for many the attributes of divinity—saving power, omniscience in regard to all essential truth, an all-encompassing compassion, timeless existence, immutable being, unending bliss, etc. But this conception of the Buddha as Supreme Being and Savior has *involved difficulties for those reared in Western theological traditions, since both his "being" and his Salvific power are understood quite differently from the Judeo-Christian conception of God and the Messiah, and attributes of the latter as Creator, Judge, Redeemer of a chosen people, Father, Son, etc. are largely absent in the Buddha...The Buddha is not God as distinct from man, nor does Buddhism, strictly speaking, have any theology.* It bases itself on neither a revelation from God nor a revelation of God. Its initial orientation is to the human reality rather than a divine reality. Thus there is *no possibility of its proceeding from divinely revealed truths* and deducing from these authoritative precepts and principles for man through scriptural exegesis or theological reasoning...*Buddhist ritual focuses upon the attainment of a state of mind; the Christian liturgy*

*is a people's expression of praise and thanksgiving to their Creator and Redeemer.'*⁴³

This is enough to refute Freud's claim that the sense of helplessness and wish-fulfilment are the basis of all religions and that therefore all religions are illusions. In Hinduism, too, the guiding idea is not seeking the love and protection of a Father-God but the attainment of knowledge of ultimate reality. Like Buddhism, Hinduism starts with an understanding of the human condition and exhorts men to transcend it particularly by attaining knowledge of ultimate reality. If Hinduism recognizes gods, they are as concessions to human frailty and not as ultimate constituents of reality. All forms of Hinduism maintain that highest knowledge and freedom can only come by eschewing all anthropomorphic conceptions of ultimate reality. As in Buddhism, in Hinduism there is no room for the Chosen People, the Father God, the Messiah, and the Redeemer Son. Consequently, Freud's general characterization of religion does not apply to Hinduism either. How desperate Freud's attempts are in defending his own thesis on religion can be seen from the fact that he refuses by definition the title 'religion' to any religion in which the concept of a powerful, protecting Father is absent:

'....Critics persist in describing as "deeply religious" anyone who admits to a sense of man's insignificance or impotence in the face of the universe, although what constitutes the essence of the religious attitude is *not* this feeling but *only* the next step after it, the reaction to it which seeks a remedy for it. The man who goes no further, but humbly acquiesces in the small part which human beings play in the great world—

⁴³ William Theodore de Bary, in his introduction to *The Buddhist Tradition* (Vintage Books, N.Y., 1972), pp. xvii, xviii, xxi, xxii (emphasis added).

such a man is, on the contrary, *irreligious* in the truest sense of the word.' ⁴⁴

According to Freud, then, not every search for remedy for the human condition constitutes religious attitude but only the search for a certain remedy, namely, refuge in a Father-God—in short, the remedy found and endorsed by the religions of his own civilization. Thus, having set up an *a priori* conception of the true religious attitude, it is easy for Freud to dismiss as irreligion any religion which does not fit that conception. It is indeed amazing that even his acquaintance with religions of other civilizations failed to detract Freud from his dogmatic pronouncements. Freud's arguments are thus special pleading and arguments by definition offered in the name of science. Seldom does one come across such utter intellectual blindness and total disregard for facts and logic.

One might now object by saying that my observations only show that Freud was mistaken in thinking that all religions are alike—monotheistic—but do not refute his claim that all religions are illusion. Before answering this objection, let me point out that Freud's claim that all religions are illusion is inextricably bound up with his thesis that all religions have the same psychological genesis. That is, once one grants that all religions arise in man's sense of helplessness and in his efforts to overcome it through the protection of a loving Father-God and that such a Father-God is nothing but wish-fulfilment and illusion, it logically follows that all religions are illusions. But by showing that there are religions in which the concept of Father-God is conspicuously absent we have shown that these religions cannot be judged to be illusions according to the same criteria by which monotheistic religions are judged to be illusions. The most that Freud is entitled to claim on the basis of

his own criteria for illusion is that all Father-God religions are illusions. It is not the purpose of this paper to answer the question whether non-Father-God religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism are illusions and if so in what sense of 'illusion'. I am merely content with establishing that Freud's criteria for illusion apply only to those religions which rest upon the notion of Father-God.

An interesting point here concerns Freud's vacillation with the meaning of 'illusion'. He says at one place that religious doctrines are illusions in the following sense:

'...we call belief an illusion when wish-fulfilment is a prominent factor in its motivation, and in doing so we disregard its relations to reality, just as the illusion itself sets no store by verification.' ⁴⁵

However, at another place he compares them to delusions:

'....Some of them [religious teachings] are so incompatible with everything we have so laboriously discovered about the reality of the world, that we may compare them—if we pay proper regard to the psychological differences—to *delusions*.' ⁴⁶

But what, according to Freud, is a delusion? He says that the essential mark of delusions is their being in contradiction with reality, in contrast with illusions, which are neither necessarily false, nor unrealizable nor in contradiction with reality.⁴⁷ If so, one wonders what Freud could possibly mean by saying that religious teachings are illusions *comparable with delusions*. The qualifications he puts through the phrase 'if we pay proper regard to their psychological differences' seem to be irrelevant. For if, as Freud maintains, the reality disclosed by science is the true reality and religious doctrines are incompatible with

⁴⁴ Freud: *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 53.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 49.

such a reality, then surely they are delusions, whatever the psychological differences between delusions and illusions may be. But, strangely enough, immediately after declaring that religious beliefs, insofar as they are incompatible with reality discovered by science, are comparable to delusions, Freud says that 'Of the reality value of most of them we cannot judge; just as they cannot be proved, so they cannot be refuted'.⁴⁸ I can only confess that I am wholly at a loss to understand this paradoxical pronouncement.

We have seen that according to Freud the reality that science reveals is the true reality, whereas the reality religion seeks is not reality at all but mere illusion having its foundation in wish-fulfilment. Guarding itself with the unfailing weapon of intellect against the seductions and deceptions of intuition and introspection, science and only science unveils the true reality:

'...scientific work is the *only* road which can lead us to a knowledge of reality outside ourselves. It is once again merely *an illusion to expect anything from intuition and introspection*.'⁴⁹

Again, extolling the primacy of reason in the discovery of reality, Freud says that 'in the long run nothing can withstand reason and experience, and the contradiction which religion offers to both is all too palpable'. Is it not ironical that Freud, for whose psycho-analysis intuition and introspection are so central, should join forces with the uncritical and dogmatic behaviorist in banishing them as useless in the enterprise of knowledge? Be that as it may, one thing seems certain: Freud did not learn anything from Kant concerning the nature, function, and limits of reason and science, as witness his naive claim that 'the riddles of the universe reveal themselves only

slowly to our investigation'.⁵⁰ He seems to be wholly ignorant of the antinomical crises into which reason runs in its attempt to grasp as objects the reflective self on the one hand and the universe as a whole on the other. The point of these observations is that for Freud there is the scientific and rational on the one hand and the religious and the irrational on the other, with a sharp demarcation line between the two. But anyone familiar with the biography of Kepler, to give only one example, cannot but be struck by the extraordinary influence on his scientific work of what Freud would regard as the irrational, the mystical, and the non-scientific.

At this point, it is worth noting that the Indian tradition recognizes the non-rational besides the rational and the irrational. Accordingly, both Hinduism and Buddhism speak of two kinds of truth, the lower, phenomenal, relative truth (*vyāvahārika-satya*) and the higher, supra-phenomenal, absolute truth (*pāramārthika-satya*). The former is the product of the senses and intellect and the latter is grasped in direct, intuitive insight which transcends the senses and intellect. Whereas the lower truth is of time-bound phenomenal existence, the higher truth is of the non-spatial, non-temporal, eternal ground of all phenomena. According to Hinduism and Buddhism, both the rational and the irrational belong in the realm of lower truth and the non-rational in that of higher truth. Being beyond and above all categories, the non-rational contradicts neither the rational nor the irrational. It is of the utmost importance to note that the fact that Hinduism and Buddhism recognize two kinds of truth does not mean that they recognize two numerically distinct realities. On the contrary, both these religions teach that the two kinds of truth are generated by two ways of ap-

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴⁹ *loc. cit.* (emphasis added).

⁵⁰ *loc. cit.*

prehending one and the same ultimate reality: when apprehended through the senses and intellect reality appears to us as variety and multiplicity under names and forms; when grasped in direct intuition without the intermediary of the senses and intellect, reality is unitary, transcending all dualisms which are characteristic of phenomena. To say that the truths arrived at by rational inquiries such as science and philosophy are lower does not, however, mean that they are false; it only means that they are always relative to some perceptual-conceptual framework or other and that therefore they cannot be claimed to be absolute and all-encompassing truths. That relative truths are pragmatically efficacious is beyond question. But this should not lead one into thinking that they are therefore absolute and immutable truths. According to the Indian tradition, the lower truths, no matter how logical, elegant, and efficacious, do not have the power to radically transform man. That is, excellence in rational pursuits cannot in itself result in freedom from greed, aggression, selfishness, anxiety, boredom, hate, and fear—and in particular, fear of death. Which is to say that the spectacle of highly intelligent men who nevertheless lack peace, compassion, and wisdom is all-too-common. On the other hand, the higher knowledge and truth liberate man from all shackles and bring him calmness, wisdom, and freedom. Having overcome, in the light of higher knowledge all dualisms, the source of alienation and suffering, the liberated man is at one with the universe. On account of its power to effect this kind of transformation, the higher non-rational knowledge is known as liberating knowledge. But if one is *a priori* committed to the belief that dualisms are ontologically ultimate, one cannot even begin to understand the Indian tradition or its religions. Freud's total failure to understand religion in any sense

other than that of those of his own civilization is due to his dogmatic dualism sanctified as science:

*'...Freud maintains an intractable dualism; self and world remain antagonists, and every form of reconciliation must fail...Freud's own attitude toward a variety of historical dualisms, including Christianity, was always respectful, for they were but versions of a more fundamental dualism in the nature of man and in the cosmos.'*⁵¹

Conclusions: 1. Freud's conception of religion is extremely narrow and culture-bound; consequently, his psychology of religion—that religion has its foundations in primordial patricide and totemism—is equally narrow and culture-bound. Several ethnologists have repeatedly demonstrated beyond doubt that totemism is not universal and that religion and ritual relations exist among peoples who know nothing of cannibalism or parricide.

2. Any theory that pretends to be scientific should be open to confirmation by direct or indirect evidence. According to this criterion, there is no doubt that Freud's theory receives some support in Judaism and Christianity; but this is not surprising because in the first place Freud constructed his theory around the two themes central to the Old and New Testaments—The Exodus and the Crucifixion.

3. On the other hand, there is nothing in Hinduism or Buddhism to vindicate Freud's theory. All elements crucial to Freud's theory are conspicuously absent in the scriptures and practices of these religions. Thus neither Hinduism nor Buddhism is a Father-God religion; nor can one find in them anything resembling primeval patricide, its atonement through the sacrifice of the Son, or theophagic rituals such as the Christian Eucharist. Nor do they fit Freud's conception of religion as feminine pre-

⁵¹ Philip Rieff: *op. cit.* pp. 292, 378 (emphasis added).

occupation⁵² with the characteristic marks of dependence, submission, and seeking grace; quite the contrary, both Hinduism and Buddhism aim at self-knowledge and self-mastery as the means to perfection:

'Unlike the Old Testament's Job, who traces suffering and prostrates himself in submission to the inscrutable will of God, or the Greek tragedies, which trace it to an equally inscrutable Fate, the Buddha insists upon a causal analysis that treats it as a soluble problem. Men would be freed from suffering, he believed, if they could but understand it, tracing it to its causes and its cure.'⁵³

4. Whereas Freud's own conception of religion is based on the premise of irresolvable ontological dualisms, Hinduism and Buddhism regard all dualisms as confined to the phenomenal world and emphasize the need to transcend them in order to attain wisdom, peace, and freedom.

5. Accordingly, Hinduism and Buddhism consider the oceanic experience of oneness with the universe as the alpha and omega of religion; whereas Freud, having dogmatically sanctified as science the dualisms of his own culture, regards the oceanic feeling as infantile regression into limitless narcissism. No wonder Freud regards mysticism as pathological and morbid! But unfortunately, such a view is based on neither personal experience nor objective investigation but simply on his dogmatic presupposition of the ontological ultimacy of dualisms.

6. Once again, in conformity with the dominant intellectual tenets of his own culture, Freud sees everything as falling into one or the other of the two categories, the rational and the irrational, science being the paradigm of the former and religion of

the latter; in keen contrast, Hinduism and Buddhism recognize a third category, namely, the non-rational; for them, the rational and the irrational pertain to the realm of phenomena and the non-rational, transcending all dualisms, contradicts nothing in the phenomenal realm. Consequently, while recognizing the pragmatic efficacy of all rational constructions in dealing with the world of phenomena, Hinduism and Buddhism reject Freud's claim to the ultimacy of scientific reality as naive and dogmatic.

7. According to Hinduism and Buddhism all modes of rational apprehension of the world, including the scientific, are relative to some perceptual-conceptual framework or other; as such, no rational account of the world can claim absolute truth and validity.

8. Whereas Freud holds that science and rational knowledge can transform men into enlightened beings, Hinduism and Buddhism teach that science and rational knowledge, themselves being the products of dualisms, cannot free man from selfishness, aggression, fear, anxiety etc. all of which have their foundations in dualisms.

9. In view of all these differences between Freud's conception of religion on the one hand and Hinduism and Buddhism on the other, the inescapable conclusion is that the latter are definitive counter-examples to Freud's general theory of religion.

10. None of these observations, however, diminish the worth and originality of some of Freud's psycho-analytic insights: they only serve to establish that even a great mind has no immunity against dogmatism, prejudice, downright bad logic, and pseudo-science. That Freud also failed to see the essentially culture-bound character of his own brain-child—psycho-analysis—is an astounding testimony to the veracity of this sad conclusion.⁵⁴

⁵² Freud: 'The Economic Problem in Masochism', *Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud* (Hogarth Press, London, 1947), Vol. II., p. 258.

⁵³ Nolan P. Jacobson: *Buddhism: The Religion of Analysis* (Humanities Press, N.Y., 1966), p. 68.

⁵⁴ For a thoroughgoing and provocative treatment of the culture-bound character of psycho-

Nothing that I have said in this paper is to be construed as a defense or refutation of the truth-claims of any religion. My concern here is only with the history and phenomenology of religious consciousness in different traditions and cultures.

analysis: see E. Fuller Torrey's *The Mind Game: Witchdoctors and Psychiatrists* (Bantam Books, N.Y., 1973).

I hope that this paper explains to some extent why reflective westerners, including great scientists such as Schrodinger, no longer able to subscribe to the religions of their fathers, increasingly turn to Hinduism and Buddhism—a fact which in itself should make one pause and think before joining the Freudian chorus that all religion is illusion.

SERMONETTES AT ST. MORITZ—III

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

We must try to see men and things in a new light. Everyone has a past. People do not just drop from the skies. Belief in man's existence before his birth in this world is steadily growing in the West. People here believe in evolution, anyway. They should learn to believe in spiritual evolution also. However, for our practical purpose it is not necessary to stress the idea of rebirth too much. What is more important is to bring about a spiritual transformation in us right now. The aim is to attain the highest illumination in this very life. That alone matters. And we have to do it ourselves, no one else can do that for us.

*

There are thousands of ideas. We should have the wisdom to choose only those we need for our spiritual life. We must develop our power of understanding, right thinking, and assimilation of ideas. As Swami Vivekananda has said, a man who has assimilated a few ideas and got his life transformed is far better than one who has a whole library in his head. We should not allow the ideas that we pick up to run riot in our heads. Confusion of ideas, feelings and impulses have no place in spiritual life.

Nor should we allow our mind to remain idle, hazy, or foggy. Everything is to be made clear, definite. We waste a lot of time and energy on account of the various conflicting currents of thoughts flowing in us. Muddle-headedness impedes progress as nothing else does.

First of all we should have a clear conception about the ideal we have to strive for. Make it clear to yourself once for all what the Goal of your life is. This should be our central thought. All other thoughts are to be harmoniously arranged around it. All our feelings and impulses are to be connected to this central thought which should always flow as an undercurrent during all our activities..

The central thought should be the soul's yearning for the Divine. When we are able to establish the dominance of this thought, this longing, in our daily life then alone will spiritual life become easy. We must follow one way. There should be one-pointed activity. Everything we do must have one purpose. Don't vacillate. Stop all conflicts of the will. If you want to get up, get up at once. Do not lie undecided. If you want to write a letter, *do* it. Don't

sit brooding over what to do, what to read, and what to write. Indecision, confusion of will, causes not only inefficiency and waste of time but also the disorganization of personality.

Modern life with its hurry and competition demands a lot of adjustments in our daily life. Can you not apply something of this adjustment to spiritual life as well? Have the practical outlook in spiritual life also. Maintain precision and order in all that you take up, spiritual or worldly. Our outer activity reflects the inner state of affairs. A man who keeps his thinking clear and feelings well-oriented will be orderly and consistent in all he does. Create the higher mood through meditation and bring it out in your daily activities. The highest ideal is to have communion with the Divine. All thinking, feeling, willing, and activity should be geared to this supreme end. Anything that cannot be connected to this central thought must be mercilessly eliminated.

*

The mind has two states: the dull and the restless. Dullness or inertia may be due to sheer heaviness, laziness, *tamas* of the mind. The remedy for this is activity. Stimulate the mind through *japa* (repetition of a holy name or mantra) or reading. Again, sometimes conflicts produced by contrary emotions make the mind stupefied, dull. Through self-analysis and self-surrender the causes of conflicts are to be removed. Dullness of mind may also be caused by physical overexertion; similarly too much of meditation in the early stages can also make the mind blank. The remedy then would be quiet rest or a brisk walk in the open.

The restless state of mind is due to impurities, desires, and fears. Much of this restlessness can be eliminated by following a definite daily routine. Cultivate the habit

of orderly thinking. But the important thing is to purify the mind.

*

How to attain purity of mind?

Vedānta stresses the essential purity of the soul. The self is part of the Divine and so intrinsically pure and self-luminous. That is our real nature. Impurity is an encrustation. It is our second nature, an acquired thing.

There are two natural movements inside us. One is from the outside world to the mind. The senses are constantly taking in all sorts of experiences—good and bad. Bad, impure, sense-experiences are to be controlled by creating a counter-movement in the mind. That can be called *dama* (control of the external sense-organs). No experience is altogether lost. Every experience leaves behind a residual impression in the depths of the mind. From there, these residual impressions are constantly rising to the conscious plane. This is the second movement inside us. This too should be controlled through an effort of the will. This is called *śama* (control of the inner organs). *Dama* and *śama* together constitute the mechanism of self-control of the spiritual aspirant.

Self-control becomes easy if there is a strong movement from the soul to the Divine in the form of intense longing to realize the eternal purity of the soul. The more this thought, this aspiration, dominates your life, the easier spiritual life becomes.

*

Repentance, if it is realistic and sincere, is good. Impurities, weaknesses, and backslidings are there in all. It is better to know the situation as it is. But repentance which is exaggerated is harmful and destructive. It weakens the personality. What is needed is strength—strength to overcome the effects of the past, strength to forge

ahead. Sitting and brooding does not give you that. Behind our limitations there is the Divine. We are a spark from the Divine. Try to think of the Divine more and more. Pass on everything to the Divine. Rise above your littleness. Dirt cannot wash away dirt. By crying, 'I am a sinner', sin is not going to leave you. It is generally the weak-minded who sit and brood over the past. The heroic brush it aside. By striving we progress.

It is the Divine that purifies us. Our purity is directly proportional to the proximity we attain to the Divine. That is why Christ said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Perfect purity is possible only when we attain unity with the Divine. Spiritual practice forms part of the cleansing process. The fire of divine knowledge burns the dirt. 'Set fire to the desires, and with the ashes cleanse your mind.' We must do our part as best we can; the Divine does the rest.

Even our meditation is a part of this cleansing process. Meditation is at first only an imagination, but an imagination of something that is real. The attributes of the Deity we meditate on gradually become a part of our own mind.

*

Meditation passes through three stages:

1. Many thoughts are connected to one thought
2. Dwelling on that one thought
3. Feeling the Divine contact and continuing the thought-current at the same time.

Finally, beyond them all, the highest stage is to feel the Divine Presence without a thought.

For the beginner, it is not possible to maintain even the first stage for a long time. So, in the beginning, an aspirant should have breaks but continue the same thought with the help of *japa* and prayer.

You can do *japa* in two ways. While repeating the holy name you may think about the various attributes of the Divine or just dwell on one single attribute, or the divine form.

In the beginning this controlling of thoughts may produce some strain. But this becomes natural as one progresses until meditation becomes effortless. This happens only when all desires have been burnt away.

*

Christ was tempted, but for Him there was no fall. For, he who has realized, 'I and my Father are one', cannot fall. But even the world teachers have to practise disciplines and pass through the various stages of spiritual development, because that is a part of their mission on earth. Others learn from their example and experience. Who else can run through the entire range of spiritual knowledge with such perfection? The bodies of these great ones are like glass cases through which the Divine shines forth for all to see. Māra (the Tempter in Buddhist literature) comes—temptations come. But they do not affect these great ones. They are eternally free and perfect.

And it is our task to follow these divine personalities. Then we too shall come in contact with the Divine. The ideal is before us. Let not limitations discourage us. We must think more and more of their divine qualities rather than their human attributes. Learn to assimilate their divine attributes as far as possible. That will purify the mind more than anything else we are doing now.

*

Our task is stupendous. We want only those to take up this life who are prepared to fight till the end. Only heroes have a place in spiritual life. Let them know the

laws of spiritual life. Let them master the right techniques.

*

Some people say: You will form complexes if you practise self-control and try to lead a life of purity. Don't listen to that sort of talk. Complexes are created anyway. Sense enjoyment produces one type of complex, self-control another—that is all. The wise policy is to accept those 'complexes' that ultimately lead us to the Divine, to supreme peace and the resolution of all complexes. Complexes are formed only in the beginning of spiritual en-

deavour. Later on, when the process of sublimation advances, the complexes dissolve one by one. All complexes vanish with superconscious experience. The child gets attached to the doll and creates a complex towards it. But when the child grows, the doll is put away and the complex disappears. So also in spiritual growth. It is a natural process. Things that attract us now cease to attract us later when we have grown in spiritual life. The complexes that are formed in the early stages are needed for our growth. Without them there would be no spiritual striving.

FIRST MEETINGS WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA: ADHARLAL SEN

SWAMI PRABHANANDA

'Sir, you haven't been to our place for a long time. The drawing-room smells worldly and everything else appears to be steeped in darkness.' Deeply touched by these words of the disciple, the Master suddenly stood up and blessed him in an ecstatic mood, touching his head and heart. The Master's voice seemed soaked in love as he said: 'I look upon you as Narayana Himself. You are indeed my own.'¹

Such an intimate dialogue was exchanged between the Master and one of his disciples only two weeks beyond a year after they had met for the first time.

The Master was the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar who had made unparalleled experimentations in the field of religious realization and experience. For him, God was true only if He could be known directly.

To him, teaching religion was not mere talking or imparting doctrines; it was communicating a deep conviction and often a superconscious experience. Herein lay his extraordinary genius, his greatness as a spiritual teacher: in his ability to transform the minds of disciples by a touch, a word, a glance or even a wish, and bring them face to face with God.

And the disciple was Adharlal Sen, a distinguished product of the University of Calcutta and an ardent sceptic, who was to be transformed into a great devotee by the touch of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual power. Born on 2 March 1855, at 29 Sankar Haldar Lane, Ahiritola, Calcutta, Adhar was in childhood extremely precocious. His father, Ramgopal Sen, a successful trader in cotton fibre, was a devout *vaiṣṇava*. He was proud in having all his sons—Balaichand, Dayalchand, Shyamlal, Ramlal, Adharlal, and Hiralal—established in life. Among them the eldest, Balaichand, who had authored

¹ Vide 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 600004, 1947), p. 364.

five books in Bengali, exerted considerable influence on Adhar, the brightest among them all. In keeping with the family tradition Adhar, when he was twelve, was married to the seven-year-old daughter of Ramchand Seal. Winning a high place in the University Entrance Examination in 1871, he joined the Presidency College wherefrom he passed the F.A. Examination in 1873, securing the fourth place in order of merit and the covetable Duff Scholarship in English literature. Four years later he passed his B.A. Examination, with distinction.² Proficiency in academic studies apart, Adhar had discovered that he could surpass most of his contemporaries in writing poetry; and by 1874 he had already published a few books of poems in Bengali, among them *Lalita-sundarī*³ (Part I) and *Menaka*. These were followed by *Kusumkānan* (Part I in 1877, Part II in 1878) and *Lyttoniana* (1880) a translation in Bengali verse of Lord Lytton's *The Wanderer*.⁴ At twenty-four he entered Government

service and was placed in Chittagong in East Bengal (the present Bangladesh) as the Deputy Collector. His explorations of the famous holy spot of Sitakundu in Chittagong were published in a scholarly work, 'The Shrines of Sitakundu' (1881). Next year, sometime about July, he was transferred to Jessore. By 26 April 1882 when he was transferred to Calcutta he had already won critical recognition from great literary men like Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Prasanna Sarvadhikari, Maheshchandra Nyayaratna, Krishnadas Pal, and Haraprasad Shastri, the last having been one of his classmates. In recognition of his erudite scholarship the Government nominated him as a Fellow of the University of Calcutta in March 1884. Thereafter he became a member of the University Faculty of Arts.

These literary pursuits notwithstanding, Adhar's religious propensities, temporarily overwhelmed by the onslaught of English education, were waiting to be revived. Like most other young scholars of the day he had revolted against idolatry and petty theistic beliefs. At nineteen, he had written in his *Lalita-sundarī*: 'The foolish Hindu offers sacrifices of animals just to please idols made of clay. No doubt he does this in anticipation that the propitiated Gods would transport him after death to the highest heaven where he shall reap the harvest of his good deeds.'⁵ Undoubtedly he had also been touched by the influence of the Brahmo Samaj, though only lightly.

About this time the popularity of the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar was rising among the young educated people of the area. The occasional publication in different Brahmo journals of the teachings of the Paramahansa, and his close contact with Brahmo leaders of all sections as well

² These academic achievements of Adharlal have been obtained from Brajendranath Bandyopadhyaya's article on 'Adharlal Sen' in *Māsik Basumatī* (Bengali), Agrahāyana, Bengali Era 1358.

³ Bankimchandra Chatterjee in *Baṅgadarśana* (Bengali), Śrāvaṇa, Bengali Era 1281, in reviewing this book observed that although the poems could hardly claim novelty, they were ample proofs of the promising future of a young poet.

⁴ Among the many literary criticisms of his work, we may quote one from the *Calcutta Review* which said: 'Babu Adharlal Sen writes in a style that shows evident marks of thought and cultivation. A distinguished graduate of the Calcutta University, he has well and wisely devoted his talents to the improvement of the literature of his own country; and in this field we confidently predict for him a highly successful career.' (Quoted by Narendranath Lahar: *Subarnabanik Kathā O Kīrti*, 1941, Vol. II, pp. 377-8). The *Hindu Patriot* observed, 'There is indeed something very interesting, very touching, and truly poetical in the composition.' (quoted *ibid.*, p. 445).

⁵ Again in his *Nalini* (1877), the hero says, 'Who has known and when, the whereabouts of God and His real form?'

as with other leading Hindus, had brought him to the forefront of religious activity. Glowing accounts of the influence of the Paramahansa on prominent men reached Adhar.

It is not definitely known what circumstances brought Adhar to Sri Ramakrishna first. However Akshay Kumar Sen narrates an interesting incident. One day Adhar visited Mahimacharan Chakravarty at the latter's Cossipore residence. Mahima was reading a Tantric text with a Sanskrit scholar, and very soon the three got engaged in a hot debate on the interpretation of a certain text. Now, to get the verdict of an authority, Mahima's choice fell on Sri Ramakrishna and the others readily agreed. The three immediately went to Dakshineswar;⁶ and this according to Akshay Sen, was how Adhar came to see Sri Ramakrishna for the first time.

In any case, according to Mahendranath Gupta, the author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Adhar met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time at Dakshineswar on Friday, 9 March 1883.⁷ It was a new-moon

day. As usual with him on such days, Sri Ramakrishna passed again and again through different phases of God-consciousness. Whenever he returned to his normal consciousness he talked about God and God alone, and people sat spellbound listening to him. The atmosphere vibrated with thoughts of God, as it were. Regarding the spiritual attitude that Sri Ramakrishna maintained at this time, 'M' observed that 'during these days Sri Ramakrishna's heart overflowed with motherly love like the love Yasoda felt for Krishna. So he kept Rakhal⁸ with him. Rakhal felt towards the Master as a child feels toward its mother.'^{9a}

After the midday meal Sri Ramakrishna rested for a while. In the meantime Adhar had arrived and other devotees had gathered in the room, including 'M' and Rakhal. As already indicated, it seems unlikely that anyone that day accompanied Adhar to Dakshineswar. Though the details of the first moments of his meeting with Sri Ramakrishna have not been recorded, we can safely infer that Sri Ramakrishna as was his wont, had observed Adhar's reverent bearing and divined behind it an unusual spiritual aptitude, which had drawn him to Dakshineswar. Adhar's first impressions too, seem to have been favourable. Soon he came forward with a question:

'Sir, I have a question to ask. Is it good to sacrifice animals before the Deity? It certainly involves killing.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'The sastra [scriptures] prescribes sacrifice on special occasions. Such sacrifice is not harmful.

bandhu Sen on analyzing the internal evidences in the *Gospel* itself has suggested that Adhar must have seen Sri Ramakrishna earlier than 9 March 1883, though he has not specified a date. (*Vide Udbodhan*, Caitra, Bengali Era 1356, p. 159). But in absence of any more reliable evidence, 9 March 1883 is accepted here as the date of their first meeting.

⁸ Later Swami Brahmananda, a prominent disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

^{9a} *The Gospel*, p. 119.

⁶ Akshay Kumar Sen: *Śrī-Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa-puṇthi* (Pub. by Udbodhan Office, Calcutta-3, 5th edition), p. 347. Ramchandra Dutta (*Śrī-Śrī-Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahamsadever Jīvanvṛttānta* (Bengali), 7th edition, p. 191) has given an almost similar account, but his contention is that the three did not go to Sri Ramakrishna for the solution: it was only Adhar who went to Dakshineswar—perhaps not his first visit. Adhar did not raise the topic but to his amazement Sri Ramakrishna began to expound, on his own, the very text on which they had been disputing. Still, one must note that in the *Gospel* account of this first meeting, there is no mention of such an exposition.

⁷ One may note that in the portion of 'M's' *Gospel* published first in the Bengali journal *Tattwamañjarī* (Vol. VIII, No. 7, Kārtik, Bengali Era 1311), Adhar's visit to Sri Ramakrishna on 8 April 1883 has been given as his first visit to the Master. Obviously 'M' revised this point when he published the *Gospel* in book-form. Yet Narendranath Laha (op. cit., p. 372) upheld the view of the *Tattwamañjarī*. Again, Kumud-

Take, for instance, the sacrifice of a goat on the eighth day of the full or new moon.

'I am now in such a state of mind that I cannot watch a sacrifice. Also I cannot eat meat offered to the Divine Mother. Therefore I first touch my finger to it, then to my head, lest She should be angry with me.

'Again, in a certain state of mind I see God in all beings, even in an ant. At that time, if I see a living being die, I find consolation in the thought that it is the death of the body, the soul being beyond life and death.'^{9b}

Then, to his surprise, Adhar heard from the lips of Sri Ramakrishna words which seemed directed to his unspoken inner needs: 'One should not reason too much; it is enough if one loves the Lotus Feet of the Mother. Too much reasoning throws the mind into confusion. You get clear water if you drink from the surface of a pool. Put your hand deeper and stir the water, and it becomes muddy. Therefore pray to God for devotion.'

Thus recommending to Adhar the practice of devotion, he stressed the devotion which has no motive behind it. 'Behind Dhruva's devotion there was desire. He practised austerities to gain his father's kingdom. But Prahlada's love for God was motiveless—a love that sought no return.'

Last of all, Adhar heard Sri Ramakrishna say: '.... God can be directly perceived in a man with a tangible form. Seeing an Incarnation of God is the same as seeing God Himself. God is born on earth as man in every age.' From subsequent events, it seems probable that Adhar began to feel that Sri Ramakrishna himself was such an Incarnation.

For the impression Sri Ramakrishna had made on him was deeper than he could realize at the moment. It caused an upheaval in his soul, carrying him irresistibly out of

the confines of his intellectual scepticism. Such was the Master's attraction for him that within a few months Adhar was saying: 'You haven't been here for a long time. I prayed to God today that you might come. I even shed tears.'¹⁰ Later on he lovingly told Sri Ramakrishna: 'I can tell you truthfully, sir, that not more than six or seven persons like you have been born since the creation of the world.'¹¹ But long before that, he had accepted Sri Ramakrishna as his guide, his mentor. Versatile master that he was, Sri Ramakrishna perceived at once Adhar's unsatisfied aspirations and the inadequacy of the answers he had obtained from his Western education and his literary pursuits. No sooner had he grasped Adhar's limitations than he took on himself the task of guiding him so that he might attain fullest development in the shortest time.

On his second visit, less than a month later, Adhar brought a friend grief-stricken by his son's death; Sri Ramakrishna not only gave him a consolation of heroic type, but proceeded to apply the thought to Adhar's own situation:

'You are a Deputy Magistrate. Remember that you have obtained your position through the grace of God. Do not forget Him, but remember that all men one day walk down the same path. We stay in the world only a couple of days.'

'It is necessary to do a certain amount of work. This is a kind of discipline.... One must have stern determination.... must make a firm resolve.

'There is a great power in the seed of God's name. It destroys ignorance.'

'The mind becomes very much distracted if one lives long in the midst of "woman and gold". Therefore one must be very careful.... Always keep your mind fixed on God. In the beginning you must struggle a little; later you will

^{9b} *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 201.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 478.

enjoy your pension.’¹²

The rapport thus established between the two was wonderful to follow. As early as 2 June 1883, Sri Ramakrishna visited Adhar’s house, and such visits became more frequent with time; they became occasions for religious festivals bringing joy to many devotees of the area. Sri Ramakrishna had seen in a vision that ‘the houses of Adhar, Balaram and Surendra were so many places for our forgathering’.¹³

When he visited Adhar’s house on 18 August 1883, Sri Ramakrishna, filled with spiritual fervour, said to Adhar, ‘My son, meditate on the Deity whose name you chanted.’ With these words he wrote something on Adhar’s tongue with his finger. It seems almost certain that, as ‘M’ suggests, the Master thus imparted spirituality to Adhar.

It was nonetheless clear that Adhar still had some worldly desires to work out: that he had ‘both—yoga and bhoga’.¹⁴ Though the Master showed him the ideal of Prahlada’s motiveless devotion, he also urged the *tāmasik* type of devotion by which one can force one’s demands on God. True to the spirit of the Master’s advice, Adhar moved ahead, and his yearning for God-

realization grew; his visits to Dakshineswar became almost daily.¹⁵ Still, the Master would often remind him, ‘This moment the body is and the next moment it is not. One must make haste to worship God.’¹⁶

Still, none was prepared for the regretfully premature end of Adhar’s brilliant life. Returning from an inspection tour in Manicktola, he fell from his horse on 6 January 1885. Sri Ramakrishna observed later that Adhar while on horseback had had a wonderful vision of his *Iṣṭa* (Chosen Deity) and being overwhelmed by religious emotion, had become unsteady and therefore fallen.¹⁷ A compound fracture of the left wrist developed tetanus, and Adhar died on 14 January. H.J.S. Cotton, presiding over a condolence meeting, rightly observed, ‘It is impossible not to labour under a sense of depression and sorrow when we see his place vacant and reflect how much fulfilment has been disappointed, how bright a promise has been blighted by his premature death.’¹⁸

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 637.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 364.

¹⁷ Swami Gambhirananda: *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa-bhaktamālīka* (Bengali) (Udbodhan Office), Vol. II, third ed., p. 246. Anticipating such a mishap Sri Ramakrishna had warned Adhar against riding horses, but the latter did not take this warning seriously.

¹⁸ Narendranath Laha, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

¹² *ibid.*, pp. 144-5.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 414.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 585.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Reminiscences are taken from 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda Pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600004, 1947). References: No. 1, p. 477; No. 2, p. 536; No. 3, p. 581; No. 4, p. 559; No. 5, p. 726; No. 6, p. 693; No. 7, p. 630; No. 8, p. 924; No. 9, p. 265.

The words quoted in 'Onward For Ever' are from *The Complete Works*, Volume IV (1962), pp. 45-6.

The life and teachings of the Buddha are a vital part of India's spiritual and cultural heritage. In Swami Vivekananda that heritage became once again living, as it were. Though a temporal gulf of nearly two millenniums and a half, intervenes between them, a comparative study of their lives and teachings reveals many points of contact. A discussion of this theme, begun last month, is completed in the current month's editorial essay.

In this second instalment of the Essay on Applied Religion—'Practice of Detachment'—Swami Budhananda further analyses the psychological causes of the origination of attachment, and suggests methods for the cultivation of detachment, which alone confers peace and blessedness on spiritual aspirants. The first part of this 'Essay' appeared in our May issue.

'Freud's Psychology of Religion: An Indian Analysis' by Dr. R. Puligandla, is a well-reasoned and well-documented refutation of Freud's ill-founded and derogatory

thesis about religion and its origins. Not to speak of the absolute non-applicability of Freud's naive conclusions, to Hinduism and Buddhism, even in the case of Judaism and Christianity his views are off the mark. Because these Semitic religions too have been built on the impregnable foundations of mystical and spiritual experiences, verifiable by men and women at all times. Freud, in tracing the 'origins' of religion to primeval patricide, infantile regression, etc., has only succumbed to his own psychoanalytic obsessions.

Dr. Puligandla holds Master's degrees in Engineering and Physics, and received the Doctorate in Philosophy in 1966 from Rice University, Houston, Texas. He is author of many articles, published in scholarly and professional journals, and of two books—one on B. F. Skinner and the other on Indian Philosophy. He is currently Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toledo, Ohio, U.S.A. The first instalment of his article was published in our May issue.

Adhar Lal Sen, an intellectual and a high official in the British Government, received the special grace and blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, and quickly became a very intimate and dear disciple. Though his life was cut short by an accident and he died before reaching the age of thirty, his spiritual earnestness and faith in and devotion to his Master are sure to inspire other seekers on the path of God. An informative account of his First Meeting with Sri Ramakrishna is contributed this month by Swami Prabhananda, a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ON ZOROASTRIAN TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS & CEREMONIALS: BY H. S. SPENCER and DASTUR K. S. DABU. Published by H. P. VASWANI, A6 Sadhu Vaswani Kunj, Poona 411001, pp. 181. Price Rs. 5/-

Culled from the larger treatise of the authors', *Sequel to the Mysteries of God in the Universe*, these pages touch in many places upon certain rituals, symbols and concepts in the Zoroastrian religion which have close correspondence to the those in the Vedic tradition, e.g. worship of Fire, Kundalini-sakti, Karma, Doctrine of Re-birth, etc. The appendices dealing with experiences and details of after-death existence are specially interesting.

SRI M. P. PANDIT

Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry.

MIND: EDITED BY DR. (MRS.) SARASVATI CHENNAKESAVAN, published by Sri Venkatesvara University, Tirupati, Date and Price not given; pp. ix+94.

The Sri Venkatesvara University and the University Grants Commission sponsored a seminar on the nature of the mind at Tirupati in 1970. The seminar was conducted on an inter-disciplinary basis which explains the presence of scientists and others beside the teachers of philosophy. The views of engineers, neurologists, cyberneticists and others are represented in the twelve papers that make up the bulk of the volume. Major Parthasarathi considers mind to be bigger than consciousness. Evidently he is in this opinion influenced by the western terminology. Dr. (Mrs.) Chennakesavan's 'Working Paper' is more concerned with the brain than with the mind. Dr. Ramamurthy's paper is negative in character: he believes our concept, or at least the word, 'mind' is too subjective and should be wholly replaced by more objective terminology. Dr. Balasubramanyam, a neurosurgeon, tends to focus on the brain, with rather scant attention to the status and function of the mind in relation to it. Dr. Venkataramaiah is honest enough to admit that 'something is there; I do not know what it is'. Prof. Raghavachar does not take mind and matter as mutually exclusive concepts. Dr. (Mrs.) Chennakesavan tried, among other problems in her 'Theory of Contingent Identity of the Mind', to distinguish learning from knowing. The attempt is commendable, though hardly the conclusion arrived at. With all this, these papers do bring together different views and attitudes from different dis-

ciplines. The volume at least reveals that the days of compartmentalization and narrow specialization are gone for good.

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BENGALI

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, SWAMI VIVEKANANDA O DHARMA PRASANGA: BY SWAMI OMKARANANDA, Published by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Ashram, Howrah 1, 1974, Pages 272, Price Rs. 8/-.

Swami Omkarananda was the Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission from 1966 till his passing away in May 1973. Earlier, for many decades, he had been one of the Trustees of the Ramakrishna Order. He had joined the Order in the year 1917, when many of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna were still living. As such, he had had the privilege of coming into close contact with them. In addition to this, the Swami was a deep scholar of Advaita Vedanta and allied religious and philosophical subjects. Endowed with a strong physique and a vigorous mind, the Swami's personality attracted many seekers to him, and his conversations, classes and lectures had the stamp of not only scholarship, but also of deep spirituality.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Ashram, Howrah, has succeeded in collecting some records of the Swami's class-talks and conversations and published them in a book-form. For the book is bound to prove a valuable guide to many an earnest spiritual aspirant. A few hitherto unrecorded incidents relating to Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have also found mention in the Swami's conversations. The book contains a brief life-sketch of the Swami and some reminiscences of him from his brother Swamis.

In fine, the book is a valuable addition to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature and our congratulations go to the publishers for bringing out the book.

SWAMI SMARANANANDA

BOOKS RECEIVED

MODERN AND OTHERWISE: BY SRI SJSIR KR. GHOSH, published by D. K. Publishing House, 73B, Anand Nagar, Delhi 110035.

THE SWAMI AND THE COMRADE—A HINDU-MARXIST DIALOGUE: By DR. K. K. Roy, published by Intertrade Publications (India) Pvt. Ltd., 55 Gariahat Road, Calcutta 19, 1974, pp. 193, Price Rs. 64/- (Sic).

PHILOSOPHY OF THE THIRD WORLD: By HEYDAR REGHABY, published by D.Q. University (Distribution Centre), P.O. Box 4507, Sather Gate Station, Berkeley, Calif., 94704, 1974, pp. 180, Price \$ 2.50

THE HUMAN EXILE: By BELA FISCHER, published by Philosophical Library, New York City, 1974, pp. 185, Price \$ 6.00

TIBETAN AND HIMALAYAN WOOD BLOCK PRINTS: By DOUGLAS WEINER, published by Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick Street, New York, N.Y. 10014, 1974, pp. ix+66 Price not stated.

REFLECTIONS ON THE TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA: By R. C. Roy, published by the author at 'Sarat-Tara', 59, Prafulla Chandra Avenue, Calcutta-30, Date not noted; pp. 253; Price Rs. 10/-

SOME ASPECTS OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY: By SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA, published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, P.O. Puranattukafa, Trichur, 680551, 1975, pp. 318, Price Rs. 8/-

GOD AS MOTHER: By CHEEVER MACKENZIE BROWN, published by Claude Stark & Co., Hartford, Vermont 05047 (U.S.A.), 1974, pp. xvii+264, Price \$ 15.00

SANKARA'S SUTRA-BHASHYA (SELF-EXPLAINED): By SRI SRI SATCHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATI, published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya (Bangalore Branch) No. 68, II Block, Subbaramachetty Lay-out, Bangalore 560028, 1974, pp. 16+105+3, Price Rs. 4.50

THE HOLY TRINITY: By DR. G. T. GOPALAKRISHNA NAIDU, published by Mercury Book Co., Coimbatore-1, 1974, pp. viii+58, Price Rs. 2.00

SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION: By PROF. A. V. HILL, F.R.S., published by The Indian Institute of World Culture, P.O. No. 402, Basavangudi, Bangalore 560004, 1972, pp. ii+14, Price Rs. 1.50

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, VRINDAVAN

REPORT FOR 1973-74

Serving the sick and needy of the area since 1907, the Sevashrama has grown to include a well-equipped, up-to-date hospital with 103 beds. Total number of cases admitted during the year under report was 3,750. The total number of surgical operations, inclusive of eye-operations, was 2,115. The work done by the various departments of the Sevashrama is as follows:

Nandababa Eye Department, started in 1943, and financed and maintained partially with the help of two devotees. During the year 649 cases were treated Indoor and 7,737 in the Outdoor section. In all 1,104 operations were done. Also an out-patient eye clinic is conducted fortnightly at Kosi-Kalan, a small town 38 kms away from Vrindavan, rendering service each time to an average of 100 patients of the surrounding villages. This eye-department organized an Eye-camp at the same place in March 1974 when a good number of operations were performed.

Seth Shri Maneklal Chinai Cancer Department

has been existing since 1969 with 8 beds and related out-door facilities. During the year under report, 55 patients were treated here Indoor and 71 Outdoor. Indoor treatment procedures included biopsy, surgical, radiotherapy, hormonal, etc.

Outdoor Dispensary treated 2,28,628 cases of which 36,851 were new. In all 629 operations were performed including those of the eye-department. On an average 626 patients were treated daily.

Homoeopathy Department, conducted under an eminent homoeopath, treated 4,279 new and 21,606 old cases.

Clinical Laboratory provides arrangements for all routine and some special examinations. During the year, pathological investigations of 18,953 samples were carried out.

X-Ray Department took 3,581 diagnostic exposures.

Physio-therapy Department treated 769 cases.

Training: Volunteers from certain field-units of Govt. of India are undergoing short practical training along with theoretical classes and talks given by matrons and doctors.

Library and Recreation: The Sevashrama runs

a library and reading-room for the patients. A small medical library is maintained for the use of the medical officers. The wards of the hospital are fitted with loud-speakers and these are fed with interesting items of Radio-programmes. Also audiovisual programmes on health, hygiene etc., are arranged sometimes.

Relief and Welfare: Pecuniary help, worth Rs. 953.84, was given to needy persons etc. Besides this, 416 poor students were helped with fees, books etc., at a cost of Rs. 1,975/-.

The Ashrama branch of this Centre concentrated on religious and cultural activities. The temple of Sri Ramakrishna, dedicated in 1973, conducted regular worship and *bhajan*, fortnightly singing of *Ramnam* and *Syamnam*, observance of birthday anniversaries of prophets and saints. Public celebrations of some of the birthdays were held with lectures and with recitation competitions for school students.

Immediate Needs :

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|--|---------------|
| (1) Donation to clear off the accumulated loans ... | Rs. 36,287.66 |
| (2) Building Maintenance Fund ... | Rs. 50,000.00 |
| (3) Endowment for maintenance of each bed in the names of donors' near and dear ones ... | Rs. 15,000.00 |
| (4) Go-Seva Fund ... | Rs. 25,000.00 |
| (5) Road construction and Land Development ... | Rs. 50,000.00 |
| (6) Sanitary Installations ... | Rs. 60,000.00 |
| (7) Covering the open verandas of the Hospital building ... | Rs. 40,000.00 |

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, KANPUR

REPORT FOR 1973-74

The activities of this centre come under three heads: spiritual and cultural, educational, and medical.

Spiritual and Cultural: Besides regular worship, prayer and meditation in the Ashrama shrine, religious classes and *kirtans* (devotional music) were held on Sunday evenings in the Mission premises. In connection with the cele-

bration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday a public meeting, too, was held in the Ashrama premises.

Also the birthdays of the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Buddha, Sri Chaitanya, and Jesus Christ as also the Sivaratri and Kali-puja were observed with due solemnity.

Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Library had 3,892 books of which 3,093 were issued. The Reading-room received 8 newspapers and 57 periodicals. The daily average attendance in the library was 41.

Educational: The Higher Secondary School for boys with an imposing building of its own has been in existence since 1947. Till now it has sent up 22 batches in both Scientific and Literary groups.

The average enrolment in the year was 698. The High School percentage of result was 98.26 with 68 boys in the first division out of 115 appeared. One boy of this School secured the eleventh position in the annual examination conducted by the U.P. Secondary Education Board. 18 students merited the National and 29 the State scholarship. The School is again in receipt of the Efficiency Grant for the seventh time. The School has its own well-equipped Library with 6,600 books and 23 magazines for the use of the students and staff members.

Medical: The out-door Charitable Dispensary, started in 1924 and moved to its own building in 1939, has been catering to the medical needs of a large number of poor patients. Both allopathic and homoeopathic systems of treatment are available here. It has five departments: general, ophthalmology, pathology, dentistry, and radiology.

The total number of patients treated during the year was 1,76,348 of which more than 70% were women and children. 323 minor operations were performed and 37,965 injections were given. The laboratory handled 884 specimens. The X-ray department has become a source of relief to the poor patients; 244 cases were radiologically examined during the year.

Immediate Needs: (1) To remove the heavy deficit under which our Charitable Hospital is working for five years past.

(2) To purchase books for Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Public Library and Reading Room.