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AUGUST 1984

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
all of these the Vision of the Paramatman is Obtained.

ADVAITA ASHRAMA

MAYAVATI, HIMALAYAS



Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

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No. 8

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

'Truth is one: sages call It by various names'

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं
नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्न-
म्भः किमासीद् गहनं गभीरम् ॥

1. Then¹ there was neither Being nor Nonbeing²; there was neither the [physical] space (*rajah*) nor the Supreme space³. What was there as a cover, and where?⁴ Whose was the blessedness (*śarman*)?⁵ Was there water, deep and unfathomable?

Rg-Veda 10.129.1

* *Nāsadīya-sūkta* 'Hymn of Creation', one of the most profoundly philosophical, mystical and beautiful of Vedic hymns, is begun here. Sāyaṇa in his commentary states that the hymn refers to the state of the universe during *pralaya* or cosmic dissolution. How then did the poet, who lived millions of years later, know it? In the realm of the Absolute the past and the future are contained in the present. Creation is a timeless process. As Swami Vivekananda's experience contained in his 'Song on Samadhi' shows, in the superconscious state, as the soul rises through different levels of consciousness to the Absolute, it encounters the stages of creation in the reverse order. In other words, *Nāsadīya-sūkta* is the expression of a profound mystical experience of the origins of creation. The author of this wonderful hymn is unknown.

1. The first part of this line negates time and the second half negates space.

2. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1. states that at the beginning there was only pure Being (*sat*) without a second. But *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.1 states that at the beginning there was only Nonbeing (*asat*), i.e. the unmanifested condition of Being. The present hymn negates both Being and Nonbeing because these are only relative terms. Some Western scholars see the rudiments of Sāmkhya philosophy in this hymn, and take *sat* as implying Puruṣa and *asat* as Prakṛti.

3. *Rajah* is interpreted by Sāyaṇa as 'the world', and by Western scholars as 'air'.

4. There was no cover, as there was nothing to be covered.

5. There was no enjoyer (*bhoktā*), as the ego had not got differentiated. *Śarman* is interpreted by Sāyaṇa as 'enjoyment or fruition of pain and pleasure', and by Western scholars as shelter, protection, support etc.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This month's EDITORIAL discusses some of the psycho-social processes to be gone through if India is to attain social and political maturity.

What is spiritual life? How can the apparent contradiction between Karma and Jñāna and between Jñāna and Bhakti be resolved? What is practical Vedanta? To what extent can the world be regarded as unreal? What are the stages of spiritual progress? These and several other related questions are answered with deep insight and effortless grace from a refreshingly original view point in the article THE PATH TO FOLLOW by Srimat Swami Gambhiranandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

RAM CHANDRA DATTA by Swami Chetan-

ananda, spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, U.S.A., is an absorbing study of the life of one of the foremost lay disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF TRANSCENDENTALISM IN AMERICA by Dr. Umesh Patri, Ph. D., Reader in English, D.A.V. College, Koraput, Orissa, is a well-documented study of the meaning of transcendentalism and of the way German idealism, English romanticism and Indian mysticism influenced the life and thought of Emerson.

In the third and concluding instalment of BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN INDIA: LIGHT FROM WITHIN Dr. S. K. Chakraborty rebuts the charge that Indian ethos is otherworldly and makes a strong plea for a new model of business management which is in resonance with the spiritual culture of India.

THE GREENING OF INDIA

(EDITORIAL)

Awakening and maturity

At the stroke of the midnight hour on the 15th of August this year India will have completed thirty-six years of her existence as an independent nation. Thirty-six years! For a nation with an unbroken cultural history of perhaps twice as many centuries, thirty-six years are just a *nimesa*, a wink of the eye. Yet, no other period of her history can be regarded as more important, more critical, more pregnant with possibilities than these thirty-six years. These years have witnessed

the heroic struggle of the infant nation to weld her ethnic, social and cultural diversities into a collective national consciousness, to lead her people to prosperity and well-being, to carve for herself an honourable place in the comity of nations, to defend her geopolitical integrity against heavy odds, to regain the glory and grandeur of her lost epochs, and to contribute her share to the progress of the global community. These are the years of India's greatest awakening which Swami Vivekananda prophesied eighty-six years ago:

The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awaking and a voice is coming to us—away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge and of love, and of work, India, this motherland of ours—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold the sleeper is awakening! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours from her deep long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.¹

But modern India is only an infant giant, still rising to her feet. She is yet to attain her full stature. She has a long way to go in assuring material prosperity, social justice and value fulfilment to all her citizens. Even her nationhood is still in the process of making, and is constantly threatened by internal dissensions. There is a great deal of immaturity in her dealing with social and political problems. She is yet to attain maturity in understanding and handling international forces. Gordon Allport, the well-known American psychologist, has stated that one of the signs of the maturity of an individual is that he has a clear-cut philosophy of life.² This is true of nations too. India is yet to evolve a mature national philosophy of life. The attainment of social and political maturity is known as 'greening'.³

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973) vol. 3, p. 145-146.

2. cf Gordon Allport, *The Individual and His Religion* (New York: MacMillan Co, 1950).

3. *The New York Times Almanac* defines *greening* as 'becoming less naive and more

Greening is not a time-bound process. Longer life does not necessarily give more wisdom and maturity to individuals—nor to nations. The United States, for instance, attained independence in 1783. Yet, as Charles Reich has shown in his well-known book *The Greening of America*, that nation is still far from attaining the dreamed of 'greening'. Speaking about the present social situation there, Reich draws attention to the loss of the sense of community and of belonging to one another. Work and living have become more and more artificial and mechanical. Democracy continues only in name, since power is in the hands of a few who make all decisions. In this situation man loses his self-respect and self-identity. Hence there is a clamour for change from the condition of restraint and subjugation to stifling structures to a state of openness and freedom which Reich calls Consciousness III⁴.

The problems of India are different. At present her major problem seems to be poverty and how to produce more wealth. Western observers tend to exaggerate the magnitude of this problem. But the socio-political problems are at least as important, and if India does not learn to deal with them today, to these will be added tomorrow the problems of developed countries. In other words, the greening of India cannot be postponed to a distant future.

Awareness of present achievements

Before going on to discuss the main issues involved in the greening process, it is necessary to understand what the nation has already achieved. Sir John Thomson,

mature, especially in one's understanding of social and political forces.' The word, in this sense, is yet to find its place in standard dictionaries.

4. cf Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970) pp. 16-18.

Britain's representative at the U.N. and former high commissioner in India, repeatedly spoke of India as 'a strikingly successful developing country...a more successful society than not only most people outside India think, but most Indians think'. Most people in the West look upon India as an incorrigibly poor country crawling on with the help of economic aid and World Bank loans. Actually, however, in terms of per capita foreign aid received, India ranks 111th, with Pakistan receiving 4 times and Israel 40 times as much aid as India receives.

Indians themselves have a poor understanding of their country's spectacular achievements which they tend to ignore or underestimate or regard as government propaganda or statistical gimmick. There is so much talk about hunger and scarcity of food, yet India exports not only wheat but also rice. The farmer complains of power cuts and the city dweller is annoyed at frequent 'load shedding'. But the very shortage of power is the result of extending electricity to all parts of the population, especially the rural poor. In 1947 Indian farms had only 6,400 electric pumpsets, now there are 42 lakh. Comparisons often serve as an eye-opener. In 1933 ninety per cent of the farms in the U.S. were without electricity. Rural electrification was completed in America only in the early 1950's, just 20 years before it reached 100 per cent of the villages in several Indian states. In 1947 there were only 1,500 villages with electricity in the whole of India, whereas there are 2,60,000 now.

When the banks were nationalized in 1969 and directed to issue loans to the agricultural sector, experts feared that the banks might lose all their funds if they lent them to farmers. No one conceived of the huge untapped reservoir rural savings that would flow into the bank from the rural areas increasing total bank deposits ninefold

from Rs. 6,000 crore to Rs. 54,000 crore in 13 years. Now 50 per cent of all bank deposits belong to small depositors from rural areas. At the turn of the century there were 9,000 bank branches in the U.S.; by 1970 there were 37,000 and by 1981, 59,000—a nearly sevenfold increase in 80 years. India had only 5,000 branches in 1961 and has 39,000 today—a nearly eightfold increase in 22 years: roughly four times the U.S. ratio. At this rate India will overtake America in a decade.

There is inadequate awareness of the significance and magnitude of the green revolution achieved by India, states the economic expert Garry Jacobs.⁵ If the Indian peasant often appears to remain idle it is not because of laziness but because of lack of opportunities. Whenever and wherever opportunities for improvement of farming and betterment of economic prospects presented themselves, the Indian peasant has never failed to seize upon them with alacrity. The modernization of rural France began only after the government laid roads to all villages and established rural schools. The rest of the development took place by itself. A similar phenomenon may be witnessed in India too. With the minimum of facilities available to him the Indian peasant is transforming rural India at a rate that dwarfs anything known in the West.

In 1963 economic experts of the FAO predicted only a 10 per cent increase of India's foodgrains production by 1970, whereas the actual increase turned out to be 50 per cent, with 180 per cent increase for wheat. Unfortunately, all the credit for this green revolution was taken by scientists and government agencies. Yet,

5. Much of the material in this section has been drawn from Garry Jacob's excellent assessment published in the 'Special Report' column of *The Hindu*, 30 August 1983.

without the initiative, skill and energy of the peasants, increased supply of fertilizer, improved seed and extension service would have been of no avail. If the green revolution has proved anything, it is that Indian farmers are enterprising, dynamic and open to innovation. As Garry Jacobs has rightly observed, 'A decade of green revolution has made for a century of British exploitation.'

The popular notion that the green revolution has benefited only the rich farmers has been shown to be wrong by Swiss economist Gilbert Etienne. His study shows that wherever the green revolution has spread even small and marginal farmers have benefited from the new technology. Farm wages and employment opportunities have also increased in those areas.

In the industrial sector the progress that India has made is to be considered stupendous in view of the fact that it began with few advantages, especially the momentum of the Mechanical-Industrial Revolution that had transformed Western societies. In spite of the overall economic backwardness of the country, it has become the eighth industrial power in the world.

It produces a number of consumer and industrial goods using sophisticated technology developed or perfected indigenously. It exports textiles, machine tools, heavy-electrical goods and other industrial products even to industrially advanced countries like UK, USA, USSR, and Germany, and is successfully competing with them on the world market. India makes her own ships, aeroplanes, locomotives, automobiles and all essential kinds of military hardware including tanks. She has acquired nuclear capability and is now mastering space technology at an incredibly fast rate. In an interview published in the *Dawn* of Karachi the Pakistani Nobel laureate Prof. Abdus Salam remarked two years ago that the prediction made by the

U.S. senator Mr. Patrick Moynihan, that India would be a super power by the year 2,000, would not be unrealistic insofar as progress in science and technology and its impact on society were concerned.

To make every Indian aware of his country's spectacular achievements is the very first step to the greening of India. This needs a massive nation-wide programme of public education coupled with token demonstration. All channels of communication are to be utilized for this purpose. Two points are to be kept in mind in this context. One is that the programme of creating progress awareness should be attuned to different levels of the population—children and adults, the educated and the illiterate, and so on. Secondly, all progress and success are to be publicized as people's achievements (as is being done in modern China). All credit must go to the toiling people of India—and not to the government or any political party, as it is happening in India at present.

Recovery of people's self-confidence

The greatest obstacle to development is not the lack of capital or other resources but the lack of self-confidence. If a boy were constantly told, 'You won't be able to do this', he would grow into a diffident, insecure individual incapable of exploring new possibilities, taking risks, facing crises and persevering with unwavering determination. This was what happened in India on a country-wide scale during the British rule. Repeated defeats in wars, loss of political power and incompetent leadership had already eroded the self-confidence of the people. The British Raj imposed a blanket of fear and authority and created the feelings of submissiveness and dependence in Indians. Through systematic indoctrination about the worthlessness of the soul and culture of the nation the alien

rulers succeeded in creating the attitudes of defeatism, pessimism and escapism in the minds of the people. More than economic exploitation and the destruction of indigenous industries, it was the distortion of the nation's self-image and the repressions of the collective unconscious of the people that was the most harmful effect of British rule in India.

None the less was the harm done to the souls of the common masses by the upper strata of Indians themselves through priestcraft and economic exploitation, which a writer characterized as 'internal colonialism'. Swami Vivekananda was the first great modern leader to point this out. In his famous lecture on the 'Mission of Vedanta', Swamiji said:

I therefore ask myself: Who is responsible? And the answer comes every time: not the English; no, they are not responsible; it is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation...Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings. They have been compelled to be merely hewers of wood and drawers of water for centuries, so much so, that they are made to believe that they are born as slaves...⁶

Independence has brought physical freedom but the hang-over of 'self-hypnotism', about which Swamiji spoke, is still with the people. The most obvious sign of it is the widespread fear of self-employment and the hankering after the security of the underpaid, uncreative, unfree jobs offered by the government. To become a doctor or engineer is the highest limit of an average Indian boy's ambition. There is immense potential for self-employment in both urban and rural areas. And yet, people would rather live in poverty and hardship than take the risk of working on

one's own steam. In an article published in the *Reader's Digest* a few years ago, a British former chairman of the Hindustan Lever Ltd. noted the general tendency of Indians to look down upon the job of a salesman, and pointed out that this country could not hope to become wealthy like the U.S.A. unless salesmanship was promoted on a large scale. There is a deeply rooted misconception that large capital and business expertise are necessary to become an entrepreneur. But what is really important is really self-confidence, supported by vision and hard work.

How to arouse faith and self-confidence in people? One way is to organize pep talks on a commercial scale as Dale Carnegie did. Norman Vincent Peale through his 'power of positive thinking' attempted it in a different way. The Christian and Islamic ethics of work are based on the Hebrew conception of man as a special creation of God. However, in Christianity man is regarded as a born sinner, whereas in Islam he is regarded as completely subservient to the will of God. If these patently inadequate views could generate so much faith and courage in the hearts of the followers of these religions, how much more should the Vedantic doctrine, which looks upon man as potentially divine and as a child of immortal bliss (*amṛtasya putra*), prove to be effective! And yet this doctrine of the uncreated, self-luminous, unattached, immutable, immortal, all-blissful, divine spark, the Atman, had for centuries been used only as a means of escape from problems and responsibilities. Swami Vivekananda was the first great modern teacher to show how to apply this Vedantic doctrine in practical life and solve the problems of the individual and the society.

Unlike many other contemporary and later Indian leaders, who sought the solution of India's problems in Western ideals

6. *Complete Works* 3:192.

and philosophical concepts, Swami Vivekananda found it in the ancient indigenous philosophy of India itself. This is a unique feature of Swamiji's plan of rejuvenating India.⁷ The Upaniṣads declare: 'Through the Atman one attains strength', 'Brahman is fearlessness.'⁸ What Swami Vivekananda did was to try to awaken the masses by teaching them about the power hidden in such Vedantic concepts for transforming individual lives and the entire Indian society. Listen to his exhortation:

Our poor people, these downtrodden masses of India, therefore require to hear and to know what they really are. Ay, let every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth, weakness or strength, hear and learn that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one there is that Infinite Soul, assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good. Let us proclaim to every soul: *uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata* —Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached. Arise, awake! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. *None* is really weak; the soul is infinite, omnipotent and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim

7. In this context we would like to controvert a thesis put forth by the well-known writer Ashis Nandy in his recent book *The Intimate Enemy* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1983). According to him Rammohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda worked on the basic assumption that the British colonization of India was a historical process, and that they allowed 'Western ideas to percolate to the deepest levels of Hindu religious ideas', and accepted 'Western cultural theories of political subjugation and economic backwardness.' Gandhiji, on the contrary, gave precedence to myth over history and rejected Western values and sociological interpretations in toto. Paradoxically, this chic tissue of arguments itself has been tailored on the basis of the current interpretations of myth and history given by some disillusioned Western thinkers.

8. आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यम् *Kena Upaniṣad* 2.4
अभयं वै ब्रह्म *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.25

the God within you, do not deny Him!...O ye modern Hindus, dehypnotize yourselves.⁹

The second unique feature of Swami Vivekananda's message to the nation is that it makes the individual the unit of development. In other systems—Marxist, capitalist, Gandhian—a segment of society like the political party, the industrial complex or the village, is the unit of development. These systems are all different forms of collectivization, and share the two disadvantages of the collectivization process. One, collectivization does not teach man how to stand on his own legs independent of external forces. Two, unless, *all* the members of the group have been raised to comparable levels of dignity and power, collectivization will only lead to greater conflict. This is what has happened in India. As the economic condition of villages improves, social inequalities also get exaggerated which vested interests misuse to their own advantage. This is the reason why the Panchayati Raj has failed in India. Industrialization increases class strife, violence, alcoholism, disruption of family ties and other social evils. Commenting on this phenomenon, Gunnar Myrdal, the Nobel-prize winning Swedish economist-sociologist, remarks:

But all these efforts to create machinery for self-government, cooperation, and a popular participation without changing the basic social and economic structure are essentially attempts to bypass the equality issue. And this attempt to evade the problem of equality is in large part responsible for the failure of these reform policies.¹⁰

In contrast to these systems, Swamiji's scheme focuses on the individual. Make the man first, develop the individual by

9. *Complete Works* 3:193

10. Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama* (London: Penguin Books, 1977) p. 146.

awakening the divinity in him and by making him actualize his potentialities—he said. A great society cannot be built upon a foundation of inequalities and disparities, and the only way to overcome these is to raise every man to his full spiritual dimension. Development of the spiritual man—this is Swami Vivekananda's solution to all social problems.

How to put into practice this doctrine on a large scale? Swami Vivekananda believed this could be done through education. 'The only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, to develop their lost individuality', Swamiji wrote to the Maharaja of Mysore more than fifty years before India got her independence.¹¹ Now the entire machinery of education is being operated by Indians themselves. Yet, Swamiji's scheme of rejuvenating the nation through education is yet to gain even the recognition and understanding that it deserves in planning and policy making.

There are three reasons for this. One is that it calls for a radical alteration of the Western model of the educative process now prevalent all over India. Right from the time of Aristotle Western theories of education have been based on the belief that knowledge comes from outside. The Vedantic doctrine is that knowledge is inherent in the Self; education is only a negative process of removing the veils that cover this inner light. It is doubtful whether the significance and practical utility of this Vedantic doctrine are widely understood, though Swami Vivekananda's famous definition, 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man', is frequently quoted.

The second reason is the general lack of awareness of the power of ideas. In India at present most people, including

social workers and the so-called intellectuals, seem to have greater faith in the power of money and material goods than in the power of ideas. But in ancient India knowledge was valued for its own sake, and nobody thought of trading in knowledge. Pursuit of knowledge was regarded as the highest goal of life and society set apart an entire caste solely devoted to it. The ancient tradition of love of knowledge and faith in the power of ideas must be revived. This can happen only through a nationwide wave of intellectual awakening, like the one that swept through Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Political awakening in India was the direct outcome of the spiritual renaissance that quickened the soul of the nation in the nineteenth century. But the transition from the latter to the former was never effected. To bring to bear the forces generated by the spiritual renaissance upon the material forces generated by the political renaissance, the mediation of an intellectual renaissance was needed—but this has not happened. Many of the problems of present-day Indian society have been caused by the operation of the two equally strong and dissimilar forces of matter and spirit, without being coordinated and controlled by the power of knowledge and reason.

The third obstacle is the wrongly or inadequately understood doctrine of secularism. This takes us to the next factor needed in the greening of India.

Recovery of the nation's cultural identity

India as a nation-state is a jigsaw puzzle. Its linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural and geographical diversity, the complexity of social stratification, and multiplicity of beliefs and customs are truly mind-boggling. But then, this has always been its characteristic feature from early times. However, until the dawn of the modern era, common

¹¹. *Complete Works* (1978) 4:362

people lived in peace and harmony in this pluralistic milieu. No doubt, there were wars but these were fought between kings or between dynasties—not between peoples. We read of the emperor of Magadha subduing the king of Gaud, but not of the people of Bihar fighting the people of Bengal. We read of the Chalukya king Pulikesin defeating the great monarch Harsha Vardhana, but not of Kannadigas fighting Maharashtrians. In striking contrast, European history speaks of Latins fighting Greeks, Franks conquering Gauls and of the conflict between Catholics and Protestants that ravaged Europe for decades. The peoples of India had been welded into a single people, a cultural nation, by the integrating power of Indian culture.

The situation is quite different now. The birth of the nation-state has let loose inter-religious, inter-caste, inter-state and other types of conflicts which have become a serious threat to the unity of the nation. Everywhere there is talk about national integration. How could this happen? The answer to this question should necessarily be a complex one. The underlying cause of the present crisis is, however, clear: neglect of the integrating power of culture. The nation-state has been built at the expense of the cultural nation.

The dominant motif of Indian culture, the 'national bent' as Swami Vivekananda called it, is religion. By 'religion' Swamiji meant spirituality, the foundational principles governing man's relationship with the ultimate Reality. According to the Vedantic view, the real nature of man is pure consciousness, the world too has its origin in infinite consciousness, and the goal of life is the realization of the unity of these two types of consciousness, the individual and the cosmic. Thus Indian spirituality is essentially the science of consciousness. Like empirical science, this religious science too is based on universal

principles and is valid for all religions. The difference between spirituality and religion is like that between science and technology. It was the inability to grasp this distinction between spirituality and popular religion that led to the adoption of the concept of secularism.

As a strictly political concept, 'secularism' is a noble one. In India it was accepted with the noble intention of eliminating religious partisanship, religious superstitions and baneful customs from the political machinery. And though it could not prevent the occurrence of communal riots, it has certainly succeeded in denying legitimacy to communalism.

But secularism has its social aspect too, and in a Welfare State this aspect cannot be completely disengaged from the political one. Secularism has deprived the nation of the constructive, purifying and integrating powers of spirituality which forms the backbone of the nation's culture. Secularism has thrown away the baby with the bath water. What is now needed is to evolve a strategy for the propagation of the spiritual foundation common to all religions and sects, and to convert spirituality into a social force for bringing about national integration, administrative efficiency and economic prosperity. It is worth noting in this context the conclusion reached by Schumacher after a perceptive analysis of Western society: 'The modern experiment to live without religion has failed, and once we have understood this, we know what our post-modern tasks really are.'¹²

There are several other conflicts, besides the religious one, that tend to divide up the nation. National integration has assumed paramount importance in recent years. Indian society is pluralistic,

12. E. F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Abacus, Sphere Books, 1981) p. 159

and integration cannot be achieved by beating it into a monolith. The ethos of the people demands that the nation should remain a composite mosaic of diverse religious, linguistic and ethnic groups. The real problem is to achieve all-round integration of the nation-state without distorting its mosaic structure through non-violent means.

There are two obstacles on the way to bringing this about. One is the pre-independence mentality of the policy-makers—the obsessions, phobias and attitudes acquired during the traumatic years of the struggle for independence. The other obstacle is our dependence on the steam-roller paradigms of the technological Western society.

Indians have to rebuild their nation with their own cultural resources. Nation building is a dialectic process. The theses and antitheses are already there—ancient values and modern needs, religious intensity and religious toleration, regional development and centralization of power and so on. These polar elements are to be synthesized and the energy of the dialectical tension to be utilized for all-round development. If she succeeds in this task of forging harmony out of chaos, through non-violent means, India will be able to present to the world a new paradigm of development, a new type of peaceful dialectics, far more beneficial and comprehensive than anything that Marxist dialectical materialism has achieved or even dreamed of.

Openness to natural life

In his travel book *A Wounded Civilization* the distinguished British novelist V.S. Naipaul (born of Indian emigres in Trinidad) refers to India as a land of 'collective amnesia and emptiness of spirit'. In his view, 'India's real tragedy has been

a failure of the mind.' How would he define a successful awakening of the mind? Naipaul's answer: 'Well, an awakening to the natural world, curiosity about man's presence in the world, taking nothing for granted.' His comments on Indian society are vitriolic but well-intentioned, and a nation bent on attaining maturity should learn to accept and benefit from criticism, internal and external.

Openness to the natural world means several things, but it is possible to discuss here only a few of them. One is the awareness of the importance of man's ecosystem. In ancient India people lived in close contact with nature. They had a clear awareness of the 'balance of life', and through the concept of life as *yajña* (sacrifice) regulated production and consumption in accordance with the rhythms of nature. This openness to nature was gradually lost, and at present the average Indian's ignorance of his country's fauna and flora and geological wealth is most pitiable. The pollution of rivers, destruction of forests and other abuses of the environment now going on all over the country, all in the name of poverty and scarcity, can only be described as suicidal. The 'Chipko' movement for the protection of forests in Garhwal and Kumaon regions is a hopeful sign. Such people's movements must be mobilized on a massive scale all over the country.

Openness to the natural world also means preparing oneself thoroughly to face the harsh realities of this world. In a world of cut-throat competition and rapid technological advancement, nations which do not take pains to cultivate work efficiency, precision, business acumen, scientific attitude and other practical traits will go to the wall. Many people, on the pretext of practising self-surrender to God, leave things to chance. To let chance decide is to surrender oneself to the blind forces of

nature. This kind of Micawberism is one of the causes of failure in personal life. At the national level Micawberism has cost India its honour, freedom and wealth on several historical occasions. The defeat of Jaypal at the hands of Mahmud Ghazni, the debacle of the Third Battle of Panipat and the Chinese invasion of 1962—all these may be traced ultimately to one psychological cause: leaving things to chance. It is also one of the two main causes for India's dismal performance in all the departments of sports, the other cause being poor nutrition.

Another aspect of the same attitude is the tendency to live in a world of fantasy. India has the dubious distinction of being the world's largest producer of motion pictures, and the number of cinema theatres in a single major Indian city is said to be more than the total number in the whole country of some other nations. In a land which gave the world the philosophical

doctrine of Maya, the flight from 'the unreal to the still more unreal' can be explained only on the ground that the masses of people have no hope of satisfying their desires and aspirations in the natural world. They are to be awakened to the fact that there is greater beauty in the natural world, greater joy in living the real life, greater satisfaction in serving their fellow-men.

Nothing great or of lasting value can be acquired through humbug. Uncompromising adherence to truth is the only real test and hallmark of greatness. India has accepted the motto *satyameva jayate, na anytam* 'Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood'. When this great principle has been translated into practice in every department of individual and collective life, when the soul of the whole nation has opened to Truth, then the greening of India will have taken place.

THE PATH TO FOLLOW

SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

One naturally wants to know what path did Sri Ramakrishna chalk out for the generality of spiritual aspirants. The answer is very simple. He talked of truthfulness, sincerity, diligence, purity in life, devotion to God, etc., which are the sine qua non of spiritual life. But our minds being complex and filled with worldly thoughts, such a simple answer does not satisfy us. We want something more concrete, more complex and philosophically presented.

Once an old man told the writer, 'Are not these ideals?' The writer replied, 'Of course they are', and the man left. The

writer thought that the questioner believed that ideals were things to be heard of and talked about, but not realizable in life. A simple advice does not satisfy a sophisticated mind. A motor-cyclist came to a cross-road and, finding a boy standing there, asked him which road led to a certain town. The boy pointed to the left road. 'How far is that?' asked the cyclist. 'Three miles', replied the boy. 'What about the right one?' 'Yes, you can go by that also,' replied the boy, 'but it is 24,000 miles long!'

Once Swami Yogananda, then known as Yogen, asked Sri Ramakrishna how he could get rid of passion. 'When you feel

the onrush of passion,' replied Sri Ramakrishna, 'call on Hari and clap your hands again and again. You will see that as birds fly away when one claps one's hands, similarly, passion will take flight when you clap your hands and call on Hari.' Swami Yogananda thought that Sri Ramakrishna was either avoiding him or did not really know any practical process. Nevertheless, he had faith enough in Sri Ramakrishna, and when the impulse came again, he followed the Master's advice and was struck with wonder to see that it was very effective.

Our minds being formed as they are, we need philosophical discussions in order to have faith in any spiritual discipline. Let us then follow this trend in understanding the utterances of Sri Ramakrishna.

In *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* we find the Master telling his audience very often that in this age of Kali-yuga one should follow Nāradyā Bhakti or devotion as taught by Nārada. Often enough he introduces this topic by saying that Karma-yoga is not possible for the people of the present-day world, because the Vedic rites and duties are complicated, take a long time and are well-nigh forgotten.

Now, we need not enter upon a research into who this Nārada was. According to us, we shall not be off the mark if we assume that the Master had in mind the *Bhakti-Sūtras* (Aphorisms on Devotion) of Nārada. The second aphorism of this book is, 'That (devotion) is of the nature of supreme love for God.' Nārada here compares Bhakti with supreme love as we know it in this world; but the real love for God is even higher than that. This is the essential nature of Divine Love. As for the characteristics of Bhakti, Nārada writes, 'Vyāsa, the son of Parāśara, is of the opinion that Bhakti expresses itself in devotion to acts of worship and the like; the sage Garga thinks that it expresses

itself in devotion to sacred talk and the like; the sage Śāṅḍilya holds that it must be without prejudice to the delight in the Ātman (Self); but Nārada is of the opinion that the essential characteristics of Bhakti are the consecration of all activism to Him and extreme anguish if He were to be forgotten.'¹

The above paragraph lands us in a little difficulty, inasmuch as Sri Ramakrishna finds Karma-yoga difficult for this age and yet he advises the adoption of devotion as presented by Nārada, in which activism plays a part. Before we proceed further, we have to state the exact meaning of *tadarpita-akhila-ācaranātā*, which we have translated as 'consecration of all activism to Him', while others translate it as 'consecration of all activities to Him'. In the second meaning we miss the sense of the suffix *tā*, which indicates an abstract noun. Activities imply all kinds of action, whereas activism points to the mental attitude, the tendency towards action or the basis of actions. So, by consecration of activism we mean that the aspirant places himself fully in the hands of God. As Sri Ramakrishna said, 'I am an instrument, and my Mother is the mover of the instrument.' Besides, in this sense, the aspirant has to look upon all his activities as so many spiritual practices linked up with God. For instance, we have this in the song of Rāmprasād Sen:

O my mind, worship Kālī in whatever way you like, while repeating day and night the great mantra received from the guru; When lying in bed for sleep, think that you are making a prostration. When going to sleep think that you are meditating on Mother. When you eat think that you are offering an oblation to Mother Kālī. Whatever words come to your ears are indeed the so many names of Mother. The Mother has taken the form of the fifty letters of the alphabet and She exists in each letter. Rāmprasād declares

1. *Nārada Bhakti Sūtras* I. 16-19

in joy that Mother lives in all things. When you go round a town, think that you are circumambulating Mother Kālī.²

The same idea is conveyed in the *Śiva-mānasa-pūjana-stotram*. The supposed composer Śaṅkarācārya writes: 'O Śiva, You are my soul, Pārvatī (Your consort) is my mind, my organs are Your attendants, my body is Your temple, all my attempts at enjoying things are offerings to You, my sleep consists in being absorbed in Your meditation, the movements of my feet are a ritual circumambulation of Yourself, all my talks are Your hymns—whatever I do is a worshipful dedication to You.' The idea underlying all these is that the whole life has to become spiritualized. Moreover, concentration implies the giving up of agentship and hankering for selfish results, which are the two chief characteristics of ordinary action. Śaṅkarācārya says that when these two are knocked out of ordinary action, it ceases to be action, so that a man can have Jñāna (knowledge) and activism of this kind together, as for instance, Rājarsi (saint-king) Janaka had. Śaṅkarācārya could never admit in his philosophy a combination of Knowledge and action, but in the present case he gives a new meaning to activism, whereby it can co-exist or become identical with Knowledge.

Karma-yoga as defined by Sri Ramakrishna or even Śaṅkarācārya, has a dualistic basis. Generally, active people think that they are the agents of their actions and that they will derive some personal benefit from them. Karma-yoga advises us that this agentship and hankering for results should be surrendered to God. The aspirant does his work according to scriptural norms, and when the result is acquired he is asked to dedicate it to God.

2. *Mana boli bhaja kālī icchā hoy tor je ācāre etc.*

Hence, God enters into the process at a late stage. According to Swami Vivekananda, a Karma-yogin like the Buddha may not even need a God. The old Mīmāṃsakas also did not posit any God in order to make their rituals adequate for reaching heaven. But the kind of activism that we have dealt with earlier has for its basis non-dualism where all works, agentship and fruits stand already spiritualized or dedicated to God. For instance, when one serves somebody by thinking of him as none other than Nārāyaṇa, the service becomes equated with worship of God and the result acquired, namely, benefit to the person worshipped, becomes automatically dedicated to God. The only result that the worshipper derives is Liberation, which according to Sri Ramakrishna is not a result of work as it is ordinarily understood. In his homely words he used to say, 'Sugar-candy is not counted among the sweets.' As for agentship, it gets naturally attenuated and eliminated according to this view; for, the worshipper and worshipped are both one with the supreme Self. The worshipper knows this from the very beginning and tries to make it a matter of experience.

This non-dualistic standpoint has been called 'Practical Vedanta' by Swami Vivekananda, who learnt it from his Master, Sri Ramakrishna. The Master was one day talking about the three main disciplines followed by the Vaiṣṇavas, namely, kindness to creatures, love for the Lord's name and service to the devotees of God. After explaining love for the Name and service to the devotees, when he started with kindness to creatures, he stopped and said, 'Kindness! How can a puny creature like you be kind to others? It is God alone who can be so. You can only serve the creatures thinking of them as Śiva Himself.' Although many heard this, only Swami Vivekananda grasped the underlying

idea, and in later life he gave it a practical shape.

On that very day Swami Vivekananda declared that he had found in this dynamic message the harmony of the four yogas—Jñāna (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion), Karma (Action) and Rāja-yoga, in the last of which meditation is the predominant factor. That the Master also stood for such a harmony is clear from his various talks in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Thus, for instance, 'M' (Master Mahāśaya), the writer of *The Gospel* was told during his second visit to the Master that he need not give up the world, but that there was need for discrimination between the true and the false, good and bad, etc., and also the need to meditate now and then in some solitary place. This combination conforms to human nature. For we all discriminate, love, act and concentrate our minds on different subjects. This being so, one's spiritual discipline should proceed according to the natural make-up of the human mind. It is, therefore, an egoistic stand to say that one is a Jñāni, a man of Knowledge, and is better than a Bhakta (devotee), since devotion degenerates into emotionalism; or that one is a devotee and not a man of Knowledge, for Knowledge gropes in the dark while devotion leads to the very presence of God! Such a partial attitude may be helpful to beginners; but advanced souls have to transcend such narrowness and enter into the more liberal field of not only tolerating but accepting the other paths as well.

People often cite the instance of the Master's disapproval of Shambhu Nath Mullick's proposal to spend his wealth for the establishment of schools, hospitals, etc. The Master's remark was, 'Would you ask God for schools and hospitals if He appears before you?' The lesson here is quite clear. Shambhu Mullick's attitude had no spiritual touch in it; it was

ordinary philanthropy. So a correction was necessary for him. A similar rebuke was meted out to Krishnadas Pal, a politician. The Master asked him, 'What is the aim of your life?' 'To do good to the world', was the answer. The Master retorted, 'Have you thought how big the world is and how small you are? What good can you do to the world? No, you can only serve it for your own spiritual benefit.'

Taking his cue from his Master, Swami Vivekananda wrote in his Rāja-yoga,

'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free'.

But he was clear about the harmony of the four yogas. In another context he said that one who had not harmonized the four yogas in his life, had not his character fully moulded in the crucible of Sri Ramakrishna.³ Thus, according to him Sri Ramakrishna stood for the harmony of the yogas.

So far we have clarified two points: First, a spiritual aspirant should look upon all human beings as divine and serve them, or worship them, as Swami Vivekananda put it, for his own spiritual benefit. Secondly, he should harmonize the four yogas and not allow his mind to have any lop-sided growth. We now turn to a third point.

Sri Ramakrishna asserted that so long as one has the idea of individuality, one has to believe in God and act accordingly. Religion is realization and not mere talk. There are some theoreticians who believe that mere philosophizing is what religion consists in. Some monists, for example,

3. cf. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972) Vol. 7. P. 412

while still craving for worldly comforts, talk of the high stages of spiritual attainments. Once a monk came to Dakshineswar. Stories went round that he was not behaving well. Sri Ramakrishna asked the monk, 'What is all this that I hear about you?' The monk replied that when all was *Māyā* (illusion), this talk about him also could not be true! Sri Ramakrishna's reaction was, 'I spit upon such Vedanta of yours!'

In his homely words he said, 'When a thorn pricks and blood comes out, it is no use saying that the thorn does not exist.' The philosophy behind this statement is that what you feel as real, you have to accept as such for the time being and deal with it accordingly, while aspiring all the time for a higher understanding. When one dreams, the things seen or heard are true for that dream state. They are false when one is in the waking state. Similarly, the empirical world is true so long as we have its experience, and the Ideal still remains unattained. Under such a condition, it is not honest to talk of it as illusory and behave otherwise, pretending to have had the experience of the *nirvikalpa*-state. One is a felt reality, and the other is a theoretical discussion. To deny one's empirical existence so long as it is felt as real, is to deny one's very existence. For a theoretical belief cannot knock out a felt reality.

This leads us to a brief discussion of *Māyā*. According to Śaṅkarācārya, *Māyā* is not just a theory for explaining the phenomenal world. He calls it the *śakti* (power or energy) of Brahman; and this *śakti* cannot be called either real or unreal in the truest sense. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* we have:

About the supreme Self which regulates time, the individual souls and others, according to rules, it was ascertained by the sages engaged in discussion about Brahman, that the cause which helps the supreme Deity to become the source

of the world, is His own power, hidden by its constituent qualities (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*).⁴

The first verse of the sixth chapter of this Upaniṣad repeats the same idea.

Śaṅkarācārya accepted God's energy as a reality in the empirical sense;⁵ therefore, in practice he lived an active life of writing books, engaging in debates, establishing temples and installing deities, starting monasteries and bringing into existence Orders of monks. To be sure, all this could not have been done if he believed the world to be an illusion even in the pragmatic sense. He shunned and despised worldliness, but not the world as such. Rather, he worked for its spiritual uplift. A snake mistaken for a rope is not unreal so long as the illusion lasts, and after the illusion vanishes the rope-snake does not vanish altogether; it persists as the rope. Now, somebody may ask, 'Is this not Śāktaism?' 'No', we answer. For, except the Kāshmīra school of Śāktas (believers in the Divine Energy), whose Sadāśiva corresponds to Śaṅkara's transcendental Brahman, no other school of Śāktas dissociates the Ultimate Reality from Its Energy.

Sri Ramakrishna followed the same tradition of monism which believes in the transcendental Brahman as the Ultimate Reality and yet posits an *Īśwara* who remains in association with His energy for creation, dissolution and continuance of the world. So, energy being accepted as real in an empirical sense, how should we behave towards it? Should we love it and take its help for our Liberation, or should we

4. ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन्
देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् ।
यः कारणानि निखिलानि तानि
कालात्मयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 1.3

5. See also his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, 14,27.

spurn it and lead a life that is inconsistent with our talk? Sri Ramakrishna considered Māyā the Mother of the Universe, whose grace alone can set the human soul free. To both these realized souls the world was to be looked upon with respect and was not to be hated. Being a manifestation of God it had to be looked upon with love and respect. This was the positive approach of Sri Ramakrishna in the field of all human behaviour. For instance, when a young man by name Hari (Swami Turiyananda of later days) came to him and said that he hated women, Sri Ramakrishna rebuked him, saying, 'Why should you hate them? You should honour them as the manifestation of the Mother of the Universe.'

He did not like people talking about sin and such things. He told them that one who talks of depravity becomes himself degraded. People should rather make high endeavours. If one advances one step towards God, He comes ten steps forward; and if one moves towards the east, the west recedes automatically.

The point we are trying to make here is that according to Sri Ramakrishna a man's spiritual endeavour should be positive rather than negative, and it should be adjusted in conformity with his real spiritual stature. A small vessel that can hold a litre of milk cannot be forced to hold ten litres. Each man must analyse his mind to find out his real spiritual calibre and adjust the line of his spiritual discipline in consonance with it. There are different levels of endeavour for God-realization. This point is illustrated by a verse ascribed to the great devotee Hanumānjī, who said in answer to Śrī Rāmacandra's question, 'How do you think of me?'—'When I think of myself as the body, I am Your servant. When I think of myself as an individual soul, I am a part of you. When I think of myself as the Self, I am one with You!' In the

Gītā also we find Sri Kṛṣṇa telling Arjuna that the duties of people in the various stages of life must differ so as to conform to their spiritual attainments and social obligations.

The mind does climb up and down occasionally; but for each man there is a level where the mind usually stays on. That determines the real personality of the man. He has to adjust his conduct according to this level and he need neither be upset by occasional falls, nor be too elated by sudden upsurges of spiritual feelings. One should also remember that one's subjective realizations cannot be wholly communicated to others. One should not, therefore be vainglorious and talk of high philosophy to others just to show off one's high attainments. Sri Ramakrishna said that when a pitcher is dipped in water it makes gurgling sound as the water rushes in; but it becomes silent when it is full.

Sri Ramakrishna refers to the seven levels of spiritual attainments as presented in Vedānta in a graded order. They are:

- i. *Subhecchā* : honest desire for the Truth
- ii. *Vicāraṇā* : searching for the Truth with the help of discrimination between right and wrong, truth and untruth, etc.
- iii. *Tanu-mānasā* : subtleness of mind that can penetrate into the higher truths
- iv. *Sattāpatti* : unshakable intellectual certainty about the Truth
- v. *Asaṁsakti* : non-attachment to worldly things
- vi. *Padārthābhāvinī* : the mind's freedom from thoughts of things other than the Self
- vii. *Turyagā* : natural tendency towards the transcendental Reality

The first three stages are only preparatory to higher realizations. One who has reached the fourth stage is called a *Brahmavid*—a knower of Brahman. In the next higher stage the aspirant

becomes a *Brahmavid-vara*. In the still higher stage he is called *Brahmavid-varīyān*. This stage is transcended by a *Brahmavid-varīṣṭha*.⁶ In the fifth, sixth and seventh stages the aspirant is free from thoughts of duality and hence he has no doubt or delusion. So, in these stages, continuance in the knowledge of Brahman becomes spontaneous.

The school of Vedantins who stick to this classification, also say that a Brahavid will have Liberation after death; but if he wants to be a man of God-realization even while living in his present body, he will have to eradicate the mental impressions and the tendencies acquired in the long past and will have to check his mind wholly from worldly thoughts. So, these three processes, namely intellectual conviction, eradication of impressions etc., and shutting out all worldly thoughts, have to be practised together. He may get intellectual knowledge from his guru and scriptures. For the eradication of impulses he will have to move in the circle of good people and study sacred literature. For the control of the mind is prescribed meditation. Thus, in all these they agree with Sri Ramakrishna who said that for the highest realization mere talk has no scope, and that one should meditate in his mind, or in some corner of his house, or in a forest.

About meditation in a forest, a wiseacre once asked the writer, 'Is not Sri Ramakrishna's idea of meditation in a forest impractical, since it may be infested with wild animals?' Another monk sitting by the writer retorted, 'If you are afraid to go to a forest, you may as well meditate in your society which has been turned into a forest by self-seekers!'

The Yoga and Tantra schools of

thought describe the stages of spiritual consciousness in a different way. For the reader's benefit we quote the following song (originally in Bengali) from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*:

As Kuṇḍalinī Thou dost live in the lotus of Mūlādhāra.

Above it lies the Svādhiṣṭhāna, where the four-petalled lotus blooms.

There also dost make Thy home, O Mystic power of Kuṇḍalinī,

in the four petals of that flower, and in Vajrāsana's six petals.

At the navel is the Maṇipura, the blue ten-petalled lotus flower;

Through the pathway of Suṣumnā, Thou dost ascend and enter there.

O lady of the lotuses, in lotus blossoms Thou dost dwell!

Beyond them lies the lake of Nectar, in the region of the heart,

where the twelve-petalled lotus flower enchants the eye with scarlet flame.

When Thou dost open it, O Mother, touching it Thy lotus feet,

The agelong darkness of the heart instantly scatters at Thy sight.

Above, in the throat, is the sixteen-petalled lotus flower of smoky hue;

Within the petals of this flower there lies concealed a subtle space,

Transcending which one sees at length the Universe in space dissolve.

And higher yet, between the eyebrows the lotus of two petals,

Where the mind of a man becomes a prisoner and past controlling.

From this flower the mind desires to watch the sportive play of life.

Highest of all, within the head, the soul-enthraling centre is,

Where shines the thousand-petalled lotus, Mahādeva's dwelling place.

Having ascended to His throne, O Spouse of Śiva, sit beside Him!⁷

6. cf. *Jivanmukti-Viveka*, 4

7. 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Tr. Swami Nīhīlananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math. 1947) Pp. 201-2

RAM CHANDRA DATTA

SWAMI CHETANANANDA

Faith and devotion are two important milestones on the path toward God. Faith removes worry, anxiety, and fear, while devotion makes life smooth and joyous. Human life becomes very painful and burdensome if a person has no one to trust and love. Spiritual seekers who put their trust in God and love Him wholeheartedly, surrender themselves to Him, and as a result God, the Eternal Father, takes care of them. Just as children enjoy a carefree life in their own homes, so spiritual seekers live happily in this world. Truly, God provides whatever his devotees need.

Ram Chandra Datta, a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, had unflinching faith in the Master, and his love and devotion for him was exuberant. He used to say that any place Sri Ramakrishna visited even for a day became a holy place, and that whoever came to the Master and served him once was blessed. Ram further asserted that the horse carriage which Sri Ramakrishna took to visit the Calcutta devotees, along with the coachman and horses, were all sanctified by the touch of the Master.

Ram's attitude was considered extreme by many, and once someone sarcastically remarked: 'If that is true what is there to fear? So many people have seen Sri Ramakrishna on the street and so many coachmen have driven him. Do you think all these people will get liberation?' Ram Chandra's face turned red, and he vehemently replied: 'Go and take the dust of the feet of the coachman who drove the Master. Go and take the dust

of the feet of the sweeper of Dakshineswar who saw the Master. This will make your life pure and blessed.'

Ram Chandra Datta was born in Calcutta on October 30, 1851. His father, Nrisimha Prasad Datta, was devoted to Kṛṣṇa, and his mother, Tulasimani, was known for her piety and kindness. All of these good qualities Ram imbibed from his parents. When he was two and a half years old his mother died, and some women relatives in their home looked after him. Ram's favourite pastime when he was young was to worship Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes he would arrange a festival and invite playmates with whom he would share *prasad*. Other times he would dress himself as a Gopī and dance in front of the deity. Ram also liked to visit a hermitage near his home where he came in contact with monks of different orders. These monks loved the young boy for his devotion and religious fervour.

From his boyhood Ram was very bold and straightforward about his convictions, and no one could persuade him to act contrary to them. When he was ten years old, he visited the home of a relative who lived about twenty-five miles from Calcutta. This relative knew that Ram was a strict vegetarian, but in spite of this he served Ram a nonvegetarian meal and tried to persuade him to eat it. Ram became furious and immediately left the house. He did not have any money to buy a train ticket, but a generous person bought one for him so that he could return home. Even in the later part of his life,

in spite of his education in science, he remained firm in his convictions. Once a doctor prescribed meat soup for his ailing wife, but Ram would not approve of it. He said, 'Let my wife die but I won't allow meat to enter my house.' Fortunately his wife recovered without that soup.

Eventually Ram's father remarried, but Ram did not get along well with his stepmother. Shortly after this Ram's father was forced to sell the parental home owing to financial difficulties, and Ram moved to a relative's home. Although Ram suffered various kinds of hardship in his early life, he persevered in his education. He studied at the General Assembly's Institution and later was admitted to the Campbell Medical School in Calcutta. Some time after his graduation he was appointed as an assistant to the Government Quinine Examiner. He also married about this time. Later on, when he became financially well off, he bought a house for his family at Simla, in the central part of Calcutta.

Ram was deeply interested in science and studied chemistry under his English supervisor with great diligence. Having learned this subject thoroughly, Ram extracted from an indigenous medicinal plant an antidote for blood dysentery. This drug was approved by the government and was recommended by leading doctors. As a result Ram's fame spread and he was appointed a member of the Chemist Association of England. He was also promoted to the post of Government Chemical Examiner and was asked to teach the military medical students at the Calcutta Medical College.

Ram's great enthusiasm for science and modern knowledge made him an inspiring lecturer to the students, but it also made him an atheist. In his own words: 'In those days we did not believe in God. We considered that everything happens,

changes, or dissolves by the force of nature. We were rank materialists, and we held the view that eating, sleeping and creature comforts were the summum bonum of life.' Ram was fond of debating with others about God and religion, and found great satisfaction in defeating his opponents. This ardour for atheism lasted five years.

Grief is an eye-opener which forces a person to face the harsh realities of life. The death of his young daughter was a terrible shock to Ram, and a great change came over his life. On the Kali Puja evening, some time after his daughter's death, he went up to the roof of his house and observed the houses of Calcutta glittering with lights. Above, the dark, clear sky was studded with twinkling stars. His grief-stricken heart seemed to be searching for something meaningful in that panorama of nature. All of a sudden he noticed some clouds passing overhead, driven by the wind. They quickly disappeared. Ram asked himself: 'Where do they come from and where do they go? Does God exist? If so, can He be seen?'

He started to visit different religious leaders of the Brahma, Christian, and Hindu faiths, but no one could answer his questions about God and religion. During this time Ram's family guru came to him and wanted to initiate him. Ram was forthright. He said: 'Sir, I don't believe in God. Moreover, I have terrible doubts about His existence. Can you tell me the way to realize God?' The guru kept quiet. He did not know what to say.

'The great inquiry' began to possess Ram. He became more and more determined to have his doubts removed and to satisfy his hunger for God. He studied many religious books but could find no satisfactory answers to his questions. At last he came to know about Sri Ramakrishna from the writings of Keshab Chandra Sen, a Brahma leader of Calcutta.

On November 13, 1879, Ram went by boat to Dakshineswar with Gopal Chandra Mitra and a cousin, Manomohan Mitra. As soon as they reached the Dakshineswar temple garden, they inquired about Sri Ramakrishna and were directed to his room. But when they reached there they found that the door was shut, and their western education made them hesitate to call out or knock. Just then Sri Ramakrishna opened the door himself from the inside and asked them to come in. Ram noticed that Sri Ramakrishna did not look like the traditional ochre-clad monk with matted hair and ash-smearred body. On the contrary, the Master was the embodiment of simplicity.

Sri Ramakrishna saluted them, addressing them as 'Narayana', and asked them to sit down. Then he smiled at Ram and said: 'Hellow, are you not a doctor? [Pointing to Hriday] He is suffering from fever. Could you check pulse?' Ram was astonished that Sri Ramakrishna knew that he was a doctor. After examining Hriday, Ram reported that his body temperature was normal.

From the very beginning Sri Ramakrishna made Ram his own and would often inquire about his personal life and mental conflicts. Ram felt greatly attracted to the Master, and started to visit him every Sunday, returning home in the evening. Soon Ram felt bold enough to ask the question that had been haunting him.

Ram: 'Does God exist? How can one see God?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'God really exists. You do not see any stars during the day, but that does not mean that the stars do not exist. There is butter in milk, but can anyone know it merely by sight? In order to get the butter you must churn the milk in a cool place before sunrise. If you want to catch fish in a pond, you have to learn the art of fishing from those who know it,

and then you must sit patiently with a fishing rod, throwing the line into the water. Gradually the fish will grab your bait. Then, as soon as the float sinks, you can pull the fish to the shore. Similarly, you cannot realize God by a mere wish. Have faith in the instructions of a holy man. Make your mind like a fishing rod and your prana, or life-force, like a hook. Your devotion and japam are like the bait. Eventually you will be blessed by the vision of God.'

Ram had recently been connected with the Brahmo Samaj, whose members did not believe in a God with form, so he was wondering how one could see a formless God. The Master read his mind and said: 'Yes, God can be seen. Can God, whose creation is so beautiful and enchanting, be imperceptible?'

Ram: 'Is it possible to realize God in this life?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'You get what you desire. Faith alone is the key to success.' Then he sang a song:

As is a man's meditation, so is his feeling of love ;
As is a man's feeling of love, so is his gain ;
And faith is the root of all.
If in the Nectar Lake of Mother Kali's feet
My mind remains immersed,
Of little use are worship, oblations, or sacrifice.

The Master continued: 'The more you advance in one direction, the more you leave behind the opposite direction. If you move ten steps toward the east, you move ten steps away from the west.'

Ram: 'But one must have tangible proof. Unless we have direct experience of God, how can our weak and doubting minds have faith in His existence?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'A typhoid patient in a delirious state clamours to take gallons of water and heaps of rice. But the physician pays no heed to these entreaties, nor does he prescribe medicine at the

patient's direction. He knows what he is doing.'

Ram was very much moved and impressed with Sri Ramakrishna's simple, convincing answers. He would become so intoxicated listening to these divine discourses that he would be reluctant to return home. He would forget all about the world, his family, and his duties.

Yet in spite of Ram's close contact with the Master, his mind was not content. His doubts persistently clung to him, even though his longing for God increased more and more. One night he dreamed that he took his bath in a familiar pond, and that Sri Ramakrishna then initiated him with a sacred mantra and asked him to repeat it one hundred times every day after his bath. As soon as Ram woke up he felt that his whole body was pulsating with bliss. The next morning he rushed to Dakshineswar and related his dream to the Master. At this Sri Ramakrishna joyfully said, 'He who receives divine blessings in a dream is sure to attain liberation.'

Although Ram heard these hopeful words of the Master, his mind was not satisfied with a holy dream. He was very sceptical, and to him dream was just a fantasy. His mind again started to waver. He found no pleasure in worldly enjoyments, yet he was not convinced about the existence of God. A few days passed this way. Then one morning as Ram was standing at the corner of College Square in Calcutta, explaining his mental conflicts to a friend, a tall stranger approached Ram and whispered to him, 'Why are you so anxious? Have patience.' Ram was stunned. After a few moments he turned to see who this person was who had consoled him with these welcome words, but the person had vanished. Although both Ram and his friend had seen and heard the man, now they could not find him anywhere. Ram felt that it had not been

an illusion but a direct message from God. Later he related this incident to Sri Ramakrishna, who smiled and said, 'Yes, you will see many such things as that.'

Gradually Ram began to get a taste of divine bliss because of his holy association with the Master, and worldly pleasures became more and more insipid to him. He expressed to the Master his desire to become a monk, but Sri Ramakrishna dissuaded him, saying, 'Nothing should be done on the spur of the moment. God alone knows what He means to do through a particular person. Where will your wife and children be if you leave the world? You must not try to upset the arrangement God has made for you. Everything will come in time.' This simple advice satisfied Ram temporarily, but later he raised the subject again. At this Sri Ramakrishna became stern: 'What will you gain by renouncing the world? Living a family life is like living in a fort. It is easier to fight an enemy from inside a fort than from outside. You will be in a position to renounce the world when you can bestow three-fourths of your mind on God, but not before that.' Ram was silenced. He resolved then to be an ideal householder devotee of God.

Soon after Ram met Sri Ramakrishna, he started to read *Śrī Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, an authoritative biography of Śrī Caitanya, written in Bengali. The more Ram read about that God-intoxicated life, the more he felt that Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Caitanya were the same person. But again he would have doubts. Once, at the request of the Master, Ram spent a night at Dakshineswar. When he was alone with the Master, he started looking at him in wonder.

'What are you looking at?' asked Sri Ramakrishna.

'I am looking at you.'

'What do you think of me?'

'I consider you to be Caitanya.'

Sri Ramakrishna was silent for a moment and then said, 'Well, Bhairavi Brahmani used to say the same thing.'

As the days went by Ram saw more and more of Sri Ramakrishna's extraordinary spiritual powers, and his scepticism was replaced by faith. One day on the way to Dakshineswar, Ram bought some *jilipis*, a sweet which the Master liked very much. While crossing a bridge, a little boy begged for one of them. Ram tried at first to ignore him, but then he thought that perhaps the boy was God in disguise and he gave a piece to him. After arriving in Dakshineswar, Ram put the sweets in the Master's room and spent the day there. In the afternoon Sri Ramakrishna asked for some refreshments, and Ram immediately placed the *jilipis* in front of him. Sri Ramakrishna touched them and looked up. He then broke a few and, shaking his head, expressed his unwillingness to eat them. After this he washed his hands. Ram was mortified. He could not understand why the Master had refused his sweets. He was so upset that he threw the *jilipis* away and returned home. After a few days Ram came to Dakshineswar again and the Master said to him: 'When you bring something for me, don't give any of it to anyone else beforehand. I can't take anything without offering it to God, and I can't offer anything to Him that has been defiled by being offered to someone else first.' This incident convinced Ram that the Master was omniscient.

Doubt is a terrible disease, and a doubting soul suffers very much. But it is hard to uproot doubt from the mind completely. Every spiritual seeker has to pass through this 'dark night of the soul'. In spite of all that Ram had seen and heard, his old doubts and scepticism reappeared, making him restless and miserable. The

world seemed to him like a desert. He went to the Master to tell him his sad tale and to seek consolation as before, but this time the Master cut him short with a curt reply: 'What can I do? It all depends on the will of God.'

'Sir, all these days I have been looking to you for help. Now if you treat me like this what shall I do?'

'I don't owe you anything. If you like, you may come. If not, don't.'

The Master's shock treatment immediately threw Ram into deep despair. His first impulse was to put an end to his life by drowning himself in the Ganga, but as he left the room he thought: 'Why should I commit suicide? I have heard that the name of the Lord is greater and more powerful than the Lord himself. And the Master said that it was my good luck to have had initiation in a dream. I shall test the efficacy of that mantra today.' He lay down on the northern verandah of Sri Ramakrishna's room and began to repeat that mantra silently. At dead of night the Master suddenly came out of his room, sat down near Ram, and gave him some advice. Ram was very happy. The Master emphasized that Ram should serve the devotees of God, and that this would give him joy and peace. Then the Master returned to his room.

Quite often the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna would arrange festivals in their homes and invite the Master and other devotees to come. At these gatherings the Master would talk about God and sing and dance in ecstasy, filling the whole house with an intense atmosphere of spirituality. The host generally bore all the expenses of the feast, including paying the carriage fare of the Master and sometimes hiring a musician. Now Ram was known for his miserliness, and when he started to calculate the expenses involved, he hesitated to

invite the Master and the devotees. But gladly began to make the necessary when Sri Ramakrishna set a date to visit his home, he had a change of heart and preparations.

(To be concluded)

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF TRANSCENDENTALISM IN AMERICA

DR. UMESH PATRI

The term 'Transcendentalism' refers in general to a philosophical tradition, and more specifically to the intellectual movement that dominated American life in the nineteenth century. As a philosophical concept, Transcendentalism goes back to Plato (427-347 B.C.) in the Western tradition and to the rise of speculative philosophy in the *Upanishads* in India. The American Transcendentalism of the nineteenth century was a significant literary and philosophical movement confined to the New England States.¹

Until the nineteenth century thinkers and writers in America had looked to European philosophers and had borrowed their ideas freely. With the emergence of Transcendentalism a new phase in American intellectual life came into being. A new group of writers and intellectuals formed a compact circle in Boston and ushered in the Transcendental movement having clearly defined principles. In an anonymous pamphlet, 'An Essay on Transcendentalism', published in 1842 the principles of Transcendentalism were laid down in the following manner: 'Transcendentalism ... maintains that man has ideas, that come not through the five senses, or the powers of reasoning; but are either

the result of direct revelation from God, His immediate inspiration, or His immanent presence in the spiritual world,' and 'it asserts that man has something besides the body of flesh, a spiritual body, with senses to perceive what is true, and right and beautiful, and a natural love for these, as the body for its food.'²

The cause of Transcendentalism was championed in America chiefly by Emerson and supported by his colleagues. It was he who 'scouted the trail that the others were to follow'. Its ultimate source, however, was the Orient, especially India. The immediate reason for turning to the Orient was the dissatisfaction of the American intellectuals with the spiritual life of America. Carl T. Jackson remarks:

A combination of factors contributed to the favourable transcendentalist response to Oriental thought. Intellectually, its spokesmen were ripe for new ideas. In rebellion against the Calvinist Christianity, rationalistic Unitarianism, and materialistic Lockeanism that then dominated New England intellectual life, leading members of the movement were receptive to the new currents of idealism they found in the Orient.³

2. This anonymous pamphlet, probably written by Charles Mayo Ellis, (1818-78) was 'An Essay on Transcendentalism' (1842), quoted by W. Harding, in 'Transcendentalism', *Americana*, vol. 27, 1965 ed., p. 3

3. Carl T. Jackson, 'Oriental Ideas in American Thought', *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1973) III, 429

1. These are: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont of north-east U.S.

The chief source of Transcendentalism in the West was Plato's concept of intuition. The Neo-Platonist Plotinus and other religious mystics of the same line also influenced the movement. But it was the Oriental concepts, primarily Hindu concepts, which the Transcendentalists borrowed and assimilated into their own system of thought, that enriched their philosophy and gave it dynamism and goal orientation.

The American Transcendentalists concerned themselves with the fundamental issues of human life such as the nature of the universe, the nature of man and his place in the universe, the nature of good and evil, and man's duty to himself and to his fellow beings. It was, in its immediate context, a reaction against the excessive rationalism of the eighteenth century, and in this sense it was characterized by a soaring idealism. It was also, broadly speaking, a part of the Romantic movement that spread almost all over the West in the nineteenth century. Its immediate source was Coleridge and English intuitionists and partly German idealists like Kant, Schelling, Fichte, Jacobi. It interpreted reality in terms of idealism and romanticism and opposed all types of materialism and industrialism. Another aspect of Transcendentalism emphasized a return to nature somewhat in a Rousseauesque vein. It saw in nature a manifestation of the Supreme Spirit of the Universe. This pantheistic aspect inherent in Transcendentalism is akin to Hindu thought in which both the animate and the inanimate are considered a part of a cosmic scheme controlled by an immanent God who, however, transcends the universe.

Transcendentalism saw in science and technology a sinister force that destroyed nature and would finally engulf man. Hence there was opposition to railways and factories, especially in the writings of Thoreau who regarded them as destroying

the landscape and upsetting the ecological balance. Transcendentalism embodied an organic world view which was opposed to the Newtonian mechanistic clock-work concept of the universe. The concept of a mechanical universe with a bystander God, derived from the works of Newton and the 18th century English theologian Paley, was fully dispensed with by the Transcendentalists. The mechanistic universe was transformed into a vitalistic and evolving one in which nature served as a symbol for the realm of spirit. Nature was also held by the Transcendentalists to possess an immanent divinity. Transcendentalism was also a revolt against John Locke's empiricism, materialism and sensationalism. John Locke's sensationalism dominated American philosophical scene for more than a century and it was expanding through the Unitarian philosophy. Locke's empiricism did not believe in the innate and a priori aspects of the human mind. This view was rejected by the idealism of the Transcendentalists. The attack of the Transcendentalists on Lockean philosophy was countered by conservative Unitarians like Andrews Norton and Francis Bowen primarily in Lockean terms. The concept of Over-soul also played an important role in the world view of the Transcendentalists. Though Transcendentalism flourished in the New England atmosphere of Christian orthodoxy and puritanism, it nevertheless opposed many of the basic tenets of Christianity. It believed in the higher potentialities of human nature and rejected the idea of guilt associated with the idea of original sin. It also opposed the puritanic denial of life based on arid asceticism and favoured a healthy enjoyment of life in the midst of nature. These various aspects of Transcendentalism are inextricably connected with the mystical tradition of the Orient, chiefly in Hinduism and Buddhism.

The word 'Transcendentalism' is etymologically derived from the Latin root 'transcendere' which means to climb over, surpass or go beyond. It is a 'philosophy which studies either the a priori form of experience or experience as formed a priori. Or, philosophy which regards the spiritual as the essence of reality or as a mode of being which transcends the empirical and the physical.'⁴ There are many definitions of Transcendentalism. For our purpose we may quote the following one which adequately describes what Transcendentalism is all about: 'the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively, or of attaining knowledge transcending the reach of the senses.'⁵

Transcendentalism as an a priori experience is basically a Kantian concept but was used also in the same sense by Dugald Stewart.⁶ In Plato we find a glimpse of Transcendental vision in the parable of the cave. The parable describes the condition of some men who were imprisoned in a cave with a fire burning behind them. They could see only the shadows of their bodies cast on the wall. As they had no experience of the world outside, they took the shadows to be real. In a similar manner we human beings, Plato explains, consider the objects of the world to be real.⁷ But in fact these objects are only poor shadows of a Transcendental world that lies beyond the world of phenomenon. Emerson was influenced by Plato to such an extent that he was called by some the 'Yankee Plato'. Emerson, it might be noted here, appar-

ently began his study of Plato as an undergraduate in Harvard University between 1830 and 1836.⁸ Plotinus (205-270) developed this idea further by emphasizing the Transcendental existence of Godhead. In Jewish theology the Supreme Godhead is conceived as the Creator who is wholly other than the world and the creatures that He has created. It is said in the Old Testament, 'God is higher above all the peoples, higher above all nations, and is as high as heaven.'⁹ In the New Testament Christ accepts the concept of the God of Old Testament as is clear from his statement: 'Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them.'¹⁰ Thus Transcendentalism began as an attempt to fuse Greek Philosophy with Christian experience. D. Mackenzie has rightly observed that Transcendentalism: 'Historically ... is the fusion of Greek thought with Christian experience.'¹¹

Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason* used the word 'transcendental' and 'transcendent' in order to indicate the presence of an a priori state of experience. He used 'Transcendental' to mean 'non-empirical', the knowledge that is not derived from sense experience. Transcendental experience according to him does not fall within the ambit of the mind. The legacy of Kant was kept up by German idealists like Fichte, Schelling and Jacobi. For Schelling nature had a transcendental origin from which the world and man emerged. In Jacobi transcendentalism tended towards mysticism.

4. *Masterpieces of World Philosophy* ed. Frank N. McGill (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) p. XXX

5. A. N. Dwivedi, *Thoreau: A Study* (Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1974) p. 122

6. *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, 1913 ed. X, 6427

7. *Republic*, Bk. 7. 514, 515

8. K. W. Cameron, 'Young Emerson's Transcendental Vision', *ESQ*, 64 & 65 (1971), p. 39

9. Psalms 99:2; 113:4; Job 11:8

10. Matthew 5:17

11. D. Mackenzie, 'Transcendentalism', *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Edinburgh: T.T. Clark, 1961), XII, 419

The natural home of transcendental mysticism is the Upaniṣads. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes Brahman, the ultimate Reality as that from which the mind and speech turn back, being unable to reach It. In *Kāthopaniṣad* Brahman is described as: the transcendent, unchanging principle with no sound, touch, form, taste or smell, with neither beginning nor end. In the same Upaniṣad it is said: *Naiva vācā na manasā* etc., meaning, it is not possible to reach It through speech, mind or the eyes. How is It to be identified, or described?

This particular trend of mysticism is traceable in American Transcendentalists. The influence of German idealism and Indian mysticism on American Transcendentalism is so great that G. W. Allen aptly called the movement 'an offspring of a German father and a Hindu mother.'¹² The famous German poet Goethe also very much influenced Emerson, the leader of the Transcendental movement. Frederick B. Wahr in his thesis on *Emerson and Goethe: Emerson and the Germans*, points out that between 1832 and 1845 'there was a flood of German literature in New England.'¹³ Theodore Parker in the *Dial* in 1842 called this excessive German influence the 'German epidemic.'¹⁴ Emerson's description of the Supreme Soul or Brahman in the following lines is highly mystical:

The strong gods pine for my abode,
Any pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.¹⁵

12. Gay Wilson Allen, *The New Walt Whitman Handbook* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1975) p. 260

13. Frederick B. Wahr, *Emerson and Goethe: Emerson and the Germans* (1915; rpt. Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1971) p. 60

14. Ibid p. 60

15. 'Brahma' lines 13-16

German idealism and Transcendentalism was no less prominent in France. The writers who imbibed the spirit of Transcendentalism and exerted a considerable influence on their fellow French writers were mainly three: Cousin, Jouffroy and the French socialist Fourier. At a later stage the famous author Madame de Staël imported German Transcendentalism into France. Her extensive travels in Germany during the years 1803 to 1804 enabled her to comprehend the basic spirit of Transcendentalism which she later on expressed in her book *De l'Allemagne*.¹⁶ She was in many ways the most important figure who bridged the gulf between France and Germany in philosophy and aroused great interest among the French contemporary thinkers. Victor Cousin and Theodore Jouffroy were responsible for giving a fillip to Transcendentalism and idealism. The other important writers who were also responsible for spreading this movement were: Laromiguiere, Royer-Collard, Maine de Biran, Degenerando, Guizot, Viiliers, and Mme. de Staël.¹⁷ Cousin's 'History of Philosophy' equally emphasized the idealistic and Transcendental nature of reality. The influence of the French authors mentioned above on the New England Transcendentalists was considerable and writers like Emerson and Thoreau show evidence of their reading the French authors. A whole book has been written on the French influence on the American Transcendentalists. It is W. L. Leighton's *French Philosophers and New England Transcendentalism*.

The Transcendental movement in America has been justly regarded as a part of the Romantic movement of the 19th century. The romantic poets and writers

16. Walter L. Leighton, *French Philosophers and New-England Transcendentalism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 24

17. Ibid p. 23

of England, mainly Coleridge and Wordsworth, wielded great influence on Emerson and his colleagues. Emerson and his friends, as we know, had no direct link with the German idealistic school or the French Transcendental authors discussed above. The Romantic writers being a counterpart of the American Transcendentalists on the other side of the Atlantic, influenced immensely the thought and expression of the latter, though the emphasis of the Transcendentalists was different from the Romantic writers of England. At bottom the salient features of both the movements are similar in nature. Emerson read Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* and *The Friend* with great enthusiasm and imbibed its basic Transcendental philosophy.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that Emerson had a chance meeting with Coleridge in 1833 and each one appreciated the other's line of thinking. Coleridge, as O. B. Frothingham writes, 'was a pure Transcendentalist, of the Schelling School.'¹⁹ This Transcendentalism of German origin was filtered by Emerson through Coleridge. Emerson's direct knowledge of German school was insignificant, it is through Coleridge that he got into the very heart of the philosophy of Transcendentalism. Further, Coleridge's emphasis on the spiritual aspects of man's nature got immediate approval from Emerson. The then current crude interpretation of human spirit as ultimately representing matter was quickly rejected by Emerson in favour of its spiritual nature. Coleridge's oft-quoted lines such as: 'the light that never was on sea or land', 'the vision and of faculty divine', touched a finer chord in Emerson's heart.

18. John S. Harrison, *The Teachers of Emerson* (New York: Haskel House, 1966) p. 287

19. Octavius Brooks Frothingham, *Transcendentalism in New England: A History* (1876; rpt. New York: Harper Touchbooks, 1959) p. 82

The other aspect of Coleridge which influenced Emerson was Coleridge's concept of organic form which he in his turn had borrowed from Schlegel. The concept of organic form is related to the unified organic world view of the organistic and vitalistic philosophers to which school both Emerson and Coleridge belonged. Coleridge's following description of organic principles in the *Biographia Literaria* is famous: '... The organic form, on the other hand, is innate; it shapes, as it develops, itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form. Such as the life is, such is the form. Nature, the prime genial artist, inexhaustible in diverse powers, is equally inexhaustible in form ...'²⁰ This idea was accepted by Emerson who said that the thought which gave rise to a poem should be: 'so passionate and alive that like the spirit of a plant or an animal it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing.'²¹ This principle of organic form was further developed in the poem beginning with the lines:

ANNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.²²

Thoreau's use of biological language also supported the organic principle. He described a poem as 'a natural fruit'. The

20. Quoted by F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (1941; rpt. Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973) p. 134

21. R. W. Emerson, *The Complete Essays and Other Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1940; rpt. New York: Modern Library, 1950) p. 323 (The Poet)

22. Emerson, *Complete Essays*, p. 768 (The Snow-Storm)

organic principle, as we have stated, is related to their teleological view which is important for our context.

The other important aspect which Emerson got from the Romantics is their pantheism especially of the Lake School of poets. The doctrine that everything in nature is an aspect of God was the cornerstone of Wordsworthian philosophy. This concept warmed Emerson's heart and enabled him to combat the puritanic aloofness from the beautiful in nature. The Puritans believed that matter and spirit were essentially incompatible and alien to each other. To love the beautiful was, according to them, unspiritual. This ideology based on orthodox Christianity denied man the experience of the kinship between human spirit and the world of nature. Ralph Henry Gabriel, talking of Emerson's love of nature, writes: 'Man is a creature of nature. From nature he derives his individuality and his freedom. He must find in nature, rather than in the Bible, that ultimate authority which makes his freedom possible.'²³ Emerson's as well as Thoreau's love of nature as a manifestation of the spirit of the Over-Soul aroused the ire of a Unitarian critic like Andrews Norton who charged Emerson of pantheism.

But for Emerson pantheism was a very lofty ideal. For him the Supreme Spirit or the Over-Soul was immanently present in the world of nature. His bold pronouncement 'I am God in nature' is opposed to the Christian spirit and comes closer to Upaniṣadic view of regarding everything as the manifestation of Brahman. 'In the entire universe whatever is matter or spirit is the divine manifestation of God'.²⁴

23. Ralph Henry Gabriel, 'Emerson and Thoreau', *The Transcendentalist Revolt*, ed. George F. Whicher (Massachusetts: D. C. Heath & Co., 1968) pp. 20-21

24. *Īsā vāsyam idam sarvam yat kim ca jagatyām jagat—Īsa Upaniṣad*, 1 (tr. author's)

Emerson writes in a similar vein: 'The world proceeds from the same spirit as the body of man. It is a remoter inferior incarnation of God, a projection of God in the unconscious.'²⁵

However in O.A. Brownson and Theodore Parker we find a different interpretation. Brownson makes a subtle distinction between pure pantheism and his concept of the Supreme Spirit or what Paul Tillich afterwards called 'The ground of being'. Brownson writes: 'The universe...is His intention. It is what He wills, as He is in it, the substance of His volition; it is what He speaks, and He is in it, as a man is in his words; but He is distinct from it, by all the distinction there is between the energy that wills, and that which is willed between him who speaks and the words he utters.'²⁶ Theodore Parker, another member of the Transcendentalist group, regarded himself as a theist and not a pantheist and he took Emerson to task by criticizing him for his commitment to pantheism.²⁷ As William B. Green observed: 'Pantheism sinks man and nature in God.'²⁸ Emerson to a great extent contributed to this view.

An important corollary of pantheistic belief is that everything that is there in the phenomenal world, including man, is a miniature universe, a microcosmos or *imago mundi*. This idea which is present in many cultures is subscribed to by the Transcendentalists. When the Transcendentalist says, 'The world globes itself in a drop of dew', he is voicing the old microcosmic idea. The *Vedas* and the

25. Emerson, *Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1855; rpt. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1903), I, pp. 64-65 (Nature)

26. Paul F. Boller, *American Transcendentalism, 1830-1860: An Intellectual Inquiry* (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1974), p. 80

27. *Ibid* p. 81 (quoted)

28. *Ibid* p. 85 (quoted)

Upaniṣads contain the earliest concept of microcosm, implied in the phrase, *aham brahmāsmi*. The central idea of the *Upaniṣads* is that all is present in each and each is present in all. The Bootstrap Theory of modern physics, by emphasizing mutual internal relationship and self-consistency of phenomena, also subscribes to this view. Erwin Schrödinger, the eminent physicist, writes: '... this life of yours when you are living is not merely a piece of existence, but is in a certain sense whole. Only the whole is not so constituted that it can be surveyed in one single glance.'²⁹ This concept was fundamental to the Transcendentalists. Their belief in Monism which implied the unity of the universe also had the other side to it, namely, the immanence of God in the world. Because God or Divinity or the Over-Soul is immanent in the world, every single part of the world, even the smallest or most insignificant thing, has the spirit of God dwelling in it. Hence everything including man is a microcosmos. The famous lines of the Romantic Christian mystic poet Blake, whose romanticism influenced the Transcendentalists, can be regarded as the culmination of the Christian concept of microcosm:

To see a world in a grain of sand
and heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
and eternity in an hour.

Emerson believed in this microcosmic idea, which is both Oriental and Occidental in origin, and held that the soul of each individual is identical with the Over-Soul, and in a microcosmic manner contains all that is there in the Over-Soul. So he could say, 'God is ; that he is in me.'³⁰

²⁹. Erwin Schrodinger, *My View of the World* (Cambridge University Press, 1964) pp. 21-22

³⁰. Quoted by Woodbridge Riley in *American Thought from Puritanism to Pragmatism and Beyond* (Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), p. 143

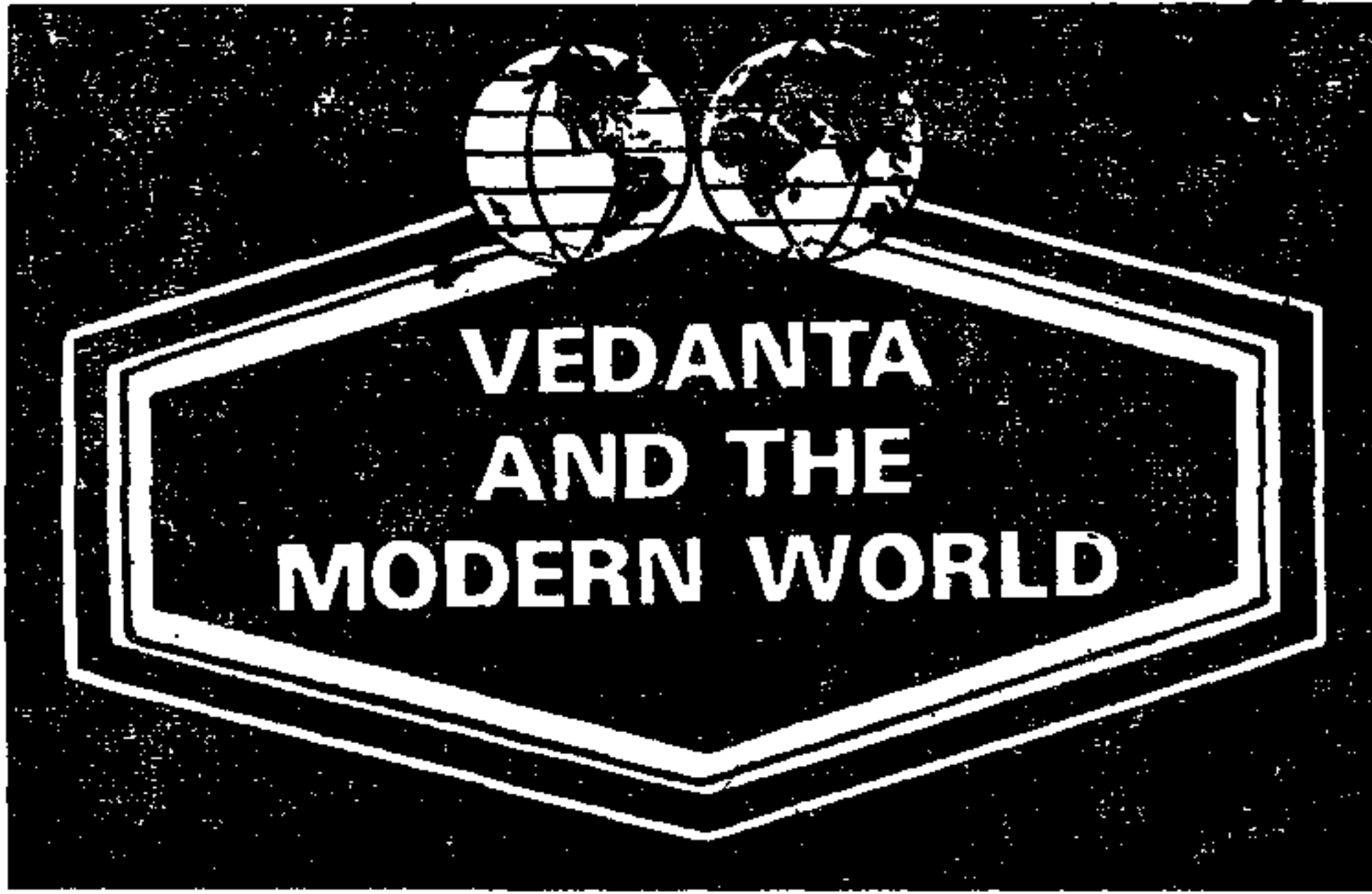
The other important romantic poet Wordsworth was held in high esteem by the Transcendentalists. In the *Dial*, the mouthpiece of the Transcendentalists, Wordsworth was discussed with honour and respect.³¹ Wordsworth's ode, 'Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood', was particularly appreciated by Emerson as a mature piece of work expressing the spiritual nature of the human spirit. Emerson in his last discourse on Immortality regards this poem as 'the best modern essay on the subject'.³² Like Wordsworth, Emerson praised the innocence of childhood days when human spirit is very close to nature. The innocence of childhood established a communion between man, nature and God.

Emerson's and Thoreau's love of nature is a well-known fact. Emerson settled in Concord, and Thoreau near the Walden Pond, where they enjoyed the beauties of nature. Praising nature Emerson writes: 'The first in time and the first in importance of the influence upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun ; and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow ; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing—beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages...'³³ For Emerson, as for Wordsworth, man should learn from Nature the perfect harmony which she has and which man has somehow unfortunately lost. His epigrammatic saying: 'Nature beats in perfect tune,' is worth mentioning in this context. Nature for Emerson is a most inspiring subject. And its 'inexhaustible plenitude' was regarded by Wordsworth and Emerson as a source of both spiritual succour and health.

³¹. Frothingham, p. 97

³². Ibid p. 101

³³. *Complete Essays*, p. 47 (The American Scholar)



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN INDIA: LIGHT FROM WITHIN—III

DR. S. K. CHAKRABORTY

We now turn to the charge that the Indian mentality is otherworldly and abstractly universal and is therefore the greatest obstacle to economic development and effective management. Such judgments, again, seems to be based on the interpretation of Indian metaphysics by scholars who have themselves never made the necessary effort to live the truths of scriptures. But we have extensive literature on how Vedanta can be made practical, created by people who attained the highest fulfilment by living the truths, by working out the principles, of Vedanta in all walks of life. As a matter of fact, Hindu religious teachers gave equal importance to material prosperity and liberation from bondage. This is clear from the following dicta of the ancient law giver Manu.

1. The acts prescribed by the Veda are of two kinds, such as procure an increase of happiness and cause a continuation of mundane existence, *pravṛtti*, and such as ensure supreme bliss and cause a cessation of mundane existence, *nivṛtti*.⁵⁶

2. Acts which secure the fulfilment of wishes in this world or in the next are called *pravṛtti*; but acts performed without any desire for a reward, preceded by the acquisition of true knowledge, are called to be *nivṛtti*.⁵⁷

56. G. Buhler, *The Laws of Manu*, Sacred Books of The East, Ed. Max Muller, Vol. XXV. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1886) XII—88.

57. *ibid*, XII—89,

3. He who sedulously performs acts leading to future births (*pravṛtti*) becomes equal to gods; he who is intent on the performance of those causing the cessation of existence, *nivṛtti*, indeed passes beyond the reach of five elements.⁵⁸

Thus *pravṛtti mārga* is the path of activity and desire, also interpreted as 'turning on the ego'. *Nivṛtti mārga* is the way of desirelessness and renunciation, also interpreted as 'turning away from the ego'. The Karma Kāṇḍa of the Veda regulates the former, and the Jñāna Kāṇḍa, the latter.⁵⁹ The guiding principle of the way of activity is virtue or *dharma*. Let us hear an assessment of this dual way of the Indian tradition from a contemporary scholar who has made a dedicated attempt to live the Vedantic life:

For world order and security both the ways are essential. Both of them are as old as mankind. They exist side by side. Without the way of activity the way of renunciation cannot function. And the former, unless directed to the latter, cannot hold its own. It goes out of bounds and disrupts life, individual and social...The two ways of religion (*dharma*) are, as it were the centrifugal and centripetal forces that make the human world rightly run its course.⁶⁰

56. *ibid*, XII—90.

59. P. N. Haksar (op cit, p. 8) has remarked elsewhere that India today should follow the much more difficult *Jñāna mārga* and adopt the methodology of *vijñāna* (obviously implying the natural sciences of today). This once again

A denial of such assessments would only indicate the ostrich-like mentality of the modern intellectuals.

Thus the Manusmṛti, interpreting the Vedas (*śruti*), offers to Indian culture an open acceptance of the life of action, desire and worldly achievement. But this recognition, although social, is still largely intellectual and formal. The Western scholar may not be able to discern any echo in it of the protestant ethic. So we may turn to the Pañcatantra for an uninhibited, frank avowal of the economic, earthly model of man. In the very first story of Book 1 of this work occur the following sentence about a merchant by the name 'Increase':

Even an abundant store of wealth, if pecked at, sinks together like a pile of soot. A very little, if added to, grows like an anthill. Hence even though money be abundant, it should be increased. Riches should be earned. What is earned should be guarded. What is guarded, should be enlarged and heedfully invested. Money even if hoarded in commonplace fashion, is like to go in a flash, the hindrances being many. Money unemployed when opportunities arise, is the same as money unpossessed. Therefore, money once acquired should be guarded, increased, employed.⁶¹

In the *Pañcatantra* are found strewn proverbs like the following:

After money has departed,
If the wit is frail,

shows the paucity of understanding about what *jñāna mārga* in *Vedānta* means, and what *vijnana* means in that same context. The starting point of *jnana marga* is to attempt to realize that the true 'I' is not the body, not the mind and the like, but the luminous eternal self. Does the *vijnana* of Haksar approach its task in this sense and sequence?

^{60.} Swami Satprakashananda, *The Goal and The Way*, (Madras, Ramakrishna Math, 1981) p. 245.

^{61.} A. W. Ryder, *Panchatantra* (Bombay: Jaico, 1981). pp. 17-8.

Then like rills in summer weather,
Undertakings fail.
Forest-sesame, crow-barley,
Men who have no cash
Owning names but lacking substance,
Are accounted trash.
Beggars have, no doubt their virtues,
Yet they don't flash
As the world has need of sunlight,
Virtues ask for cash.⁶²

And we hear again of the wealthy being honoured thus:

The wealthy are, however old,
Rejuvenated by their gold:
If the money has departed, then
The youngest lads are aged men.⁶³

But to whom does such wealth, fortune, or cash accrue? Let us listen to counsels which seem as if they were the original voice of which the later Protestant ethic was only echo.

The goddess Fortune seeks as home
The brave and friendly man,
The grateful, righteous soul who does
Each moment what he can,
Who regulates a sturdy life
Upon an active plan.⁶⁴

And yet all this counsel for wooing fortune and seeking wealth ends with the following crowning proverb⁶⁵:

No treasure equals charity:
Content is perfect wealth,
No gem compares with character
No wish fulfilled, with health.

It is probably such a blend of spiritual principles, moral laws and worldly proverbs which puzzles the Western scholar into concluding that Indian culture represents a queer mixture of the profane and the

^{62.} *ibid*, p. 208

^{63.} *ibid*, p. 219

^{64.} *ibid*, p. 220

^{65.} *ibid*, p. 224

sacred. To him perhaps in such matters it is a question of *either this or that*. But Indian thought has always tried to guide its followers in their struggle through the mundane world by urging them to anoint themselves from within with the pure and the sublime. Thus the very first verse of the famous *Īśa Upaniṣad* pronounces that we should enjoy our earthly existence with detachment—a great paradox indeed for the modern mind. It is of course a matter of regret that in India today synthesis of this kind is not attempted at any stage of human development. People like Haksar ask us to be secular by ridding ourselves of this priceless foundation. The quest for moral satisfaction is seen by them as something to be divorced from religion, forgetting probably that religion and morality can never be separated in India as it has been done in the West.⁶⁶ Indian religion is fundamentally spiritual, whereas Western religion is, or was, mostly Sunday Churchianity. India, therefore, seems to be in no need of a lesson from the West. An Indian cannot understand how a moral, ethical man is not a spiritual-religious man too.

In the first anecdote of Book V of *Pañcatantra* we have the money motive for worldly existence reaffirmed, albeit negatively, with great gusto in the following verses (in the context of a merchant called 'Jewel' having lost all his property and consequently having suffered much humiliation):

Conduct, patience, purity,
Manners, loving kindness, birth,
After money disappears,
Cease to have the slightest worth.
Wisdom, sense and social charm,
Honest pride and self-esteem,
After money disappears,
All at once become a dream.
To the wisdom of the wise.

66. Haksar, *op cit*, pp. 37—40.

Constant household worries bring
Daily diminution,
Like winter breathed upon by spring.
After money disappears
Keenest wisdom is at fault,
Choked by daily fuel and clothes,
Oil and butter, rice and salt.
Yet the rich have licence for
All things vulgar and debased,
When the ocean bellows,
None reprobate his faulty taste.⁶⁷

Thus, it is clear that India certainly possessed her own brand of protestant ethic in all the various epochs of her millenia-long history. For, how else could the glowing descriptions by foreign travellers, about India's great affluence and stable society like those left by Megasthenes, Al Beruni, Fa-Hien and Hieuen Tsang be accounted for? To understand a culture like India's, her history, philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology and other fields of achievement must be brought into a unified focus within a single frame. Insight, sensitivity, and above all respectful humility are required to achieve this goal.

We may now consider the first kind of problem all Indian organizations face today as mentioned in section I. It goes to the credit of Indian seers, past masters as they were of human psychology, to have always taught and exemplified the 'giving' aspect of man's existence at the expense of its 'taking' aspect. Right from the moment a child is born it begins expressing its needs and demands which are as automatic and natural to it as breathing. But as the child grows, true human development would teach it to discipline its selfish needs, and to seek fulfilment through giving, as does a tree or a rose. The colonization by the West of several large chunks of the world, and the two World Wars have demonstrated the rank selfish 'taking' attitude of the West—whether spurred by the protestant

67. *Panchatantra*, *op cit*, pp. 367—68.

ethic or by something else. The Indian conquest of the East, on the other hand, epitomizes the victory of the 'giving' attitude with no plunder, no bloodshed and no subjugation—crude or refined. For this altogether superior victory we owe an immense debt of gratitude to our seers and law givers. To one such important source—the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*—we now turn.

Now this self (the householder) is verily the support of all beings. It is by offering libations in the fire and performing *sacrifices* that he becomes a support to the gods. By reciting the Vedas he acts as a *support* to the sages. By making *offerings* to the manes and desiring offspring he is a *support* of the manes. By lodging men and *giving* food to them he becomes a *support* of men. By providing fodder and water for animals he becomes their *support*. And as beasts and birds and even ants feed in his houses, he is thereby their support. Just as one wishes welfare to one's body, so do all beings wish welfare to him who knows thus. All this (fivefold duty) has verily been known and discussed.⁶⁸

In the *Manusmṛti* too there is a similar law, which enjoins a threefold duty:

When he has paid, according to the law, his debts to the great sages, to the manes and to the gods, let him make over everything to his son and dwell in his house, not caring for any worldly concerns.⁶⁹

Indeed, the much-maligned role of the eldest brother or the head of the family is also anchored firmly in the concept of sacrifice and support. Let us hear Manu again on this point:

As a father supports his sons, so let the eldest support his younger brothers, and let them also in accordance with the law behave towards their eldest brother as sons behave towards their father.⁷⁰

68. Swami Madhavananda, *The Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, (Madras: Ramakrishna Math. 1979) 1.4.16

69. *The Laws of Manu*, op cit, IV—257

70. *ibid*, IX 108

Both in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* and the *Manusmṛti* the underlying psycho-spiritual message is that one should ever be grateful to the various forces and elements of Nature (venerated as gods); to the ancient sages who gave us great truths and rules of conduct in human life; to our parents and ancestors, to whom we owe our present existence; to our fellow beings who support our existence in society in all kinds of unseen and indirect ways; and to the trees, animals and birds who maintain ecological balance for man.⁷¹ All the time in all his actions a man is expected to be alive and conscious of his all-round indebtedness, and behave and think with humility and gratitude. Thus will he give more, and demand less.

The denial of this stream of ethical consciousness in our education today is all too evident. An engineer, a doctor, a management graduate, a civil servant, each thinks only of his own hard work (mostly imaginary) done in his student days. The rest of his life he only calculates in terms of what return the society is giving or going to give him for his investment in studies. But where is the awareness of the collective and all-comprehensive investment that parents, teachers, and the society have made in turning out an engineer or a doctor in a poor country like India? It is because of the lack of such thinking that the exodus from India to foreign countries has taken place—much of it in the name of better work opportunities, which really means only higher standards of consumption.

The best strategy for generating an ethic of work commitment and managerial effectiveness for India should, therefore, lie in refurbishing the key principle of giving or sacrifice in our educational and training systems—all the way up and down. If we do not commence this reorientation at

71. Swami Satprakashananda, op cit, p. 212

the earliest, the law of Karma will not desist from inflicting its own relentless verdict. Such is the system-orientation underlying the Indian thought pattern.

It is also considered by many, more by implication than directly, that since Indian culture is abstract, universalistic, other-worldly and so on, there is very little concern in it for orderly human relations in social life. And this weakness transplants itself with harmful consequences in the human setting within organizations. Like many other assessments about Indian society and culture, this too is a half-baked generalization. The truth rather appears to be that the normlessness of human behaviour in Indian society—as well as in organizations today is an outcome of the infiltration of the alien, western individuality-cult into our pattern of training and upbringing. The general consequence has been so pernicious, that today crass selfishness is masquerading in the cloak of individuality. One may read profitably the rules of conduct for the *snātaka* ('one who has completed his studentship') in the *Manusmṛti* to understand the extent of disciplined social relations upheld in ancient times.⁷² For example, in respect of communication—on which so much of literature is available today—the *Manusmṛti* offers the following rules:⁷³

Let him say what is true, let him say what is pleasing, let him utter no disagreeable truth, and let him utter no agreeable falsehood: that is the eternal law.

And about social behaviour it urges:⁷⁴

'What is well, let him call well, or let him say "well" only; let him not engage in *useless enmity* or dispute with anybody'; and 'Let him avoid atheism, cavilling at the Vedas, contempt of the

Gods, *hatred, want of modesty, pride, anger, harshness.*'

The remarkable feature of such laws is that they are perennially valid. This is because they embody eternal moral and spiritual principles. It is the spiritual foundations of human behaviour which mattered then, matter now, and will matter in future.

Recognition of the importance of non-verbal communication is evident from the following proverbs of the *Pañcatantra*:⁷⁵

But men of wisdom can infer
Unuttered thought from features' stir—
For wit rewards its worshipper.

and

From feature, gesture, gait,
From twitch or word,
From change in eye or face
Is thought inferred.

In the same work, the practical importance of correctly differentiating the good man from the bad is expressed most beautifully:⁷⁶

'If set in tin, a gem that would
Adorn a golden frame,
Will never scream nor fail to gleam,
Yet tell its wearer's shame.'
'Where just distinction is not drawn
Between the left and right,
The self-respecting, if they can,
Will quickly take to flight.'
'If masters no distinction make
Among their servants, then
They lose the zealous offices
Of energetic men.'

Thus, the recognition of merit—not merely birth or lineage—was held as vital in maintaining social relations as in running organizations.

^{72.} *The Laws of Manu*, II—74 to 249, and IV-128 to 260

^{73.} *ibid*, IV—138

^{74.} *ibid*, IV—139 and IV—163

^{75.} *Panchatantra*, *op cit*, p. 25

^{76.} *ibid*, pp. 32-3

V. Conclusion—A Theory of Organic Resonance

Through the excerpts and arrangements in section IV we have tried to offer to our readers glimpses of the extremely diversified (at times apparently contradictory) nature of Indian culture. This is probably bound to be so for a living culture which has nearly 6000 years of dynamic history behind it. As Milton Singer rightly points out:

The Indian world view encompasses both material and spiritual values and these can be found in the behaviour of the ordinary Indian existing side by side and in functional interdependence. Indian thought too, particularly the work of Tagore, Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan, Raghavan, shows a balance and complexity in these respects which is far from that overspecialization on the spiritual, the sacred, and the life-denying to be found in the interpretations of some Western scholars.⁷⁷

And yet, within this diversity and balance the unmistakable and unwavering choice India has made for herself all through the centuries is to give the *first* place to the Spirit, God, and the *second* place to matter and earthly concerns. History has proved that this ordering of priorities has never let her down as a culture, as a civilization— notwithstanding her military and political subjugation for a long time by foreign hordes.

No theory, scheme or model of management in Indian organizations can resonate symphonically without the harmonizing element of spiritual insight which is every Indian's heritage. This component is the organic core of the Indian psyche. Evidence for it lies in the fact that almost all Indians even today cherish a humble feeling of reverence towards a

wandering mendicant in ochre robes. Psychologically, what this means is that nothing rings more true and appears more elevating to an Indian than a man of sacrifice and purity. Leaders, managers, superiors, heads of families, all must assimilate this invisible mainspring of the Indian psyche for effective management. The ochre robe is only an exterior symbol of renunciation, and may in some cases, especially in the high society of today, mean just plain deceit and charlatanism. Playing on the gullibility of commonfolk under the pretence of renunciation and holiness is reprehensible, no doubt. But such abuse does not invalidate the symbol itself. The vastly more positive and potent factor is the inspiration, loftiness and dedication which a man of renunciation can kindle in the common man, at least in India. Why disown and decry it then? Was this not the secret of a Mahatma Gandhi, or of a Netaji Subhas Bose who, in their own ways, trained and welded diverse human communities into a most dedicated and integrated action group? Surely, people could recognize the supreme purity, sacrifice and selflessness revealed in whatever the two great leaders did. Ochre robes did not adorn their bodies.

Hence the need of the moment is to adopt a strategy to achieve the *organic resonance* of human resources in Indian organizations. Neither Western psycho-analytical-behavioural, nor Japanese Zen or Seishin strategies can do this job for us. An Indian is apt to learn best about discipline, dedication and commitment from a Bhīṣma or a Hanumān or a Gandhi and not from a Caesar or a St. Paul or a Zen Rōshi. We have to struggle for development on our own terms and in our own way. This possibility has already been hinted at by us in another context where we have described India's own potential contribution to the world of business management as a

⁷⁷. M. Singer, 'Cultural Values in India's Economic Development', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. May 1956. p. 83

'spirituo-technical' system.⁷⁸ We have to learn nothing even from Japan in this respect, the most salutary first lesson—to have self-respect and confidence in our own traditional value systems, spiritual as well as mundane. Even what is to be discarded from the Indian heritage can be decided correctly only *after* we have ourselves made an honest study of our culture through our own eyes without the blinkers of foreign value systems. It will indeed be tragedy for us if we waste another thirty years in imitating Japanese man-management styles.

A most unfortunate phenomenon noticeable today is that top observers of the Indian management scene are themselves pointing out some gaps in it, and at times are suggesting remedies too—but all this in total disregard of indigenous psychological concepts and theories. Nitish De in a recent data-based study of team spirit in Indian organizations states that: 'moralistic, personalistic and egoistic values predominate among Indian managers.'⁷⁹

Another observer, Udai Pareek emphasizes the need for self-appraisal through 'self-confrontation' by individuals. And self-confrontation, in turn, can be done only by one who has high self-respect and self-integration.⁸⁰ If we are permitted to tie up De's conclusion with Pareek's suggestion, it is possible to discover a 'diagnosis-remedy' sequence between the two. But what does Pareek equip his reader with to achieve self-respect and self-integration? Do we really understand the principles involved in achieving self-integration? Is there a possibility that such suggestions could be made correctly without

an adequate perception of the means and methods to accomplish them? On the basis of our modest understanding we venture to argue that self-integration is essentially a spiritual process, and it cannot be anything else but that. Only an interiorized personality can be self-integrated, and not the many-splintered, thoroughly exteriorized individual. And the path to the interiorization of a positive character is a spiritual one.⁸¹ There is probably no loftier conception of integrated personality than that of the *Sthita-prajña* of the *Gītā*.⁸² In more direct and operational terms, an integrated personality means one who has a stable, luminous central reference point within his innermost being to which he can, at will, return and look up for understanding in all his moments of success and failure, pain and pleasure, praise and blame, insult and accolade, gain and loss. It is this centripetality, holding back the centrifugality as it were, of the mind which is the great achievement of an integrated individual. Equanimity is his hallmark.

Spiritual ideas and practices are a much surer way of achieving this goal than scholarly dissertations. Thinkers on Indian management are likely to go on spinning like wheels within wheels, without achieving any real breakthrough, unless they

81. S. K. Chakraborty, 'Business Management and Indian Mysticism', *op cit*, pp. 394-5

82. Swami Vireshwarananda, *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* (Madras: Ramakrishna Math, 1972) verses 54 and 55 especially in chapter II and also 56 to 64. The word 'sthitaprajña' is translated by the author 'as a man of steady wisdom'. Such a person is settled in perfect equanimity born of contentment through desireless action. It is interesting, and important too, to know that S. Radhakrishnan in his *Bhagavadgita* (Calcutta, Blackie, 1976, pp. 122-23) translates 'sthitaprajña' as a man of settled or stable 'intelligence'. We are inclined to accept 'wisdom' as a better word than 'intelligence' for in normal circumstances, intelligence is not accompanied by wisdom, although wisdom necessarily implies intelligence.

78. S. K. Chakraborty, 'Understanding Organizational Reality in India—An Indian Perspective', *Asia-Pacific Training and Development Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1981, pp. 32-3.

79. N. R. De, 'The Egoistic Indian Manager', *Business Standard*, 27 October 1981.

80. U. Pareek, *Beyond Management* (Delhi: Oxford—IBH, 1981) p. 45

succeed in building man-management theories by blending the most valid and refined Indian psycho-spiritual insights with the realities of empirical phenomena at grassroot levels. What we have attempted is just to try to rekindle the flame of self-confidence in our heritage, which has for some decades now been extinguished by the cold blast of our own folly and conceit. With this flame alight again, it is possible now to construct our own theory of organic resonance, striking our deepest chords, for our own man-management strategies.

From what we have presented above, the following main ingredients (by no means exhaustive though) of an *organic resonance* theory for Indian management emerge:

1. Subjective change and improvement are the only real change and improvement. Objective change and improvement ought to be a consequence.

2. Management of human resources should always be subjective. Hence the paramount importance of toning up the quality and fibre of the subject, the person. This will mean serious efforts at the individual level to progressively purge one's mind of the natural, obvious and deep-seated impurities and weaknesses (a process called *Cittaśuddhi* in Sanskrit).

3. A still and indrawn mind (not induced by drugs or sedatives!) is more creative and more infallible at those moments of being its 'natural' self. Such stillness in practice can be greatly aided by equanimity. Equanimity, in turn, can be gained by cultivating the art of instant mental engagement as well disengagement. And this ability requires the support of a pure mind which is less distracted and fractional, and more concentrated and holistic.

4. Purity of action and behaviour, aided by a pure mind, can be progressively attained by a correct understanding of the Doctrine of Karma, and the associated Law of Rebirth or Reincarnation.

5. Ancient Indian literature guiding secular life is neither life-negating nor world-negating, nor a mere engine of oppression for vested interests—although impure minds can so twist it for their own diabolic ends. Those beliefs and customs which are obvious anachronisms in today's context should be ruthlessly banished. But spiritual insights and ethical principles forming the essence and core are still wholly valid and relevant.

6. Cultivation of the conviction that success in the mundane, this-worldly life too is ultimately rooted in the purity of motives and means.

7. Slow but steady acknowledgement within that we humans are after all not our own creators, nor that of the universe. There is a Supreme Force (call it what you will) whose help and power we should seek consciously and with humility. Only this way perhaps can we commence to de-egoize, and later on, to be modest and humble in our inter-personal relationships. For, to begin first to de-egoize before a fellow human being in formal organizations is always a much more difficult task.

8. The roles of the head of a family, the eldest brother, the King, the leader, the boss—they are all pivoted on the one single idea of sacrifice and giving. If they do so, the probability that the rest will follow suit is much greater. The whole human life is conceived as an act of offering to all quarters of society. That man's needs are best fulfilled who gives most and the best. This is the viable motivational concept for work commitment in India—true to her genius.

9. A pervasive stream of consciousness, deep within each one of us (meaning the readers of this paper in particular) of the fact that we are indebted to the whole of the past, present and future society. This sense of gratitude should silently guide us,

in all our daily actions and thoughts.

10. Most of the images, symbols, and codes of conduct in Indian society contain a very deep and lofty psychological meaning. They must not be dismissed with

haughty contempt after a superficial glance at the external incongruities or apparent vulgarities of form. Most of them can and need to be resurrected for practical use in modern organizations.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SERVICE AND SPIRITUALITY BY SWAMI SWAHANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600 004. Pp. 211. Rs. 10.

Swami Swahananda, presently Head of the Vedanta Society, Hollywood, was the Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*, Madras, one of the religious-cultural journals of the Ramakrishna Order, from 1956 to 1961. The present book is a collection of his editorials in that journal, to which are added three of his other contributions elsewhere. As can be expected these articles expound, under different captions, some of the salient features of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda ideas and ideals which resuscitate and harmonize, in the modern context, the twin ideals of the hoary Indian religio-philosophic culture, comprehended under the concepts of *abhyudaya* (secular and social prosperity) and *nihśreyasa* (spiritual felicity) of the individual and society, as pointed out by Śrī Śamkarācārya in his introduction to the commentary on the *Gītā*. Swami Vivekananda held these up as the ideals of the Ramakrishna Order under the motto: *Atmano-mokṣārtham, Jagad-hitāya ca* (For one's spiritual freedom and the welfare of the world). He also exhorted, 'Renunciation (of lower self) and service (of beings) are the national ideals of India, intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself.' *Service and Spirituality* forming the title of the book, are complementary to each other.

There are seventeen articles in this book dealing with the practical aspects and applications of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda ideas and ideals in the fields of religion and social life. They constitute the seventeen chapters covering the following topics: (1) Swami Vivekananda's Concept of Service; (2) Why Vivekananda? (3) Swami Vivekananda to Modern Youth; (4) God or Humanity? (5) The New Worship; (6) Service and Spirituality; (7) The Ramakrishna Mould; (8) Sri Ramakrishna's Speciality;

(9) A Ramakrishna Symbol; (10) The Social Necessity of Religion; (11) The Youth and Spiritual Life; (12) Life and Religion; (13) Vedanta and Modern Man; (14) The Role of Vedanta in Shaping Our Nation; (15) Vedanta and the Democratic Spirit; (16) The Unity of Religions; (17) Religious Organization. These afford a view of the wide scope of the book. The topics are dealt with in a broad, non-sectarian, human context. Of these, the first one is an address delivered at the University of Madras. It ably deals with the subject in all its aspects, the theoretical philosophical background and its practical application, and covers one-third of the book. The others are well expounded in simple language and in a way easily graspable by common reader. The book provides, on the authority of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, useful ideas and healthy concepts for the moulding of our lives and thought in an integrated harmonious manner, in the social and spiritual context, and in the spirit of inter-religious and inter-cultural harmony of mankind.

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HINDUS, HINDUISM, HINDUSTHAN
(Teachings of Swami Vivekananda) COMPILED BY
G. M. JAGTIANI. Published by G. M. Jagtiani,
D/22 Self-Help Housing Society, St. Francis
Road, Vile Parle (West), Bombay 400 056. 1983.
Pp. xi + 84. Rs. 5.

The *Works* of Swami Vivekananda are like an ocean containing inexhaustible and priceless treasures. You may dive into it any number of times, but every time you come up with new treasures. Sri Jagtiani is a professional pearl diver who has dived into this ocean several times. This time he has come out with a selection of Swamiji's statements on Hindus, Hinduism and Hindusthan. These teachings have the power to

rouse Hindus from the age-long slumber and make them conscious of their individual dignity, strength, and uniqueness, conscious of the greatness of their culture, of the glory of the land of their birth and of the need for unity and concerted action at this critical period in the history of India.

S. B.

HINDI

SAMARTHA RAMADAS VANI: By NIRANJAN JAMIDAR. Published by Geeta Samiti Prakashan. Bada Rawla P.O., Indore 452 004. 1983. Pp. 140. Rs. 7.

In the spiritual tradition of Maharashtra Samartha Ramadas occupies an important place. The present book is an attempt to make available to a wider reading public the treasure of the saint's wisdom. It consists of a few selections from Ramadas' works, ably translated from Marathi into flawless Hindi by Shri Niranjan Jamidar. They represent the essence of Ramadas'

teachings. These teachings are mostly spiritual which aim at making man realize his inner power. The author, Shri Jamidar, draws his inspiration from the work of Simone Weil, the author of *The Need for Roots*. Shri Jamidar believes that the teachings often remind us of our glorious past. This heritage needs to be preserved and developed. Such an attempt can bring out a national regeneration. The words of saints are a great integrating force also. The words of Ramadas can arouse dynamism in our youths, even today, as they did three centuries ago.

The book is divided into five parts. All important couplets from Dasabodha, Atmarama, stotras etc. have been culled and arranged in a meaningful way. The book will go a long way in spreading the life-giving message of Ramadas, far beyond Maharashtra, wherever Hindi is spoken and understood.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

MAYAVATI CHARITABLE HOSPITAL

REPORT FOR APRIL 1983 TO MARCH 1984

Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, was started on 19 March 1899 under the inspiration of Swami Vivekananda in the Kumaon Hills of the Himalayas. In 1903, a small dispensary was started by the Ashrama in response to the dire need of the local villagers in sickness. Since that time the dispensary has developed into a fairly well-equipped, small rural hospital. The hospital stands within the precincts of the Ashrama, and is under the charge of a monastic member. A resident allopathic doctor treats the patients with the help of his assistants, and earnest efforts are made to maintain a high standard of efficiency in service. Moreover, all patients receive prompt and sympathetic treatment completely free of charge.

The hospital has 25 beds in the indoor department, but sometimes arrangements have to be made for more. There is also a small operation theatre. A dental chair and a pathological department provide additional help in the treatment of patients. The total number of

patients treated during the twelve months in the Indoor Department was 230 of which 169 were cured and discharged, 37 were relieved, 21 were discharged otherwise or left, 3 died. In the Outdoor Department the total number of patients treated was 20,281 of which 5,301 were new and 14,980 were repeated cases.

Present needs

1. Providing fresh lockers to all the 25 beds in the Indoor Dept. Rs. 5,000
2. Providing new mattresses, linen and blankets Rs. 10,000
3. Creation of a Permanent Fund for the purchase of medicines Rs. 5,00,000

Our appeal to charitably disposed individuals and institutions is to lend us their helping hand in a big way, so that we shall have sufficient funds, at our disposal to meet future requirements, particularly for the purchase of medicines which we wish to improve both qualitatively and quantitatively. Cheques and drafts may be drawn in favour of *Mayavati Charitable Hospital* and sent to the President, Mayavati Charitable Hospital, P.O. Mayavati, via Lohaghat, Dist. Pithoragarh (U.P.), 262 524, India.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Democracy and Justice

One of the noble features of democracy is that it keeps the door to justice open for each and every citizen. In democratic polity the Judiciary, the Executive and the Legislature are independent bodies. According to the traditional view, the function of the Judiciary is simply to keep the door to justice open; it is the duty of the Executive and the Legislature to lead people to and through the door. But this view is now on the way out.

In India the door to justice is wide open. Yet millions of people have no access to the sanctuary of justice, and innumerable acts of social injustice and personal crime, of which innocent men, women and children are victims, remain unredressed. In an enlightening article published in the January-March 1984 issue of *Triveni* (Machilipatnam, A.P.) the Chief Justice of India Sri Y. V. Chandrachud gives us the hope that the winds of change have started blowing at last. 'Is justice quick enough, cheap enough and fair enough?', he asks and continues, 'One of the foremost challenges which the judiciary faces today is how to administer justice speedily to the millions who throng the portals of courts with faith and confidence.'

Apart from those who 'throng the portals of courts' there are thousands of others who never reach the portals, whose voices of agony nobody hears, who do not even know that justice exists. 'Lawyers do not have locally based organizations to take up these cases for inquiry and treatment,' points out Sri Chandrachud. 'It is the academicians and social scientists who have drawn the attention of a cold and indifferent world to the sufferings of these neglected segments of society. And out of their concern for the welfare of the poor and friendless has grown the concept of public interest litigation.' Public interest litigation begins with the uproar in the legislature, the appearance of reports and articles in the press, public demonstrations or letters and telegrams addressed directly to the judges. Till now the reaction of the judiciary to these forms of public protest had been one of dignified aloofness. But the Chief Justice assures us: '...the new access to justice has unearthed and brought to surface grave ills which afflict the society. By expanding the narrow limits of *locus standi*, the Supreme Court has opened a broad avenue to quick and cheap justice for those who have been traditionally denied justice on technical and bigoted considerations. The judges have taken up the role of a legislator—to a limited extent, of course, and interstitially. This is one of law's finest achievements in recent times.'

Is it necessary to pull down the present legal system and introduce a new system by radical or revolutionary means? Sri Chandrachud answers: 'I am hopeful that it is possible, within the present framework of our legal structure, to derive ways and means for making law an effective instrument of social justice.' Though not uttered *ex cathedra*, these statements of the supreme juridical pontiff of India have a probative and imperative force which the nation cannot ignore. Sri V. R. Krishna Iyer, former justice of the Supreme Court, has suggested the setting up of a Justice Planning Body of eminent jurists to prepare a project for the reformation of the present judicial system. What is perhaps more important is to sharpen the moral sensitivity of the people and open their minds to moral and social values through a massive scheme for moral education.
