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Cover: A view of the Himalayas

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उत्तिष्ठत
जाग्रत
प्राप्य
वरान्निबोधत



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED.

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No. 3

Divine Wisdom

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो
यत्साम्पराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तत्।
योग्यं वरो गूढमनुप्रविष्टो
नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेता वृणीते॥

Tell me, O Death, of that Great Hereafter
about which a man has his doubts. Naciketa
will surely not choose any other boon but
the one so wrapped in mystery.

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेत—
स्तौ सम्परीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते
प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते॥

Both the good and the pleasant present
themselves to a man. The calm soul
examines them well and discriminates. Yea,
he prefers the good to the pleasant; but the
fool chooses the pleasant out of greed and
avarice.

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैवमाप्नुयात् ॥

He who has not first turned away from bad
conduct, who is not tranquil and subdued,
and whose mind is not at peace, cannot

attain Ātman. It is realized only through the
Knowledge of Reality.

वायुर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो
रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा
रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च॥

As the same non-dual air, after it has entered
the world, becomes different according to
whatever it enters, so also the same non-
dual Ātman, dwelling in all beings, becomes
different according to whatever It enters.
And It exists also without.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीया—
नात्माऽस्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम्।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको
धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥

Ātman, smaller than the small, greater than
the great, is hidden in the hearts of all crea-
tures. A man who is free from desires
beholds the majesty of the Self through tran-
quillity of the senses and the mind and
becomes free from grief.

from the Katha Upaniṣad,
Trans. Swami Nikhilananda

Vedantin and Modern Society

Vedantin's self-image

The truly happy person today is the Vedantin. Some are early-Vedantins, some turn to Vedanta late in life. He or she who has even in the least grasped early in life the central ideas of Vedanta is better equipped to cope with the complexities of modern life and its exhausting pace. For through Vedanta it is possible for a person to discover within himself an inbuilt 'guidance-system' with the help of which he can with growing ease and purposefulness steer across the uncharted ocean of life.

Each day, from the moment one steps out of the house, in fact from the moment of waking, one is brought into contact with the different unanticipated moods of this 'ocean'—with waves now serene, now turbulent, now opposing, now frightening. Though one is bound to be thrown off course quite often, yet one feels safe with this unfailing internal guidance mechanism, because (like the ship's gyroscope) it helps bring back one's balance sooner or later. It not only directs, but also regulates one's passage. What is this mechanism? It is a set of Vedantic ideas—'I am not a mere biological organism—I am essentially divine, the Self, the Atman, which is pure, free, perfect, changeless and blissful. So are the Selves of all living beings. My life is meant to come into direct realization of this truth. Every act of choice and will and activity must conform to my divinity, which is the universal Selfhood of my Self.'

In effect this guidance-system becomes a stable and luminous self-image, self-identity. It may not light up the entire course of one's life, but it does illumine fairly clearly what is immediately ahead and also

some area beyond so that one is able to steer carefully.

Just as any guidance-system, ingesting all the data and assimilating them, finally says, 'This way', this divinely luminous self-image also enables the Vedantin to organize his or her life, integrate into it all the learning, information, and experiences with all types of people, face all situations, absorb and deflect all the punches of life, and still stay on course as indicated by the pointer, 'This way to peace and true happiness'.

Almost a century ago Vivekananda, sensing the changes that would sweep over societies setting an unrelenting pace for us to keep up with, had said, '...This is the question: With every sense and every organ active, have you that tremendous peace (so that) nothing can disturb you? Standing on Market Street, waiting for the car with all the rush...going on around you, are you in meditation—calm and peaceful?' The Vedantin is the truly intelligent one, for he does not get rushed by or trapped in the world. He is very energetic and active in everything that needs to be done day-by-day, but is discriminatingly so.

Late-Vedantins

Others appear to be happy, but are headed towards misery. Those who are stuck up in adolescence physically and mentally are content with recklessly and foolishly entertaining themselves—their senses and mind around which their self-image has grown. Their guidance-system is liable to fault because it consists of their senses only, which means it has not one pointer but five. Each of the pointers points in a different direction and operates

independently, though simultaneously with the others, with varying strength. So the course of life gets set according to the pointer strongest at the moment. But whichever the pointer, the screen always reads, 'This way to pleasure and excitement; full speed ahead'! Since this guidance-system, similar to what all organic creatures and animals possess, sees only what is just ahead and leads in different directions from time to time, these people invariably stray into dangerous parts of the ocean of life. Waves of fear, anxiety, peacelessness, helplessness, meaninglessness and loneliness sweep over them, ultimately sinking them into the depths. Their self-images get shattered as their body and mind lead towards destruction. As age feeds on these people, as body and mind lose their vitality—as in time they must—, disease or incapacitation strikes terror; death itself casts its ominous shadow. Then they are in the throes of depression and despair, not just because they realize their lives have been misspent, but because while craving for enjoyment is still intensely present, the instrument of enjoyment, the body, has failed beyond repair! No rejuvenating health foods or tonics or potions help for long, no science promises immortality and freedom from sorrow. Nevertheless, there are people, we hear, who have offered themselves to be deepfrozen until science someday discovers a way to prevent aging and death, so that they may then be revived and reactivated to go on with their perpetual rounds of merriment.

Take the case of the so-called greats of mankind—athletes, boxers, actors and actresses, playboy tycoons, business magnates, politicians, the *nouveau riche*, and such other celebrities. What a pitiable condition they are reduced to by that inexorable enforcer of Nature's law of change—Time! We hear a brief radio broadcast or read in the newspaper—this time in commercially

unwasteful small-print in an available corner of an inside-page—mention of their penury, or illness, mental disorder, suicide, or natural death. People thus chained in worldly cares are born and die like seasonal flowers.

Of course, we hear too of a few among them who suddenly awaken and are alerted from within. They realize the futility of the course of their lives before it is too late. Greying hair, wrinkling skin, falling teeth, unexpected public indifference, the hard reality of the commercial media wanting only 'fresh flowers', loss of money and power, etc., jolt them and open a new path before their mind's eye. They gain a new perspective on their lives. Some take up charitable work, become supporters of environmental or wildlife protection societies, join childcare organizations or other philanthropic programmes. This means that the focus of their awareness has suddenly shifted from themselves, from their own bodies and minds, to expand and feel close to others. They feel now that they belong to the vast complex Entity called Mankind, or Life, or Existence. Their outlook on the world and humanity changes. The materialistic fragmented view of things they had formerly imbibed from modern education gets transmogrified. A few of these late-risers are attracted to meditation, or to some other spiritual pursuit. In this case the great change is in their 'in-look', their self-image. Their true Self, the Atman which is intrinsically pure, immortal, blissful, and changeless, rises in rebellion, as it were, against their thoughts of remorse, hopelessness, helplessness, and death. They find their lives become properly oriented, deeply meaningful and filled with a kind of joy they never experienced before. It has been observed that a good number of this type of 'late-Vedantins' also do not become recluses, but become wholeheartedly involved in the service of society and pour

their newfound spiritual happiness into the world from which they had earlier drawn only selfish pleasure.

But these people who change the course of their lives late cannot be blamed. After all it is the content of modern education and the powerfully commercialized media which gave them that body-only self-image and pleasure-only goal. They are slow learners who needed personal experience of more than half a lifetime to realize that science is not yet all-knowing, and that it really has precious little knowledge about human life and consciousness. It has answered only partially about the *how* and *what* of things, and so far it has failed to provide a universal answer to the *why* of human values and the *who* in living creatures. For all the benefits it has given man, it has very seriously violated the natural order of human as well as non-human life on the planet.

Society needs Vedantins

However that may be, today a number of educated persons find in Vedanta an ideal guide for life. Being acceptable as a rational system of thought and intuitively satisfying, Vedanta is an ideal complement to modern science. That is, without having to sacrifice their scientific temperament and without having to fall back upon tradition-bound religious faiths and dogmas, people can accept Vedanta, which is a religion *sans dog-*

matism and a science *sans materialism*. Serious psychological problems—self-alienation, the feeling of emptiness within, anxiety, fear, etc.—created by mechanistic science and technology can be solved and therefore could be pre-empted through Vedantic teachings about man's innate divinity, purity, immortality, etc. In the larger context of social problems too, Vedantins find that their life as members of their families and as social beings takes on a wonderful tone of love, harmony, and service. Also, some of the worst effects of secular education—consumerism, sexism, and the unbalancing of Nature and the environment can be righted only through Vedanta which teaches self-control and sanctity of all life. Since at the root of all presentday problems lies the 'half-educated' condition of modern people, solutions to those problems can come only by complementing that existing education with the ideas of Vedanta: by complementing *individualism* with *divine individuality*, *uniformity and monoculture* with *harmony in essential diversity*, *consumerism* with *self-control and sharing*, *exploitation* with *service and organic holism*, *competition, success, and domination* with *Self-realization*.

This is where Vedantins have a crucial role to play, by demonstrating through their own lives that it is possible to become scientific minded spiritual beings.



That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical. That is my opinion; and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so; and the sooner, the better. Stand up, men and women, in this spirit, dare to believe in the Truth, dare to practise the Truth!...Practise that boldness which dares know the Truth, which dares show the Truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe, nothing can kill him. Then you will be free. Then you will know your real Soul. "This Atman is first to be heard, then thought about and then meditated upon."

—*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. 2, p.85.*

Madhusudana Saraswati on the Bhagavad-Gita

SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

We had begun to publish from January this year extracts from Madhusudana's Dīpikā (Annotation) on the Gītā, translated by Swami Gambhirananda, late President of the Ramakrishna Order, and revised by Swami Mokshadananda, Belur Math. The following are from Chapter 2, verses 14 and 15, dealing with the real nature of Man, the eternality of the Self, etc.

Objection: We do not argue against the eternality and all-pervasiveness of the self, but we cannot accept the view that the self is the same in all the bodies. Thus, the Vaiśeṣikas think that the selves which are eternal and pervasive are endowed with the specific nine qualities—called intelligence, happiness, sorrow, will, aversion, effort, merit, demerit and mental impressions—and they are certainly different with respect to each body. This very view is held even by the Logicians and the Mīmāṃsakas. But the Sāṃkhyas, even though differing about the possession of qualities by the self, do not differ as regards the distinction of the self in each body, for otherwise there would arise the contingency of happiness, sorrow, etc. (of one) getting mixed up (with those of the others). And thus, 'Though I who am distinct from Bhīṣma and others have eternality and pervasiveness, yet, since I have association with happiness, sorrow, etc., therefore when the bodies of friends and relatives like Bhīṣma and others die I shall have dissociation from happiness and association with sorrow. So, sorrow and delusion are not improper.'

Anticipating such a sentiment of Arjuna, the Lord with a view to distinguishing the subtle body (from the Self) says:

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत॥ (2.14)

*Mātrāsparśāstu kaunteya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino'nityāstāṃstītikṣasva bhārata*

But the contacts of the organs with the objects are producers of happiness and sorrow, through cold and heat, to that (internal organ) which has a beginning and an end. They are transient. Bear them, O descendent of Bharata!

Mātrāḥ are those by which objects are measured up, (viz) the organs. Their *sparśāḥ* (means) contacts with objects. Or, (*mātrāsparśāḥ* means) the modifications of the mind corresponding to the form of their respective objects. Through cold (*śīta*) and heat (*uṣṇa*) they are *sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ*, producers of happiness and sorrow; *āgamāpāyinaḥ*, to that which has a beginning and an end, to the internal organ itself which is subject to origination and destruction, but not to the eternal all-pervasive Self, because It is attributeless and changeless. For, an eternal entity cannot have any association with impermanent qualities, because an attribute and the possessor of that attribute being non-different, there is no possibility of any other relationship between them, and because what is witnessed cannot be an attribute of the witness. So it has been said:

One cannot be sorrowful without undergoing change. How can any changeable entity have the state of being a witness? I am the witness of thousands of changes in the mind.

*Therefore I am changeless.*¹

And thus, since all the respective differences can be explained on the basis of the differences themselves of the internal organs which are the repositories of happiness, sorrow, etc., therefore there is no valid proof of the multiplicity of the Self—which is changeless and the illuminator of all—, because It permeates everything through Its nature as Existence and Self-effulgence. As for the internal organ being the cause of happiness, sorrow, etc., that is a conclusion of both sides engaged in the debate. In that regard, since the material cause itself is considered to be the principal factor, therefore that alone should be accepted (in the case of the internal organ); on the other hand, since no other material cause is present, the internal organ should not be accepted merely as the efficient cause. In consonance with this, in, 'Desire, deliberation, doubt,...(all these are but the mind)' ² etc., the Śruti speaks of the mind as being the material cause of desire etc. by pointing out their identity in, 'all these are but the mind' (*ibid*). And since the Śrutis make it known that the nature of the Self is self-effulgent, Knowledge and Bliss, (therefore) It is not the resort of desire etc. So the idea is that, it is through error only that the Vaiśeṣikas and others have accepted the mutability and diversity of the Self.

Since the mind has a beginning and an end, and it is an object of perception, therefore it is different from you who are the eternal witness. And even the modifications of the mind corresponding to the form of the respective objects of the organs, which give rise to happiness etc. in it (mind), are *anityāḥ*, transient, unstable by nature, because cold, heat, etc. which are at one time verily producers of happiness are at another time seen to be givers of pain; and similarly,

even what is at some time a producer of pain is seen at another time to be a producer of happiness. The mention of cold and heat is meant for suggesting happiness and sorrow on the personal, material and divine planes. Cold and heat are sometimes delightful, and sometimes not, whereas happiness and sorrow do not change (their natures). This is why they are mentioned separately. Therefore you *titikṣasva*, forbear the modifications of the mind which correspond to the respective objects of the organs; which are extremely unstable and produce happiness, sorrow, etc. in that (mind) which is different from you and changeful; which take the form of association with and separation from Bhīṣma and others. You ignore them with this discrimination, 'These can do nothing to me.' The meaning is, 'Do not consider yourself as unhappy by superimposing the idea of identity with the sorrowful mind.'

By addressing him with the two names—Kaunteya, son of Kuntī, and Bhārata, scion of the Bharata dynasty—, the Lord indicates this: ignorance does not befit you whose parentage on both sides is pure!

य हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ।

ममदुःखमुखं धीरं सोमृतत्वाय कल्पते॥ (2.15)

*Yaṁ hi na vyathayantyete puruṣaṁ
puruṣarṣabha
samaduḥkhasukhaṁ dhīraṁ so'mṛtatvāya
kalpate*

*O (Arjuna, who are) foremost among men,
since these do not torment the wise person to
whom sorrow and happiness are the same,
therefore he becomes fit for Immortality.*

'Is it not that, if the mind itself be the seat of happiness and sorrow, then on account of (the mind) itself being the agent and the enjoyer it has to be admitted as conscious? And thus, since there is no proof of any

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Vārtika*, 4.3.396.

2. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.5.3.

enjoyer (called the Self) that is different from and an illuminator of that (mind), the dispute will revolve round the name only (as to whether it is to be called "Self" or "mind"). If there be a distinction (between the Self and the mind), then there will arise the objection that bondage and Liberation are related to different entities, because the mind being the seat of happiness, sorrow, etc. will be under bondage, and the Self, distinct from that (mind), will be free.'

In order to dispel this doubt of Arjuna, the Lord says, *Yam hi*, the person whom..., etc. *Yam puruṣam*, the person whom: who in reality is well known to be independently self-effulgent, as stated in the Śruti, 'In this state the man himself becomes the light.'³ *Puruṣaḥ*: so called because, being omnipresent (*pūrṇa*), he resides (*śayana*) in the body (*puri*), as stated in the Śruti, 'He, on account of dwelling in all bodies, is called the *Puruṣa*. There is nothing that is not covered by Him, nothing that is not pervaded by Him.'⁴ *Sama-duḥkha-sukham*, he to whom sorrow and happiness are the same: he who is self-effulgent and immutable, and to whom sorrow and happiness—they being the attributes of the non-Self and objects of perception—are the same; for happiness and sorrow, which are subject to increase and decrease, are ruled out by the Śruti,

*This is the eternal glory of a knower of Brahman: it neither increases nor decreases through work.*⁵

The reference to *happiness* and *sorrow* is suggestive of all the modifications of the mind.

Dhīram, the wise man to whom: to him who, from the derivative sense of 'he who

impels the intellect', is the director of the intellect as a result of the superimposition of his identity with the intellect through a reflection of Consciousness; i.e., who is the Witness of the intellect, as stated in the Śruti, 'Assuming the state of dream in identification with the intellect, It transcends this world.'⁶ Hereby is shown the ascription of bondage. Accordingly has it been said, 'I am that Brahman through which the means of proof are determined, as also the three states of waking etc. and the distinction between existence and non-existence. This is what is taught.'⁷

Hi, since; the modifications of the mind, which correspond to the respective objects of the organs and which give happiness and sorrow, *na vyathayanti*, do not torment, do not in reality affect (this person), as he is beyond (all) changes on account of being the illuminator of all the changes, which accords with the Śruti,

*Just as the sun, which is the eye of the whole world, is not tainted by the ocular and external defects, similarly the Self, which is but one in all beings, is not tainted by the sorrows of the world, It being transcendental.*⁸

therefore, *saḥ*, he, that person; through the realization of the identity of the Self with Brahman that is his real nature, *kalpate*, becomes fit; *amṛtatvāya*, for Immortality, for Liberation, which is indirectly meant by 'the eradication of the source of all misery, (viz) the ignorance about It (Brahman)', and which (Liberation) is by nature the self-effulgent supreme Bliss that is untouched by all kinds of duality.

If the Self indeed be the substratum of

3. *Ibid.*, 4.3.9.

4. *Ibid.*, 2.5.18.

5. *Ibid.*, 4.4.23.

6. cf. *Ibid.*, 4.3.7.

7. *Brhadāranyaka Sambandha Bhāṣya Vārtika*, 1082.

8. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 2.2.11.

(Its) inherent bondage, then since the inherent qualities cannot disappear without the disappearance of their substratum, therefore It can never be Liberated. So it has been said,

*If the Self be of the nature of an agent etc., then do not long for Liberation. For, like the heat of the sun, the nature of things does not get separated.*⁹

For it is seen that without the annihilation of the substratum there cannot occur the simultaneous annihilation of all *specific qualities* that do not coexist with their antecedent non-existences (*prāgabhāvas*).¹⁰ On the other hand, bondage is not natural to the

9. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Sambandha Bhāṣya Vārtika*, 55-56.

10. According to the Vaiśeṣikas, *prāgabhāva* means the non-existence of an effect antecedent to its production. ('Non-existence of anything which is yet to be.'—Monier Williams) They hold that the Self is by nature an agent, an enjoyer, a knower, etc. In their view there are twenty-four qualities. Of these some are common qualities and some are specific. The Self under bondage has nine *specific qualities*, viz intelligence, happiness, sorrow, will, aversion, effort, merit, demerit and mental impressions. Again, while these qualities exist in the Self, their antecedent non-existences (*prāgabhāva*) also coexist. For at the same time that a particular *happiness* or *sorrow* exists, there is also the *prāgabhāva* of such other kinds of innumerable future *happinesses* and *sorrows*. Besides, it is not a fact that another *happiness* will not occur again after some *happiness* has occurred at the present and then ceased. Thus all the *specific qualities* of the Self coexist with their respective antecedent non-existences (*prāgabhāvas*), for even when these nine *specific qualities* exist, there is also the presence of the *prāgabhāvas* of the *specific qualities* of the respective classes. For instance, when a par-

Self, but it is due to the limiting adjuncts such as the intellect, as has been stated in the Śruti,

*The discriminating people call that Self the enjoyer when it is associated with body, organs and mind.*¹¹

Objection: In that case, may it not be that

particular *happiness* disappears from the Self, there continues in the same Self the *prāgabhāva* of a future *happiness* of the same class. Thus the *abhāva*, disappearance, of a particular *specific quality* coexists in the Self with the *prāgabhāvas* of such other *specific qualities*; i.e., the same Self has, at the same time, the *abhāva* of a particular *specific quality*, e.g., *happiness*, and the *prāgabhāva* of another such *specific quality*.

But the Vaiśeṣikas hold that in Liberation the Self gets simultaneously freed from all its *specific qualities* and also from the *prāgabhāvas* of such other future *specific qualities*, because if the *prāgabhāvas* of the *specific qualities* persist in Liberation, then the latter will emerge again and there will be no Liberation. Therefore, as against this the right position would be to say that Liberation consists in the simultaneous *abhāva* of all the *specific qualities* that do not coexist with the *prāgabhāvas* of such future *specific qualities*.

However, this cannot be justified from the Vaiśeṣika stand point, since in that case there would also follow the destruction of the Self, the substratum of those qualities, and their *prāgabhāvas*! For in practice it is seen that without annihilation of the substratum there cannot occur the disappearance of the *specific qualities* that do not coexist with the *prāgabhāvas* of such other future *specific qualities*. This would lead to the annihilation of the Self itself. Therefore the view held by the Vaiśeṣikas that, bondage is natural to the Self because of Its being the agent etc., is totally illogical.

11. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 1.3.4.

even while the substratum (Self) exists, Liberation may be justified on the ground of the cessation of (the qualities, viz happiness etc., of) those limiting adjuncts?

Reply: Well then, since it is admitted that a limiting adjunct (*upādhi*) is that which makes its own characteristics appear as subsisting in something else, therefore it follows that the limiting adjuncts such as the intellect etc. make their own characteristics appear as subsisting in the Self. Thus then, by admitting the unreality of bondage, you have come to the right point! Indeed, the redness that appears in a crystal owing to the proximity of a China rose is not real. So, bondage consists in the appearance of the Self—which is verily unassociated with all the characteristics of mundane existence—as being associated with those (characteristics) of the limiting adjuncts.

On the other hand, Liberation consists in the spontaneous absoluteness of the Self which is full in the form of self-effulgent supreme Bliss, and is pure on account of Its freedom from being coloured by all the objects illumined (by It); this (freedom) follows from the cessation of all errors, as a result of the eradication of ignorance about the Self and its effects, viz the limiting adjuncts such as the intellect etc.; (and) this (again) is a consequence of the realization of the true nature of the Self. Thus this is not open to the objection that bondage and Liberation are related to different substrata.¹² Hence the view that the dispute is only about the name is refuted, since the 'illumined' and the 'illuminator' cannot be

the same. For, in consonance with the inference, 'The sorrowful one (viz the insentient principle called "I") is revealed by another principle that is different from it, because it is an object that needs to be revealed like a pot', it is not seen that an object that needs to be illumined can be the illuminator (of itself). If the same principle be the object needing illumination and the illuminator (of itself), then there arises the contradiction of the same principle being the subject and the object!

Objection: What about the case of the Self?¹³

Reply: No, (this doubt cannot arise) for it is admitted by us that the Self is only an illuminator. Being the revealer of the sense of 'I' associated with the modifications of the mind in the form, 'I am sorrowful', etc., the Self never comes under the category of being an object of revelation. Hence, even the inference, 'The sorrowful one (viz the insentient principle called "I") is not dependent on a "revealer" different from itself, since it is an "illuminator" like a lamp', does not hold good,¹⁴ because that inference is nullified by the fact that whatever is 'revealed' requires something different from itself as the 'revealer'. And (according to you) does

12. The *opponent's* standpoint was that bondage consists in the intellect being the enjoyer and the agent, whereas Liberation comes to the Self. The answer is: Bondage in the form of error, and Liberation in the form of Self-revelation through the eradication of error, both concern the Self.

13. 'The Self, according to you, reveals Itself and also reveals other things. Hence It becomes both the "revealer" and the "revealed".'

14. According to the *opponent*, in such experiences as, 'I am sorrowful', the Self indicated by the word 'I' is an object of experience. Thus It becomes revealed by subjective experiences. And so this very Self, being by nature Consciousness, becomes Its own revealer. Hence the same Self is both the revealer and the revealed. The *answer* to this is: The 'I' referred to is not the Self, but it is the ego associated with sorrow etc. So, even if this ego which is a modification of the mind be an object of revelation, the Self is not so.

(the 'I') being a 'revealer' mean its 'being an instrument of revelation', or its 'being a revelation that is self-effulgent'? If the first meaning is accepted, then, although the 'sorrowful one' (viz 'I') does not stand in need of another aid as does a lamp (to be a 'revealer' of other objects), the fact that it requires something other than itself to reveal it does not become contradicted. Otherwise there arises the contingency of the illustration being contrary to what is sought to be established.¹⁵ But as regards the second point, the *hetu* (ground of inference) (viz 'being a "revealer"') remains unestablished (for, 'the sorrowful one', viz 'I', being a modification of the intellect, is not a 'revealer' but the 'revealed'. The revealer is the self-effulgent conscious Self alone). Thus the *hetu* that the 'sorrowful one' is an object of revelation is more powerful, and hence comes out victorious.

Objection: May it not be argued that since any 'consciousness' other than the modification of the intellect is not admitted, therefore the intellect itself is identical with consciousness?

Reply: Not so. Since Consciousness pervades all space and time, and is devoid of any distinguishing characteristics, there is no possibility of this one all-pervasive and eternal Entity becoming identical with the

modifications of the intellect, which are transient, limited and divergent; and (also) since the experience of origination, destruction, etc. (of Consciousness) can be even explained as pertaining to the association (of Consciousness) with objects that have to be imagined as a matter of necessity.¹⁶ Otherwise, if the origination, destruction, differences, etc. of those respective consciousnesses be imagined, then there will arise the fault of imagining too much (i.e., it will violate the law of parsimony). This is elaborated elsewhere (under verse 2.17). And in,

...for the vision of the Witness can never be lost, because It is immortal,¹⁷

...like space, It is all-pervasive and eternal,¹⁸

(this) great, endless, infinite Reality is but pure Intelligence,¹⁹

and,

That Brahman is without prior or posterior, without interior or exterior. This self, the perceiver of everything, is Brahman, etc.,²⁰

the Śruti shows that the Self is by nature omnipresent, eternal, self-effulgent and Consciousness. By this is established the difference (of Consciousness) even from the limiting adjunct called ignorance. Hence, since Liberation follows when as the result of the knowledge of the true Self the error of

(Continued on page 131)

15. What is sought to be established (*Sādhya* or major term) is the absence of dependence on some 'revealer' other than itself, whereas in the example, viz the lamp, there is no such absence. It stands in need of some 'revealer' other than itself. Although the lamp does not require any other aid for revealing a pot etc., still for its own revelation it needs a 'consciousness' different from it. Similarly, though the 'sorrowful one' is an instrument for revealing objects, still for its own revelation it depends on a consciousness other than itself.

16. Association of the Self with objects, which is created by nescience, has to be imagined perforce. For unless such an imaginary association is admitted, objects cannot be revealed by It.

17. *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.3.23.

18. *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad*, 2.1.3.

19. *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.12.

20. *Ibid.*, 2.5.19.

The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna

PROF. V. GOPINATH

Drink Ambrosia, Nectar Divine,
Read the 'GOSPEL', Salvation-wine!
Hark! the tales that the GOSPEL tells,
Thrill the body and mind as well !
Reading the GOSPEL helps one cross
The vain Saṁsāra, Coarse and Gross!
How many the souls have crossed this sea,
The GOSPEL served well—as barge, you see!
'If you worship "Me" with devotion,
(said "He") you will cross the ocean!'
True, if we will but chant His name,
All our sins will fly whence they came:
Never will they come back and trouble again,
And pester us in life with loss or gain.
Hold thou His feet with all thy might
To merge in His divinity by thy birthright !



Madhusudana Saraswati on the Bhagavad-Gita

(Continued from page 130)

bondage caused by false limiting adjuncts ceases, therefore everything stands clarified.

By the address, '*Puruṣarṣabha*, (lit) O foremost among men', the Lord indicates: You are the *puruṣa* in your nature as the self-effulgent Consciousness, and you are a *ṛṣabha*, the supreme, in relation to all duality, since the Self is supreme Bliss by nature. You are lamenting without knowing this. Therefore the removal of your sorrow can be easi-

ly brought about only through the knowledge of your true nature; for the Śruti says, '...a knower of the Self goes beyond sorrow.'²¹

The Sāṁkhya view is refuted here by the use of the word *puruṣa* in the singular number, because they admit a plurality of *puruṣas*.

21. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 7.1.3.



"Perfection can be had by everybody, and what is the proof ? Because we see the holiest of men in all countries, good men and women everywhere, whether born in our faith or not. Therefore it cannot be held that ours is the only way to salvation."

—*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 8, p. 210.

Valedictory Speech by Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma

PRESIDENT OF INDIA

The President, speaking on 19 September 1993 at the Netaji Indoor Stadium, reviews the relevance of Swami Vivekananda's teachings which are capable of resolving India's vexing problems of religious conflicts, poverty, education of the masses and backwardness of women.

May I say how glad I am to be with you on this important occasion.

I have always looked forward to visiting Bengal and the great metropolis that is Calcutta. Here one breathes in the ambience of the lofty spiritual and intellectual traditions of Bengal, the heritage of art, literature and culture, the enlightened endeavours towards social reform, the heroism and sacrifice during our struggle for freedom, and the resolute advance of the masses manifesting the power of the people in practical tasks of nation-building.

I thank the Ramakrishna Mission for associating me with this Conference.

The vision of Swami Vivekananda has been the subject matter of your deliberations over the last eight days or so, involving a wide range of distinguished scholars and thinkers from India as well as from overseas. I have pleasure in extending my greetings to all the participants, and in expressing my sincere appreciation of their learned contributions.

Friends, right from the time when I was

a student, I have been deeply moved by the luminance of Swami Vivekananda as reflected by records of his addresses, his letters, prose and poetic writings, his conversations with people, and by words about him by the greatest amongst our national leaders. Bapu (Gandhi) had visited Belur Math on 6 February 1921, the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. He was accompanied by Pandit Motilal Nehru and Maulana Mohammad Ali. Bapu had said:

I have come here to pay my homage and respect to the revered memory of Swami Vivekananda . . . I have gone through his works very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousandfold.

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, with whom Swami Vivekananda had stayed in Pune for ten days, had been struck by the radiant wisdom and learning of his young guest whose profound spirituality made a great impression on him. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had said:

If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him every thing is positive . . .

Vivekananda's gospel marked the awakening of man in his fullness, and that is why it inspired our youth to the diverse courses of liberation through work and sacrifice.

I would like to recall here Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's perceptions about Swami Vivekananda as these bear special interest. He had said:

I was not a child when he passed away. But I could not see him as I studied in Europe in those days. But whatever he has spoken or written I have read . . . I would say you must read them, and having read, you must analyse them in your mind . . . He had a flame in each of his words . . . there was fire in his heart—the fire of a great personality . . . putting his heart and soul into the words he uttered . . . many of my generation were very powerfully influenced by him . . . He was, I think, one of the great founders of the national modern movement of India, and a great number of people who took more or less active part in that movement drew their inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Directly or indirectly he has powerfully influenced the India of today. And I think the younger generation will take advantage of this fountain of wisdom, of spirit and fire, that flows through Swami Vivekananda.

The theme of your Conference has been the commemoration of the Chicago Addresses of Swami Vivekananda during the Parliament of Religions in September 1893. His participation in that congregation should be seen in the much larger context of what he had set out to do in the aggregate. He had in mind the initiation of an integrated plan of action involving determined endeavour to effect radical and positive change in a number of inter-connected areas concerning the human condition in totality. Towards this paramount task, a tremendous sense of purpose and of energy flared from within him. He had exclaimed: 'I feel a mighty power! It

is as if I were about to blaze forth. There are so many powers in me! It seems to me as if I could revolutionize the world.'

At Chicago, in the Parliament of Religions, we know, the world knows, that the impact of his personality, the scintillating brilliance and beauty of his expositions enthralled his audience, and word travelled far and wide over the telegraph and newspapers in the Western world about his sensational contribution. Amongst others in that historic assembly listening in rapt attention to Swami Vivekananda was Dr. Annie Besant. Dr. Besant wrote about the experience thus:

Enraptured, the huge multitude hung upon his words; not a syllable must be lost, not a cadence missed! . . . said one, as he came out of the great hall, 'and we send missionaries to his people! It could be more fitting that they should send missionaries to us.'

In his address, Swami Vivekananda had articulated the ancient wisdom and insights of India, the time-honoured philosophy of oneness and harmony within pluralism, the recognition of, respect for, and acceptance of different paths of logical and intuitive access to Absolute Truth. He had quoted the famous sloka from the *R̥g Veda*: '*Ekam Sat, Truth is one, viprā bahudhā vadanti*, the learned may describe it variously.' He had quoted the profound perception expressed in a verse from the *Sandhyāvandana Mantras* (*Taittirīya Mantrakośāḥ*, Part II, p. 60; Also *Mahābhārata*, Critical Edition, 13.639):

*Ākāśātpatitam toyam yathā gacchati
sāgaram
sarvadevanamaskāraḥ keśavam prati-
gacchati.*

As rainwater falling from the sky eventually reaches the sea, so O Lord, the worship of the different Gods all lead to Thee.

He cited the explicit authority in the eleventh verse in Chapter IV of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*:

*Ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmstathaiva
bhajāmyaham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha
sarvaśaḥ*

In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I fulfil their desires: (it is) My path, O son of Prthā, (that) men tread in all ways.

Proudly he had proclaimed: 'We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true.' It is this spirit that is expressed in the philosophies of our seers, in the devotional songs and the prayers of our common people, for centuries past. This outlook has enabled India to become the home and the refuge of all the great religions of the world respected by the broad mass of her people. Swami Vivekananda had also come out strongly against sectarianism, bigotry and fanaticism, and had registered the hope that these narrow, futile and erroneous tendencies would disappear.

foretold the maxims 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace, and not Dissension', as the eventual hallmarks of every religious community.

I feel Swami Vivekananda's words concerning the inner oneness of doctrine of all religions should fully be comprehended by each one of us. Indeed, the identity of thought, the oneness in ethical and moral codes of different religions need to be explained, understood and absorbed. Every religion, for example, stresses the importance of Service. There is a dictum:

*Sarvaśāstrapurāṇeṣu vyāsasya vacanam
dhruvam
paropakāraṣu puṇyāya pāpāya
parapīdanam*

Amidst all scriptures and Purāṇas, know this statement of Vyāsa to be true: that doing good to others conduces to merit, and doing harm to them leads to sin.

Compare this with the Christian injunction: 'Know thou that in the Service of thy fellow

... I have been deeply moved by the luminance of Swami Vivekananda ...
his addresses, his lectures. ...

Every word of his exposition needs to be recalled by us and pondered over. In subsequent addresses—on 15 September 1893, he explained the causes of narrowness, and in the truly profound address of 19 September he explained many salient features ... of the Vedic and Vedantic body of thought, and defined the characteristics of a religion 'whose whole scope, whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true ... nature.' On 26 September 1893 he provided a masterly exposition concerning the connexion between Buddhism and Brahminism. On 27 September he

men do thou serveth me', and the Islamic warning: 'Not mere professing of the faith, but good works and service of fellow men is true prayer.'

There are innumerable such illustrations that could and should be compiled to foster understanding of the mutuality of apparently different religions.

In a poem written on 4 September 1893, a week before the Chicago Parliament, Swami Vivekananda had sung:

*Thou wert my God with prophets old
All creeds do come from thee;
The Vedas, Bible, and Koran bold
Sing Thee in harmony.*

His effort constantly was to draw attention to the unifying, harmonizing virtue in the religious thought of all the great persuasions. He said:

My idea is first of all to bring out the gems of spirituality that are stored up in our books, and in the possession of a few only, hidden as it were,—to bring them out; to bring the knowledge out of them . . . In one word I want to make them popular. I want to bring out these ideas and let them be the common property of all.

At the same time, he stressed the essential aspect of religion as he saw it. He said: 'Religion is neither word nor doctrine . . . It is deed. It is to be and become. It is the whole soul changed into that which is believed . . .'

In my view Swami Vivekananda was greater than just a visionary idealist steeped

metaphysics. We need a religion which will give us faith in ourselves, a national self-respect, and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around . . . We have to give back to the nation its lost individuality and raise the masses.

Forcefully, inspiringly, he used to say, 'Arise, awake, sleep no more; stop not till the goal is reached. Within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and miseries. Believe this, and that power will be manifested.' Often he would quote the popular Sikh saying:

*Savā lākh par ek chadhāoo,
jaya guru govinda nām sunao*

(Uttering the words, 'Victory to Guru Govind', I can take on twenty five thousand enemies.)

A remarkably modernistic appreciation of the true nature of education and its urgent need in India was also consistently expounded by Swami Vivekananda. 'Educate, educate! *Nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya*—than this there is no other way'—

'. . . and we send missionaries to his people !
It could be more fitting that they should send missionaries to us.'

in religion of the scriptural form. His whole approach was of one dedicated to building a new world, attending to its most vexatious problems, providing solutions of a feasible, workable form. He was acutely conscious of the enormous scale of poverty, backwardness and disease in India, the abject sense of inferiority amongst the people, the shameful station assigned to women, and the need therefore to organize wide-ranging effort to surmount these problems. He once said:

It is an insult to a starving man to teach him

he exclaimed. 'A nation is advanced,' he said, 'in proportion as education and intelligence spread amongst the masses.' He provided remarkably clear and meaningful definitions of education:

What is education? Is it book-learning? No, is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education.

On another occasion he stated:

We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.'

The practical, realistic approach is again expressed in the answer he gave once to a

issue.

As we look around our country and within, what is it that we see? The world is moving forward. A subtle but significant shift is underway in the relations between nations and peoples. Powerful factors of

'The uplift of the women, the awakening of the masses, must come first and then only can any real good come about for the country, for India.'

question on educational needs in India. He stressed:

We need to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own, (and) with it the English language, and Western science; we need technical education and all else which may develop industries, so that men instead of seeking service may earn enough.

But that these statements have been carefully authenticated and documented, it would amaze not a few that these were made about a century ago, and that too by a *sannyāsi*.

Swami Vivekananda's advocacy of the uplift of women and the abolition of casteism is also equally noteworthy. 'The uplift of the women, the awaking of the masses, must come first and then only can any real good come about for the country, for India.' '*Yatra nāryastu pūjyante ramante tatra devatāḥ*,' he would quote—'The enlightened are pleased where women are held in esteem.'

Friends, any objective review of the towering spiritual, intellectual and pragmatic thinking of Swami Vivekananda would evoke an assessment of conditions obtaining in our own time today, our major problems and prospects, and the direct relevance of Swami Vivekananda's teachings towards the solution of many a vexing

growth and re-organization and change are being manifested. Asia is resurgent and a new balance is being adjusted as between the West, the continent of Europe, Asia and Africa. India too must organize herself to surge forward true to her potential. We cannot afford to be caught in a quagmire of antediluvian attitudes mainly arising from narrow thinking and failure to appreciate the advantages of unity and harmony.

Among our major problems is that of communal-mindedness. This acts like a powerful poison wherever it is, vitiating the atmosphere, constraining potential for progress, feeding and perpetuating many other ills.

The communal outlook is not supported by the doctrine and tenets of any religion. In fact every religion truly serves the cause of oneness, harmony, understanding and cooperation. The communal outlook helps none in our country—not even those who for any misguided purpose may seek to derive advantages to themselves from it. Communalism is the bane of our country, and a boon only to forces inimical to India, inimical to human progress. We must realize that this is one problem which is essentially in the hands of the people of our country and its leaders to solve. The eradication of communalism can be achieved by our fortifying our minds against communal

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What Swami Vivekananda Means to Me

What Swami Vivekananda means to me is that without him, I would not have found Vedanta. He left behind him a web that spans all over the world and I have been fortunate enough to have been caught in that web.

Initially I was attracted to the biographies of the direct disciples [of Sri Ramakrishna] and readings of the Four Yogas [which] provided me with my first glimpse of the brilliance of Swamiji's writings. As I have read Swamiji over the years, I have been awestruck by his ability to speak about *māyā*, its intricacies and how to escape it, by his grasp of English, by his humour, by his compassion and by his capacity to live and be each of the yogas.

His lectures have given my mind the intellectual fodder to be fully convinced of the truth and practicality of Vedanta. When he says that this is *māyā*—that it is only a vain pursuit of happiness we seek in the external world, I am compelled to believe him. His exposition leaves no room for doubt. Fortunately he did not stop there and so each time I read about his life I am inspired to attempt the life he exhorted us to pursue.

There seem to be levels of greatness—those who are at the first level remind us of how small *we* are. But there are those at a level higher than that—those with whom greatness seems so natural, and they are so humble and embracing that they draw us into believing we can also be great. Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother are that greatness and Swamiji embodies it. I can only be grateful to him for making it possible, through his coming to America, for me to direct my struggle toward the highest goal.

David Leventer

From *What Swami Vivekananda Means to Me*
The Vedanta Society, Portland, Oregon, USA

Parliament of the World's Religions

(Chicago, August 28—September 4, 1993)

Though we published in November (1993) a report on this event, the following one adds a number of interesting features.

More than six thousand people attended the Parliament of the World's Religions which was held in Chicago for eight days, from August 28 to September 4, 1993 to commemorate the Centenary of the original Parliament of 1893. The Palmer House Hilton Hotel was the headquarters of the Parliament and several hundred religious and spiritual leaders representing the world's diverse faiths participated in more than seven hundred different presentations—lectures, panels, workshops, symposia and cultural programmes. The Ramakrishna Order was represented at the Parliament by Swami Gahanananda, Vice-President of the Order. Other Swamis who participated were: Swami Pramathananda, Swami Swahananda, Swami Adiswarananda, Swami Tathagatananda, Swami Chidbhasananda, Swami Chidananda, Swami Prapannananda, Swami Shantarupananda, and Swami Varadananda.

The Parliament began on Saturday, August 28th with an Opening Ceremony in the Grand Ballroom of the hotel. Our Swamis were given a place at the front of the procession of religious leaders, and were seated in the first row of the large hall. Swami Gahanananda was seated on the stage with other religious leaders and gave a message of blessings for the Parliament. Later, at the first Plenary Session, he addressed the audience on the theme of 'Interfaith Understanding'. Our Order gave two major presentations: August 31st on 'Swami Vivekananda's Message to the West', and September 1st on 'Swami Vivekananda—

The Awakener to Service of God in Man'. At the start of the second programme, the Swamis were welcomed by the Executive Director of the Parliament, Dr. Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, who spoke in glowing terms of Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Order. At these programmes Swami Gahanananda and the Swamis spoke to large and appreciative audiences. On Sunday, August 29th the Swamis participated in a Symposium at the Vivekananda Vedanta Society on 'The Vision of Swami Vivekananda'.

As part of the Parliament, there was held an 'Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders' consisting of over 200 distinguished religious leaders who met for three days at the Art Institute of Chicago, where the original Parliament of Religions was held in 1893. Swami Gahanananda and Swami Adiswarananda represented the Order in this Assembly. At the conclusion of their deliberations, the Assembly declared its commitment to interreligious understanding and cooperation which the world is so much in need of today. The Parliament concluded with a celebration and ceremony on 4th September in Chicago's Grant Park. Musical artists performed and representatives of the world's religions spoke of the common spiritual ground that unites all people.

It is wonderful to think that a century after proclaiming his universal message of Vedanta at the original Parliament of Religions, Swami Vivekananda continues to inspire people of all faiths. Thousands came

together in 1993 to pay homage to the great Swami and to declare with him the spiritual unity of humankind and the harmony of religions. The name of Swami Vivekananda was often mentioned with great respect and appreciation by the participants in the Parliament. On August 30th, the religion editor of *The New York Times* wrote about the Parliament and included with his article a

picture of our Swamis seated at the Opening Ceremony of the Parliament. In his article, he wrote: "The star of the 1893 assembly was Swami Vivekananda, a 30-year-old spokesman for Hinduism. "Do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches, or temples," he preached. "They count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man which is spirituality.""



Valedictory Speech by Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma

(Continued from page 136)

thought, word and deed and by our being determined to resist and to overcome such elements as may persist in pressing communal-mindedness on us.

If India is to grow to her full potential as a strong, united, prosperous nation, a nation attuned to the highest moral and ethical values, true to the genius of her cultural and spiritual heritage, we shall all have to strive each day to build harmony, justice and creative endeavour. Indeed, in a very real way, it is our duty so to strive.

The youth of our country must be in the vanguard of this mission. Let us recall the stirring words of Swami Vivekananda in Calcutta on his return from America:

Be strong . . . and everything else will follow . . . you have to do the task. If I die tomorrow the work will not die. There will be thousands coming up to take up the work and carry it further and further . . . I have faith in my country, and especially in the youth of my country . . . from the youth of Bengal will come the power which will raise India once more to her proper spiritual place.

Friends, I thank you once again for having invited me to be with you today.

I pay my respectful homage to the immortal memory of Swami Vivekananda.

Jai Hind.



"In the winter sometimes a thunder-cloud comes up; it roars and roars, but it does not rain; but in the rainy season the clouds speak not, but deluge the world with water." So those who are *really* workers, and *really* feel at heart the universal brotherhood of man, do not talk much, do not make little sects for universal brotherhood; but their acts, their movements, their whole life, show out clearly that they in truth possess the feeling of brotherhood for mankind, that they have love and sympathy for all. They do not speak, they *do* and they *live*. This world is too full of blustering talk. We want a little more earnest work, and less talk.

—*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 2, p. 380.

After the Parliament of Religions, What?

*Response of the Ramakrishna Order
in the Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders*

As part of the Parliament, an Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders was held for three days at the Art Institute of Chicago, the site of the 1893 Parliament. Four important questions had been chosen for the Assembly to consider. Swami Gahanananda, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and Swami Adiswarananda, spiritual leader of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York, put forth the views of the Ramakrishna Order on those questions.

Question 1: *Can the world's religious and spiritual leaders come to some agreement about ways to continue inter-religious collaboration for peace, the relief of suffering, and the preservation of the planet?*

Answer to Question 1: Yes, it is possible. All the world's religions teach truth, universal love, non-violence and peace, and the necessity of providing for the well-being of mankind. As Swami Vivekananda declared, 'Holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and . . . every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.' All religions also agree on one central point and that is that the goal of life is the realization of God, even though there may be differences in the way in which realization is understood by different religions. Therefore, hypothetically there should not be any difficulty on the part of the world's religious and spiritual leaders to accept and declare all religions as true, as paths to the same goal, regardless of the name used to describe the ultimate Reality, such as Brahman (Atman), God, Allah or Jehovah. This declaration of the truth and distinctiveness of every religion would in itself further the cause of peace and well-being for the people of all nations and religions by removing

much of the prejudice, hatred and misunderstandings that exist between followers of different religions. Religious and spiritual leaders should continue 'inter-religious collaboration for peace, the relief of suffering, and the preservation of the planet', accepting the principle of *unity in diversity*, without any discrimination of country, creed or nationality.

Harmony between religions, nations and cultures can be promoted by emphasizing not the differences that exist between them but the essential oneness underlying them. Swami Vivekananda said, 'Everything that makes for that oneness is truth. Love is truth, and hatred is false, because hatred makes for multiplicity. It is hatred that separates man from man; therefore it is wrong and false. . . . Love binds, love makes for that oneness. . . . For love is Existence, God Himself, and all this is the manifestation of that one Love, more or less expressed.'

Question 2: *What plan or common projects can members of the Assembly endorse and bring to their own communities and to their nations' leaders?*

Answer to Question 2: Swami Vivekananda said, 'Nothing makes us so cruel as religion,

and nothing makes us so tender as religion.' And in another place he said, 'The intensest love that humanity has ever known has come from religion, and the most diabolical hatred that humanity has known has also come from religion.' Religious intolerance, which is one of the causes of violence in the world, is often caused by ignorance about the teachings of other religions. On the other hand, by emphasizing the fundamental principles on which all religions stand, principles such as purity, selflessness, oneness with all beings and charity, religion becomes a powerful force for peace, understanding and cooperation in the world. Therefore, the recognition of the underlying unity of all religions is of paramount importance. Commenting on the universal nature of religion as he envisaged it, Swami Vivekananda declared at the World's Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893: '... if there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahminic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for every human being. . . .' The watchword for such a universal religious understanding will be *acceptance and not exclusion*, based on the principle of unity in variety. The acceptance of the universal nature of religion does not mean that anybody will have to change his religion or that religions will have to give up their unique characteristics. Rather, it means that each religion will retain its own distinctive nature and yet accept the fundamental truths embodied in other religions, and that the followers of different religions will embrace with whole-hearted adoration the principles, ceremonials and prophets of their own religion and yet cherish in their

hearts the special-characteristics of other religions too.

Programmes for educating the followers of all religions, as well as the public at large, as to the common principles underlying all religions can be undertaken by the following:

- (i) Publishing suitable religious literature containing the universal messages of peace, love of mankind, non-violence, etc. as available in the scriptures of different world religions.
- (ii) Promoting understanding through inter-religious dialogues in their own places of worship.

The nations' leaders can be made conscious of the necessity for truth, peace, non-violence, etc. through powerful statements made to them by people thus educated by the religious and spiritual leaders.

Question 3: *Should the members of the Assembly take up the question of an ongoing 'Parliament of Religions', or Council of religious and spiritual leaders, as a network or organization devoted to finding solutions to the shared problems of the human community?*

Answer to Question 3: Yes, let us give it a try, first with a council acting in an advisory capacity and afterwards with a parliament if deemed necessary.

Question 4: *Can the members of the Assembly endorse statements such as the Parliament's Declaration of Global Ethics (in preparation), or similar statements?*

Answer to Question 4: Any Declaration of Global Ethics must include a statement of the central points or underlying principles on which all religions are in agreement, as discussed above. These central points are

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Swami Vivekananda's Call to a World in Chaos

J. P. VASWANI

The 'World Vision 2000 Global Conference' commemorating the centenary of the Chicago Parliament of Religions was held at the Capital Centre, Washington, D.C., from 6 to 8 August last year. The theme of the Conference was, 'Swami Vivekananda's Universal Vedantic Message'. Speaking on the 7th, Dada J.P. Vaswani, the leader of the Sadhu Vaswani Mission, makes an impassioned plea to people to return to God, to practise religious harmony, and to lovingly serve God who dwells in human beings and animals alike.

Swami Vivekananda! There is an inspiration in his name: There is a music in his memory!

He was a symbol of India's deathless culture which stands for the supremacy of the Ātman, the Spirit. In his hands he held a torch. On his lips was the live coal of inspiration. He thrilled those who heard him. He carried with himself a tremendous power of the Spirit. He was a man of fire. There was fire in his words, in his heart, and in his soul.

He appeared at a time when millions in Europe and America considered the Hindus to be heathens and condemned the Hindu religion as paganism. With the roar of a lion, Swami Vivekananda said to the Christians of America:

Hinduism is the only religion which tells you that you are not a sinner, that you are not doomed to burn eternally in the fires of hell. It is a sin to call man a sinner. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep. You are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal. You are not matter, you are not bodies. Matter is your servant, you are not the servants of matter.¹

When he was asked, 'Swamiji, have you come to America to convert us to a new belief?', he laughed as he answered:

I do not come to this country to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief. I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, a Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, a Unitarian a better Unitarian.

In the heart of Swami Vivekananda there was no sense of separateness. He recognized the great truths of world religions. In a lecture before the Ethical Society of Brooklyn he said:

We Hindus not only tolerate but we accept every religion, praying in the mosque of the Muslims, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling before the Cross of the Christians, knowing that so many religions are but so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite.

Swami Vivekananda understood the value of Islam and its message of social equality. He entered into the heart of the message of the Christ. Is it not also a message

1. While keeping to the spirit of Swami Vivekananda, the quotes are not always exact. Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete*

Works of, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989) Vol. I, pp. 11, 331 etc.

of spiritual *advaita*? 'I and my Father are one,' said Jesus. He also said, 'Ye are Gods!', and again, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect!' Alas! The Jews of his generation understood him not. Has the West understood him yet? No! To be able to understand Jesus, one must be imbued with the spirit of the East.

Above all, Vivekananda realized the value of Higher Hinduism. He called it Vedānta. He wished to make it a world-force.

Vivekananda said, 'With God, you can sail over the seas. Without God, you cannot cross over the threshold.' With God, Vivekananda crossed the continents and re-proclaimed the Wisdom of the *ṛṣis*. 'Arise! Awake! And stop not until the goal is reached!', was his trumpet-call to the Hindus. Also to India, Europe, and America.

Today man stands on a planet of limitless promise. Today man has reached a zenith of technological brilliance. Man's rockets go flying past the distant planets. He has been able to station satellites in space. Yet is he confused as to his own real being and purpose. He is faced with a terrible loneliness, and his heart is stirred by a thousand fears which he cannot name. Man boasts that he has been able to control the forces of nature. When will he learn to control himself? Today, wherever you turn, there is passion for power, the lust for fame, the greed of gold. Today there is the dance of desires. This dance of desires is the dance of death. And civilization has already begun to crumble beneath the burden of its own weight.

A new civilization is to be born. This new civilization must be built on something which is greater, nobler by far than mere secular socialism. Swami Vivekananda has been described as a socialist by some, by

others as a humanist. Yet, what he practised and taught cannot be called socialism or humanism. For, these two schools of thought do not uphold the oneness of all souls and the solidarity of man. Swami Vivekananda urged that everyone is divine, and that man must serve his fellow men beholding in them pictures of God, images of the Eternal. Swami Vivekananda gave a new mantra to humanity, '*Ātmano mokṣārtham jagad-hitāya ca*'. The words mean: 'For our own spiritual freedom and the welfare of the world'. These twin ideals must not be separated from each other, these twin ideals must go hand in hand.

One's own spiritual freedom. Swami Vivekananda said, 'Freedom is the watchword. Be free! A free body, a free mind and a free soul! That is what I have felt all my life. I would rather be doing evil freely than be doing good under bondage!' And there can be no true freedom without spirituality. As one grows in spirituality, he will grow in self-knowledge. As one grows in self-knowledge, he will unfold the tremendous powers of the Spirit, that lie locked up within him. Within every man are these tremendous powers of the Spirit, immense energies of the Eternal. They need to be released. Swami Vivekananda said, 'Power will come and glory will come, and goodness will come and purity will come as the sleeping soul awakes.'

Yes, power will come and glory will come, and goodness will come and purity will come when the sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity. But this power and glory are not meant to be kept for oneself alone. Power and glory must be spent in service of the surrounding world—in service of the less fortunate ones, the poor and broken ones, the forsaken and forlorn, the lowly and the lost, the unwanted and unloved, who cry in this world of travail and pain. To Swami Vivekananda, service of

man was worship of God. His was the religion of unity and love, of service and sacrifice. How true it is that religions are worth no more than straw if they do not teach man to love God and to serve the God-in-man. For within every man, howsoever poor he be, howsoever miserable, frustrated, defeated in life, there dwelleth God. Every man is a living tabernacle of God, a living, moving shrine, a living, moving temple of God. This is true Vedānta—that I behold myself in my brother. I and my brother are one! There is no separation. On one occasion Swami Vivekananda said, 'Love every man as your own self, and not as your brother as Christianity teaches. Brotherhood should be superseded by universal selfhood. Not universal brotherhood, but universal selfhood is our motto.'

This is true service—not service done as charity, not service done as *meharbāni* (kindness), but service as though I am doing it to my own self, service done as worship of God who dwells in all. And this day, as we are gathered together to offer the homage of our hearts to one of the greatest men of all time, let us move one step forward. Vedānta teaches that there is but one life in all. This one life sleeps in the mineral and the stone, this one life stirs in the vegetable and the plant, this one life dreams in the animal and wakes up in man. Creation is one family, and in this one family of creation, birds and animals are man's younger brothers and sisters. It is the duty, the responsibility of man to give the love of his heart to his younger brothers and sisters, to guard them, to protect them against the cruel knife of the butcher. Oh, the sin of daily slaughter in our soulless cities! Some of you may regard me as a fanatic, but believe me, the day is coming, sure as the sun rises in the East, when

meat-eating will be condemned. . . . The time is come when we must decide, once for all, that all types of exploitation must cease. We must recognize the moral inviolability of the individual—both human and non-human. Just as the black people do not exist as resources for the whites, just as women do not exist as resources for men, even so animals do not exist as resources for human beings. All types of human tyranny must cease if we are to have peace on earth.

Today we hear so much talk of animal welfare. Animal welfare is not the answer: we must have animal rights. Men have their rights: do animals have no rights? Men have their rights: do they not have their duties, responsibilities towards the animal kingdom? I believe the time is come when we must get together and formulate a charter of animal rights and a charter of man's duties towards the animals. And the very first fundamental right of an animal is the right to live. No man can take away that which he cannot give. And as we cannot give life to a dead creature, we have no right to take away the life of a living one.

Let me close with the very words with which Swami Vivekananda closed the chapter of his life on earth. A little before he passed away Swami Vivekananda said: 'It may be, that I shall find it good to get outside my body—to cast it off like a worn-out garment. But I shall not cease from working. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God.' May these words continue to ring in the hearts of some of us like a temple bell: 'I shall not cease from working. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God! *Uttiṣṭhata! Jāgrata!*—Arise! Awake! and stop not until the goal is reached!'



The Modern Indian Idealism of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

DR. C. P. VILASINI

The writer in her paper discusses the spiritualistic idealism of Dr. Radhakrishnan, which holds that the world-process is progressing towards the spiritual ideal. Dr. Vilasini is a post-doctoral research fellow at Calicut University, Kerala.

The philosophical basis of Radhakrishnan's concept of religion has been a form of idealism. As such, it is highly desirable at this juncture of time to look into some of the general features of idealism as it appeared in the history of Philosophy, in order to identify the kind of idealism which we find in the works of Radhakrishnan.

Idealism has been one of the dominant philosophies of the West for many centuries. One of the most important distinguishing characteristics of idealism consists in its interpretation of reality in terms of idea or spirit. The idealists regard philosophy as complementary to science, since it enables man to attain the kind of knowledge which science does not. They strongly hold the view that mind and spiritual values are the fundamental categories of reality. Thus in its metaphysical sense idealism is a theory which explains reality as essentially spiritual and its epistemology is based upon the assumption that the objects of knowledge are not independent of the knowing mind. Different systems of idealistic philosophy have been developed by a number of philosophers from Plato down to the present times. Similarly most of the philosophical systems developed in India have been idealistic in nature. As a result the term idealism is used in a number of different senses. Thus philosophers like Plato, Berkeley, Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Lotze, T.H. Green, Bradley, McTaggart and Gentile in the West, and a number of Indian

thinkers including Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Mādhva, though all differ among themselves, can reasonably be described as idealists. Idealism is similar to the theistic religions in the sense that it regards the material world as somehow inferior to, or less real than, the world of mind or Spirit or God. But although idealists seek to establish a view of the world that lays foundation for a spiritual and rational religion, they are not at all bound to believe in a personal God or to practise any form of religion.

Although idealism has been regarded as the greatest single philosophical trend found both in the West and in the East, it is extremely difficult to give a precise definition of it. The first difficulty is that it is a movement which has undergone a number of modifications and alterations during its life of several centuries. Secondly, it has assumed various forms which often appeared to be conflicting with and contradictory to one another. Thus, at times it has been understood either as a purely epistemological doctrine while at other times as a metaphysical or axiological one. While in epistemology it is opposed to realism, in ontology and axiology it is opposed to materialism and naturalism respectively. The varying perspectives of the large number of idealists make it difficult for one to ascertain a fixed connotation of the term. At times the study of idealism with its various formulations may even appear to be quite confusing. However, we

may not be far from truth if we look upon idealism as originating from certain epistemological considerations, passing into ontology and culminating finally in axiology. Since this type of thinking in the West had its beginning with Plato, the whole Western idealism is often identified with the term Platonic tradition. The Western idealism which passed through the hands of Platonists like Aristotle and Plotinus gradually spread over to Germany and later Hegel became the pivot of the movement. Subsequently, Hegel's systems were followed by various forms of Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian systems of thought.

Etymologically, the term Idealism has its roots in ideas or ideals. Since our ideas of the world are mental, and if reality is understood only in terms of ideas, it must depend upon some mind, finite or infinite. If the ideas are explained in terms of finite mind it gives rise to what is known as Subjective Idealism, and if they are explained in terms of the Infinite Mind, the Absolute, or God, it leads to some form of Objective Idealism. However, in both cases reality is conceived as something of the nature of the Idea, Spirit, or Mind. Baldwin therefore defines idealism as 'a theory which maintains the universe to be throughout the work and embodiment of reason and mind.'¹ Similarly, G.W Cunningham states: 'Idealism is that philosophical doctrine which undertakes to show that, in order to think [of] matter or the spatio-temporal order of events in its ultimate nature, we are logically compelled to think mind or spirit along with it as in some sense foundational to it.'²

According to Prof. MacKenzie, idealism is rather a tendency than a fixed theory. This tendency seems to originate most probably from a sense of dissatisfaction with the world as it is presented to us. For, as Calderwood points out, the idealists try to interpret the universe in terms of some ideal scheme, that is, in terms of perfection.³ Thus Plato's system may be seen as a Philosophy of Ideals. His ideas are nothing but the standards or ideals for the objects of the senses. Thus, the idea of horse is the ideal horse and the idea of man is the ideal man, and these ideals alone are the realities, in terms of which the actual horse or man is to be understood. According to Plato, these ideas are not just the figments of imagination or unrealizable hopes, but are truly real sources of the phenomenal world. Thus the ideal plays a decisive part in idealism as a metaphysical theory.

Although idealism begins with certain epistemological considerations, its focus of attention is from the idea to the ideal and as a result, the 'epistemological' idealism ultimately leads to the metaphysical idealism or absolutism. In Plato's Philosophy it can be noted that both the terms 'Idea' and 'Ideal' have played their parts and have rather merged into one another. Hence according to Plato, Reality consists of an organized realm of Ideas forming a hierarchy, having the Idea of Good at the apex. But these ideas are also at the same time the *ideals* of things. Ever since Plato, idealism expressed itself in the West in many ways and forms which include the Subjective Idealism (Berkeley), Pluralistic Idealism (Leibnitz), Transcendental

1. Ripusudan Prasad Srivastava, *Contemporary Indian Idealism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973) p. 6.

2. G.H. Cunningham, *The Idealistic Argument in Recent British and American Philosophy* (New York: Appleton Century Co., 1933) p. 339. See also: Patrick, *Introduction To Philosophy*

(p. vii): 'Just as materialism considers the universe as grounded and rooted in matter or in physical energy, so idealism considers it as grounded in mind.'

3. P.T. Raju, *Idealistic Thought of India* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953) p. 41.

Idealism (Kant), Voluntaristic Idealism (Schopenhauer), and Objective Idealism, which began from J. G. Fichte and culminated in Hegel and Neo-Hegelians.

Perhaps it is the system of Hegel which gave the most coherent formulation of absolute idealism. According to him the Absolute which is immanent and dynamic, ultimately transcends the dualism between ego and non-ego or mind and matter, since they are nothing but the manifestations of the same reality. Hegel's philosophy is a search for unity and affirms that the mind can grasp the total structure of the universe. For him, the reality itself is a rational process. Hegel conceived the Absolute as an active dynamic spiritual principle which must grow, act and develop. Consequently, the Absolute Idealism of Hegel expresses itself as a form of monistic philosophy since it postulates a single reality as the source and foundation of everything.

F. H. Bradley presents us with another important form of idealism. He describes reality as one all-inclusive spiritual system. The Absolute according to Bradley is to be felt, experienced and realized, and not simply known by the intellect. Bradley was fully convinced that the Reality is spiritual.⁴ The degrees of truth and reality, therefore, depend upon the spiritual essence in the phenomena.⁵ Pure spirit is realized only in the Absolute which can never appear as such among the appearances. It is a unity of the manifold in which the externality of the manifold has utterly ceased.⁶ Hence the spirit is described by Bradley as 'absolute life' or 'absolute experience'. This kind of an approach enabled Bradley to establish the immediacy characterizing the Absolute as

well as to overcome the externality of the manifold.

Hegel and Bradley were followed by a number of modern idealists, among whom T. H. Green, Edward Caird, A. E. Taylor, J. M. E. McTaggart and Josiah Royce are some of the important figures. All of them share the view that the reality is essentially spiritual, rational and intelligible to human mind. They uphold its organic unity and moral significance. Man has been viewed as essentially a self or person who is organically related to other selves as well as the Absolute.

It is in the light of the above mentioned central ideas of the idealist tradition that we may identify Radhakrishnan's view of reality as a form of idealism. It appears that his basic philosophical position is the synthesis of *Advaita Vedānta* and the Philosophy of Absolute Idealism. Grounding himself in the *advaita* tradition of *Vedānta* Philosophy, he tried to absorb all that was found valuable in idealism in order to formulate his own view of reality. Consequently, Radhakrishnan adopted a form of monistic idealism which regards reality as essentially spiritual. He was fully convinced that there is a spiritual ideal towards which the entire world-process is progressing. Thus, his philosophy turns out to be an expression of his attempt to illustrate the ultimate nature of the universe as spiritual, and that unless the spiritual sense is awakened, there is no hope for man to save himself from the chaotic life of evil and sufferings. His emphasis upon the ultimate spirituality of everything is so strong that at times Radhakrishnan appears to be a mystic. But this mysticism is quite legitimate in the sense that a certain amount of trans-rational elements becomes unavoidable in the context of an idealistic philosophy of the monistic variety.

4. F.H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1908) p. 489.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 489.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 441.

Radhakrishnan defines idealism as a system of philosophy that concerns the ultimate nature of reality in relation to the knowing mind. It is an answer, he elaborates, 'to the problem of the idea, the meaning and purpose of it all. It has nothing in common with the view that makes reality an irrational blind striving or an irremediably miserable blunder.'⁷ The greatest merit of idealism according to him, is that it finds life significant and purposeful, and endows man with a destiny that is not limited to the sensible world.⁸ However, he rightly points out the fact that idealism can be interpreted in various different ways and sometimes even realists may appear to agree with the principal tenets of an idealist.⁹ He is convinced of the fact that it is the idealism and the spiritual character of Indian thought which are the dominant features of India's rich cultural history.¹⁰ Naturally therefore, wherever Radhakrishnan finds a materialistic trend in Indian philosophy, he seeks to find an explanation for it from his idealistic standpoint.

As a convinced idealist, Radhakrishnan finds himself in full agreement with Hegel as he tells us: 'In a sense, as Hegel said, all philosophy is idealistic. In contrasting appearance and reality, fact and truth, existence and essence it is led to admit an ideal world beyond the phenomenal. Even absolute materialism is idealism, though of a crude kind, for the matter to which all existence is reduced is not concrete reality but an abstract idea.'¹¹ We are further told

that 'if we are not carried away by the noise of the controversy among the philosophical sects, but watch the deeper currents which are shaping them, we seem to find a strong tendency to insist on the insights of idealism, though of course, the language and the style are different.'¹²

Hence it can be seen that though Radhakrishnan formulates his own version of idealism in the light of all the relevant elements of *Advaita Vedānta* and that of Absolute Idealism, he does not fail to add his own insights into it. It is a philosophy saturated with all the noble aspirations of human nature, such as truth, beauty, love and charity. He wants us to know that truth is no monopoly of any religious sect of the Christians, Hindus or Muslims. There is no chosen people of God. According to him all are God's children and all God's children have a right to participate in the truth. It is open to all those who search for it with an open heart. It needs neither a particular creed, or dogma, but a sincere passion and a disinterested love. Since he conceives ultimate reality in the spirit of *Advaita Vedānta*, we may regard his idealism as monistic. However, since the essential nature of the universe, for him, is spiritual, his philosophical outlook may also be considered as a spiritualistic idealism. One cannot ignore his repeated warnings that unless a spiritual sense is awakened in man his life remains miserable and chaotic. He finds this view of man is confirmed by the fact that the idealist tradition both in the East and in the West has always asserted the supremacy of spirit. For, mere physical desire and passion, impulse and instinct, even intellect and will, do not exhaust the essential nature of human reality.

7. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1933) p. 15.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

10. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929) p. 41.

11. *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 16.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 17.



Where There is a Will There is a Way

(Ramakrishna Mission Flood Relief Work in Purulia, West Bengal)

SWAMI BHAKTIRUPANANDA

The Ramakrishna Mission undertakes to relieve the distress of victims of natural catastrophies in all parts of the country. Here is a graphic account of the 1992 flood relief in West Bengal. The author is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

Destruction before Creation?

Twenty-sixth of September 1992 happened to be the *Mahālaya*, the day marking the beginning of the lunar bright fortnight during which the worship of the Divine Mother Durga takes place. In West Bengal and elsewhere it is the biggest festival and an occasion for exuberant joy and gaiety. In towns and countryside alike, young and old, men and women were bustling with enthusiasm. But Mother Durga does not always grant joy and gaiety only.

Rains are not uncommon during this autumnal festival, though the district of Purulia in Bengal is known to be a dry and drought-prone area. It forms the last two steps on the descent from the hills of the Central India to the Chhotanagpur plateau and on to the Damodar plains of West Bengal. The landscape is undulating. Kansabati river, locally called Kasai, is the main river of the district, and together with the river Kumari drains almost 50% of the land area of the district. A popular folksong mentions a big flood in the Kansabati way back in 1898. However, the only recorded instance of a major flood was on 18th June 1938, though it was much less in magnitude. So this time when the first reports of a flood were received at the State Headquarters the news was dismissed as a practical joke!

It all started with light showers on 25th September. Gradually the rain increased and on the following day it became torren-

tial. Due to overcast skies and heavy downpour a condition of semi-darkness prevailed. Nevertheless when the rain subsided, people neither accustomed to floods nor expecting one resumed their usual chores, not knowing what lay in store for them. Mother Durga has not granted much respite to people in that dry and arid land of Purulia.

It was three in the afternoon. Cowherd boys were grazing cattle in pastures on high land unmindful of what was happening in the riverside village of Satsimulia. Bhaku Sarkar had been fishing quietly in the river. A surging current of water caught him unawares and nearly swept him away. He struggled hard and luckily reached the bank.

Ajit Muda and his mother Kalyani had taken shelter on the rooftop when the flood waters suddenly entered the village and submerged their house. But the next moment a huge wave had launched the thatched roof into the current. Had it not been blocked as though by miracle by a tree, it is difficult to say what would have happened to them.

All the villagers were fleeing for dear life. Parbatibala Datta was wading through chest deep water with her small daughter in her arms. Unable to withstand the current she was swept away only to be saved by Ranjit who risked his own life to save both

the mother and child. A little later he again had to save six-year old Jamuna who was trying to carry her baby sister across the raging stream.

Muchiram, Mohan and others had congregated as usual under the village peepul tree to sing Bhajans in chorus. The time was seven in the evening. The place, Lausenbera, 30 kms down the river from Purulia. When Bhajan was in progress two boys, Rasaraj and Nanda, came running shouting a warning that the surging waters of the Kansabati had already inundated the paddy fields and were fast approaching the village.

In continuing rain men and women with babies in their arms ran to huddle under the few and far-between trees, not knowing what would happen next.

As it was the night of the new moon, overcast skies made it dreadfully dark. Everything was enveloped in darkness. Occasional flashes of lightning lit up the dark earth to show only the turbulent waters spread out for miles and miles. To Muchiram it appeared as if the swirling waters rose up menacingly like the hood of an enormous snake—ready to devour everything—only to crash down the next moment with deafening roar.

'The stars are blotted out,
The clouds are covering clouds.
It is darkness, vibrant, sonant. . . .
The sea has joined the fray,
And swirls up mountain-waves,
To reach the pitchy sky.'¹

A low pressure area that had developed over the northern part of the Bay of Bengal on 24th Sept. had moved over north Orissa

and coastal Bengal, and on its way to the Bihar plateau it hovered a bit too long above the Ayodhya mountain range, Purulia, on the 25th, resulting in the unprecedented floods the following day. (Incidentally, local inhabitants of Ayodhya cherish a traditional belief that Sri Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana had sojourned here during their exile.) Rain-fall was very heavy on the northern and western slopes, reports indicating that it ranged from 300 to 700 mm within a period of 30 hours!

Naturally the force of the run-off from the slopes was tremendous and it swept away everything that stood in its way. Huge trees were uprooted and carried away, approaches to the road-bridge were washed away, and even the railway bridge was heavily damaged, leaving the steel tracks hanging precariously in midair. Road and railway traffic was totally disrupted.

At the Lepers' Home

It was dusk and already quite dark when almost all members of the destitute lepers' home, Nabakushthashram, at Chhotabalarampur had begun to flee to safety on seeing the threatening swell of the Kasai (meaning *butcher* in colloquial Bengali). Only four invalid members in an isolated ward were not so lucky. They found themselves already encircled by water, the terrifying velocity of which had cut across the ward and converted it into a deep channel!

Two students dead

Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Purulia, is a premier center of learning not only in the state but in the whole of the country. The school had just closed on this fateful 26th Sept. for the autumn vacation. Ankush Chanda, a bright student of class X, left with his classmate Shyamal Mahato to the latter's village upon invitation. In the evening Ankush was to join his younger

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989) Vol. IV, p. 384.

brother Arani for their journey home to Calcutta. But Ankush and Shyamal never returned. The vehicle in which they were travelling fell into a deep pit which had been washed out on the approach road to the bridge over the raging river. Water was flowing over the road and the driver was evidently deceived. The eager father waiting at the Howrah station received only Arani. The body of Ankush reached their home later.

Aftermath of the Disaster

In the morning following the night's fury, the people of Purulia town were shocked to know about the death and destruction from the newspapers and radio. Many rushed to the riverside to verify for themselves the reported tales of destruction.

The sky had cleared by then and there was bright sunshine, but what they saw of their devastated rural neighbourhood cast nothing but gloom. The very landscape had changed. Village sites were not recognizable: houses lay flattened, lanes had made way for streams, trees were uprooted and the eroded fields looked like cratered battlegrounds.

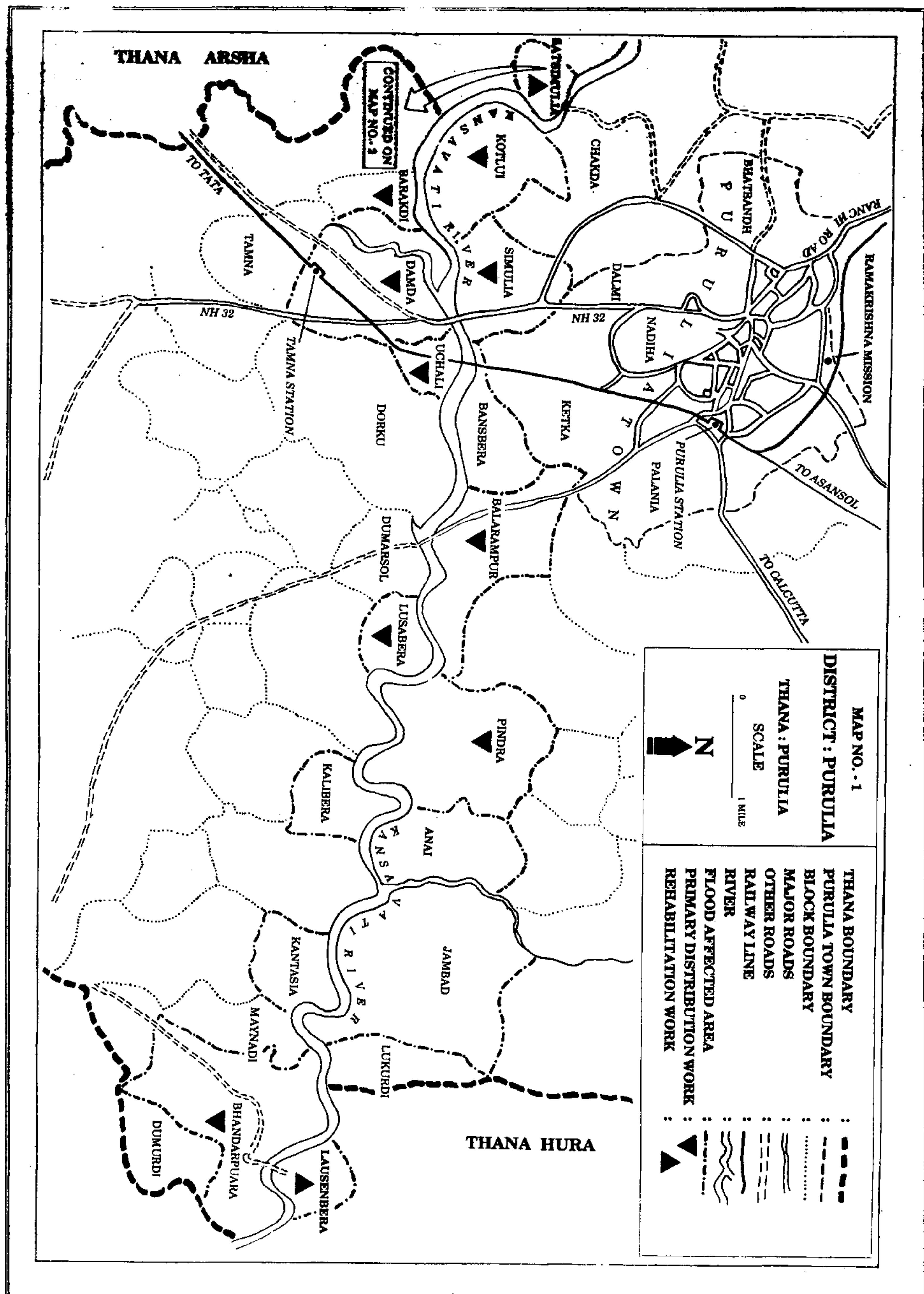
The oppressive atmosphere of sorrow that pervaded the campus of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith because of the loss of its two dear students was not allowed to linger for long. Even in the midst of this great tragedy the energizing mandate of Swami Vivekananda to serve God in Man was clearly remembered by the school authorities. What about the thousands who had become destitutes overnight, losing their all, and those who became paupers without even a morsel to appease the hunger of their children?

Relief was organized on 27th Sept. just a few hours after the weather improved. Cooked food in the form of Kichuri (rice

cooked with lentils etc.) was distributed to the flood victims numbering about 300 at Lausenbera. Lausenbera was the worst affected village in the Block with the entire village washed out and all the cultivable lands converted to sandy wastes. The Secretary, Swami Umanandaji, of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith mobilized the volunteers of Krishnananda Guchha Samity, Baligoda, giving financial support and encouragement to commence the feeding at Lausenbera.

In the meantime, primary relief was organized in several other villages also and food materials such as Chira (flattened rice) and Gur (molasses), etc., which could be consumed by the hungry people without preparation, were dispatched and distributed. Additionally, in cooperation with other agencies, nutritious food supplies, such as Bulger wheat, C.S.B. and soyabean oil, were distributed in several villages of different Blocks. The monks of the Vidyapith with the assistance of the volunteers from 'Kalyan', an institution working for integrated rural development and affiliated with the Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur, worked tirelessly against heavy odds to bring succour to the needy. Since the flood had destroyed all motorable and railway links with areas south of the Kansabati river, the relief workers often had to negotiate waist deep water to reach some of the villages.

After these preliminary undertakings the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission at Belur Math was contacted for assistance in carrying out work on a massive scale. The response was immediate and large quantities of materials—dhotis, saris, children's garments, clothing, bedsheets, cooking utensils, and lanterns—were rushed to Purulia by a band of monks and brahmacharins. Swami Atmasthanandaji, General Secretary of the Mission, issued an



appeal to the generous public for help and it came from various quarters, both from within India and abroad, in cash as well as in kind. Since winter was approaching, woolen garments and blankets also came; also baby food and biscuits for children. Tarpaulins, clothings, utensils, food materials, etc. were provided for the destitutes at Nabakusthashram. The smile of relief and the hope that lit up their countenance then, despite the sorrow at losing many of their co-members, was a great reward for the service-volunteers.

The magnitude of the damage

The devastation, as per the Government's estimate, was enormous—more than fifty villages in fourteen Blocks of the Purulia district were listed as severely affected. More than 2,200 families had lost their hearths and homes. Nearly 4,000 acres of agricultural land was rendered useless due to the water-carried deposits of sand, and thousands of cattle perished. The loss of human life, though counted low in early reports, was believed to be quite high.

The Ramakrishna Mission took up primary relief work in five Blocks—Purulia I and II, Hura, Arsha, and Manbazar—, comprising 20 villages. Total number of beneficiaries was 6,751 belonging to 1,037 families. Apart from distribution of food and other materials, free medical service was also rendered in ten villages under expert medical supervision. Needless to say, these services were highly acclaimed by public officials as well as by the public in general. Initial reservations in the minds of people about stretching their hands to others for help gave way to profound trust and a sense of deep love and gratitude. During their travels, invariably the Swamis would be received cordially by the villagers, plied with numerous questions and offered rest and refreshment. The massive relief operation and subsequent rehabilitation

projects made a very good impression on the government officials, technical experts and local leaders. One high-ranking officer frankly admitted that even the Government with its elaborate machinery could not have coped with a task of that magnitude so creditably. Several villagers of Lausenbera, after the rehabilitation work was over spoke to us one day saying, 'We had seen you come now and then to conduct surveys and so on, but we hardly imagined that you would be able to construct these houses in spite of so many difficulties!' But in fact, as we toured as many villages as possible, the magnitude of devastation only made us more determined to work harder. As Milton said, '*What though the fields be lost? All is not lost, the unconquerable will...and courage never to submit or yield....*'

The road to Arsha Block was closed. Approaches to five bridges had been washed away by the flood. To reach the village of Birchali at the foot of the Ayodhya range, the epicentre of the cloudburst a few days ago, we had to traverse a circuitous route fording several streams and pools. Upon reaching the village we were aghast at the sight of hungry and naked children staring vacantly at us. An irate woman shouted at us, 'What pleasure do you people derive from visiting us and making false promises?'—obviously referring to some other of the agencies who came there to help but who after promising much did little. So the people had become irritable and impatient. Quietly we did a quick survey and quietly left, making a special note of that village. Now as we look back after the lapse of several months, we have the satisfaction of having served Birchali also, which was then cut off on all sides by the river and rivulets after the flood.

Rehabilitation

Primary relief continued for nearly three months, during which time materials worth

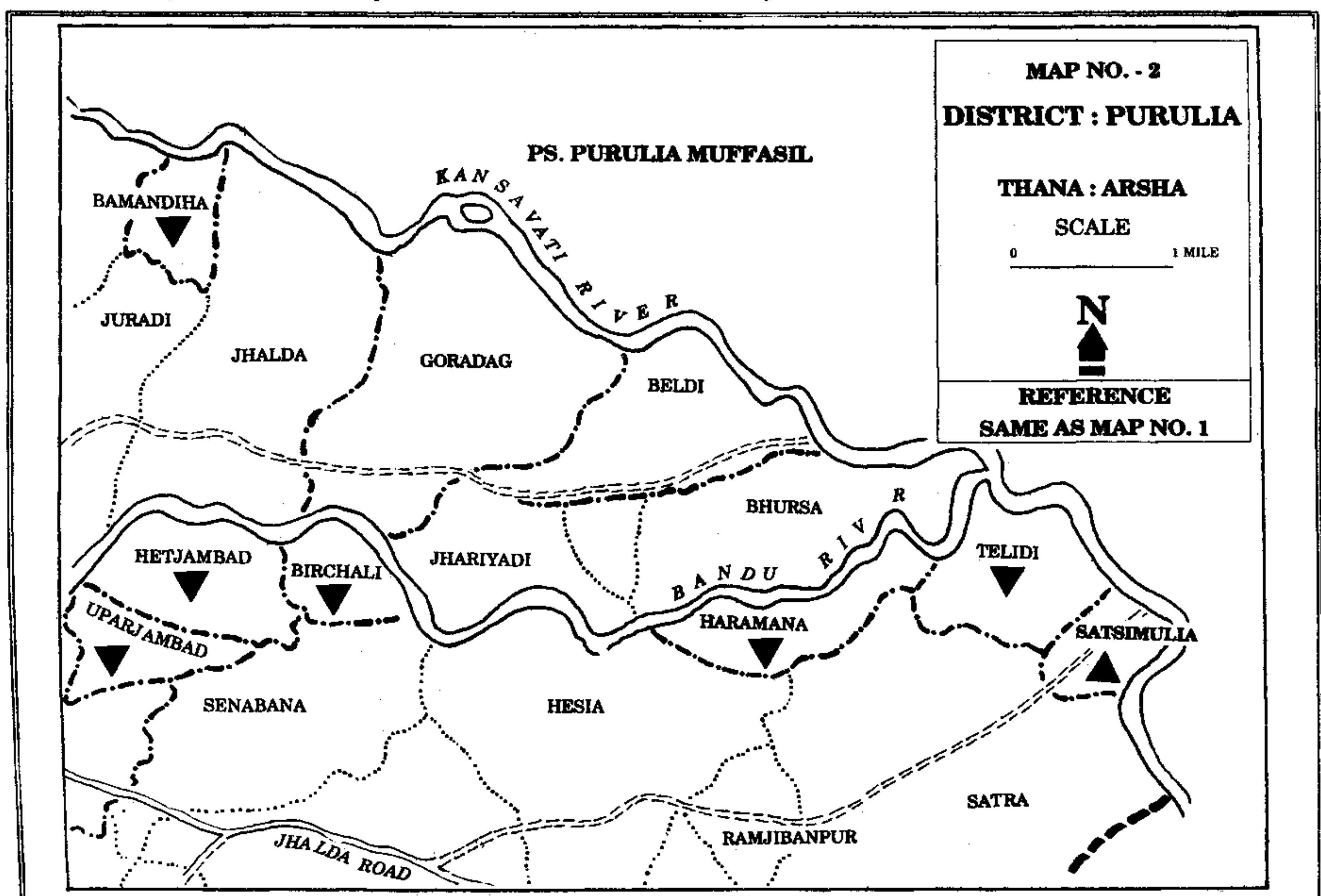
nearly five lakhs Rupees were distributed. In almost all the villages where we had worked and completed primary relief, people pleaded for rehabilitation. Actually from October 1992 requests were coming to us from various quarters to undertake rehabilitation work for the homeless. After various initial difficulties the Mission finally decided to construct houses for the flood victims with the approval and cooperation of the State Government. Only the project had to be completed by June 1993, before the onset of the monsoon, so we had limited time.

In order to study the local conditions and to prepare a suitable plan, the Headquarters sent a team of experienced civil engineers in November 1992. Accompanied by us they surveyed all the villages where primary distribution had been conducted. They finally suggested two villages, viz., Lausenbera and Satsimulia, for rehabilitation work, considering the suitability of the conditions

there. One major task under the project was to find suitable plots on elevations above the highest flood levels where houses could be constructed.

A Novel Approach

We decided to commence rehabilitation work at Lausenbera. There we were one bright winter morning, sitting on rickety stringed cots provided by the village residents, overlooking the beautiful undulating terrain for miles around. The winding course of Kansabati was in sight. A strong northern wind blew all the while and the weather was very cold. The Rakab forest stretched out on both the banks of the river for more than thirty miles. Formerly that forest was infested with wild animals and equally wild humans (dacoits), a fact which remains now buried only in vague memory. Not far away lies the cave where more than sixty years ago Swami Krishnanandaji, a disciple of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, had performed severe austerities for a



number of years. His life had influenced the local tribals so much that many have since then been ardent devotees of Sri Ramakrishna!

Lausenbera lies 30 km southeast of Purulia town. The Kansabati flows from the northwest to the southeast, passing through the districts of Purulia, Bankura, and Midnapore, then turning south to join the Hooghly river close to the estuary. About 50 kms down stream from Purulia, at Mukutmanipur, the waters of Kansabati and Kumari meet. The famous dam of Mukutmanipur is a picturesque sight and attracts visitors from far and near throughout the year. From a distance the vast mass of accumulated water appears like a bay surrounded by hills and forests.

More than a thousand years ago Kansabati basin was the seat of a prosperous Jaina culture. Ancient temples with beautiful architecture still exist at Deulghata, Budhpur, Anai Jambaid and Pancha. Exquisitely carved granite statues and temples dedicated to Tirthankars seen at the latter two sites speak of a glorious past.

After prolonged negotiations with the district officials for demarcation of house plots after land settlement, the work on layouts and excavation of foundations began on 3rd January 1993. Each house was to have a plinth area of 204 sq. ft. with one large bedroom, a store-cum-kitchen and a verandah. Taking the local conditions into account the roofing was to be done with tiles. Cost per house was estimated to be Rs. 15,000/-, though finally the actual cost came down considerably.

The Panchayat members, local leaders, and the officials were very enthusiastic about the project. Soon the incomplete Primary School building was constructed and handed over to us for our camp.

Great Beginning

On the 11th January 1993, all the villagers, young and old, were busy preparing for the visit of Srimat Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission. Their joy knew no bounds. Ceremonial worship was performed in the new building and it was subsequently consecrated by Revered Maharaj. Soon after he arrived he was led through the decorated lanes amidst singing of Bhajans. After going round the village he spoke to the villagers: '... In the midst of so much misfortune, it is heartening to note that you have had the courage to face the challenge and make yourselves happy. May the Lord ever guide you!'

A community feeding was arranged that day for all in which the villagers also participated enthusiastically and helped in whatever ways possible.

The construction work progressed steadily despite many hardships and was the subject of much wonder and appreciation. The villagers themselves had been trained up in the manufacture of hollow cement building-blocks despite initial doubts about their ability. The model houses at Lausenbera were finally completed and ready to be ceremoniously handed over to the villagers on 6th March. Everyone was getting ready to receive one whose encouragement and initiative had sustained us throughout and made the project a success. It was Srimat Swami Atmasthanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. Addressing the villagers at the public meeting he said: '... You will be happy to know that our work at Lausenbera has received the active help and cooperation of all. On the one hand, the State Government along with the officials and people's representatives have come forward with all their support,

and on the other hand the people of the whole country have sympathized with and contributed for the success of this project.'

On the eve of our departure from Lausenbera, Sri Baidyanath Majhi, a postal peon, spoke to us emotionally with tearful eyes: 'Who ever heard of a flood in Purulia? But the inevitable happened and there seemed to be no end to our struggles and sufferings. At long last the Ramakrishna Mission came into our midst and heralded the beginning of an era of peace and prosperity. Before the flood even the people of Purulia town had not heard the name of Lausenbera, but now everyone knows it in the country and abroad—thanks to the good work done by the Mission and the publicity given by the newspapers, radio and TV.'

Rehabilitation—Second Phase

The work at Satsimulia was taken up on a war-footing even as work at the Lausenbera camp was going on. It was already mid-April and the rainy season could commence any time in late May or early June. There was little time to lose, for work had to be completed before then. With our limited manpower, we pressed on towards this difficult objective. Satsimulia was forty kilometers away from Lausenbera on a very difficult road. We had to negotiate the Kasai river on an undependable fair-weather road. Whenever there was a downpour in the catchment area up in the hills, the river would swell, flow over the road and disrupt traffic for a number of days. Each time we had to wait for the water to subside and then hastily repair the road. So it was a race against time all through. Whenever the road became unusable, our materials had to be carried across the river by labourers or on bullock carts in order to keep the work moving. This was indeed a difficult task.

Due to acute scarcity of water in Satsimulia, production of hollow-blocks

was discontinued and construction with ordinary clay bricks was taken up. With the absence of ponds or tube-wells nearby, water for construction work was brought in by large water-tank trailers drawn by tractors. The condition here was entirely different than in Lausenbera. There was also the problem of hot weather. In a heat-wave with temperatures rising above 45°C, working atop those barren grounds in the blasting hot wind was an experience never to be forgotten.

Keeping the unmetalled village roads of black cotton-soil in tolerably good condition for our truck to ply was a recurring problem that needed constant attention. Our engineer-Swami could be seen leaving the camp early everyday with some food packed in a lunch box for yet another day of gruelling work under the hot sun. Most of the masons and labour trained in the work at Lausenbera were employed again at Satsimulia, and their experience did bear fruit. By the end of May the work was complete.

Swami Prabhanandaji, Assistant Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission handed over the fifty-five houses to the beneficiaries at Satsimulia—renamed now 'Vivekananda Palli' at the suggestion of the Forest Minister, Govt. of West Bengal, Dr. Ambarish Mukherjee—in a befitting ceremony. Swami Shivamayanandaji, the Assistant Secretary in charge of Relief at the Headquarters, who had visited us several times before and had guided us throughout, also participated in the function. Swami Prabhanandaji in his presidential address at the function said to the beneficiaries, '... You have accomplished the task of constructing your own houses. We have only helped you in this task. Now the responsibility of maintaining and developing the village into an ideal village lies on your shoulders ...'

Future Work

Upon completion of the project, the Bengali daily '*Bartaman*' reported on 14th June 1993, 'The horrifying flash flood made the village of Lausenbera well known. The Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission have constructed 41 pucca houses in place of the old clay-mud houses. At the request of the villagers they are also constructing a beautiful Community Centre and a temple. The construction of houses at Satsimulia also is now complete. In order to undertake work at two villages separated by a distance of 40 kms, the monks and volunteers of the Ramakrishna Mission had to take a vow of extreme austerity. Now the houses at Lausenbera and Satsimulia stand out as bright examples in the field of low-cost rural housing.'

Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Purulia, is known more as a pioneering educational institution of the State, but what

many do not know of are the various developmental works initiated and sustained by it in the rural areas of the District. Not content with what has already been done, the Vidyapith now aims at an all-round economic and cultural growth of the people.

And we are not alone in this task. A number of dedicated officials, friends and well-wishers have promised to extend their helping hands in this noble undertaking. The spirit of Swami Vivekananda has moved them deeply. Has not Swamiji said, 'They alone live who live for others. The others are more dead than alive'? Also, 'This is the gist of all worship—to be pure and to do good to others. He who sees Shiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased really worships Shiva.'²

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 141-2.



After the Parliament of Religions, What?

(Continued from page 141)

the basis on which religions can work together in harmony for the betterment of the world and all its peoples. They also provide the rationale for man to understand his oneness with his fellow man and with the world in which he lives and thus provide him the incentive for mutual cooperation, trust and respect.

A Declaration of Global Ethics should include the following: In the first place, it should recognize the universally applicable eternal truths of all religions—truths which are broadly in harmony with those of science. Secondly, it should recognize that all religions are expressions of the principle of *unity in diversity*. Thirdly, it should accept all religions as valid and emphasize that

there must be no place for sectarianism and intolerance. Fourthly, it should emphasize humanistic values, which will enable man to solve the existential problems of life. Lastly, it should direct man's attention to the ultimate goal of life, the realization of God, which alone will bring him the experience of supreme peace and fulfilment.

But it should also be recognized that harmony and cooperation cannot be achieved by religions or at the social or national level merely by making declarations. Harmony can be attained only through true understanding. If the Declaration of Global Ethics or similar statements include these central points, they should be endorsed by the members of the Assembly.



PRACTICAL VEDANTA

A BLESSING OTHERWISE

Guru Nanak once happened to enter a village known for its virulent atheism. Those villagers, who looked down upon sannyasins as imposters and hypocrites, greeted him with harsh abuses hoping that insults would drive him away so they would be spared the bother of arranging for his stay and food. Nanak, no wonder, remained calm and poised, and in fact chose to spend the night there! Next morning as he got ready to leave the villagers came again and tongue in cheek asked him to bless them and the village. Expecting a rebuke they were surprised when the great saint smiling benignly said, 'May you all become prosperous and remain well settled here!' and quietly walked away.

Enters Nanak into the next village. In great contrast he found these villagers receiving him warmly and reverentially, offering him a place for resting, food, etc. After some time, in response to the earnest requests of the villagers, the Guru talked to them at length of God, righteous living and so on. When he concluded and wanted to leave, these pious people, too, as per traditional custom, requested him to utter a few words of benediction over them and their village. Disciples who were accompanying Nanak were taken aback when he said, 'May you all become uprooted and dispersed!'

The villagers of course were too stunned to react in any way. But the disciples accompanying the Guru took courage to ask him the significance of these two strange and apparently undeserved 'blessings'. 'Master,' they said, 'it is beyond our comprehension why you blessed your revilers to prosper but your devotees to become uprooted. Please explain to us.'

Nanak replied: 'When these hardworking and upright people disperse like seeds and settle elsewhere, they will surely be able to not only establish themselves but also, more importantly, create a holy environment benefiting others. In the case of those godless villagers, it is safer they prosper and remain confined to their village. Were they to move to other places, they would only pollute and vitiate the atmosphere of those places!'

News and Reports

Centenary Celebration of Swamiji's Participation in Chicago Parliament of Religions

Tribal Youth Convention

A two-day Tribal Youth Convention was organized by the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission at Belur Math on 26th and 27th December last year. 860 boys belonging to 50 tribes, mostly students from our educational institutions in Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, Bihar, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal, Maharashtra and other states, participated. A colourful procession with band and music preceded the first session. Revered President Maharaj inaugurated the Convention and gave a benedictory address. Each day's programme had three sessions. The General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission; Sri R. K. Khramey, Minister for Education, Science & Technology, Government of Arunachal Pradesh; and Prof. G. G. Swell, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), spoke in the inaugural session. Swami Gahananandaji was the chairman in the second session. The evening session was devoted to a cultural programme which included tribal dance and drama. Swamis Lokeswarananda and Tattwabodhananda chaired in the morning and afternoon session of the second day. A question and answer session, a quiz competition, short speeches, story-telling, recitation, songs, instrumental music, and gymnastics formed part of the programme. The General Secretary was the chairman in the valedictory session. An exhibition displaying tribal artefacts, our activities amongst the tribals, and other related items was also organized. Revered President Maharaj inaugurated the exhibition on 25th

December. A booklet on tribal welfare services by the Math and the Mission was released by Revered President Maharaj on the 26th. The delegates were taken to Calcutta for sight-seeing on the 28th.

Course on

Social Work and Rural Development

A nine months residential course on Social Work and Training in Rural Development and methods of transfer of Appropriate Technology will commence on 1 June 1994 at the Ramakrishna Mission Samaj Sevak Sikshan Mandir, Belur Math, Howrah, West Bengal, 711 202. The course on Social Work teaches methods of working with people, surveying, planning, monitoring and evaluation practices, and leadership skills. Training in Transfer of Appropriate Technology deals with soil analysis, use of bio-fertilizers, vermicultutre, plasticulture, horticulture, floriculture, mushroom cultivation, use of agricultural implements, regulation of crop-patterns, pest-control, land-shaping, and micro-water-shedding. It also deals with training in methods of pisciculture in fresh or brackish water and in paddy fields.

Males from rural areas who are graduates or have passed class 12 with experience in Rural Development are eligible to apply. Prospectus and Application Forms are available for Rs. 10/- from the Principal (at the above address). Those wishing to receive the Forms *by post* should remit Rs. 11/- to the Principal. Duly filled-in application forms should reach the Principal by 31 March 1994.

Selected candidates will be provided free lodging and board during the period of training.



Reviews and Notices

SUFISM: A Dictionary With Profiles of Saint-Poets, by T.C. Rastogi; Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1990; pp. 110, Rs. 125/-

The Sufis occupy a special place in the sphere of genuine spiritual pursuit—for their universality of outlook and the depth of their mystical realizations. Often they are called Vedantic Muslims. The first part of this beautifully got-up book, a concise dictionary of Sufi terminology, provides immediate evidence of the profundity of their understanding of the different aspects of spiritual discipline, obstacles on the path, and the methods of surmounting them. It shows how well the Sufis had harmonized dualism and nondualism, devotion and knowledge, and realized God's transcendence and immanence.

The second part of the book, thoughtfully added, with biographic profiles of six Sufis—'Umar Khayyaam, Hafiz, Rumi, Sarmad, Chandrabhan Brahman and Baidil—has enhanced the charm of the publication. The learned author has indeed made a significant contribution to the appreciation of Sufism through this book. For, as he says, the Orientalists have not been able to bring out a glossary of Sufi words so far.

Ed.

GUIDE-LINES TO SHANKARA VEDANTA, by Shri Devarao Kulkarni. Published by Manas Kumar Sanyal, 182 S.N. Roy Road, Calcutta 700 038; 1990. 88 pages; Rs. 12/-.

The book under review is an introductory work on Advaita philosophy of Acharya Shankara and covers from five fun-

damentals of Shankara Vedanta. The author has thus written five chapters, each explaining a fundamental principle of Advaita-Vedanta, viz. (1) "Comprehensive Vision of Life Based on Intuitive Experiences", (2) "Self as the Witnessing Principle", (3) "The Unique Methodology of Vedanta: *Adhyaropa* and *Apavada*", (4) "*Vyavahara Drishti* (the empirical standpoint) and *Paramartha Drishti* (transcendental standpoint)", (5) Difference between *Kartru Tantra* and *Vastutantra Jnana*. The validity of the doctrine is reinforced by quoting the original passage from the commentaries of Shankara on the *Gita*, the *Brahma Sutras*, and the principal *Upanishads*.

The purpose of all the scriptures is to lead aspirants to Self Knowledge, but without commentaries of the Acharyas they are confusing. Acharya Shankara was the foremost to expound Advaita philosophy in a systematized and logical manner as the highest immediate experience. This book helps one to know the basic tenets of Acharya Shankara's teaching in its true perspective in all the phases of life. *Atman*, which is the transcendental Reality beyond the perception of subject-object and time-space-causation, appears as the universe without any change in itself. This has been explained in simple language.

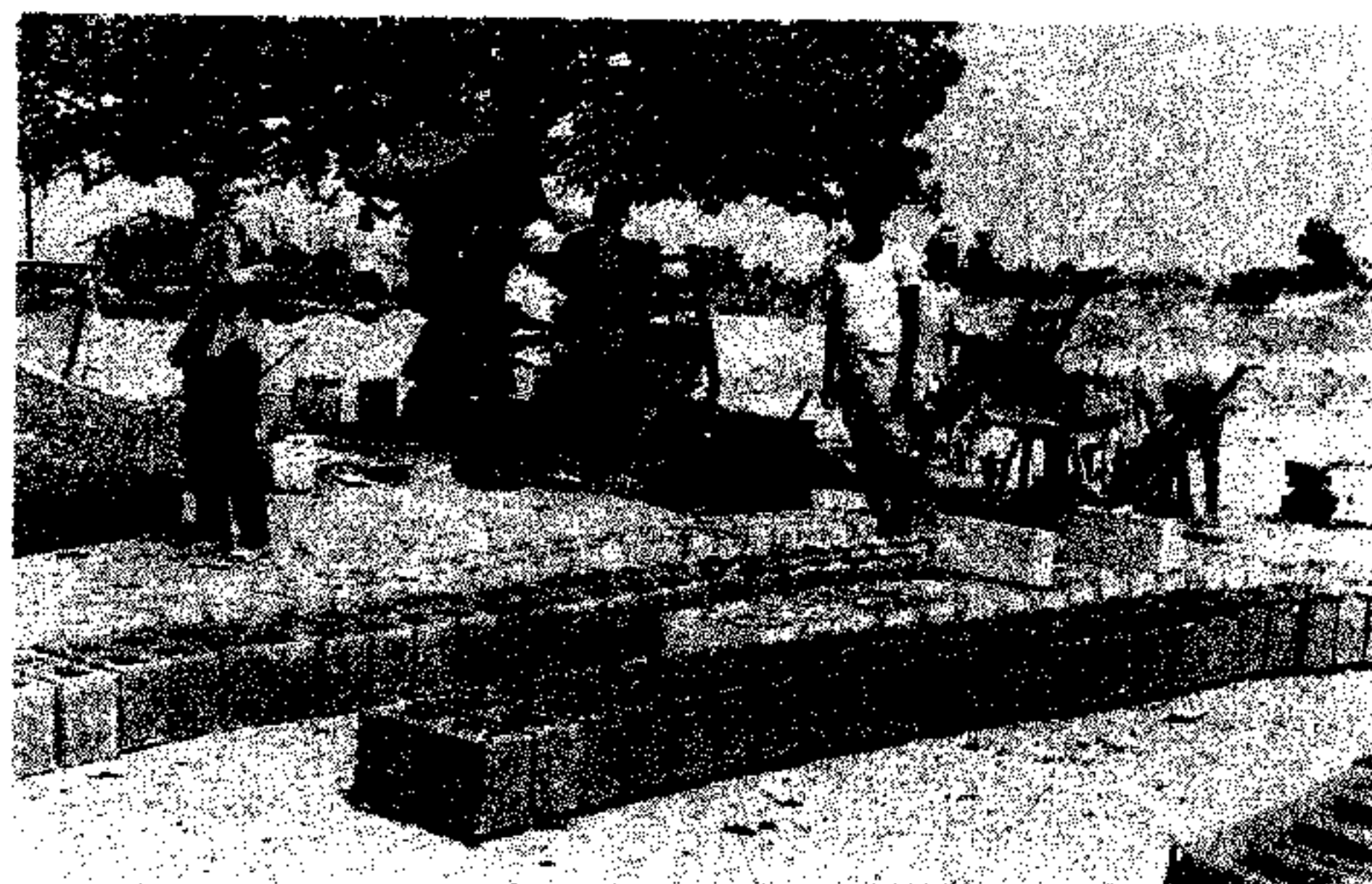
This small book will certainly enlighten the readers to know themselves as *Atman* the indivisible Consciousness, and get peace and tranquility in life. It is a valuable addition to Vedanta literature.

Swami Brahmasthananda
Hyderabad.





Chhotabalarampur after the deluge



Hollow Blocks being produced at Lausenbera



Construction of houses in progress at Lausenbera



Construction of houses at Satsimulia



Revered Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj visits Lausenbera



A house ready for the inauguration



*Revered Swami Atmasthanandaji Maharaj
going round Lausenbera*



*Sri Ajit Kumar Panja hands over
house-ownership certificates at Lausenbera*



*Swami Prabhanandaji handing over
the certificates at Satsimulia*