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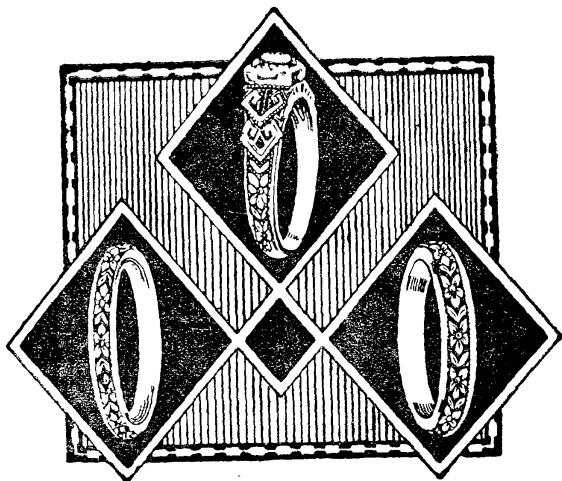
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# The Vedanta Kesari

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S PRACTICE OF ISLAM

By SWAMI SARADANANDA

From the Advaitic state of consciousness the Master came to know about another fact. To be established in the state of Advaita is the goal of all spiritual practices. For before this time, he had practised the disciplines of the various religions of India, and come to the realisation that they all took one to the state of Advaita. When we asked him about the Advaitic realisation, he told us again and again: "My boy, that is the last word in spiritual life. It is a natural state that comes on the soul in the full maturity of divine love. Understand that it is the final goal of all religions, and that all religions are so many paths leading to the same goal."

As a result of his Advaitic realisation, the Master's mind gained a wonderful catholicity. He developed a great sympathy for all religions which consider the realisation of God as the final end of life. But he was not able to know at first that this perfect catholicity and sympathy for all the faiths was a realisation that he of all men had for the first time, and that no one in the past was ever able to gain it in such fullness as in his case. He came to understand it gradually through his contact with many spiritual aspirants during his stay at Dakshineswar and his pilgrimage to holy places. But even from now he used to feel

very much pained when he saw one-sidedness in religious matters in any one, and he would try to rectify this mentality whenever he came across it.

### *The Practice of Islam*

How wonderfully liberal the Master's mind at this time had become, having been established in the monistic knowledge, is indicated clearly by an event of his life at this time. We know already that after his full realisation of Advaita the Master suffered from physical illness for several months. The event, we refer to, took place after he was cured of his illness.

A certain person, Govinda Rai by name, had been practising religion from some time before this event. Hriday says that he was a Kshatriya by caste. Most probably he was well-versed in Persian and Arabic. Having studied various religious schools and having associated himself with various sects, he finally felt attracted by the liberal views of Islam and was duly initiated into it. We are not sure, however, how far he followed the social customs of Islam though he accepted its religious views. But we have heard that since his initiation into that religion, he had been devotedly studying the Koran and enthusiastically practising according to the Koranic methods. Govinda

was a lover of God. Probably the method of God-realisation according to the teaching of the Sufi sect of Islam had a strong hold on his mind. For he used to be engaged day and night in the realisation of his ideal like the *dervishes* of the Sufi sect.

### *The Arrival of the Sufi, Govinda Rai*

Anyhow he happened to arrive at that time at the Dakshineswar temple, and finding the Panchavati very convenient for his *sadhana*, he established his seat in its cool shade and began to spend his days. Like the Hindu monks, the Mussalman Fakirs also were at that time welcome at the temple of Rani Rasmani and received equal hospitality at the temple. Therefore so long as Govinda stayed at the temple he had not to go out to beg his food, but spent his days blissfully devoting himself to the thought of his Lord. Having seen Govinda, the Master was attracted to him; and when he conversed with him he was charmed by his sincere faith and love of God. His mind was therefore drawn towards the religion of Islam and he thought within himself: 'This also is a path to God-realisation. The infinitely playful Mother has been leading many persons along this path to the blessedness of realising Her lotus feet. I must see how Mother fulfils men along this path. I must receive initiation from Govinda and devote myself to the practice of this *sadhana*.'

### *The Master Receives Initiation from Govinda*

Action quickly followed thought. He expressed his mind to Govinda, was initiated by him and gave himself up to the practice of Islam. 'At this time,' the Master said to us, 'I used to repeat the name "Alla", wear my cloth in the fashion of the Muhammadans, and recite the Namaz regularly. All Hindu ideas being wholly banished from the mind, not only did I not salute the Hindu gods and

goddesses, but I had no inclination even for visiting them. After passing three days in that way, I fully realised the goal of that form of devotion.' During his practice of Islam the Master first of all saw a radiant Person with a long beard and of grave appearance; and then his mind, passing through the realisation of the Brahman with attributes was finally absorbed in the Brahman, without attributes.

### *The Master's Conduct During the Practice of Islam*

Hriday used to say that during this practice Sri Ramakrishna was ready to eat all sorts of food that Muhammadans take, including beef, and it was at the earnest entreaty of Mathuranath that he desisted from this extreme course. Knowing full well that Sri Ramakrishna, with his child-like tenacity of purpose, would not be satisfied unless he could carry out some part at least of his desire, Mathur had various dishes prepared in the Muhammadan style by a Brahmin under the direction of a Musalman, and gave them to the Master to take. During the practice of Islam he never stepped into the precincts of the temple, and lived in Mathuranath's quarters which were outside the temple compound.

### *The Significance of the Master's Islamic Practice*

The above episode of the Master's life indicates how sympathetic his mind had become towards other religions after his realisation of Advaita, and how only through a belief in the Advaita, the Hindus and Mussalmans of India can be sympathetically and fraternally disposed towards each other. The Master used to say: 'There are mountain-like barriers between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. In spite of their living together for ages, their thoughts, religious faiths, and activities have remained totally

incomprehensible to each other." Does not the practice of Islam by the Master, the prophet of the age, indicate that these mountain-like barriers will vanish one day, and that these two communities will embrace each other in love?

### *The Strong Hold of Advaitic Consciousness on the Master.*

As a result of his being established in the state of *nirvikalpa samadhi*, the sight of men and things abiding even on the phenomenal plane would often suddenly invoke in the Master's mind the memory of the monistic consciousness, and plunge him into the transcendental state. We have seen him reaching that state without any conscious resolve at the slightest inspiration. It is therefore redundant to mention that henceforward he was able to plunge into the Absolute state whenever he so wished. How profoundly dear was this Advaitic outlook to his heart is evident from the little things we have mentioned before. They also show how his outlook was at once wide and deep. Our remarks will be explained if we mention here a few incidents of the Master's life, which indicate his Advaitic consciousness.

The extensive gardens of the Dakshineswar temple are thickly grown over by grass during the rains, and this causes great difficulty to the gardeners in rearing up vegetables. Grass-cutters therefore are then allowed to cut grass and take it away. An old man once received permission to take grass without fee and he cut the grass gladly and abundantly, and made it into a big bundle to carry to the market. The Master saw that the man had cut so much grass through greed that it was beyond his power to carry the load. The man was poor; he could not see that he was too weak; he tried again and again to poise the bundle on his head but failed. As he looked on, the Master fell into an ecstasy. He thought that though the man had within him the Self who is knowledge absolute, yet outside there was

so much foolishness. The Master exclaimed, 'Oh Rama, mysterious is your play!' and so saying, he entered Samadhi.

The Master one day saw at Dakshineswar a butterfly flying with a long straw stuck in its tail. He thought that some mischievous boy had done this and he felt pained. But the next moment he went into an ecstatic state and began to laugh loudly saying: 'Oh, Rama, it is you who have thus inflicted pain on yourself!'

A certain portion of the garden of the Kali temple once looked beautiful, being grown over with fresh grass. The Master, as he looked at the place one day, was so absorbed in it that he began to feel the place absolutely as a part of his own body. Just then a man came and began to walk across the plot of grass. This caused such an excruciating pain in his chest that he became restless. Referring to the incident, the Master said to us: "The pain I felt at that time was just as if some one was walking over my chest. Such kind of ecstasy is very painful. This lasted with me for six hours. But even this short experience became unbearable to me."

One day the Master was looking at the Ganges standing at the large central *ghat*; he was in an ecstatic mood. Two boats were then moored by the *ghat* and the boatmen were quarrelling with each other on some affair. The quarrel became louder and the stronger man dealt a severe slap on the back of the weaker one. At that the Master burst into a loud cry. This plaintive cry reached the ears of Hriday at the shrine of Kali. So he came quickly to the Master and found that his back had turned red and swollen. He became very angry and said again and again, 'Show me, uncle, who has beaten you. I shall tear off his head'. When the Master gradually calmed down and narrated the incident, Hriday was dumbfounded. This incident Sjt. Girish Chandra Ghose heard from the lips of the Master and told us.

## THE CHOICE BETWEEN TWO RELIGIONS—II

The religion of the temple and the Church or more correctly institutional religion is interested in holding out to men the promise of personal salvation, salvation 'which could be attained very largely by belief and formalities, without any serious disturbance of the believer's ordinary habits and occupations'. A Church or a temple that prescribes any mild cut in the quantum of the devotee's daily luxuries is sure to become unpopular. 'Be where you are, and as you are' this sublime teaching has been so piteously prostituted by the temple-religion. We want security, security from disease, from death, from poverty and all worldly ills, and that religion which doles out the maximum of this security becomes the most popular. Of course, institutional religion gives us something unpleasant too. It frightens us with hell-fire. But this hell is necessary as a counterpart of the heaven it promises.

The religion of the mystics is so unlike institutional religion. It does not promise a heaven, nor does it frighten you with hell. The religion of the mystics knows that these are bad psychological devices to help the devotee in self-discovery, in the unitive knowledge of God. It demands a lot of wise rationing in food, drink, sleep and recreation; in short, the mystics expect disciplining and control from us. And the reward, if reward it can be called—is *not* personal salvation, but a happy self-dissolving for world-salvation. Herein is the fundamental difference between religion, institutional and spiritual: the first promises personal salvation, the second expects us to work for world good. We have got a glorious instance of true spiritual religion in Prahlada who said to the Lord, 'O Lord, most sages *intent on their own salvation* contemplate Thee in perfect silence; and they do not think of the purpose

to be secured to others. Abandoning these helpless creatures I do not seek release for my single self. (*Bhagavata*: 7-9 44). Buddha, Christ, Krishna and Ramakrishna, all put themselves last in the queue for salvation and were unanimous that we must take all others along with us to the kingly banquet of immortality. 'Go forth, ye monks into the world, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many', exhorted the Enlightened One. They certainly reach me,' assures Sri Krishna, 'who having restrained all the senses, and always equanimous, work for a better ordering of society.' The scripture of the Christians is not content to say, 'that those who shall teach wisdom to men, as Jesus Christ did, shall have life everlasting' (Eccles XXIV, 3). It says moreover, 'that those who show the way of justice to many, shall shine like stars for all eternity.' Here is a holy enthusiasm that must be harnessed to a better ordering of society, for forging a society of greater freedom and more opportunities.

The religion that is anxious for a better ordering of society, for more freedom and opportunities is just the thing that fits modern temper admirably well. The modern temper is predominantly socialist, anarchist, iconoclastic. It wants to create a new world, a new society of equal opportunities, with the sources of happiness and freedom equally distributed. To this end the modern temper has started breaking all old 'idols.' But unfortunately new idols have come in their place. True socialism and anarchism must begin from within, with the breaking of self-made idols. They have made a fetish of these new political philosophies. 'Fanaticism is idolatry', writes Huxley, and it has the moral evil of idolatry in it; that is, a fanatic worships something which is the creation of his own desires, and thus even his self-devotion in support of it



is only an apparent self-devotion; for in fact it is making the parts of his nature or his mind, which he least values, offer sacrifice to that which he most values. The moral fault is the idolatry, the setting up, of some idea which is most kindred to our own minds and the putting it in the place of Christ, who alone cannot be made an idol and inspire idolatry, because he combines all ideas of perfection, and exhibits them in their just harmony and combination.' Add to this moral idolatry, the technological and political forms of idolatry and the picture is complete.

How have we slipped into these idolatries? We wanted security from material want and asked science to build the house of security and luxury for us and technological idolatry and the security of the atom bomb were the result. We wanted security from other nations and fell in'co the mouth of the Nazi and the Fascist idolatries. We removed God from his place and put our fanaticism and narrow-mindedness in his place and the worst form of moral idolatry was the result.

Security cannot be had so long as we are of this insecure world. He who rides a tiger can never dismount. Security worth the name is of the spirit within, that is the abode of all security, happiness and freedom. The chief business of spiritual religion is to uncover the springs of strength, happiness and freedom not only in one but in all alike. The religion of the mystics which is the true spiritual religion seeks to usher in a world in which the creative spirit is alive, in which life is an adventure full of joy and hope, based rather upon the impulse to construct than upon the desire to retain what we possess or to seize what is possessed by others. It seeks to bring in a world where affection has free play, in which love is purged of the instinct for domination, in which cruelty and envy have been dispelled by happiness and the unfettered development of all the instincts that build up life and fill it with mental and spiritual delights. Such a world is possible, it waits for our choice. He who chooses it, gets it. Let us choose that religion which will usher in the world described above, a world that is our deepest necessity.

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### SAYINGS OF KABIR

Those who know the suffering of others are saints; those who do not know it, are butchers only.

Forsake me not, O Lord, though the whole world be arrayed against me. To Thee there are many like me; to me Thou art the only protector.

What availeth if thou hast passed thy life in muttering over beads, if thy mind is not subdued; give up the crookedness of thy mind and the labyrinths of thy heart.

# 'THE INTEGRATION OF THE PERSONALITY'

By INDRA SEN

Prof. C. G. Jung gives an interesting study of the process of individuation in his book, entitled *The Integration of Personality*. Consciousness and unconsciousness are,<sup>1</sup> according to him, the two aspects of life. But they 'do not make a whole when either is suppressed or damaged by the other'. There is a conflict, which means also collaboration, actual and possible, between 'the reason and the self protective ways' of the conscious and 'the chaotic life of the unconscious'. But the *yogis* who are to him past masters in the art of attaining wholeness of life, aim at *samadhi*, an ecstatic condition that seems to be equivalent to an unconscious state. 'In their case', states he, 'the unconscious has devoured the ego-consciousness'. 'The universal consciousness', alleged to be attained in *samadhi*, asserts he, 'is a contradiction in terms, since exclusiveness, selection and discrimination are the root and essence of all that can claim the name of consciousness'.<sup>2</sup> 'An accurate application of the methods of the Pali-canon, or of *Yoga-sutras*,' he is prepared to grant, 'produces a remarkable extension of consciousness. But the content of consciousness loses in clearness and detail with increasing extension. In the end, consciousness becomes vast but dim, with an infinite multitude of objects merging into an indistinct totality—a state in which the subjective and objective are almost completely identical.'<sup>3</sup> But this is not the solution to be 'recommended north of the Tropic of Cancer' where people believe firmly enough in the ego-consciousness.

The above opinions are bound to interest a student of psychology and *yoga*. The objective of the realisation of 'a unique,

indivisible unit or 'whole man', that ideal of personality as Jung puts it, can be, on the whole, accepted on behalf of *yoga*. Both are also agreed that the human nature as such involves a conflict which has to be made good. Now Jung believes that the *yogi* does attain to a wholeness of life, though that he achieves, says he, by reducing the conscious to the unconscious. But it passes comprehension how 'wholeness', which implies a single principle of organisation in all the elements of life, can be accounted for by the unconscious, which is recognised to be 'chaotic' in character. This single principle cannot be a moral rule, however universal, since by its very conception a moral law involves opposition to sensibility and impulse, which it seeks to govern. Thus the wholeness implying as it does a transcendence of all conflict cannot be explained with reference to any term of the unconscious or the conscious. The relative unification of wholeness, ordinarily realised in life can surely be accounted for by the evolution of the moral sense, but the wholeness here visualised is the complete harmonisation of life and therefore that single principle must be a supra-moral principle; a sub-moral could give only the wholeness of an animal.

The concept of a supra-moral principle is bound to cause difficulty since we are ordinarily so much accustomed to treating moral life as almost the highest reach of man. Without going into a fuller discussion I will content myself at present with just the affirmation that a life of conflict between good and evil with an increasing ability to choose the good does seem, of necessity, to imply a life of spontaneous righteous activity. That is the concept, to my mind, of spiritual life, which involves a definite transcendence of the moral or the human level of consciousness. The conflict

<sup>1</sup> C. G. Jung, *The Integration of Personality* p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 26.

of moral life cannot be final as no contradiction can be. If contradiction on the intellectual side presupposes a position of synthesis and reconciliation, the conflict of moral life can also be understood only against the possibility of spiritual fulfilment and consummation of life.

Now such supreme principle, which can afford to take up and harmonise the whole of the mental life of man, is obviously man's highest potentiality and possibility. The unconscious, collective or individual, has been pretty thoroughly investigated by the psycho-analysts. And they all agree in regarding it as almost a mass of impulses seeking their individual gratification. This new highest possibility of man, though an unconscious content, is obviously not a content of the unconsciousness as it has been revealed to us by the psycho-analyst. It is also not a content of our ego-consciousness. Does it then not necessitate the positing of another sphere or aspect of our consciousness, which implying as it does a mode of consciousness higher than the moral, as-yet-unrealised, may be called superconscious? Our subconscious is the dynamic retention of our racial and individual history. Our consciousness is adapted to the practical requirements of our life in relation to the environment. That is the essential biological and evolutionary function of it. But as in the animal at its higher levels indications of the beginnings of the rational level of consciousness can be noticed, so in man there are, as there must be, indications of the future evolutionary development. Such indications are factors in human nature qualitatively different from the subconscious, which is a record of the past, and the conscious, which concerns itself with the present.

But to Jung what we are not conscious of belongs to the unconscious and no super-conscious can really exist. He says 'I am unable to separate an unconscious below

from unconscious above, since I find intelligence and purposiveness below as well as above.'<sup>4</sup> Our superconscious is surely unconscious with us except for certain extraordinary experiences, which betray its intrusion into the normal waking consciousness. But the unconscious can only have intelligence and purposiveness of an order, which deserves at the human level the description of being chaotic, while the intelligence and purposiveness of the super-conscious is of an order higher to man's present status.

The *samadhi* of the *yogi*, which Jung may describe as the unconscious, implying as it does according to his admission the supreme 'wholeness' of life, cannot really be unconscious in the sense of the chaotic unconscious of our life. It is surely not conscious in the sense of the exclusiveness, selection and discrimination' of the ego-consciousness. But what necessity is there to suppose as Jung does that exclusiveness etc., are the root and essence of all consciousness? Surely our normal human consciousness is such. But we know well enough that the entire extent of consciousness is so wide and varied that it may be a mistake to insist too categorically on the conditions of one mode of it being binding on all its forms. In particular, when we know that the *yogi* himself far from seeking to lapse into unconsciousness tries to rise to a state of concentration and delight. A perfect *yogi* according to Jung because of the unconscious *samadhi* that he develops, should tend more and more to resemble in his general condition of life to the level of the animal and the plant. But on the other hand, as we know it full well, the *yogi* so far as *samadhi* is concerned reports at least an experience of delight and illumination and in his ordinary life too reveals better self composure and concentration.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

It should further be noticed that there are in fact, many systems of *yoga*, with distinct aims and ideals. Some *yogas*, no doubt, as Jung says wind up with *samadhi*. But integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo cares for *samadhi* just as an instrument for raising the level of the general consciousness and not for its own sake. And the main principle of the practice of it is to become increasingly more and more conscious of the *subtle* inner workings of life. Evidently a process of *yoga* proceeding by becoming ever more fully conscious of one's total being cannot end in dark unconsciousness. Still the consciousness which the *yogi* ultimately attains to is different from the ego-consciousness. That is exactly the superconsciousness of *yoga*. The testimony of the personal experience is there to show the empirical validity of such consciousness and it will surely not become a scientist to restrict his data and facts deliberately.

Notwithstanding the failure to understand the true character of *samadhi* and the nature of *yogic* process and the denunciation of the discipline of *yoga* for the people north of the Tropic of Cancer where they believe in the 'ego-consciousness' and 'realities', in the last chapter of his book, where he delineates 'the development of personality' he makes affirmations which make unexpectedly interesting reading as scientific pointers to some truths of the *yogic* theory and practice.

He opens the chapter by saying that every one's ultimate aim and strongest desire lies in developing the fullness of human existence that is called personality<sup>5</sup>. 'Education to personality' has become the slogan of modern pedagogy. But he complains, 'in general, our approach to education suffers from a one-sided emphasis upon the child who is to be brought up and from an equally one-sided lack of emphasis upon the deficient up-bringing of the adult educator.' It is

necessary 'whoever wishes to educate must himself be educated. In order to rear children to personality, it is the first thing that the ordinary parents, instead of being 'partly or wholly children' that they are, should themselves be personalities.

Further on he gives a fine piece of psychological analysis. The ideal of personality is laudable, but for children it must not be overdone, because properly speaking it is an ideal of adulthood. He says 'I suspect our contemporary pedagogical and psychological enthusiasm for the child of a dishonourable intent; people speak of the child, but should mean the child in the grown up.' For there is in the adult an eternal child needing care and fostering, which is the part now wanting to complete it elf. The modern man, he means, 'darkly divining his own defect, seizes upon the education of children and fervently devotes himself to child psychology.' 'This purpose, says he, is praiseworthy, to be sure, but it comes to ship-wreck against the psychological fact that we cannot correct in a child a fault we ourselves still commit. Children, of course, are not so stupid as we believe. They notice only too well what is genuine and what is not<sup>6</sup>. 'If there is any thing,' he further says, 'that we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves. Our enthusiasm for pedagogy may, in fact, be a cloak to hide from our view the uncomfortable feeling that we are ourselves still children and need up-bringing. 'Definiteness,' 'fullness' and 'maturity' are the three characteristics, which if forced upon the child too soon will make of him a 'pseudo-adult,' and that would be a sheer 'educational monstrosity.' And where the parents fanatically want to do their 'best' and 'live only for the children' the tragedy becomes

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid* p. 284.

serious indeed. The result is that unfulfilled ambitions of the parents are loaded on to the child.

Then what is the solution? Jung is here concerned primarily with a theoretical characterisation of the subject. So he is really stating the ideal. 'No one can educate to personality,' he unhesitatingly declares, 'who does not himself have it' and it is 'only the adult who can attain personality' and 'the achievement of it means nothing less than the best possible development of all that lies in a particular, single being.' And for this 'a whole human life span in all its biological, social and spiritual aspects is needed.'

We have reached the true cause of the matter and have stated above what personality really means and involves. 'Personality is an act of the greatest courage in the face of life,' to read another sentence of the author, 'and which means unconditional affirmation of all that constitutes the individual, the most successful adaptation to the universal conditions of human existence, with the greatest possible freedom of personal decision.'<sup>7</sup> This is, indeed an inspiring sentence. But to educate someone to this is 'surely the heaviest task that the spiritual world of to-day has set itself' and 'a personality as a complete realisation of the fullness of our being is an unattainable ideal.' However, for *yoga* unattainable it is not, though difficult undoubtedly it is.

As we have stated above, personality does not admit of foreign impositions, it being, in fact, the realisation of the fullness of one's own being. Therefore personality must first unfold before it can be subjected to education'. We do not know how and in what direction a budding personality will shape itself and our hasty good will to mend the child early enough will easily reduce the natural growth

of personality to an 'individualism' i.e., a partial tilted sort of growth of personality.

But a reader may ask: Is one then to give no direction to the unfolding life of a child? I do not think that is the intention of Jung. We have been trying to understand certain principles of the growth of personality. And we will do well to recapitulate them here. First, the parents or teachers have to make sure that they do not themselves suffer from the defect that they are wanting to remove from a child. In doing so, it is necessary to suspect in oneself all kinds of subtle self-deception which must be attempted to be got over. In one word, one has to become for oneself a truly growing personality. That is the first condition favourable to the growth of personality in the child. Secondly, personality, in each is something unique, which must first be read and detected in him, before he can be helped to grow along that line.

Next we ask the important question, what is the motivating force determining the development of personality? 'Only coercion', says he, 'working through causal connections moves nature, and human nature also. Human nature is immensely conservative, not to say inert. Only the sharpest need is able to rouse it. The development of personality obeys no wish, no command, and no insight, but only need; it wants the motivating coercion of inner or outer necessities'.

This long quotation should serve to state clearly Jung's idea of the motivating force governing the development of personality. Evidently human nature is conceived as being almost on a par with external nature. The same causal type of agency operate in both and the human nature possesses a conservativeness comparable to the inertness of material nature. All this is, on the whole true of the unconscious. But what happens

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid* p. 286.

to the intelligence and purposiveness, which he otherwise grants to human nature.

His conception of need in latter sentences appears to be rather mixed up. It should be interpreted in the sense of mechanical causation, as required by the earlier part. But then one would like to ask what is meant by 'inner necessities'.

This really raises the question of mental causation. Are mental workings mechanistically or teleologically determined? For many psychologists all mental operations are determined by a purpose, which, however may be unconscious or conscious. Even habits and other elements of the unconscious as revealed in normal or abnormal behaviour which display repetition and mechanical necessity do possess a purpose of organic life. At the self-conscious level, the acceptance of moral, æsthetic or religious ideal can become an over-ruling necessity and, may be, that is what Jung implies by 'inner necessities'. But accepting that they may under some circumstances become as effective as drives of hunger or sex, the two must be distinguished as constituting distinct types of motivations. And therefore it does not seem to be at all fair to talk of 'inner and outer necessities' and put them on par with external causal agency, unless the whole intention in the above quotation is to say that nothing short of something as imperative and inexorable as any physical law will stimulate real growth in personality.

I wish in this connection, to record what in *yogic* language is called 'awakening of the soul,' of which I have had occasions to see a few cases myself. Two of them are particularly striking, as both of them possessed the average out-look with its general ambitions of personal gratifications. And further both of them came to a great spiri-

tual personality, more or less by a necessity of circumstances. Both of them reacted unreceptively for sometime, one very much longer than the other. But I clearly remember the week during which a radical change in the outlook took place. A new positive seeking and longing appeared right in place of the older self-complacence or listlessness of daily routine of gratifications. The new longing, the wonder of the matter is, steadily grew in force and superseded old valuations so effectively that sacrifices, which to the individual himself and others known and related to him were inconceivable, being the very self of the person, were made with such ease and joy, as though they involved merest possessions and no more. Surely a change had taken place in the organisation of the individual self-hood. A change which involved the discovery, as it were, of a principle of self-hood superior and more organic to life. Otherwise how could former identifications with wealth, property and relations have been superseded? And these changes, I have noticed for a year, have stayed on.

This is a brief account of two cases of sudden and more or less radical transformation of the most average past history. In fact the number of such cases is quite large and even personally I know of many more but I have mentioned just the two most striking ones, which dealt to my psychological sense a shock and forced me to widen out my psychological categories, by which, I thought, I could sum up human nature.

It may further be added that the *guru* in these cases as in others hardly ever spoke a word. The influence is described as entirely silent.

(To be concluded)

# SAINT TYAGARAJA†

By Dr. V. RAGHAVAN

## I—LIFE

Friends! We are met here during a holy season, that is sacred to Goddess Para Sakti, Maha Maya, the Supreme Mystic Power of the Lord, who has thrown up this endless pageant of Nature, the Goddess of all Creative Energy, Maha Sakti, the Goddess of all Beauty and Richness, Maha Lakshmi, the Goddess of all Knowledge and Learning, Maha Sarasvati. She is the Goddess of all Arts, the Mother of Music—Sangita Matrika—‘who is eternally playing the bejewelled lyre’ माणिक्यवीणासुपलालयन्ती—to whom Muttusvami Dikshitar prayed—

सन्ततं पाहि मां सङ्गीतस्यामले- सर्वाधारे जननि ।

चिन्तितार्थप्रदे चिद्रूपिणि शिवे श्रीगुरुसुहृद्वेदिते शिवमो-  
हाकारे ॥

It is but proper that this year we should celebrate the nine days of Her festival with recalling to our memory the greatness of our foremost music composer, Sri Tyagaraja. The appropriateness gains in significance because this happens to be the year of the centenary of the samadhi of Sri Tyagaraja. And a series of discourses to you on this subject fits in the scheme of your Navaratri lectures on religious and spiritual topics, as we have in Sri Tyagaraja not only the foremost musical genius of our country, but one who came in the regular line of our poet-saints, who uplifted the people with their out-pourings of wisdom, devotion and spiritual realisation.

Friends, it is now a full hundred years since Saint Tyagaraja shuffled off the mortal coil and became one with the Effulgent Godhead which he sought through his steadfast and consuming devotion to his favourite divine form of Sri Ramachandra. Moved

by the deep anguish of this devotee, Sri Ramachandra had appeared before him and assured him of Moksha within a few days. The Saint himself tells us of this in two of his last pieces: Giripai in Sahana and Paritapamu in Manohari.

“Giripai Nelakona Ramuni  
Guri tappaka ganti—

o o o  
Pulakankitudai Anandasravula  
Nimpusu Mataladavalenani  
Kalavarinchakani *Padiputalapai*  
Kachedanavu Tyagarajavinutuni”

“Unerringly I have seen Sri Rama, who is installed on the hill . . . . He promised to give me salvation in five days. My body was thrilled, tears of joy rolled down my cheeks and I merely mumbled, unable to give expression to my thought”\*

‘Paritapamugani yadina  
Palukulu marachitivo na  
Sarileni Seetato Sarayu mudambuna  
Varabagu bangaru vadanu  
Merayuchu *Padiputalapai*  
Karunichedanuanuchu Krekanula  
Tyagarajuni”.

“Have you forgotten the words of assurance, which you, seeing my anguish, lovingly expressed, when you were on the golden boat on the Sarayu, in the company of the incomparable Sita, the assurance that you would take me to you in another five days”.

In accordance with this promise, the Lord took this Bhakta, on Pushya Bahula Panchami, in Prabhava (6th January 1847) when the Saint was almost 88 years old. Sometime before he attained this Brahma-

† A course of nine lectures delivered at the Sri Ramakrishna Students Home, Mylapore, Madras, during the Navaratri (Dasara) Festival, 15th to 23rd Oct. '47. In an amplified form these will form part of the publication, “The Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja” projected by Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar.

\* The translations used in the course of these discourses are based on those made by Sri Krishna Rao, Retd. Govt. Translator, for the publication ‘The Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja’.

Bhava, one-ness with Godhead, the Saint had taken to the orange robes and become a Sannyasin. Crude mythologists of the Saint's life will tell you that God Ramachandra told him that salvation was for him, only in another birth and the resourceful Tyagaraja short-circuited the scheme by taking to Apat-sannyasa, which was technically equal to a second cycle of life! What could be more against the promise of salvation given by the Lord in the two songs that I just read out to you? Tyagaraja became a Sannyasin, because he very much yearned to embrace that high spiritual order and in this, he was prompted by the noble example of the many Sannyasins whose samadhis keep his own company on the bank of the Cauvery at Tiruvaiyar. Many Sannyasins of that time had sought Brahman-realisation, not only through their Vedantic jnana, but through the worship of Nadabrahman too. The renowned Advaitic Avadhuta author Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra was also a musician who sang of his bliss of Brahmananda in "चिन्ता नास्ति किल", "खेलति ब्रह्माण्डे भगवान् खेलति पिण्डाण्डे" and so on. Narayana Tirtha who composed the musical play on the sports of Krishna—the *Krishna-lila-tarangini*—was a Sannyasin and that his personality influenced Tyagaraja is clear not only from Tyagaraja's efforts in the dramatic line but from echoes of his songs in Tyagaraja's expressions too.\* And one of Tyagaraja's own Gurus saluted by him in his opera *Naukacharitra* is a Sannyasin named Ramakrishnananda.

Though Sri Tyagarajaswami lived only a hundred years ago, we have unfortunately no authentic account of the full details of his life. Hagiologists have tried to make up by

legends and miracles, some of which are still growing! We shall try to glean such details of his life as we can from references in his own songs and add to these some particulars that have been handed down by tradition in the families of his pupils.

You may all recollect that at the end of every piece of his, the composer has signed his name as Tyagaraja. Tyagaraja is the name of the presiding Deity at the famous shrine at Tiruvarur, a place whose musical associations go back to the time of Saint Sundaramurti Nayanar and where the music trinity of South India, Syama Sastri, Muttuswami Dikshitar and Tyagaraja were all born. Tiruvarur, at that time, was one of the cultural head-quarters of the Cauvery delta and God Tyagaraja was worshipped by the Tanjore kings as their patron Deity, as can be seen by the numerous musical compositions, padas and natakas, in Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Sanskrit, on God Tyagaraja, composed by the poets, musicians and kings of the Tanjore court and lying among the manuscripts in the Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjore. One of the post-composers attached to the Tanjore court was an Andhra Brahmin settled at Tiruvarur, Sri Giriraja Kavi. To his daughter was our composer Sri Tyagaraja born at Tiruvarur. Giriraja was Tyagaraja's maternal grandfather and not paternal grandfather, as is usually said. Tyagaraja's father was Ramabrahmam, of a Telugu Vaidika Muriginadu family of Tiruvaiyar; that his house-name, Inti-peru, is Kakarla, is known from his *Naukacharitra*. It is said that Ramabrahmam was living at Tiruvaiyar in a house gifted by the Tanjore king, from which we can infer that the father, too, was one of no small attainments. To his maternal grandfather Giriraja, Tyagaraja makes an indirect allusion in his Ganesa Song in Bangala, 'Giriraja-Suta-Tanaya'. To his own father, Tyaga-

\* See the present writer's article on Sri Tyagaraja and Sri Narayana Tirtha in the Tyagaraja Centenary Volume published by the Andhra Gana Kala Parishat, Gautami Vidya Pitha, Rajahmundry.



raja makes more than one direct reference in his compositions; towards the end of one of his early pieces, 'Dorakuna ituvanti seva' in Bilahari, he says 'Ramabrahma-tanayudau Tyagaraju'—Tyagaraja, son of Ramabrahmam'; in his dramatic composition *Prahlada Bhakti Vijaya*, he pays obeisance to his father, both at the beginning and at the end; and in the initial reference, Tyagaraja describes Ramabrahmam as God Rama himself, which shows that his father too was a person of high spiritual attainment. The Sri Mukham that Upanishad Brahma Yogin of Kanchipuram sent to Sri Tyagaraja mentions Ramabrahmam as the classmate of that renowned Sannyasin-scholar. While one tradition calls Tyagaraja's mother Santamma, another gives her name as Sitamma. When later, Tyagaraja sang of Rama and Sita as his parents,—Sitamma Mayamma Sri Ramudu ma tandri—the poet probably meant it in a double sense.

Tyagaraja was born in Sarvajit, Chaitra, 27th, Monday, Sukla Saptami, Pushya, corresponding to 4th May, 1767, according to one tradition; but in 1759, according to others.

If Tiruvarur, his birthplace, was an ancient kshetra, renowned alike for its traditions, saints, devotees and musicians, Tiruvaiyar or Panchanada, where he lived, was a place of no less sanctity and traditions of learning and spirituality. If the land of the Five Rivers in the North proved a fertile soil for the creative output of the Vedic Rishis, this land of the Five Rivers in the South was not less productive of poets, philosophers, saints and musicians. Tyagaraja knew the great value of the kshetra where he lived and strove for his salvation; in his song in Atana, 'Epapamu jesitira', by playing a clever pun on the word Nada, he says that this place of rivers, Nadapura (or Nadapura नादपुर) is verily

the Lord's own place, as the Lord is the embodiment of Nada (नाद). In the Mukhari song 'Muripamu kalige gada', he says that his God Rama should be proud of a place in beautiful Panchanada kshetra, worthy of being coveted by Siva, on the banks of the Cauvery over which the mild Zephyr blows and where holy persons perform homas and chant Vedas.

"Iduleni Malaya marutamuche  
Kudina Kaveri tata mandu—  
Sivudu koru yogyamaine  
Sundaramagu puramu—"

And on the fertile Cauvery whose waters made the Choladesa not only a granary of grain, but a granary of brain too, Tyagaraja sang this fine song in Asaveri; 'Oh! Look at this lady Cauvery, gloriously proceeding to the Lord's place, the sea, fulfilling the desires of all, without difference. Now speeding fast, now roaring terribly and now placid with grace, with cuckoos singing on either side, touching shrine after shrine and worshipping deity after deity, with holy men worshipping her with flowers, on either side and extolling her verily as Raja Rajesvari—Look at her!'

"Sarivedalina I Kaveri Judare  
Varu Vivanuchu Judaga ta nav varigabhi  
shtamula nosongusu.  
Duramuna noka tavuna garjana bhikara  
noka tavuna nindu karunato

Niratamnga noka tavuna naduchuchu  
Vara kaveri kanyakumari  
Vedukaga kokilalu Mroyaganu  
Veduchu Rangesuni Juchi Maviredu  
jagamulaku jivanamaina  
Mudu rendu nadi nadu ni juda

Rajarajesvari yani pogaduchu  
Juchi sumamula dharamaraganamulu  
Pujalivugadala seyaka Tyagaraja sannu-  
turalai mudduga.

Some of the other mundane particulars of Tyagaraja's life, known mostly from tradition, are briefly told. Tyagaraja is said to have married a lady named Parvati, who pre-deceased him. According to one school of his pupils, this wife died early and issueless, and Tyagaraja married her sister Kanakambal and begot a daughter named Sitalakshmi. Sitalakshmi was married to one Kuppuswami of Ammal Agraharam, and a son Tyagaraja was born to them. When this Tyagaraja married one Guruvammal and died issueless, the direct line of Saint Tyagaraja became extinct.

Tyagaraja had an elder brother named Japyesa, who is very easily made a villain, to set off the greatness of Tyagaraja. It is said that Japyesa realising the musical greatness of Tyagaraja was over-anxious to make capital out of it; that Tyagaraja, however, would not yield to his brother's pressure to go to the royal court, sing the praise of mortal man and receive sumptuous presents and riches and that, enraged at the youngster's obstinate devotion to Rama, Japyesa took the Rama idol that was being worshipped by Tyagaraja and threw it into the flood of the Cauvery. It is also said that after the floods subsided, Tyagaraja searched for his precious idol in the sands and that many of his moving songs were sung at this time in the anguish of his separation from the Rama idol; particularly, the song 'Nenendu Vedagudura', is assigned to this context. While story-tellers are very sure of the context of this song, it is strange they do not know the real Raga of this piece. Let us see the text of the song once, and we shall find that it has no lower incidental significance, but has only the higher spiritual reference. Tyagaraja says here :

"Sri Hari! Where could I effectually search for you? Even Brahma could not

have a response from you to his prayers for a similar purpose. I have been a sinner, have done wicked deeds, have indulged often in vulgar talks and have imposed on the world as a great Bhakta."

The blackening of the elder brother, who is said to have partitioned the house and the belongings between himself and Tyagaraja, seems, however, to have an ultimate basis of some form of domestic conflict. For one of the details that we can directly gather from the Saint's songs, refers to the trouble that his elder brother gave him. In his 'Anyayamu seyakura' in Kapi, the Saint says at the end: 'Won't you free me from the trouble that my elder brother gives me?' "Na purvaju badha tirpa leda." Also, in his Madhyamavati song 'Nadupai', Tyagaraja refers to accusations against himself that he forced the partition of the house and property and wanted to celebrate daily festivals for Rama.

Similarly, it is said that Tyagaraja sang the well-known Kalyani piece, 'Nidhitsuksukhama' as a reply of refusal to an invitation from the king. Similar sentiments of vairagya and aversion to seek the patronage of the king or rich men are given expression to by all poets and saint-singers; for instance look at Tyagaraja's contemporaries and and compeers, Syama Sastri and Muttusvami Dikshitar; Sastri prays in his beautiful Ananda Bhairavi address to the Mother, 'Oh Jagadamba' that he should be saved from the calamity of singing for the low rich.—'Manavini vinuma mariyada lerugani—Dush-prabhula korivintimpaga varambosagi.' In his invocation to the Goddess of learning and music, 'Vinapustakadharini,' in Vegavahini, Dikshitar praises the Goddess as one who frees man from the calamity of looking up to the faces of small men— नराधमाननविलोकशोकापह्नाद्, and starts a regular song in Lalita, with the idea 'I

shall resort to Goddess Lakshmi and shun the resort to low men'— 'हिरण्मयीं लक्ष्मीं सदा भजामि, हीनमानवाश्रयं त्यजामि.' Similarly, though both on his paternal and maternal sides and on the side of his own music teacher, there was for Tyagaraja much contact with the Tanjore court and though the kings of Tanjore were themselves highly cultured and gifted persons whose association would hardly have devaluated his vairagya, all the same, Tyagaraja vowed, as part of his sadhana, to lead the life of a daily mendicant, go about singing the praise of Rama-Bhajana and live by Uncha.vritti.

Besides his own brother, Tyagaraja had about him at Tiruvaiyar, some detractors who ridiculed his ways of devotion, as well as his music. This is clear from some of his pieces in which he criticises and complains against these adversaries, calls into question their competence and exposes their false devotion. He asks Rama in some songs why He should be a witness to His devotee being humiliated among his compeers. There is a Samskrit saying that the composition of a contemporary poet and the beauty of one's own wife do not appeal to man\*, and it is indeed true generally that neither a saint nor an artist is ever recognised and honoured in his own time or clime. But though there was a critical or hostile opinion, Tyagaraja's songs and his name spread far and wide during his own lifetime. A number of pupils came to him and he imparted to each a corpus of his compositions according to his voice-quality and musical equipment. It is to these pupils, primarily to the representatives of the three branches of his Sishyaparampara of Umayalpuram, Tillaisthanam and Walajapet, starting with

Sundara Bhagavatar and Krishna Bhagavatar, Rama Ayyangar and Venkataramana Bhagavatar respectively, that we owe the propagation of the songs of the Saint. Of famous musicians who called on him, special mention is made and a story told of a Kerala musician called Shatkala Govinda; it is said that Tyagaraja commemorated the occasion of the visit of this musician of prodigious gift of voice, with one of his five main long pieces, referred to as the Pancha-ratnas, the song 'Endaro Mahanubhavalu andariki vandanamu' in Sri Raga. The song is an omnibus obeisance to the vast galaxy of realised souls, devotees, sages and saints and singers of the praise of the Lord and can have hardly any trace of an incident like the visit of Govinda. There were also invitations to him to go to several places and in the latter part of his life, Tyagaraja undertook a pilgrimage which extended from Tirupati in the North to Srirangam and Lalgudi in the South. At Tirupati again, a story is told that when he was eagerly approaching the *sanctum* for darsan, the priest had drawn the curtain and this occasioned the song in Gaulipantu, 'Tera diyaka rada,' "Oh Tirupati Venkataramana!" could you not remove the screen of anger, arrogance and jealousy which, taking a firm stand in me, keeps out of my reach Dharma, Moksha etc?" It is the veil of matsara and agnana from which one suffers that is further elaborated in the song. From Tirupati, the Saint came to Madras and its neighbourhood. The musical importance of Madras is not a matter of the present-day Sabhas and Academies. At that time, there were in Madras, great patrons of music, like Manali Muttukrishna and Chiniah Mudaliars, Devanayakam of Nungambakkam, Vedachalam, Pindakuri Venkatadri of Coral Merchant Street, who patronised stalwart musicians of the times—Rama swami Dikshitar and his three sons, Sonthi Venkataramayya, son of Sonthi Subbayya and Guru of Tyagaraja, Doraiswami

प्रत्यक्षकविकाव्यं च रूपं च कुल्योषितः ।

गृहवैद्यस्य च विद्या च कस्मैचिद्यदि रोचते ॥

Rajasekhara in his *Kavyamimamsa*.

and others.\* One of these enlightened gentlemen of Madras at that time was Kovur Sundara Mudaliar whose village was visited by Sri Tyagaraja. At Kovur, Tyagaraja sang five songs on God Sundaresa there, 'I vasudha nivanti' in Sahana 'Sambho Mahadeva' in Pantuvarali, and others. At Tiruvotriyur, the place of siddhas and saints, the shrine having a duplicate of the deity after whom Tyagaraja was named, Tyagaraja was drawn by the presence of the Goddess Tripurasundari on whom he sang the pieces 'Sundari ni divya rupa' in Kalyani, 'Darini telusu konti' in Suddha Saveri and others. He then went to the holy city of Kanchi, where at that time lived a noble Sannyasin and Ramabhakta named Upanishad Brahmam, an author of Advaitic works and a votary of Nadabrahmam. He had sent a Srimukham inviting Tyagaraja to his place and we still have the original letter. At Kanchi, the composer sang a few pieces like 'Varadaraja ninnukori' in Svarabhushani, and 'Vinayakuni' in Madhyamavati, on Kamakshi.

Stories are told of how, during his itinerary in these northern districts, with a song, he once revived a dead person and how at another time, when thieves harassed him, Rama himself appeared and walked by his side as guard.

At Negapatam, he sang of Goddess Nilayatakshi, in two pieces. 'Jutamurare' in Arabhi, 'O Rangassayi' in Kambhoji and 'Rajurvedala' in Todi are some of his songs on Sri Ranganatha, at Srirangam. It is not not known what took Tyagaraja to the village of Lalgudi, known as Tapastirthapura. On the Goddess Mahitapravridha at that place, Tyagaraja has sung four pieces.

During the visits of admirers and pupils and during these travels, he came to realise how his fame as a musician had spread all over the country and in the fulness of his satisfaction and gratitude to his beloved Deity, he says in his song in Todi, 'Dasarathi Ni Rinamu tirpa na tarama' that Rama was the greatest savant, 'Rasikasiromani', who discerned the worth of Tyagaraja's songs, enjoyed them and spread them to the distant lauds to the full satisfaction of His devotee,

'Asa tira duradesamulanu  
prakasimpa jesina  
Rasikasiromani Dasarathi,  
ni rinamu tirpa na tarama'—

and asks 'Is it possible for me to repay the debt I owe you for this?'

Tyagaraja had a full consciousness of the mission with which his life was charged on this earth; as he says in his Asaveri piece, 'Epaniko jauninchiti,' he clearly saw that he was born with the mission of singing again of Rama even as sage Valmiki and others did of yore; and with full knowledge, care and joy, he carried out to his soul's content, the task to which he was called; in his song in Ganavaridhi, 'Dayaguchatuku', he gives expression to this supreme gratification of a self-conscious artist, born to fulfil a noble mission entrusted to him by the Lord.

'Munu Nivu Anaticchina  
Panulu Asakoni Ne  
Manasaraka Nidhanamuga Salpinanu'

The anguish and the plaintive strain of many of his songs may lead one to think of Tyagaraja as a meek and a frail spirit. But a large number of his songs, in which his bold spirit is seen, show the strength of his mind and his firm faith in God and himself and the knowledge of his own musical excellence and the consciousness of himself being in

\*See the present writer's article on Some Musicians and their Patrons in Madras about 1800 A. D. as revealed in a Sanskrit manuscript work called *Sarvadevavilasa*, in the Journal of the Madras Music Academy, Vol. XVI. pp. 127-136.

the right. In the familiar piece 'Nidhisala-sukhama,' he refers to himself as the wise Tyagaraja, 'Sumati Tyagaraja'. In the other, familiar piece, in Devagandhari, Namoralagimpavemi, he plays a poetic pun on the word Sugriva and asks Rama, that if Sugriva should be protected for his beautiful neck, (Su-griva), for the same reason of his own Su-griva, (excellent musical voice), he should also be protected. Look especially at his Mukhari piece, 'Chintistunnade', in which he dwells on the anxiety of Yama, the lord of hell, who is unable to claim any victim, because people have all taken to singing the saving songs of Tyagaraja. 'Saramaina Tyagaraju Samkirtanamu Paderanusu-chintastunnade Yamudu'.

Just as Tyagaraja was conscious of the high spiritual value of his songs, he was conscious also of their great musical excellence. His music was the natural climax of an age of giants at Tanjore, the musical atmosphere there having been enriched by the contributions of Kshetrajna, Narayana Tirtha, Virabhadrayya, to mention only a few of the first rank. According to one tradition Tyagaraja was himself the grandson of Vina Kalahastayya. He had his musical lessons from Sonti Venkataramanayya, son of Sonti Subbanna, of whose music a Sanskrit contemporary work\* says that it would make barren trees sprout. No wonder that popular imagination speaks of his having been personally initiated by sage Narada himself. No wonder, also, that in his own Mukhari piece, 'Elavatara-mettukontivi', Tyagaraja makes bold to say finally that Rama incarnated himself only to enjoy and bless Tyagaraja for his songs in hundreds of Ragas.

Tyagaraja's musical contribution is remarkable for its quantity and variety, as

\* *Sarvadevavilasa*; see the present writer's article in the Journal of the Madras Music Academy, Vol. XVI. p. 135.

much as for its quality. The highest musical excellence is found in his compositions which we have come to call kritis, in which he captured and effectively pictured the essence of Ragas. In his compositions, there is a wide variety of form and type, from metrical compositions and settings suggested by the European band-tunes that were then familiarised at Tanjore,—e.g. Girirajasuta and Ramamsuvarevarura, to creations like Koluvaivunnade, where Sangatis are heaped and the Sahityas are moulded like Pallavis. As part of the daily worship of the Rama idol, he composed a series of songs expressing the several services, the shodasa upacharas, forming part of the worship. At that time, there was widely prevalent in the Tanjore area, the practice of celebrating in Bhajana mathas, the festivals of Radhakalyanam and Sitakalyanam. Tyagaraja composed a series of songs referred to as the Utsava sampradaya kirtanas and Divya-nama-samkirtanas, for a full festival like these. Above all, Tyagaraja attempted also to produce full musical plays. During his times, in temples and certain villages of Tanjore, like Merattur, there was the practice of enacting in Abhinaya, musical plays by troupes of Bhagavatars, proficient in music and dance.\* Tyagaraja had much fascination for this devotional dramatic tradition sanctified by the association of Jayadeva and his *Gita Govinda* and, much nearer his time, Narayana Tirtha and his *Krishna lila tarangini*. An elder contemporary of Tyagaraja was an accomplished music composer of Merattur named Venkatarama Bhagavata, who enriched this Bhagavata mela nataka sampradaya with his musical plays like the *Prahlada charitra*. Inspired by these

\* See the present writer's Bhagavata Mela Nataka in the Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta, Vol. V. 1937, pp. 167-170; Journal of the Madras Music Academy, Vol. XVII. pp. 160-161.

Tyagaraja composed two musical plays, bringing out the greatness of devotion, called the *Prahlada bhakti vijayam* and the *Nauka charitra*. Pious tradition believes that, on the whole, Tyagaraja composed, to be on a par with the 24,000 slokas of Valmiki's Ramayana, 24,000 songs on the glory of Rama. Even the songs that are now available, 800 or so, form quite a substantial contribution.

We are, however, not concerned on this occasion with any detailed study of Tyagaraja as a musical genius. Among musicians of his time, Tyagaraja was one who underwent a poignant life of devotional and spiritual striving and by the meaning and message packed in the passages of his songs, he takes his place among the musician-saints of our country, like Kabir, and Purandaradas who exerted a very large influence on him or the pioneers of devotional poetry in this part of the country, like the Alvars, and the Nayanars. Among the music composers of his time, Tyagaraja was a poet, preacher and philosopher. Those that have heard his songs again and again and have been carried away by their music, have no suspicion of the wealth of idea that lies underneath, like gems within the ocean. Time and again, we sit before our favourite songster and wait for the thrill of a particular *sangati* or *sanchara*, in his song: neither we nor the singer realises the equally thrilling poetic fancy or philosophic truth which that musical flourish hides within itself. When you look at this aspect of his songs, you will not be reminded of the musical setting of his age, of the heritage of Sonti Venkataramanayya, Adippayya and so on, but you will recall a different background, of a religious and spiritual revival on the banks of the Cauvery, of Narayana Tirtha, Sadasiva Brahmendra, Ayyaval and Bodhendra and of the rise of the cult of the Lord's Name, Nama Siddhanta, as the most

potent means of realising God. His reformist zeal for true devotion and discarding of sham and meaningless form and ritual, derived its direct inspiration from the Padas of Purandaradasa and an entire school of Rama Bhakti developed by saints and books, like Ramananda, Tulasidas, the *Adhyatma Ramayana*, and Ramadas gave his imagination everything that was needed in his pilgrim's progress for the realisation of Ramachandra. Tyagaraja's songs will therefore be not only a huge dam storing for us our precious musical heritage, but one more of the bibles which our saints have given us for our spiritual salvation.

Friends, we shall accordingly spend our eight more mornings of this holy festival by dwelling on some of the aspects of the rich spiritual heritage of Tyagaraja and devote our attention to the message of the songs that Tyagaraja composed for the salvation of humanity;

Tyagaraju kadatera tarakamani jesina.  
Sata Ragaratna malikarache ranjillunata  
Baga Sevinchi sakala bhagyam ondu damu  
Ra Re  
Naigama shat sastra purana agamartha  
sahitamata  
Yogivarulu anandamu onde sanmargamuata  
Bhagavatulu gudi pade kirtanamulata  
Tyagaraju kadatera tarakamani jesina  
Sata Ragaratna malikache ranjillunata.

"Come one and all and sing the hundreds of gem-like melodies which Tyagaraja composed for the salvation of humanity; songs which contain the essence of the Vedas, the six Sastras, Puranas, and Agamas, which the Bhagavatas congregate and sing forth and which show the right path to attain the bliss realised by the great Yogins.

"Oh come, one and all, sing them well and be blessed."

# THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD :

## TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION (iv) SUBJECT MATTER AND PLAN OF ARRANGEMENT

By SWAMI TYAGISANANDA

The *Chhandogya Upanishad* consists of eight chapters, and each chapter is divided into many sections and sub-sections. As we have already noted, it is a Samhita (संहिता) or collection of the records of the spiritual experiences of various rishis of ancient times. Naturally we must expect to find in it varying presentations of spiritual truths. On a first perusal of the book, the mind of the reader may get a little confused at the heterogeneous and scrappy nature of the collections, apparently without any underlying unity of plan. But a careful student can see some plan in the arrangement adopted by the compiler. We shall try to enlighten our readers about this underlying plan.

We have already tried to point out in our previous articles that all Hindu scriptures deal mainly with one topic namely, the realisation of the Absolute Truth, Brahman-Atman. In this there is no disagreement between the Karma-kanda and the Jnana-kanda. The Upanishads as we have seen, give the essence of the scriptures, and, therefore, we must expect to find the *Chhandogya Upanishad* also interested only in presenting the same topic in its own way.

The Absolute Truth, in itself, is admitted by one and all to be beyond the province of speech and thought. What any book could, therefore, attempt to do is only to give the reader some idea of It, however vague it may be. We should always be careful not to confuse any idea or description of It with the actual entity or experience in itself. Any attempt to visualise the infinite Absolute which refuses to be limited by names and forms of speech and thought, or to think about or describe It, would only end in painting at best, a caricature of It, however highly qualified the teacher may be. The mind and the senses cannot but transform what they attempt to grasp, in the very

process of knowing It. But this does not mean that the caricature is of no use at all to one who has no actual experience of the original. Even two portraits or photographs of the same physical object cannot be exactly similar to each other or to the original. Every picture purports to express and represent not the original but only the painter's or photographer's or cartoonist's idea of it. In spite of this a portrait or a photograph is admittedly capable of giving some idea of the original to one who has not seen. A caricature or cartoon is, likewise, a true representation of the original, as far as it goes, though not exactly similar to it in all details, however grotesque and crude it may appear to be at first sight. The only defect of the caricature is that it over-emphasises certain aspects of the original to the exclusion or suppression of others, according to the capacity, predilections and idiosyncrasy of the cartoonist. It thus makes some aspects of it more prominent at the expense of others. The picture, though not quite true to the original, does suggest something about it, which is, relatively true, and thus gives an opportunity to others to know something about the original, though not the whole of it. Even the over-emphasised characteristics must have a necessary and real basis of fact, and if they are purely imaginary, they will not be suggestive of the original and thus would fail in their purpose.

If such is the case even with the picture of an ordinary physical object, it goes without saying that all ideas and descriptions of the Absolute must necessarily be only relatively true, but still true, after all, in their own way, and suggestive enough to enable one to remind oneself of the original of which it is a caricature. It is no wonder then that the Absolute appeared in different forms to different rishis of ancient times and

different names were given to each of them. In fact the whole universe, is, according to the Vedanta, only a mass of such names and forms in which the Absolute appears to the clouded vision of men. (*Vide Chhandogya*; chapter VI). According to one's adherence the one or the other system of philosophy, one may consider these names and forms as false or real, but everyone must admit that the various names and forms of the Absolute are capable of revealing some aspect or other of Reality, and, as such, are helpful, because of this suggestiveness. Even the worst of these names and forms have a background of Reality, and are suggestive of this Reality, if one's attention is drawn to it. Each of these names and forms presented to us by the rishis are as real as any other object in the universe, but more suggestive than the latter and because of the actual experience of the rishis and as they are specially recorded only to serve as special pointers to the absolute, for the benefit of later generations of pilgrims to Perfection.

The first thing, therefore, to be kept in mind in the study of the *Chhandogya* is that the various pictures, given in the different chapters and sections of the book, are true revelations of the same fundamental and essential Absolute, which is only one. There may be many ways to reach this same goal and some of them may be apparently opposed to each other as in the case of two roads converging on the same place from opposite directions. In spite of this apparent opposition, they do actually lead to the same goal. Again, one may have different views of the same hill, if one attempts to climb it from different directions, and even different views of the same peak are possible in the course of the ascent through any one path from any one direction. All these views are relatively real, and knowledge of these views can give some help to one who tries to climb the hill for the first time. Similarly, the various teachings contained in the various chapters and sections of the text are all helpful to

persons who want to climb to the peak of the Absolute.

Since it is the same Absolute, Brahman-Atman that appears as different objects of the universe, every object in the universe, whether physical, vital or mental can reveal some aspect of this Absolute, in spite of the diversity in names and forms, to a pure mind, well-trained in concentration and in scientific or philosophic analysis, just as an ordinary physical scientist can get at the electron or energy by a scientific study and analysis of any atom of matter. Many such objects such as the sun, fire, wind etc., have actually revealed the Atman to many rishis through philosophical analysis, just as mind and life have served as the medium of revelation to others. To those, who have had the opportunity to collate those revelations through various objects, must have been revealed also the substantial and essential identity of these objects which had served as revealers, with the Atman, and thus the truth of the fundamental unity of the whole universe came to be inevitably recognised by them. Adaptation of life, in terms of this revelation of Truth, naturally followed as the ideal of life. The various practices or experiments, which enabled the rishis to realise the Atman as the essence of the whole universe, were all considered as capable of leading others also to the same realisation and these came to be recorded along with the goal and ideal of life. Those, who want to have the same realisation, have first to understand the teachings of these records, and perform the same experiments themselves to arrive at the experience which the rishis themselves had. This knowledge, and practice based on such knowledge is called Vidya (विद्या). The *Chhandogya Upanishad*, therefore, treats of the various aspects of Vidya.

This Vidya, as we have seen, has got two aspects, positive and negative, which are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. The positive aspect mainly consists in truly under-



standing that aspect of Atman which is sought to be revealed through that particular Vidya, and concentration on that aspect, and continuous loving meditation on it until, at last, this aspect of the Atman becomes part of one's actual experience. This is called yoga (योग). Everything that obstructs this is to be renounced and this renunciation is called tyaga (त्याग). There can be no tyaga without yoga and no yoga without tyaga. Therefore, everyone of the Vidyas mentioned in the *Chhandogya* emphasises these two aspects in relation to that particular Vidya.

The *Chhandogya* presents the Highest, sometimes in terms of external objects such as the sun, fire, air, lightning etc., and such presentation it calls Adhidaivatam (अधिदैवतम्); sometimes it presents the same teaching in terms of vital and mental phenomena, and this presentation it calls Adhyatmam (अध्यात्मम्). At other times again, the revelations of the absolute are presented through some elements of a ritualistic sacrifice, which have been helpful revealing the Truth to some of the past. Sometimes, the self-same Truth is presented in terms of its revelation through the mantras forming part of Vedic chanting. The former may be called Adhiyajnam (अधियज्ञम्) and the latter Adhivedam (अधिवेदम्) though these two terms are not actually met with in our text. The *Chhandogya* takes care, however, to bring all these varying presentations into harmony with one another by identifying their fundamental teaching to be the same essence of the universe, the Atman.

Thus we have the identification of the Adhyatmam and Adhidaivatam (अध्यात्मम् and अधिदैवतम्) in I. 3-2., I. 4-5., I. 7-4., III. 12-7-9., III. 13-7., III. 18-1., IV. 3-1-4., IV. 10-5. The final culmination of this identification is given in such statements as "सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलम्," of III. 14-1., "सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत्," and "तत्त्वमसि," of the sixth chapter, "आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्,"

of chapter VII and "तद्ब्रह्म तदमृतं स आत्मा," of the eight chapter. In the Adhiyajna (अधियज्ञ) presentation we have the various Agnis (अग्नि) of the ritual identical with the Akshi Purusha (अक्षि पुरुष) in the Upakosala vidya of the fourth chapter, and also with the whole universe in Vaisvanaravidya. The whole yajna itself is identified with the Akshi purusha or Atman in IV. 16, and with Brahmacharya in VIII. 5-1. The whole human life is considered as one yajna in Purushavidya of the third chapter and the whole of Trayividya (त्रयी विद्या) is considered only as the worship of the Atman in I. 1-10. Again in the Adhiveda (अधिवेद) presentation, we have the identification of Udgitha (उद्गीथ) or Aum with the fundamental essence of the universe at the very beginning of the Upanishad in I. 1. The Gayatri (गायत्री) is identified with Brahman in the Gayatri Vidya of the third chapter. The whole of Rik, Saman and Yajus are identified with this Udgitha and with the absolute in I. 4-4., and in II. 23. We have the whole universe identified with Aum. In I. 3-12. we have the direction to meditate on the Atman when the chanting is done. In the eighth chapter, in the Indra Virochana episode, we have a final explanation of Aum in terms of the analysis of the three states.

We thus see that, in spite of the variety of presentations, the *Chhandogya* takes care to impress upon its readers their underlying unity.

The whole of the *Chhandogya* as we have seen, is condensed in Mahavakyas like

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म<sup>1</sup>, तत्त्वमसि<sup>1</sup>, आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्<sup>1</sup>,

etc. The Udgitha or Aum forms the essence of these Mahavakyas. This Aum is indeed, the seed of the whole Vedantic philosophy and the quintessence of all Vedantic teaching. The whole *Chhandogya*, as we shall show in the course of the explanation of the text, seems to be only an attempt to progressively reveal the significance of this Aum and its various elements. That is why

the Upanishad begins with Udgitha vidya and ends with the description of the Turiya Atman (तुरीय आत्मन्) which forms the underlying essence of the experiences of the three states. In the intervening chapters, we have only a repetition of the same topic, over and over again, in different forms and colours. If we apply the various tests of the Mimamsakas for finding out the fundamental teaching of a text, enumerated in the famous verse उपक्रमोपसंहारौ etc., we shall find that the *Chhandogyā* is only an exposition of the implications and suggestions of this quintessence of all Vedanta in all its aspects.

The compiler, a good educationist, is fully aware of the importance of the principle of proceeding from the concrete to the abstract and, in the spirit of the Arundhati Nyaya, he takes care to present the more concrete forms first and the more abstract ones last so as to serve the progress of the aspirant from the initial to the more advanced stages. He has also taken care to satisfy the needs of the grihasthas, by arranging the topics in such a way as to suit their daily practices and avocations, as far as possible. This serves to regularise their spiritual sadhana, without prejudice to their daily routine. Thus the day of a Samavedin begins with the Udgitha in the प्रातः सवन of a Somayaga, followed by Sandhyavandana (सन्ध्यावन्दन) and the Panchamahayajna (पञ्चमहायज्ञ), and the day closes with a meditation and prayer before sleep. The *Chhandogyā*, therefore, begins with spiritual practices that could be undertaken along with the प्रातः सवन, सन्ध्यावन्दन and the Panchamahayajnas in regular succession, and ends with an analysis of sleep and its implications which could be two meditated upon just before retiring. The first two chapters deal with topics connected with the Saman chants in a Somayaga, the third deals with those associated with Sandhyavandana such as Adityopasthana (आदित्योपस्थान) and Gayatri japa etc. The fourth and fifth deal with meditations in relation to Agnihotra,

Avapana, (अग्निहोत्र, औपासन), the feeding of guests and the poor, and acts of public service. The final three chapters deal with vichara (विचार) or philosophical enquiry into the three aspects of Satchidananda, based upon an actual analysis of the implications of the experience of the three states. The whole text closes with a description of a Jivanmukta who lives in the world unattached like a mud-fish, but who is actively engaged in serving the world in all possible ways, all the while immersed in the consciousness of the Atman, and the unity of all creation, calmly waiting for the final call from above, with a mind serene, with the consciousness of duties properly discharged as worship of God, in accordance with the teachings of the Gita.

The various Vidyas are also arranged in such a way as to satisfy the needs of the four types of yogas. In the initial chapters, we have meditations connected with karma, and hence these Vidyas may be considered as representing Karma-Yoga. Chapters III to V deal with meditations on and devotion to Saguna Brahman such as are generally adopted by theists and devotees of God and may therefore be taken as representing Bhakti Yoga. The final three chapters are devoted to intellectual analysis and investigation of the Absolute Truth, and therefore may be considered as representing the practices of Jnana Yoga. All the Vidyas partake of the nature of the Raja-Yoga in so far as they are forms of meditation leading to Samadhi. Thus we have a progress from Karma-Yoga to Jnana-Yoga through Bhakti Yoga, ending in realisation and Jivanmukti. The *Chhandogyā* thus advocates a synthesis of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma, based on constant awareness of the Atman, and devoted service of the world in the highest stage.

The meditations themselves are also graded to advance progress in spiritual life. All people are not in the same stage of spiritual development. The Upanishad, therefore,

prescribes various Vidyas to suit the different stages of development. As pointed out by the *Brahma Sutras* III, 3.56. "विकल्पः अवशिष्टफलत्वात्-" there is option with respect to the several Vidyas, because their result is the same. Each and everyone of the Vidyas need not be practised by all, and anyone may be selected according to one's needs and capacities. The *Brahma Sutras* III. 3.1—4 point out that the Upasanas described in the various Vedantic texts are not really different, unless they have different subject-matter altogether. The meditations given in the first two chapters belong to the type called अङ्गावब्रह्मोपासन. Here various deities are to be meditated upon by ritualists in connection with the elements of the sacrifice. When the aspirants become better qualified, they are expected to rise to the next higher stage of प्रतीकोपासन, as depicted in the third chapter. These Pratikopasanas need have nothing to do with rituals as such, but the meditator relies upon some known object or other, to serve as a peg to hang his ideas on. These objects help him to keep the mind concentrated on God, or Brahman through the psychological principle of association of ideas. The very objects, the sun, the fire, the air etc., which are meditated upon as deities of the various parts of the sacrifice in the previous type of Upasana, are themselves here treated only as Pratikas (प्रतीक) or symbols of God. Unlike the previous stage, where parts of sacrifice are meditated upon as Aditya etc., here, in the second stage Aditya etc., are meditated upon as Brahman. Vide *Brahma Sutras* IV. 1.5 & 6. "ब्रह्महृष्टिदुर्कर्षात्" and "आदित्यादि मतयश्च अङ्गे उपपन्तेः ।" In the first, mere exercise is given to the mind in concentration and meditation, in the second this meditation is directed to God. The symbols themselves are kept in mind only as reminders and the meditation is upon Brahman itself with the help of the symbols. The physical symbol may give place to mental symbol in the higher stage of this Pratikopasana, as when

one is asked to meditate upon the mind itself as God in III. 18. When the mind is sufficiently trained and developed to think of Brahman without the help of any symbol, the practitioner has to rise to independent meditation on Brahman. At this stage, God is conceived of as the repository of an infinite number of auspicious qualities, and may be even invested, in one's imagination, with human attributes and personality (Sakara). Such meditation is referred to in the fourth chapter (IV. 15). This is the God of the theists whom devotees like to contemplate upon. This upasana is called Sagunopasana. This God may be even conceived of as formless (Nirakara) but still he is invested with qualities such as creation, protection, destruction. Such Sagunopasana is mentioned in III, 14. and in Vaisvanara Vidya, where the whole universe is meditated upon as God. Even at this stage, God is thought of only as an object, but in the next stage, the aspirant has to meditate upon Brahman, as He is in reality. The search for Truth begins at this stage and takes the form of an enquiry into the essence of God Himself who has manifested as the universe, so the sixth chapter deals with the Sadvidya (सद्विद्या) or the problem of Reality, the seventh with its Ananda-aspect, and the eighth with its Chit-aspect. This Satchidananda which is the goal of all spiritual endeavour is not something existing outside as an object, but it is the essence of both the meditator and his object of worship. The Brahman is here meditated upon as the Atman of the meditator, as is mentioned in *Brahma Sutras* IV, 1.3. आत्मा इति तु उपगच्छन्ति ग्राहयन्ति च । In the previous stages of meditation, a good deal of imagination has to be used to give name and form to the Absolute. These names and forms really exist only in the meditator's own mind as ideas, and as ideas they come and go. Sagunopasana consists only in repeatedly keeping the same idea in the mind, continuously without any other idea intervening between any two moments. The continuity of thought here

is only like the continuity of the river whose every particle is always changing. In the next stage of upasana, the mind has already intellectually understood the nature of the Absolute, which does not change in the midst of all changes, as a result of the study of the scriptures, philosophical enquiry and self-analysis and observation. This Absolute is that which is present even in the interval between any two ideas. Cf. VIII. 14. "आकाशो वै नाम नामरूपयोर्निर्वहिता ते यदन्तरा तद्ब्रह्म तदमृतं स आत्मा" This can never be thought of as it is not an idea. It is neither subject nor object. It is beyond name and form, beyond relativity, beyond space, time and causation. Even its description as Satchidananda or Sakshi (साक्षी) does not really touch this Absolute, for, immediately the words are employed, the meditator will be thinking only of the ideas denoted by these words, and in meditating on the meaning of the words, he makes the Absolute Saguna (सगुण). If at all one tries to conceive of It which is really as impossible as climbing on one's own shoulders, one can think of It only in negative terms, such as devoid of all attributes, inconceivable, indescribable etc. Whatever objects one may sense and whatever ideas one may think, It is not that. Such negative characterisation we find in VII. 24.1. यत्र नान्यत्पश्यति नान्यत् श्रुणोति नान्यद्विजानाति स भूमा । Also in एष आत्मा अपहृतपाप्मा विजरो विमृत्युर्विशोको विजिघत्सोऽपिपासः etc. of VIII. 15. and VIII. 7.1. and अक्षरीरं of VIII. 12. Although we use these negative expressions, we can grasp only an idea of the Absolute and not the Absolute itself, but this is the only highest way of grasping It, open to unrealised man, so long, as the mind works in the relative plane of subject and object, and within the framework of time, space and causation. To keep this idea of the Absolute as inconceivable and indescribable, continuously in mind, without allowing any ideas of name and form to obstruct it (Vide VIII, 14),

is the highest stage of upasana called Nirgunopasana. But even this is only the penultimate stage, which is only a step to the highest stage of actual realisation of the Absolute, known as Jnanam (ज्ञानम्) which characterises the Jivanmukta. One, who has reached this highest realisation of the Absolute Brahman—Atman, does not need to put forth any effort—mental, physical or social because he has nothing more to achieve for himself, as he has transcended all egoism. But still his whole life will be an expression of his highest realisation. He lives an active life of लोकसङ्ग्रह or सर्वभूतहितेरिति, in the language of the Gita. As, when the sun shines, the shining is an activity only in name, and does not entail any effort on the part of the sun, so, in the case of the realised man, service of the world or meditation on the Atman does not entail any effort as it becomes natural to him. It is in this sense that it is said that a realised man does not work. He is in constant meditation or is a ब्रह्मसंस्थ in the midst of his activity, and as such activity and meditation can go together since there is no conflict between such Jnanam and such Karma. This is the goal of all Vidyas. The whole Upanishad, therefore, closes with the description of this Jivan-mukti. When the whole universe is seen as Brahman it becomes Brahmaloaka. All enjoyments in such Brahmaloaka are Brahmananda. It is this bliss of Brahman that the Jivan-mukta enjoys while still alive. It is this Bliss that is described concretely in glowing colours towards the closing sections of the Upanishad, in terms that a layman can appreciate.

Thus we see that the *Chhandogya upanishad* has an underlying unity of plan, which may not be discernible to a casual reader, but which has to be kept in mind to appreciate the teachings of the text in their innate harmony.

# REMINISCENCES OF SISTER NIVEDITA

By DINESH CHANDRA SEN

In 1901, I was appointed as Reader in the University of Calcutta and was entrusted with the work of writing a '*History of the Bengali Language and Literature*' in English. After finishing the work, I had it examined by two persons. I have already spoken of one of them, Sri Kumuda Bandhu Bose. But I have particularly to mention about Miss Margaret Noble, well-known in Bengal as Nivedita. Bose Para Lane (now Nivedita Lane) was close to our house in Calcutta. She had rented a two-storeyed house therein and started a school for girls. One morning, I went to her and broached the subject of examining my book. She readily agreed. I said that the book was very big. She replied 'However big it be, I shall examine as I have promised.' And with a smiling face, she bade me farewell.

Nivedita was an extremist in politics. After some time, she would never discuss politics with me. She used to call me a coward, weaker than one of the weaker sex and so on. If I spoke anything on politics, she would flare up with anger and say 'Dinesh Babu, this is not your field. I will not talk politics with you.'

However, she went through my book with extraordinary patience and perseverance. Though there were some faults of idiom in some places, she summed up her opinion as follows: 'Your English is good'. From the standpoint of ideas, we had constant conflicts. Her views and convictions therein were so strong that she would never accept my opinions. Even though it be on a point regarding Hindu Society, I had to yield to her..... Thus, we would discuss for long and sometimes not a line further would be read. One or two days would be spent in discussion. Nivedita would be so

obstinate now and then that she would say 'Dinesh Babu, if you do not make this alteration, I shall not read your book any further' I would then be in a dilemma and modify a little to satisfy her. If something was not to her liking, she would stop and like an elephant stuck in the mire would proceed no further. She forgot that it was I who was responsible for the opinions given in the book and that I had entrusted the book to her merely to revise the English. In this respect, I found her quite a woman.

Whenever she shouldered a responsibility, she could not think of that work as that of another. She would exert herself to the utmost as if it were her own work. No reward can purchase such labour. On some days she would work from morning till 10 P. M. She and I would finish our meals in five minutes and the rest of the time would be devoted wholly to work. I have rarely come across another who was so utterly unselfish and thoroughly devoted, giving oneself up in a matter in which one was not merely indifferent, but wholly hostile. The ideal Nishkama Karma (work without attachment) which I had merely read in the Gita was fully exemplified in her.

The corrections made by her were mostly with regard to the ideas and only to a slight extent to the language of the book. Her ability to apprehend the deep significance of any poem was extraordinary. I have quoted a portion from the *Sunya Purana* about Shiva which ran thus: 'O! Shiva why do you beg for your food? Begging is despicable. Sometimes, you may get some thing and sometimes you may have to return empty-handed. Take to agriculture and your sorrows will end. Oh Lord, how long will you remain stark-naked or but barely clad in tiger-skin? If you take to spinning cotton, you can clothe yourself and be very happy.' I did not think that there was anything peculiarly Indian in

\* Translated by Sri P. Seshadri Iyer, B. A. M. L. of Travancore University, from the Bengali book 'Gharer Kathano Yuga-Sahitya' by Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen. 1320 B. E. 1923 A. D.)

this passage. But she became exultant when she read this portion and exclaimed 'Wonderful, wonderful'. I said: "Sister" is there anything in this that you feel so jubilant as if a beggar has suddenly been raised to a King. Nivedita kept her eyes fixed on the poem and clapped her hands in joy and merely spoke thus: 'Dinesh Babu, "this is wonderful, most wonderful." I thought that the eccentric lady had gone crazy. Another European lady whose name I do not now remember was also there at the time. Next day I found her alone and questioned her as to what Nivedita had found wonderful in that poem. She replied 'The ordinary devotee seeks help from his God, and prays for health, wealth, fame and other things. There is no end to the boons he desires. But in this poem, the devotee loves his God with such intensity that he forgets all about himself. He does not take into account his miseries. His heart melts at the thought of the sufferings of his God. His whole mind is anxious as to how the Lord will be relieved of His miseries.'

It was then that I understood a little of the greatness of the mind and the heart of Nivedita. If I spoke with indifference to, or disrespect, of the village folk songs, Nivedita would grow indignant and rebuke me mercilessly. She would say "there is often deeper and truer poetry in the unpolished language of village folksongs than in the works of those who are acclaimed as great poets by their high-flown words and flourishes. Pray, do not slight the peasants' songs. Though the rhyme may not be perfect, in them there is feeling, genuine sympathy. Though the composers may not be acquainted with the dictionary meaning of words, there is life in their simple words. Though there be not pillars of gold or silver in their lovely huts, there is the sweet fragrance of the beautiful flowers of Nature.'

I could become legitimately angry and annoyed at many of her criticisms during the course of the perusal of the book, but I did not. I could see her most tender,

sympathetic and appreciative heart, soft and sweet like the fresh blossom, beneath the harsh words. She would sometimes say. 'I have not seen in the whole world another simpleton like you. Your foolishness surprises even me, a woman'. At other times, stopping at some passages, she would exclaim, 'Dinesh Babu, you are indeed a great poet. Even though you have written prose, your style is truly poetic. Your literary talents are extraordinary.' Thus being extravagantly rebuked and exaggeratedly praised by turns I grew indifferent to both and remained silent. But, when a stranger came, she would speak of me in a few hearty words and I would really feel gratified. Once, when an Englishman, her friend, came to see her, she introduced me to him thus: 'There is none to equal this gentleman in the knowledge of the social conditions of Bengal. He has discovered the history of the Bengal society from the peasant's hut to the royal palace by means of the torn and scattered manuscripts he has collected with great care'. Brahmachari Ganen used to be always with us. I would make fun of his broken English. Nivedita would say, 'You must admit that Ganen is able to express his mind by his English. The expression of his face and the movements of his hand supplement any deficiency in this respect.' Nivedita could very well understand Bengali and it was only to show her his depth of knowledge in the English tongue that Ganen would now and then speak in English. When she read that part of my book where I had praised the Vaishnava poems she pressed me to get a Vaishnava singer to sing them to her. One day, I brought a Vaishnava beggar from the street and made him sing. Her eyes were filled with tears of joy when she listened to the song, beginning with "Oh Gauri! my Gauri has come" and she gave a rupee to the beggar. For a few days an American lad of 20, Alexander by name was her guest. He was an extraordinary genius. The insight he had even at that early age into the Hindu religion and literature was wonderful and

truly surprising in a foreigner. Nivedita would say that it was a feast for the eyes to see his quickness in brilliant composition. Even the typewriter could not keep pace with his speed in writing. Alexander gave promise of a bright future as a great writer and a genius by his '*Life of the Swami Vivekananda*' but his career was cut short by his early death.

Nivedita had a companion, Sister Christina, an American. She was soft and sweet by nature. When Nivedita becomes delighted in reading a portion of my book, she would often remark, 'Dinesh Babu, I considerably differ from you in politics; and your cowardice makes me not only ashamed of you but wounds me to the core of my heart. Nevertheless, I like you. Do you know the reason? You have done so much for your country and that without any ostentation; and you have shown so much love and devotion to your country that you can legitimately claim to be a true patriot.' She used to constantly make fun of me calling me a coward. One day I really exhibited my cowardice and was ashamed of it. That night, Nivedita, Ganen and myself were walking on the bank of the Ganges near Baghbar. I was in front, Nivedita just behind me and Ganen last of all. Suddenly, a mad bull rushed towards me. I turned aside and ran to save my life. I did not pause to think that by my action Nivedita was exposed to the attack of the bull. Ganen jumped forward and boldly faced the animal which fled away. Then we rejoined. Nivedita laughed and in an ironical vein addressed me thus: "You have this day shed lustre on the entire masculine class of humanity. Leaving a helpless woman to face a mad bull, you have saved your skin. This one act of yours will remain as a permanent memorial of your fame." Then she cast off her mock smile of raillery and, becoming serious, said: "You are not even a bit ashamed of yourself." I felt that I had not acted properly and remained silent.

She would never care for the Europeans whom she met on the way but she showed great respect to the Bengalis. Once we were going together in a train when an Englishman got in and sat close to her, almost touching her. She raised her eyes and looked at him in such a manner that he rose up, sat on another bench and remained bending down his head in shame. Nivedita moved closer to me and smiled and talked to me with pleasure. She had literally dedicated her life to India and regarded all Indians as her brothers. So, the name Sister Nivedita was most appropriate. She could not bear the very idea of the Westerners treating the Indians with scorn.

From the day when she heard from me that 1200 monks and 1000 nuns of Kharda (near Calcutta) had dedicated themselves to the cause of their Guru Virabhadra, she was pressing me to take her to that place. Originally, these monks and nuns were Buddhists. When Buddhism was on its decline in Bengal, these monks and nuns had sunk to the lowest depths of degradation and misery. Hindu society had closed its doors on them. Virabhadra gave them refuge and converted them to Vaishnavism. From the time the compassionate Vaishnava Acharya took them under his protection, that is for about 350 years, annual festival was being held at that very memorable place as a mark of the extreme gratitude felt by the uplifted monks and nuns. This festival has since been discontinued.

One midday in the month of Phalgun, Ganen and myself accompanied Nivedita on a trip by boat to Khardah. On two or three occasions, we have thus travelled by boat across the Ganges. We would finish our meal before 10 A.M. and would return to Baghbar at nightfall. How happy Nivedita was on the day we set out for Khardah! She told me, 'Do you know how I have named that place? It is the Samadhi Kshetra (burial ground) of the Buddhist faith. Why have they given up celebrating the festival? Such a historical event! How sad to see

that the festival held in memory of such a momentous event has died out!' At 3 p.m., we reached Khardah Ghat. The people there were naturally very much surprised to see a European lady with two Bengalis. The fat Gosains looked at us with curiosity. Nivedita had forbidden us to reveal her identity. The people thought that we would leave the place and continue our journey after a few minutes. But when they saw Nivedita actually landing and talking to us most intimately as we proceeded to march into the village, the Gosains, the descendants of the famous Nityananda, the inseparable boon-companion of Sri Chaitanya and others, followed us. Nivedita smiled softly at seeing this grand procession. Many stared at us and some bolder ones questioned me in low tones "who is this lady?". From their faces, it would appear that the answer to this question was a matter of life and death to them. The entire crowd looked at me so intently. I answered, Ask her. She can tell you better than anyone else. Nivedita became so stern and serious at my reply that no one dared to question her. I asked one which way led to the temple of Shyamasundara. At once the answer came from a dozen persons. Some pointed out the way by their fingers. Some said: "Come with us. We will take you there" and they wanted to wholly appropriate to themselves the honour of guiding us. We were surprised at this abundant manifestation of hospitality. When Nivedita stood on the outer quadrangle in front of the shrine of Shyamasundara and, having placed her hat on the steps prostrated before the Lord, the entire crowd was mad with excitement. Some felt proud of Hinduism and exhibited their sentiments by words and signs. Ganen and myself, on account of our sacred threads straightaway entered inside the temple. We offered something to the priest and he became gracious and showed us the *Bhagavata* written in Nityananda's own hand and his stick. We took them, went outside and showed them to Nivedita. She prostrated before them and gave five rupees

to the priest. He was so delighted that he brought a sacred red cloth and asked Nivedita to place it on her head. She did so with devotion and all present shouted "Hari, Hari" with great *eclat*. One of them said "This cloth is very holy. Even princes feel blessed by placing this on their heads. It is our deep respect that has made us honour you in this manner. But we request you to satisfy our curiosity by telling us who this lady is". At Nivedita's bidding, Ganen and myself said: "She is an English lady who has taken refuge in the Sri Ramakrishna Math". Then one man asked "Is she Nivedita?" We could not conceal her identity any longer. All were intensely moved. Some shed tears of joy, some felt choked by devotion and some folded their hands and saluted Nivedita. She humbly took leave, but the priests said "How can it be, You must take *prasad*." Soon after the *prasad* came in the form of a big lump of Rasagolla. Ganen and myself filled ourselves with entire satisfaction. Nivedita took a bit, but had to take a little more to satisfy the pressing entreaties of the crowd. Towards sunset, we saw the place where the great festival was held. She questioned many there about the festival and took notes of their answers. She greatly desired that I should write an article on our visit to this Samadhi Temple of Buddhism and said that she would give me her notes for that purpose. Now after such a long time, I have fulfilled her request. But there is no possibility of getting those notes.

When we were returning from the Bagh bazar Ghat, we saw a hawker of dolls. She called him near, looked at the dolls and was lost in joy. Three of these dolls could be got for a pice. It was the image of a woman (coloured black and yellow) with a covering on the head, small and half-finished hands like the Jagannath image, the bosom larger than the hands and the feet, like the clay Shivalinga. Such dolls could be had by the hundreds at every nook and corner and there is not one in Bengal who has not broken ten



or twenty of these in childhood. But Nivedita took the doll in her hands and exclaimed 'Oh, most wonderful!' I said, "You have gone mad. What is there in this doll that you stand transfixed in the lane? You will attract a crowd around you as at Khardah'. Still, she did not pay any attention to my words and merely repeated in a loud voice, 'Oh most wonderful, most beautiful' and bought the whole lot for a rupee. Soon after I took leave.

Next day I asked her why she had become so moved at seeing the dolls. She replied; "You will not understand. I have not seen anything so beautiful and wonderful in India". She then took one of the dolls and looked at it with eager longing. I could not make out the meaning of her ecstatic admiration.

Three days later, she told me, 'Would you like to know why I loved the doll so much? Dr. Evans has recently brought to England many things used in Crete about 3000 B.C., that is, 5000 years ago. I have seen them during my last visit to England. There was among them a doll exactly like this.'

Nivedita would prostrate whenever she saw a Kali temple and her analysis of the songs of Ramaprasad in her book, *Kali the Mother* is the offering of love of a real devotee. She revealed a little of her mind to me on one occasion. She asked me 'Can you truly address God as mother?' I replied 'Why not! That God is our father or mother is no conventional phrase with us. We have been brought up in the idea of God as mother from our very infancy. We have drunk it

with our mother's milk. It is no show or mimicry with us. There is not the least shadow of hypocrisy when we bow down to Kali calling Her mother.' She said 'Therein is the difference between the East and the West. I am not able to realise the motherhood of God. The feeling of the Fatherhood of God is our hereditary tendency'.

Two months before she went to Darjeeling with Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose (and she died there soon after) she had requested for and taken from me an image of 'Prajnaparamita' Buddha. 'I said "I hesitate to give this to you. She laughed at my fears and said. "I never expected to hear grandmother's stories from a historian like you". She snatched it away from me by force and worshipped it daily with flowers, incense etc. I later learnt from Sister Christina that Nivedita had no peace of mind from the day the image was brought into her house until her death.

A few days before her trip to Darjeeling, I had presented her with two copies of my English book the *History of the Bengali Language and Literature*. She had forbidden me from mentioning her name in the introduction. She was highly delighted to get the books.

Her parting words are still ringing in my ears. She said with sad tenderness, 'We have grown intimate on account of this book. We have worked together. As the work is over, you will not come here as before. But I request you not to break our friendship. If you do not visit me as in the past, I shall feel sorry.' I cannot say how delighted and happy I was at her sisterly affection. I felt a great void when I heard the news of her passing away.

# WILLIAM LAW,

By ALDOUS HUXLEY

The world in its concrete reality is complex and multitudinous almost to infinity. In order to understand it, we are compelled to abstract and generalize—in other words, to omit what we choose at the moment to regard as irrelevant and to reduce such diversity as still remains to some form of homogeneity. What we understand is never concrete reality as it is in itself, or even as it appears to be to our immediate experience of it; what we understand is our own arbitrary simplification of that reality. Thus, the worker in natural science abstracts from the concrete reality of actual experience only those aspects which are measurable, uniform and average; in this way he is able (at the price of neglecting qualities, values and the unique individual case) to achieve a limited, but for certain purposes, extremely useful understanding of the world. In the same way the historian achieves his much more limited and questionable understanding of man's past and present by selecting more or less arbitrarily, from the chaotic mass of recorded facts precisely those which exhibit the kind of homogeneity that happens to appeal to a man of his particular time, temperament and upbringing. This homogeneity is then generalized as a principle, or even hypostatized as a *zeitgeist*; and these in turn are used to explain events and elucidate their meanings. Such facts as do not suffer themselves to be explained in this way are either explained away as exceptional, anomalous and irrelevant, or else completely ignored. I may perhaps be permitted, in this context to quote a passage from an essay, which I wrote some years ago on Mr. Christopher Dawson's historical study, *The Making of Europe*.

Occasionally, it is true, Mr. Dawson makes a generalization with which I find myself (with all the diffidence of the unlearned dilettante) disagreeing. For example, 'the modern European' he says, 'is accustomed to look on society as essentially concerned

with the present life, and with material needs, and on religion as an influence on the moral life of the individual. But to the Byzantine and indeed to mediæval man in general, the primary society was the religious one, and economic and secular affairs were a secondary consideration.' In confirmation of this, Mr. Dawson quotes, among other documents, a passage from the writings of St. Gregory Nazianzus on the interest displayed by his fourth-century contemporaries in theology. 'The money-changers will talk about the Begotten and the Unbegotten, instead of giving you your money; and if you want a bath, the bath-keeper assures you that the Son surly proceeds from nothing.' What Mr. Dawson does not mention is that this same Gregory reproaches the people of Constantinople with an excessive interest in chariot-racing, an interest which, in the time of Justinian, a century and a half later, had become so maniacally passionate that Greens and Blues were murdering one another by hundreds and even thousands. Again, we must apply the behaviourist test. If men behave as though they took a passionate interest in something—and it is difficult to prove your devotion to a cause more effectively than by killing and being killed for it—then we must presume that the interest is genuine, a primary rather than a secondary consideration. The actual facts seem to demonstrate that some Byzantines were passionately interested in sport. At any rate, they behaved about both in the same way and were as ready to undergo martyrdom for their favourite jockey as for their favourite article in the Athanasian Creed. The trouble with such generalisations as that of Mr. Dawson is that they ignore the fact that society is never homogeneous and that human beings belong to many different mental species. This seems to be true even of primitive societies displaying the maximum of "co-consciousness" on the part of their members. Thus the anthropologist, Paul

Radin, well-known for his work among the Red Indians, has come to the conclusion that monotheistic beliefs are correlated with a specific temperament and so may be expected to crop up with a certain specific frequency irrespective of culture. If this is true . . . what becomes of a generalisation like Mr. Dawson's? Obviously, it falls to the ground. You can no more idiot an age than you can a nation.

We see then, that there is no reason to believe in the homogeneity of the Dark Ages or the Middle Ages. Still less is there any reason for believing in the homogeneity of more recent periods, such as the eighteenth-century 'Age of Enlightenment'. And, in effect, we find that the age of Gibbon is also the age of Cagliastro and the Conte de Saint-Germain; that the age of Bentham and Goodwin is also the age of Blake and Mozart; that the age of Hume and Voltaire is also the age of Swedenborg and the Wesleys and John Sebastian Bach. And this same Age of Enlightenment produced even stranger sons than these visionaries and magicians, these indefatigable revivalists, these lyrical poets and musicians. It produced the first systematic historian of mysticism, Gottfried Arnold; it produced one of the greatest writers of spiritual letters for the guidance of practising mystics, J. P. de Caussade. It produced, in Louis Grou, the author of a book of mystical devotion, worthy to take its place among the classics of the spiritual life. And finally, in William Law, it produced a great philosopher and theologian of mysticism.

The notion that any given historical period is homogeneous and uniform is based upon the tacit assumption that nurture is everything and nature nothing at all. By nature, as the most casual observation suffices to convince us, human beings are not all of the same kind; physically, intellectually, emotionally, they vary in the most astonishing manner. Historical generalizations can be valid only if the unifying force of social heredity is always much stronger

than the diversifying force of individual heredity. But there is no reason to suppose that it always is much stronger. On the contrary it is manifest that, whatever the nature of the social and cultural environment, individual physique and temperament remain what the chromosomes made them. Nurture and social heredity cannot change the psycho-physical facts of the individual heredity. They merely condition the overt expression of physique and temperament and provide the individual with the philosophy in terms of which he may rationalize his actions. Thus, in an age of faith, the findings of the born empirics and sceptics must be in accord with what is locally regarded as divine revelation and religious authority; for only in this way can they be made to seem intellectually plausible and morally respectable. In a positivistic age the findings of those who are naturally religious must be shown to be in accord with the latest scientific hypothesis; for only on this condition will they have a chance of being taken seriously by those who are not congenitally devout. Individuals, whose native bent is in a direction opposed to that prescribed by the prevailing social patterns and cultural traditions, have to make one of four possible choices—to force themselves into a reluctant but (consciously, at any rate) sincere conformity; to pretend to conform hypocritically, with an eye to the main chance; to dissent, while rationalizing and justifying their non-conformity in terms of the currently orthodox philosophy, which they re-interpret to suit their own purposes; to adopt an attitude of open and unqualified rebellion, rejecting the orthodox rationalizations no less completely than the orthodox patterns. Any kind of individual can be born into any kind of social heredity. It follows that, at any given period, the prevailing social heredity will be unfavourable to the full development of certain kinds of individuals. But some of these non-conforming individuals will succeed, none the less, in breaking through the restrictions imposed upon them by the time-spirit-in-being, let us say, romantics in an age of classicism,

or mystics in defiance of a social heredity that favours born positivists and natural materialists.

In the days when men still did their thinking along theological rather than scientific lines, when they sought to find the primary rather than the secondary causes of events, the facts of individual heredity were explained by a theory of predestination. For our ancestors, Augustinism provided a plausible and intellectually satisfying explanation of human diversity; to us, Augustinism seems a thoroughly inadequate explanation and it is through Mendalism that we seek to understand the observable facts. The earlier hypothesis attributed the phenomena to the good pleasure of God; the latter leaves God out of account and concentrates on the mechanism whereby differences are brought about, preserved and modified. They agree, however, in regarding individual differences in physique and temperament as things fore-ordained and, to a considerable extent unmodifiable by environment.

All the evidence points to the fact that there are born mystics and that these born mystics can pursue their vocation in the teeth of an anti-mystical environment. Shall we then conclude that the practice of mystical contemplation is reserved exclusively for those whose psycho-physical make-up in some sort predestines them for the mystical life? The general consensus of those best qualified to preach on this subject is that this is not the case. The mystical life is possible for all—for the congenitally active and devotional no less than for the congenitally contemplative. Self-transcendence can be achieved by anyone, whatever his or her hereditary constitution and whatever the nature of the cultural environment; and in all cases self-transcendence ends in the unitive knowledge of God. That self-transcendence is harder for certain individuals in certain surroundings is, of course, obvious. But though for many the road to the unitive knowledge of God may be horribly difficult, it seems impious to believe

with Calvin and his predecessors and followers that the divine good pleasure has predestined that greater number of men and women to inevitable and irremediable failure. If few are chosen it is because, consciously or unconsciously, few choose to be chosen, 'Thy kingdom come', 'Thy will be done' is the one will and the one hunger that feeds the soul with the life-giving bread of Heaven. 'This will' Law continues, 'is always fulfilled; it cannot possibly be sent away empty; for God's kingdom must manifest itself with all its riches in that soul which wills nothing else; it never was nor can be lost but by the will that seeks something else. Hence you may know with the utmost certainty that, if you have no inward peace, if religious comfort is still wanting, it is because you have more wills than one. For the multiplicity of wills is the very essence of fallen nature, and all its evil, misery and separation from God lies in it; and as soon as you return to and allow only this one will, you are returned to God and must find the blessedness of his kingdom within you.'

To the practising mystic *Tat tvam asi* is an axiom, as self-evident in Europe as in India, as much a matter of immediate experience to an Eckhart, a Ruysbroeck or a Law as it was to a Sankara or a Rama-krishna. What follows is Law's commentary on the precept to 'love God with all your heart and soul and strength.'

'To what purpose could this precept of such a love be given to man, unless he essentially partook of the divine nature? For to be in heart, and soul, and spirit all love of God and yet have nothing of the nature of God within you, is surely too absurd for anyone to believe. So sure, therefore, as this precept came from the Truth itself, so sure is it that every man (however loath 'to hear of anything but pleasure and enjoyment in this vain shadow of a life) has yet a divine nature concealed within him, which, when suffered to hear the calls of God, will hear the voice of its heavenly Father and long to do His will on

earth as it is done in Heaven. Again to see the divinity of man's original, you need only read these words: "Be ye perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." For what could man have to do with the perfection of God as the rule of his life, unless the truth and reality of the divine nature was in him? Could there be any reasonableness in the precept or any fitness to call us to be good as God is good, unless there was that in us which is in God? Lastly, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' is another full proof that God is in us of a truth; and that the Holy Spirit hath as certainly an essential birth within us as the spirit of this world hath. For this precept might as well be given to a fox as to man, if man had not something quite supernatural in him. For mere nature and natural creature is nothing but mere self and can work nothing but to and for itself. And this not through any corruption or depravity of nature, but because it is nature's best state, and it can be nothing else either in man or beast.'

For the mystic, I repeat, *Tat tvam asi* is an axiom but for those who have not had the immediate experience that 'thou art That', he tries to find arguments in support of this (to him) self-evident truth—arguments based upon other immediate experiences more widely shared than the mystical realisations that Atman and Brahman are one. Law's arguments in the preceding passage are based in part upon the words of Christ, accepted as revelation, in part upon the observable fact of disinterested love for God and for men for God's sake. Another line of argument is to be found in the final chapter of '*What is Life?*' the book in which an eminent mathematical physicist, Professor Erwin Schrodinger, examines the problems of heredity in terms of quantum mechanics. 'Immediate experiences in themselves', writes Dr. Schrodinger, 'however various and disparate they be, are logically incapable of contradicting each other. So let us see whether we cannot draw the correct non-

contradictory conclusion from the following two premises :

(1) my body functions as a pure mechanism according to the Laws of Nature.

(2) Yet I know, by incontrovertible, direct experience, that I am directing its motions, of which I foresee the effects, that may be fateful and all-important, in which case I feel and take full responsibility for them.

The only possible inference from these two facts is, I think, that I—I in the widest meaning of the word, that is to say, every conscious mind that has ever said or felt 'I' am the person, if any, who controls the 'motion of the atoms' according to the Laws of Nature. In itself the insight is not new. From the early great Upanishads the cognition *Atman-Brahman* was, in Indian thought, far from being blasphemous, to represent the quintessence of deepest thought into the happenings of the world. The striving of all the scholars of Vedanta was, after having learned to pronounce with their lips, really to assimilate in their minds the grandest of all thought.\* Space does not permit me to cite Dr. Schrodinger's interesting comments on the fact that 'consciousness is never expressed in the plural, only in the singular' and his hypothesis that the 'pluralization of consciousness' is the consequence of its connection with a plurality of similar bodies'. Enough, however has been quoted to make it clear that, while it is impossible that the fact of any immediate experience should be proved by argument, it is none the less possible to argue from the premises of other immediate experiences in such a way as to make the existence of the first experience a plausible and probable matter—so plausible and probable that it becomes worth while to fulfil the conditions upon which, and upon which alone, that experience can enter one's life as a fact of consciousness.

(Reproduced from the *Vedanta and the West*).

\* *What is Life*, by Erwin Schrodinger, Cambridge University Press.

## MAHAYANIST MEDITATION

Lord, from my shadows do I flee  
Into Thy lovely light ·  
To sin's black dross that beauty seems  
A furnace fierce and bright.  
But its cool light shines on virtue  
Like the moon on flowers by night.

Thou smilest, gentle, on those saints  
Who tread the Noble Way;  
But fierce and furious dost Thou scowl  
On fools who walk astray;  
These, with a lotus, do you bless,  
These, with a sword, you slay.

Teach me to see beyond, Lord,  
Thine aspects sweet or stern;  
Let my soul not fear destruction,  
Not yet for blessings yearn :  
May I leave behind all names and forms  
When to Thy light I turn.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RELIGION AND SOCIETY: BY  
S. RADHAKRISHNAN. PUBLISHED BY  
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.,  
LONDON, PP. 242. PRICE 10S. 6D. NET.

In this stimulating volume which forms the Kamala Lectures delivered in the University of Calcutta in 1942, Prof Radhakrishnan seeks to interpret the meaning of religion in its most comprehensive sense and discusses its application to the burning problems of the modern world such as war and peace, social relations and spiritual values. It offers a challenge to the old system which affords no adequate protection against the chaos that is breaking over us, and a concession to changing circumstances which show a lack of confidence in the principles of our tradition. On the basis of the eternal and imperishable principles which have been evolved in the past, we must visualize new safeguards for the protection of the fundamental human rights. The genuine forces of revolution must be welded with the eternal principles of the past into a new homogeneous unity.

In the first and second chapters the author discusses the need for religion and a New World Order. The chief cause of modern uneasiness is traced to secularism which has wrecked the world by its false philosophy, beliefs and values. The discussion of the Marxist attitude known as metaphysical materialism reveals, in spite of our sympathy for its social programme, that it is not as scientific as some people believe. The Marxist who brags about his scientific rationalism is not infallible in his thinking. Higher values cannot be determined by economic interpretation of history. A spiritual revival is an absolute necessity even for Marxist ends and aims. Spiritual values alone can give a national basis to the social programme. Human society is a living, growing organism which should become the expression of a faith in the oneness of the creative Spirit of the universe, and in a sense of fellowship. The third chapter is devoted to the study of materials relating to Hindu Dharma, its concept and sources, principle of change, religious institutions, caste and untouchability, sacraments etc. Dharma is truth's embodiment in life and social relations. It refashions our nature and is the norm which sustains human life and the universe. In the fourth chapter the learned Professor considers the place of women in Hindu society and concludes that even domestic ties are to be snapped for the pursuit of spiritual freedom. In the last chapter he considers the problem of force in society and Gandhiji's non-violence and points out that social progress and real peace are achieved by

man's transcendent experiences. Everyone has to work for the renewal of the heart, the transformation of values and surrender to the spirit for the claim of higher values.

We heartily congratulate the author without any reservation on his accurate, lucid and gripping presentation of the meaning of religion with all its bearings on social life. The book bears the stamp of the author's elegantly philosophical approach to the pressing problems of the day. We recommend the work not only to students of religion but also to students of social history.

S. A.

GANDHI, TAGORE AND NEHRU:  
BY K. R. KRIPALANI: HIND KITABS  
LTD., PUBLISHERS, BOMBAY. PRICE  
RS. 1/8.

Shri K. R. Kripalani of Shantiniketan has put together his penetrating essays on Gandhi, Tagore, Nehru, Romain Rolland and others like C. F. Andrews and Rothenstein, who were inseparably connected with Tagore and his work for humanity. If I were to suggest the theme of these essays I would simply think of Tagore who forms the soul, so to say, of all these efforts to sketch brilliantly and briefly the great personalities who came in contact with him, all devoted to the great task of liberating humanity from artificial shackles put on us by ourselves in our ignorance and greed for power. Tagore's beautiful lines "Prisoner, tell me who was it that wrought this unbreakable chain? It was I, said the prisoner, who forged this chain very carefully" form the idea behind the efforts of these great men, bent on freeing all of us, irrespective of caste, colour and creed. All these essays, with the exception of one on Shah Latif, the great poet of Sindh, are, to my mind, an exposition of the great theme of human liberty as held out and ultimately followed in detail in India to lead us to freedom and friendship. Why not read this intelligent and inspiring exposition?

B. S. MATHUR.

INDIA'S INSOLUBLE HUNGER:  
BY JOHN FISCHER. VORA & Co,  
PUBLISHERS LTD., 3 ROUND BUILDING  
BOMBAY 2. PRICE RE. 1.

India's *Hunger Problem* is a knotty one. Apparently, infinite increase in population is set down as the reason for hunger and poverty. But this is not the only reason. There is the fact of India's slavery, which is happily now no more, coupled with our own ignorance, laziness and peculiar circumstances of communal

differences. John Fischer, a famous American journalist, who spent a year in India in 1942-43 as a representative of the U. S. Economic Administration falls in line with economists who clearly see possibilities of famines and misery in future so long as India remains conservative and goes on multiplying. He seems to set little store by schemes for industrialisation and for improvement in agricultural production. He is, it is good, an educationist in these pages to ask all of us to be cultured in the light of advance in Western society.

B. S. MATHUR.

FRONTIER SPEAKS: BY MOHAMMAD YOUNUS: PUBLISHED BY HIND KITABS LTD., BOMBAY. PRICE RS. 4/8.

Frontier Speaks is an interesting gift to the reader by one who, though young in years, has gained necessary culture and education of the right type in the constant company of Pandit Nehru and the "Frontier Gandhi". A people devoted to freedom and chivalry are fortunate in getting Mohammad Younus as their historian. There is only one limitation and that is the youth of the historian in the present case. This is, one will submit, a great limitation: the historian has to write history philosophically, uniting facts with reflection for the benefit of humanity. The old saying "History repeats itself" is never untrue if history is wisely written. The historian has to become a keen observer of things, men and facts and then he can perform this business. This observation will enable the historian to teach people delightfully. Mohammad Younus does this work but in his own limited fashion, because of his youth which has to be tamed and ultimately harnessed in the service of his people. Naturally we find enough of Younus in the book: this enough of Younus is animation, a living personality of one who is keen on the liberation of his people, dubbed to be fierce and fighting by the interested foreigner. Yet there is enough history recorded with honesty and patriotism. Both these parts are fascinating and instructive. Many of the misconceptions about these people are eliminated and we have a living record of a generous and honest people, devoted to truth and non-violence under the inspiring leadership of Badshah Khan, the "Frontier Gandhi".

At present there is division in the air. This division might soon disappear in a sacred union of Pakistan with the Indian Union if the Frontier people take up the challenge of the time. Mohammad Younus has this animating hope as a consequence of his intense patriotism and understanding of his people. He exclaims rightly:

"Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth".

B. S. MATHUR

BLOOD AND STONES. BY K. AHMAD ABBAS. PUBLISHED BY HIND KITABS, PAGES 48. PRICE RE. 1.

In this touching story Mr. Abbas puts a sensitive, idealistic youth against the background of riot-ridden Bombay. Nirmal Kumar a journalist of Bombay gets sick of the blood and communal frenzy of Bombay and organises a Peace Brigade. But he finds that the peace Brigade with which he wants to banish communalism is itself infected by communal rancour. He becomes desperate and his friend, Bharati takes him to the Ajanta caves, so that art may bring peace to his mind. He meets with some monks there who are constantly at work on the stones with their chisels. On enquiry he finds that they were working there long since and when they quit another batch will take their place. Effort, effort, endeavour, endeavour, work is worship, work is its own justification, its own reward: This was their message, the message of Ajanta. Nirmal feels that he was in need of this message. He is uplifted and returns to his peace efforts with a new vigour and resolution.

Mr. Abbas as is usual with him has told a moving story in a more moving way.

SWAMI VIJNANANANDA: BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA. PUBLISHED BY SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, RAJKOT, RAJPUTANA PAGES 32: PRICE AS. 8.

Swami Vijnanananda was one of those fortunate souls who had the rare privilege of coming in contact with Sri Ramakrishna and of receiving the benefit of his blessings. The Swami's first contact with Sri Ramakrishna the transformation that he underwent under his benign influence and his later spiritual ministrations as the President of the Ramakrishna Mission,—of these aspects of his life, there is a detailed account in the *Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna* published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. This book is not a mere retelling of the same story; the author gives his personal reminiscences of the Swami. A full chapter is devoted to the spiritual experiences of the Swami, when he came, as it were, face to face with the Ultimate Reality. Especially noteworthy are the experiences that he had at Benares and Sarnath. The English-knowing public will gain better understanding of the Swami by reading the book.

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY  
BY V. N. DEVARA, B. A., PAGES 68  
PRICE RS. 2.0.0.

The generality of mankind believes that philosophy is found in books and that it is a special monopoly of the philosopher with his syllogisms and



logic. Philosophy, properly seen is the reaction of an individual to the universe around him. This reaction, on the intellectual side, takes the form of an assessment of the values of life. As such every man is a philosopher, in the sense that he has at least some vague notion of the Ends of Life. The author, though not an academic philosopher, with a trained critical faculty, has been thinking over the vital problems of life from a very young age, and to his credit we must add, that he has kept it up to the present. The book, as it stands is an impression in black and white of the inner workings of his mind. We would like that every man, like the author, interested in life's problems, should seek a solution of them in the laboratory of his mind instead of hunting for it in the libraries of the world.

#### THE SELF AND ITS SHEATHS BY

ANNIE BESANT. THEOSOPHIST OFFICE, ADYAR.

The theory of Koshas sheathing the Self of man is as old as the Taittiriya Upanishad where the Panchakoshas are enumerated and described with great clarity. Dr. Besant in the four lectures recorded here elaborates this view in the light of the findings of modern science, as well as the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society.

In the first lecture, 'The Self and its Sheaths' it is shown that Atman behind the sheaths is not to be confused with the sheaths themselves, that the seer should not be mistaken for the seen. The second lecture, 'The Body of Action', gives an account of the functions of the Annamaya and Pranamaya Koshas, that of bringing about the clash between the Self and the external world. The third lecture, 'Body of Feeling' shows us the mechanism of feeling, associated with the Mana and Vijnana Maya koshas, which are in the author's words, 'sheaths which feel and which are the receptacles, to hold experiences, where building of the individual goes on, and where self consciousness is gradually evolved.' In the last lecture, 'The object of the Koshas', a glowing account of the Anandamaya kosa, the Seat of Bliss is given. To quote the author, "That is the Anandamayakosa where the Atma knows itself; its nature is bliss; all the spheres have ceased; all else has gone; none but the devotees may know it; none but the pure may reach it..."

Atman, taking cognizance of the lower sheaths at last alights upon the Anandamayakosa, for there it is at its closest proximity with its true nature. The whole process of evolution is the ascent of man through the intermediate sheaths to that immortal Bliss of which he is the rightful heir.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### KAMAKRISHNA MISSION HIGH SCHOOL CHIRRAPUNJI, ASSAM.

Report for the years 1931-46.

The hill-tribes of Assam are a strong and vigorous race with great potentialities in them and of these the Khasis 3,32,251 in number according to the census of 1941 have proved themselves to be the most progressive and interesting. The work of numerous Christian Missions in their midst has given to a section the gift of education, but it has to a large extent denationalised the whole race of hill-tribes. They are, as it were, cut off from all currents of the great culture and civilization of India. The Ramakrishna Mission felt themselves called upon to take up the task of spreading among them education and culture on national lines and started a primary school as early as 1924 at Shella, twelve miles from Chirrapunji. The spirit of service that inspired the pioneer workers was at once appreciated by the people and the work grew rapidly and spread gradually to the other parts of the Hills. The Mission is now running a Middle

English school at Shella, Primary Schools at Nongwar, Chirrapunji and Shillong besides the High School at Chirrapunji which was started as a Middle English School in 1931. The institution has the unique distinction of being the only High school in the whole of Khasi Hills outside Shillong.

The strength of the High School for the year 1946 was 228 and that of the Primary School 68. The school being in a backward area, a large number of students receive either free or half-free studentships. The school has a well-qualified staff of twelve experienced teachers and the results of the Matriculation examination were brilliant. There is a hostel attached to the school where the students get the benefit of household training and the close association with teachers. Emphasis is laid on manual training and dignity of labour. Agriculture and bee-keeping form two of the main extra-curricular activities of the boys. The weaving section works four looms under the charge of two trained teachers; it is hoped that very soon arrangements will be ready to teach girls weaving and enable them to earn a living in an honourable way.

Swami Anantananda

From the above account it must have been abundantly clear that the Mission is doing its best to give the Khasi boys a complete and man-making education. But the Mission is handicapped by want of funds. There is an yearly deficit of Rs. 3000. Added to that are the many requirements of the institution. Chirra being at an altitude the water scarcity is acute during winter and a pipe installation roughly costing Rs. 10,000 is the most urgent need. Among the other urgent needs mention must be made of a shed for vocational training and a prayer hall. It is earnestly hoped that the national-minded public will come forward with substantial help for this institution, which is a fruitful national investment, and help the institution to achieve the reclamation of the Khasis and other Hill-tribes into Indian culture.

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA ADVAITASRAM,  
KALADI**

**An Appeal**

A branch of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission (Belur Math) is being run at Kaladi, the birth-place of Acharya Sri Sankara. In spite of its association with the great Acharya the place is a forlorn village, undeveloped and illiterate. The Asram is conducting three High Schools (two Sanskrit and one English, an Industrial School, a Harijan Orphanage, a Gurukul and a Religious Library besides the normal activities of preaching and teaching. The Asram is doing extensive work among the Harijans of North Travancore.

The new building of the Third High School and a separate building for the Orphanage Library are to be completed. A fresh building to accommodate residential students has to be put up. An additional building to house the increasing number of Harijan students and a bathing ghat in the river-front of the Asram for the use of the thousands of pilgrims who come for worship are very urgently required. These items have got to be done before next June and on a minimum estimate a sum of Rs. 50,000 for the purpose is required.

We appeal to all friends and patrons of the Ramakrishna Movement as well as followers and admirers of the Great Acharya Sankara to contribute liberally and make our endeavours a success.

**SWAMI AGAMANANDA,**  
*President.*

We record with deep sorrow the sudden passing away of Swami Anantananda on 23rd November at a Nursing home in Mangalore. After visiting some South Indian Centres the Swami had gone to Mangalore to visit the new Ashrama that was opened there some time ago. For a long time intestinal ulcer was his constant companion and he was putting up a heroic front to all complaints and was visiting places and renewing old contacts. At Mangalore Ashrama his complaints reached a critical stage and the doctors diagnosed it as perforation of the intestines due to chronic ulceration. He was removed to a neighbouring Nursing home where he entered final rest retaining consciousness of the Lord till the last. It is remarkable that the Swami inspite of his severe pain and ailments was full of courage and had a kind word for everybody who served him.

Swami Anantananda was one of the senior monks of the order, having had the opportunity of intimate association with the direct disciples of the Master, Swami Brahmananda, Swami Shivananda, Swami Turiyananda and others. He had the privilege of serving Swami Turiyananda of whom Swami Vivekananda spoke as the living embodiment of the Sthitaprajna ideal of the Gita. Swami Anantananda had travelled widely in India and had numerous friends and admirers in different parts of India especially among the student population. He could become young in the company of students and discuss with them the burning problems of the day and give them the correct approach and guidance. Wherever he went he attracted a number of young men.

Of late he became interested in starting a centre at Ahmedabad and was there for some time organizing local support and creating the nucleus. On reasons of health he moved on to the South for which he had a special love and fascination. His friends will be missing his inspiring company and his brother-monks a very loving brother. May his spirit find peace at the feet of the Master.

The Birthday of Sri Sarada Devi,  
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The Visva-Bharati Quarterly has taken up the responsible task of presenting before the citizens of Free India the various problems connected with educational reconstruction and their solutions as they might have suggested themselves to individual minds working in different spheres of educational activity. With this end in view it is shortly bringing out a special Education Number which it is hoped will throw a flood of light on the two major educational experiments that India has witnessed in recent times: namely Rabindranath's experiment started at Santiniketan in 1901 and Gandhiji's Wardha Scheme formulated in 1937. Apart from a description and comparative estimate of these two main trends, the Special Number will also contain articles bearing on almost all the important aspects of educational theory and practice.

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The Special number is expected to come out, enriched with illustrations and vignettes by well-known artists, early in November, 1947. Those whose name occur in the subscriber's list as at September 30th, will receive the Number in the usual course. There will be a limited number of copies available for sale at Rs. 8-0-0 each (Post free) to the members of the general public. To ensure securing their copies, those interested should remit the cost in advance and book order from now.

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