

IV - 11

And it is not only the symbolic world of pointer-readings that thus gets detached from the rest of the sciences. The same disruption and sundering also characterize Prof. Ed.'s view of the familiar and the scientific worlds and their objective background. Thus the unity of experience is disrupted into independent and diverse realms. Prof. Ed., in fact, exalts into fixed divisions what are only manufactured distinctions within one unitary experience. Prof. Ed.'s tripartite division of experience into images, pointer-symbols, and objective counterpart may not in itself be illegitimate, but it is admissible only within such limits as will permit the reconstruction of the whole which makes such distinction possible. Prof. Ed.'s three strata however are so sundered in origin as well as character as to pre-

clude all possibility of a reconstruction of the original unity.

And what holds good of Prof. Ed.'s general position applies with equal force to his views about the nature of religion. Just as Prof. Ed. restricts the sphere of science to the physical aspects of the universe, so also he restricts religion to a form of mystical experience thereby degrading all other religions to the position of theologies or conceptual symbolism. Nor does Prof. Ed. say how the spiritual world of religion which he avers to be as real as the world of sense, can both be a construction and a reality at the same time. And so here as in his general theory of experience we have not merely an arbitrary starting-point but a medley of subjectivism and objectivism without any internal unity or cohesion.

THE FLAME OF THINGS

(DIARY LEAVES)

BY PROF. NICHOLAS ROERICH

It is mentioned in literature how by restriction of food and by other spiritual strivings St. Isaac of Syria changed the entire form of his life. After a stay of five years as a bishop, he went back into the desert. There in the great stillness of the desert, he perfected his precepts and admonitions in order to leave them in an expressive, brief, and unforgettable form :

“Those who are guided by benefaction always feel that some sort of thought-ray traverses the lines of a written work and distinguishes in their minds the external words from that which is spoken with great thought by the soul's knowledge. If a man reads verses of great significance with-

out plunging deeply into them, his heart remains impoverished, and in him is extinguished the sacred force which, through actual soul cognition, imparts the sweetest savour to the heart. The spirit-bearing soul, when it hears a thought containing a hidden spiritual force, flamingly accepts the contents of this thought. Not every man is roused to wonder by what is told spiritually and has in itself great mysterious force. A word about heaven requires a heart not preoccupied with the earth.”

“The Scripture has not interpreted for us the things of the future age, but it has simply taught us how, while yet here on earth, we can receive a



THE ARCHIVE OF
**NICHOLAS
ROERICH
MUSEUM**

sensation of delight with them, up to the point of our natural transmutation at departure from this world. Though the Scripture, in order to arouse in us a longing for future blessings, has portrayed them under the names of things always desirable and glorious, acceptable and precious to us, yet when it says that 'the eye has not beheld that, nor the ear heard', it hereby announces that 'future blessings are inscrutable and bear no resemblance to the blessings of this place.'

"Preciseness of naming is established for objects here, but for objects of the future age there are no true authentic names; there is about them one simple cognition which is higher than any denomination and any component principle, form, colour, outline, and all fabricated names."

"He is no lover of good works who has to struggle to do good, but he who takes upon himself with joy subsequent afflictions."

"The cross is a will which is ready for any sorrow."

"With the destruction of this age immediately begins the future age."

"What is knowledge?—Realization of immortal life."

"What is purity?—Briefly put, the heart which forgives every living thing in nature." "What is such a forgiving heart?—Incandescence of a man's heart about all creation, about people, about birds, about animals."

"The timorous man shows that he suffers two infirmities, love of his body and lack of faith."

"The thoughts which intimidate and horrify a man are usually engendered by the thoughts which he directs toward repose."

"The hope of rest at all times compels people to forget the great."

"Who does not know that birds fly into nets while having rest in view?"

"The first of all passions is self-love; the first of all good works is scorn of repose."

"Strive not to hold back the wind with your hand, that is, faith without works."

"For every comfort there follows suffering, and for every suffering, for the sake of God, there follows consolation."

"Fear habits more than enemies."

"He who is sick in feelings is in no condition to encounter and sustain the flame of things."

The very expression "the flame of things" shows an extraordinary plunge into the subtlest world. Indeed, that is why what was enjoined by St. Isaac is so heartily conclusive, because it is based on the discernment of the fiery essential nature. Many works of St. Isaac have vanished and not come down to us, but they did exist and this is evident from repeated references in literature. No matter that to some the paths of St. Isaac are regarded as gnosticological. Except the definition "the flame of things", no other one will be right.

In all his ordained precepts, first of all there resounds everything flamingly derived. That thought, that word will have a special consequence which has been intertwined with the flame of the essence of things. To write down and remember the fiery counsels will be a reinforcement on all paths, a steadfastness not from earth, but from the heavens. People have realized this fiery firmament and felt in themselves a cognizing sacred palpitation of the heart.

"Spiritual contemplation—It is not to be sought in mental labour, but it can be imbued only through Bliss. And so long as man does not cleanse himself, until that time he does not have enough forces within himself even to harken to

it; no one can thus acquire it only through study."

"Just as it is impossible for one with his head under water to breathe the air, so is it impossible for one whose thought is plunged into mundane concerns to breathe sensations of the new world."

Thus, away from transitory earthly cares, St. Isaac strives towards sensations of the new world. Verily, he knows spiritual values when he says: "Irritate no one and hate no one"; "Be not inflamed with anger at him, lest he should see in thee the signs of enmity." These are counsels of the true builder who realizes that inflammation with anger is disastrous.

St. Isaac could noteworthy speak about the indispensable: "Agitated are the waters at the descent of angels." But this agitation is not wrath nor enmity, but only the flashings of sacred fire which spiritualizes all that exists in the flame of things.

"The unburnable bush"—This icon full of fire reminds one about a beautiful and lofty miracle. The "Great Wisdom" of God rushes along on a fiery steed, and the "angel", benign silence, is also infallibly fiery. Those who first inscribed these symbols understood them not as abstract philosophizing but as inalienable truth, as reality. In this heart, actuality, the flame of things, is nearby and comprehensible and beautiful.

"The infirm in feelings is in no condition to encounter and to sustain the flame of things".

Thus at the beginning of the 8th century enjoined St. Isaac the Syrian. From the Monastery of Maz-Matthew at Ninevah have been handed down to us these remarkable fiery counsels, which resound with invincible persuasiveness. Whether they were spoken yesterday or twelve centuries ago, they remain just as irrevocable.

SRI-BHASHYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

THE GREAT SIDDHANTA

ADVAITIN'S POSITION REFUTED

The 'knower' is not a product of ignorance

It is not quite sensible to say that this 'I', the knower, is a product of ignorance due to superimposition, even as mother-of-pearl is taken for silver. For in this case of superimposition our experience would have been, 'I am consciousness,' even as mother-of-pearl and silver are experienced as non-different, and not as 'I am conscious' which is

actually what we experience. The experience 'I am conscious', however, shows that consciousness is an attribute of the 'I' and different from it even as the statement 'the man with a stick' shows that the stick is an attribute of the man and different from him; and as our experience in this latter case is not merely of the stick but of 'the man with a stick', so also in 'I am conscious' our perception cannot be merely of