

THOUGHT

By Prof. Nicholas Roerich

[With the help of scientific data Prof. Roerich establishes how thought is a much more potent force than ordinary man supposes.]

GOETHE once said to Eckermann: "Despite my name, I have not acquired the right to say what I really think: I must keep silent—not to disturb people. Yet I have a slight privilege. I know what people think, but they do not know what I think...."

The science of thought at present especially occupies the minds of people. From ancient times there resound commandments about this blessed energy. India is rich with such ordainments. Plato and Confucius and many wise men of various epochs persistently turned the attention of people to the great might which is accessible to all. But in the rush of materialism this panacea was sometimes neglected. Hence it is significant that our age can inscribe upon its seal: "Thought is the law of the universe."

The names of Professor Bekhterv, Rhine, McDougall and other eminent scholars who investigate the energy of thought, shall for ever remain on pages of honour in the history of culture.

Let us record the following remarkable research:

"Two Professors of the Cambridge University have succeeded in making cinema photographs of human thought. One of them is Dr. Adrian, Professor of Physiology and a distinguished member of the Royal Society, the other is Prof. Mathews. Adrian, who had dedicated his whole life to the investigation of the mys-

teries of the nervous system, in 1932 received the Noble Prize and only a few days back was awarded the golden medal of the Royal Society."

"When a person sits quietly in a chair with closed eyes, and his thought is not occupied with anything serious, then his brain matter produces regular electrical discharges at the rate of about ten discharges per second. With the help of very complicated and ingenious apparatus and a photo-electric camera, Prof. Adrian succeeded in registering these discharges on a cinema film. He likewise observed that as soon as his patient opens his eyes and begins to concentrate his attention on something, the frequency of the electrical discharges increases considerably and reaches usually about 2000 per second."

"The rhythmic impulses continue also during deep sleep and also when the person (or animal) is subjected to the influence of narcotics. The professor proved by experimental methods the similarity of vibrations in different persons at the sight of the same object or manifestation. Different thoughts, which arise as a consequence of the action of the visual nerves, give different impressions upon the film."

"Prof. Adrian confined his experiments mainly to that part of the human brain which controls vision. He proved that this region of the brain is extra-ordinarily small. And in general Prof. Adrian established the

fact with the help of his apparatus, that the greater part of the human brain does not participate in any mental process."

"Prof. Adrian carried his experiments to such a degree of perfection that he can now easily change his photographic records of thought into sound and can broadcast it over the radio for the public. During a public demonstration the audience heard a great variety of sounds, varying with the visual impressions of the patient, who sat upon the stage and opened his eyes at the direction of the professor".

Thus something quite natural and perhaps long ago known is being recorded already by crude mechanical apparatus. Long before these mechanical records were achieved, the great Indian scientist, Sir Jagadish Bose, in similar experiments recorded the pulse of plants, and demonstrated even for a casual observer how plants react to pain, light, etc., and how the appearance of even a distant cloud react upon the pulse. Graphically he showed on a screen the agony of a plant's death, poisoned or transfixed. At the same time, he recorded the influence of human energy upon the life of the same plants, which, not long ago, were in the eyes of civilised people regarded to be but mere lower growths, devoid of any senses.

By the movement of the needle, which records the pulse of the plant, one can notice the influence of human energy of thought. A kind thought, a sympathetic thought, could protect the plant from the action of poison. In the same degree a hostile thought would increase the fatal action.

If only the realisation of the importance and power of thought would penetrate quickly into the minds of even uneducated masses! It is ridiculous and humiliating to subject the lofty experiments upon human thought to the action of coarse mechanical apparatus. But for a coarse consciousness similar methods of investigation are necessary. The realisation alone of the significance of thought would considerably transform our earthly existence.

In the realm of television, purely mechanical improvements of importance have taken place. It has just been reported that during the current year this transmission of vision on a distance will receive new possibilities. This is quite possible since once the field has been entered, the result in this direction will no doubt accumulate shortly. Gradually the reflection of the quality of thought will also become apparent through television, when images of persons are transmitted.

Even some observant photographers point out that the difference of photographs depends not only on purely external conditions, but also on the inner state of the subject. Thus also in this case we arrive at the concept of the reflection of thought.

Discussions about hypnotism and suggestion, that is to say, about the trained methods of influence, have already become common. But the limited consciousness as yet but feebly admits that not only in cases of trained mental influences, but absolutely in all cases of more or less clear thinking, powerful reactions upon the surroundings take place.

This consideration will once more remind us of the concept of respon-

sibility, about which we recently had several evidences. What lofty beauty is contained in the idea of responsibility and service! And there is no such spot on earth, where man would not be subject to these two great pre-destinations.

When we evoke from space, words and sounds, are they not followed also by the ever present properties of the energy of thought? Along tremendous distances the human voice, directed by thought, clearly resounds.

No doubt, across the vast space, together with the outer sound, are also stretched the inner strings of a mighty energy. Someone will sense them quite clearly, another though feeling them, will deny. And in such a negation there will be again present the element of fear. For the fearing consciousness shudders at the very hint that it is surrounded by in-

fluences and energies. Precisely that which should uplift people, casts the weak-willed into fear—fear which is the consequence of something indefinite and chaotic. But fear will not save us from chaos. Fears are the very gates to chaos!

It is beautiful, being clad in valour, to realise the grandeur of thought and of all the energies which it sets into action. Though through mechanical means, nevertheless let people hurriedly approach the thoughts about thought in all its mighty significance. And instead of a chaotic fear, many seemingly complicated problems of life will become illumined by the realisation of all the possibilities of thought. Not without reason was it said: "Act not only in body, but also in thought!"

What a beautiful concept: "Thought in Infinity!"

RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES IN INDIA

By Prof. S. V. Puntambekar, M.A. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law

[Mr. Puntambekar is the Professor of History in the Benares Hindu University. In the present article he gives a running survey of some of the important religious movements in modern India. One would, however, note that there are important omissions like the movement associated with Sri Aurobindo, the influence on religious thought exerted by Mahatma Gandhi, etc.]

INDIA possesses a large and varying tradition of religious beliefs based on the experiences, interpretations and utterances of her revered sages and seers who had led a noble life of contemplation and service in order to experience and realise the supreme end of life and the *summum bonum* of existence. To these indigenous traditions and declared paths of spiritual life were added early in her history, experiences, interpretations and utterances of religions coming from abroad. Their contact and on-

slaught irritated our orthodox minds, puzzled our common minds, and opened a path of new experience and search to our inquiring minds. Consequently a set of new heresies and harmonies, creeds and credulities, arose and have made the religious life of India a confusion worse confounded.

In order to give this rich but confused heritage of religious tradition and treasure a proper perspective and interpretation, and in order to make the common man understand the rela-