



BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

**DR. RANADE'S LIFE
OF LIGHT**
M. S. Deshpande

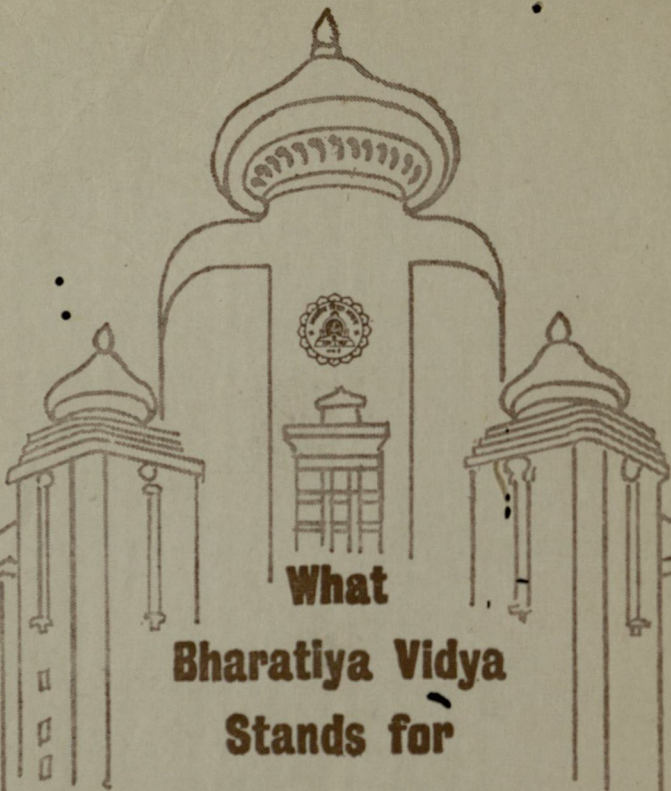
GENERAL EDITORS

K. M. MUNSHI

R. R. DIWAKAR •



BHAVA' TIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY



What Bharatiya Vidya Stands for

Bharatiya Shiksha must ensure that no promising young Indian of character having faith in Bharat and her culture Bharatiya Vidya should be left without modern educational equipment by reason merely of want of funds.

2. Bharatiya Shiksha must be formative more than informative, and cannot have for its end mere acquisition of knowledge. Its legitimate sphere is not only to develop natural talents but so to shape them as to enable them to absorb and express the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya.

3. Bharatiya Shiksha must take into account not only the full growth of a student's personality but the totality of his relations and lead him to the highest self-fulfilment of which he is capable.

4. Bharatiya Shiksha must involve at some stage or other an intensive study of Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages and their literature, without excluding, if so desired, the study of other languages and literature, ancient and modern.

5. The re-integration of Bharatiya Vidya, which is the primary object of Bharatiya Shiksha, can only be attained through a study of forces, movements, motives, ideas, forms and art of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process.

6. Bharatiya Shiksha must stimulate the student's power of expression, both written and oral, at every stage in accordance with the highest ideals attained by the great literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres.

7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

(a) the adoption by the teacher of the *Guru* attitude which consists in taking a personal interest in the student; inspiring and encouraging him to achieve distinction in his studies; entering into his life with a view to form ideals and remove psychological obstacles; and creating in him a spirit of consecration; and

(b) the adoption by the student of the *Shishya* attitude by the development of—

(i) respect for the teacher,

(ii) a spirit of inquiry,

(iii) a spirit of service towards the teacher, the institution, Bharat and Bharatiya Vidya.

8. The ultimate aim of Bharatiya Shiksha is to teach the younger generation to appreciate and live up to the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya which flowing from the supreme art of creative life-energy as represented by Shri Ramachandra, Shri Krishna, Vyasa, Buddha and Mahavira have expressed themselves in modern times in the life of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

9. Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student, not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form or attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world





आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

—Rigveda, I-89-i

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109

Dr. Ranade's
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By
M. S. DESHPANDE

BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

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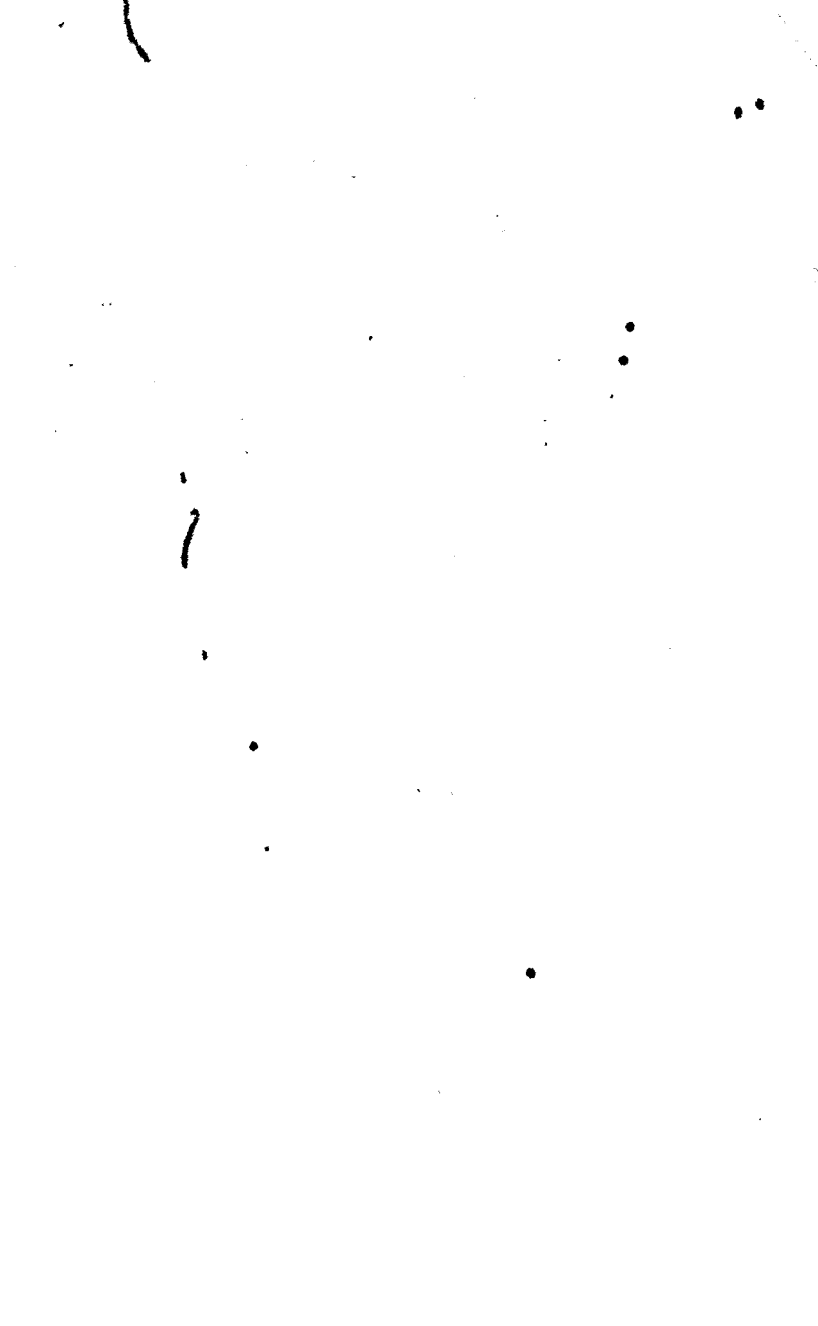
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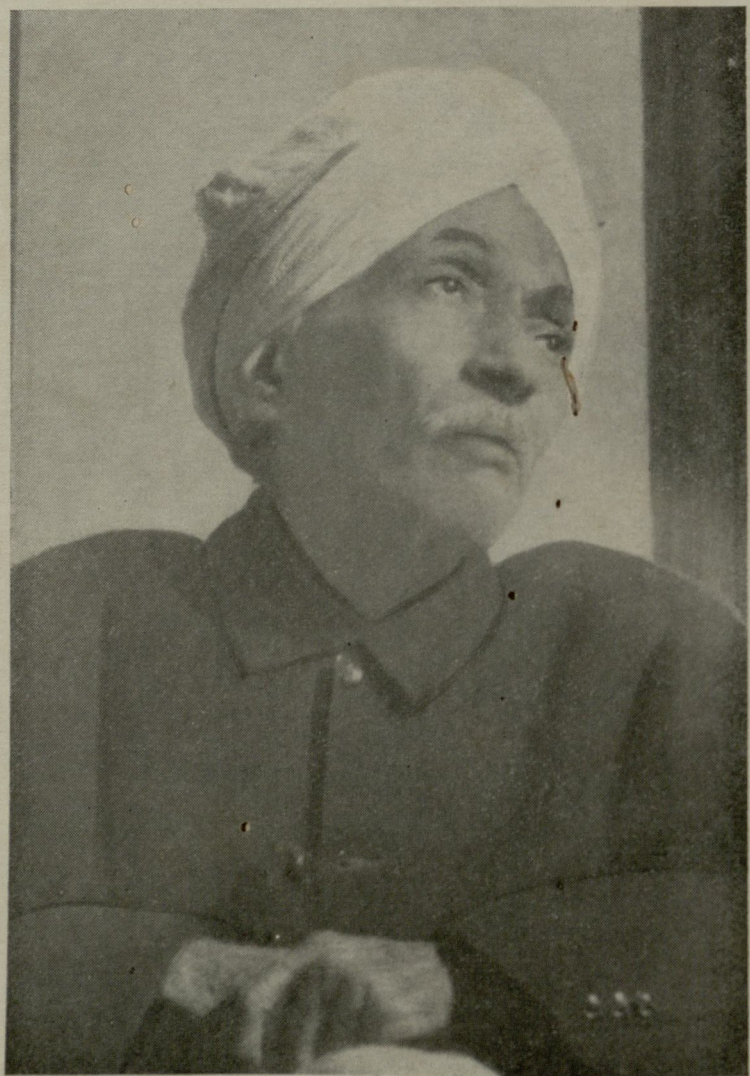
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Dr. Ranade's
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1963

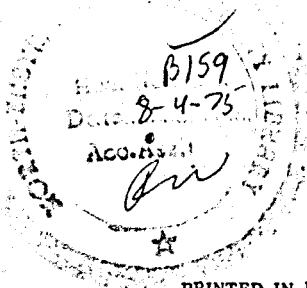
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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulses of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2.00.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages : Hindi, Bengali, Gujerati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit :

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities : we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order ; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it; the *Gita* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of Philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata*: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul, he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but above all, it has for its core the *Gita* which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas, in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD,
NEW DELHI:
3rd October 1951.

K. M. MUNSHI

FOREWORD

Sri Manohararao Deshpande, one of Dr. R. D. Ranade's ardent disciples and an esteemed friend of mine, has asked me to write a foreword to this interesting biography of his master. Sri Deshpande is known to the Kannada reading public as an excellent critic and interpreter of mystical literature and as a philosophic thinker. He is also known for his eminence as a teacher and as an educationist. He has written in English too and published a book of selections from Gandhiji with a fine introduction, entitled *Light of India*. I welcome this major contribution in English from his pen with real pleasure. The biography makes interesting and instructive reading and it is an affectionate tribute paid by a sage and serious disciple to the memory of his great master.

Dr. R. D. Ranade was one of the gifted sons of India who achieved great distinction in several departments of life—educational, intellectual, constructive and spiritual. Karnatak was the home of his physical and spiritual birth and evolution. Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh provided the setting for his career as a professor and educationist. The world came to know him through his *Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy*. Numerous pupils and devout disciples grew in the intellectual and spiritual sunshine that he scattered so prodigally around. He had his own share of the cross and the crown, the fortunes and misfortunes of life. He bore the cross cheerfully and he wore the crown with a great and deep sense of humility. Sri Deshpande has divided the biography into two parts—Intellectual Eminence and Spiritual Eminence. This is significant. Dr. Ranade was as great as a philosopher as he was as a mystic. His influence in the circles of the *elite* in India is due to this remarkable combination of two distinctive gifts—philosophic discrimination and vision.

Dr. Ranade was an illustrious son of the Indian Renaissance and he did a great deal, constructively, intellectually and spiritually, to promote it further towards its own fulfilment. He founded spiritual centres in Nimbai, Sangli and Allahabad. He made contributions of enduring significance to Indian philosophic literature. And he left behind him a large and cultured fraternity of disciples practising a living spiritual discipline which had been handed down from master to disciple in the past and which found in him its most illustrious exponent and representative.

Renascent India is to be recognised not only by its glittering Kailas and Gourishankar and Kanchanaganga, its Sri Ramakrishna, Tagore, Gandhiji and Sri Aurobindo, but also by other Himalayan peaks, equally authentic, though a little less celebrated. Nothing else brings out better the rich authenticity and pervasiveness of the Renaissance than the emergence of a whole tribe of saints and pioneers simultaneously and continuously in all parts of India. The richness and variety of this emergence strikes a student of the Renaissance not less profoundly than the advent of Shakespeare and his tribe which made Elizabethan England a nest of singing birds. The humanist and the sceptic will continue to turn his back on this splendour, urging that what is hailed as light is really a relapse into the "primeval darkness" of Vedic times. But the student of the Renaissance who has responded to its fusion of reason and imagination, of intellect and intuition, of work and worship, is sure to be fascinated by the infinite wealth that it has brought to India. He will be delighted to read this biography of Dr. Ranade which is a glorious canto in the epic of the Indian Renaissance. The self-discovery of the East, the meeting of East and West in a grand moment of synthesis, the presentation of this synthetic vision in English which is a world language, the coming together of occidentals and orientals who have a consanguinous spirituality,

the re-interpretation of a living spiritual tradition so as to bring it in line with the modern world—these are some of the features that characterise the Indian Renaissance. The reader will find ample illustrations of this multi-faceted splendour in this biography of Dr. Ranade.

A re-interpretation of ancient and medieval Indian poetry is also a feature of the New Age. If Dr. Ranade gave us a classical and scholarly account of ancient Indian thought in his *Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy*, his volumes on the "Pathways to God" may be described as romantic in their approach to medieval Indian poetry. It is a fascinating experience to read his interpretations of the poetry of the mystics of North India, Maharashtra and Karnatak. He shows there how the experience embodied in this poetry is the same as that of mystics all over the world. Many obscure songs suddenly spring to life in the revelatory light that he sheds on them by referring frequently to his own experience. This is specially true of the account he gives of the mystic poets of Karnatak. He penetrates through various philosophic terminologies and diverse credal formulations to the core of experience that lies enshrined within them and brings out the universal significance that underlies various forms and beliefs. This serves to underline the unity of Indian thought that persists through a bewildering variety of forms.

The frail body of Dr. Ranade housed a great soul. He was a great builder, teacher and scholar and a serene philosopher and mystic. For several years he hardly lived on any other nourishment but tea. But he needed no other food :

"For he on honeydew hath fed
And drunk the milk of paradise."

I was privileged to come into contact with Dr. Ranade on a few occasions. As an undergraduate in Dharwar as far back as 1928, I thrilled to his eloquence when he lectured on the

Upanishads. Through his close disciples who were my friends and through Prof. N. G. Damle, I could get vivid glimpses of the manner in which he was evolving into a great seer. He presided over a lecture that I delivered on Sri Aurobindo at the residence of Srimant Rajasaheb of Sangli. As the then Dean of the Arts Faculty of the Karnatak University, I arranged for one of his extension lectures. I had the honour of receiving him at my residence at Dharwar. And when he passed away, I had a strange intimation of it in a dream, a few hours before I read about it in my morning newspaper; I treasure these memories of the great man and I am sure that thousands of individuals all over the country do so in their own way.

The dawn of the Renaissance is slowly but inevitably breaking into day. I salute Dr. Ranade as one of the harbingers of this Polar dawn and I am sure that many will read this biography of his by Sri Deshpande with genuine delight.

Narayan Guda, Hyderabad :
26th March: 1963 •

V. K. GOKAK

BENEDICTIONS

I

I was greatly delighted to listen to your English book *Dr. Ranade's Life of Light*—Part II, which you kindly read to us at Athani last month. I was deeply impressed by the manner in which you have given a charming, detailed and absolutely correct account of Sri Gurudeva's *Paramarth-Patha*, collected from all his works. It is as it were, "a Constructive Survey of Gurudeva's works, chiefly his 'Pathways to God' in Marathi, Hindi and Kannada Literatures." In writing his works Sri Gurudev has adopted the method of 'Construction in Exposition'. Many a reader is not able to distinguish Gurudeva's opinion from those of the original authors, on account of this method and somebody had to undertake the arduous task of separating his philosophy and teachings from the opinions of the original authors whose writings he has expanded and which forms the success of his works. You have done it ably and successfully, if the opinion of one like me has any value. Gurudev has left to us a sublime Philosophy of Mysticism, incorporating in it the Mystic Pathway also and I hope, as time advances, it will receive the attention of philosophers and devotees alike. You are really well-qualified for the work by the works you have produced, by your deep scholarship, indefatigable industry, attention to details, a good style and above all, by your long spiritual and literary association with Gurudev, marked by devotion and humility and your equally long sincere *Sādhana*, according to the direction of Sri Amburao Maharaj.

May God bless you with a long healthy life which you can and will devote to spiritual *Sādhana* and spiritual writings.

Kaka

Sangli
4-4-1962

(G. V. TULPULE, M.A.)
(Retired Dy. Post-Master General)

II

To my knowledge this is the first authentic biography of Dr. Ranade in English. The author is Sri M. S. Deshpande who has been his devotee and a good student of his writings.

As most of us know from his writings, Dr. Ranade was a philosopher and a mystic of a very high order. But few had had opportunities of knowing him at close quarters and experiencing the bubbling spirituality which could hardly be contained in that frail frame of fifty kilos. Fewer still know that the erudite scholar who was equally at home with Eastern and Western philosophy, who was as familiar with Aristotle and Plato as with Shankar and Ramanuja, was a disciple in the true traditional style, of a Guru who was comparatively unlettered. Who knows for instance, that he spent far more hours in *Japa* and meditation than in reading or writing or discussing? Rare are the persons who have seen him bursting into ecstatic expression.

All philosophers are not mystics. All mystics are not philosophers. Dr. Ranade was a mystic first and philosopher afterwards. Neither occultism nor miracles are the essence of spirituality, nor are they always seen to be co-existing. Inner and total experience of the oneness of the all-pervading Spirit is the very definition of spirituality. And Dr. Ranade had unmistakable marks of that experience.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is doing real service in bringing out this book in this form and it is expected that the lovers of the writings of Dr. Ranade and those who have genuine interest in the life of mystics will be benefitted by this attempt of Sri Deshpande.

Bangalore:
15th April 1963

R. R. DIWAKAR
Chairman, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

PREFACE

Mūkam karōti vācālam, paṅgum laṅghayate girim,
Yatkrpā tamahaṁ vaidē, paramānanda-mādhavam.

“Salutations to the supremely blissful Lord, whose benign Grace enables the dumb to speak and the lame to scale the mountain.”

Let me at the outset offer my humble *Praṇāms* to Sri Gurudev but for whose unbounded Grace, this ‘Life of Light’ would not have been prepared and published in the present form. It was the grace of Sri Gurudev that enabled me earlier to write his short life-sketch in Marathi verse and his bigger biography in Kannada prose. Both of them were very much liked by seekers and scholars alike. Thereafter, some of my friends pressed me to write his biography in English as well. When the proposal was made, I was a bit diffident on account of the awareness of my limitations in this sphere. However, the thought that the grace that had backed me so far would not fail to come to my aid in this work as well, ultimately triumphed and prompted me to undertake this responsible venture. Fortunately for me the grace did help me as expected and hence I could complete the work within a short time to my satisfaction. I hope, therefore, that like my previous works this one also would merit the appreciation of seekers and scholars as well.

The present work ‘Dr. Ranade’s Life of Light’ throws a flood of light primarily on both his exterior and his interior life—on his intellectual flowering as well as his spiritual evolution—and reveals the superb heights reached and kept by him in both the spheres. It clearly depicts his intellectual eminence as reflected in his illuminating lectures

and literature and his spiritual eminence as manifested in his splendid spiritual experiences. The book also shows how Sri Gurudev inspired the aspirants to love spiritual life, intensify their spiritual *sādhana* and enjoy spiritual bliss. The book describes, in some detail, the Pathway to God chalked out by Sri Gurudev with all its prominent stages, viz. incentives to spiritual life, moral preparation, initiation by a realised *Sadguru*, meditation on the Divine Name, an absolute loving surrender to the Lord and the splendour and bliss of God-realisation enjoyed by the *sādhaka*. Lastly, it presents a few pen-pictures of Dr. Ranade drawn by his admirers, a few salient facets of his many-sided, unique personality as well as his eternal message to humanity. Thus it tries to serve as a good guide to all genuine seekers who aspire to tread the Pathway to the Lord.

Lastly, I must express my deep sense of gratitude to revered Smt. Sitabai—Kakusaheb—Ranade for kindly allowing me to use the original material and blessing my humble attempt. I am also very much grateful to the two revered friends of mine for their loving Benedictions. Sri Kakaji Tulpule—a spiritual brother of Sri Gurudev—has been a source of inspiration and guidance to me right from the advent of my spiritual career, even up to the present day. Sri Diwakarji has encouraged me in my literary work. He has been also kind enough to appreciate the merit of my book and recommend it to the authorities of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and arrange for its publication. Padmasri Prof. Gokak, Director, Central Institute of English, Hyderabad, has been one of my best friends for a pretty long time. He has been kind enough to go through my manuscript and make valuable suggestions. His illuminating Foreword to this book has been the outcome, not only of his profound scholarship, but mainly of the *Padmasri*—the splendour received by him from the Spiritual Lotus—Sri Aurobindo—through his deep devotion. Being one of the premier heralds

of the Cultural Renaissance of Modern Karnatak, he is eminently fitted to sing the glory of Dr. Ranade, 'one of the harbingers of the Polar dawn of the Spiritual Renaissance of India.' I tender my heartfelt thanks to this bard for his excellent performance.

My sincere thanks are also due to the following spiritual brothers of mine for their valuable help in various ways in the preparation of this volume. Sri K. D. Sangoram, B.A., LL.B. and Sri S. N. Deshpande, M.A. went through the manuscript carefully and gave very valuable suggestions. Sri. S. D. Dabade read the chapters as they were being written from time to time and encouraged me by his loving appreciation. Dr. S. G. Tulpule, M.A., Ph.D. and Prof. B. R. Kulkarni, M.A. supplied me some fresh material. Dr. R. S. Padaki of Bangalore gave me a copy of an important letter received by him from Sri Gurudev on the eve of his attaining *Mahasamadhi*. Sri Narayanrao Kulkarni, a famous artist from Bijapur, supplied a beautiful photograph of Sri Gurudev for the frontispiece. I am very much grateful to all these gentlemen. Lastly, I must thank the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, especially Sri S. Ramakrishnan and Sri S. G. Tolat, most sincerely for kindly publishing this book in the Book University Series in such a fine manner.

M. S. DESHPANDE

3rd June 1963

ATHANI

OM

To

Samartha Sadguru

SRI BHAUSAHEB MAHARAJ UMADI

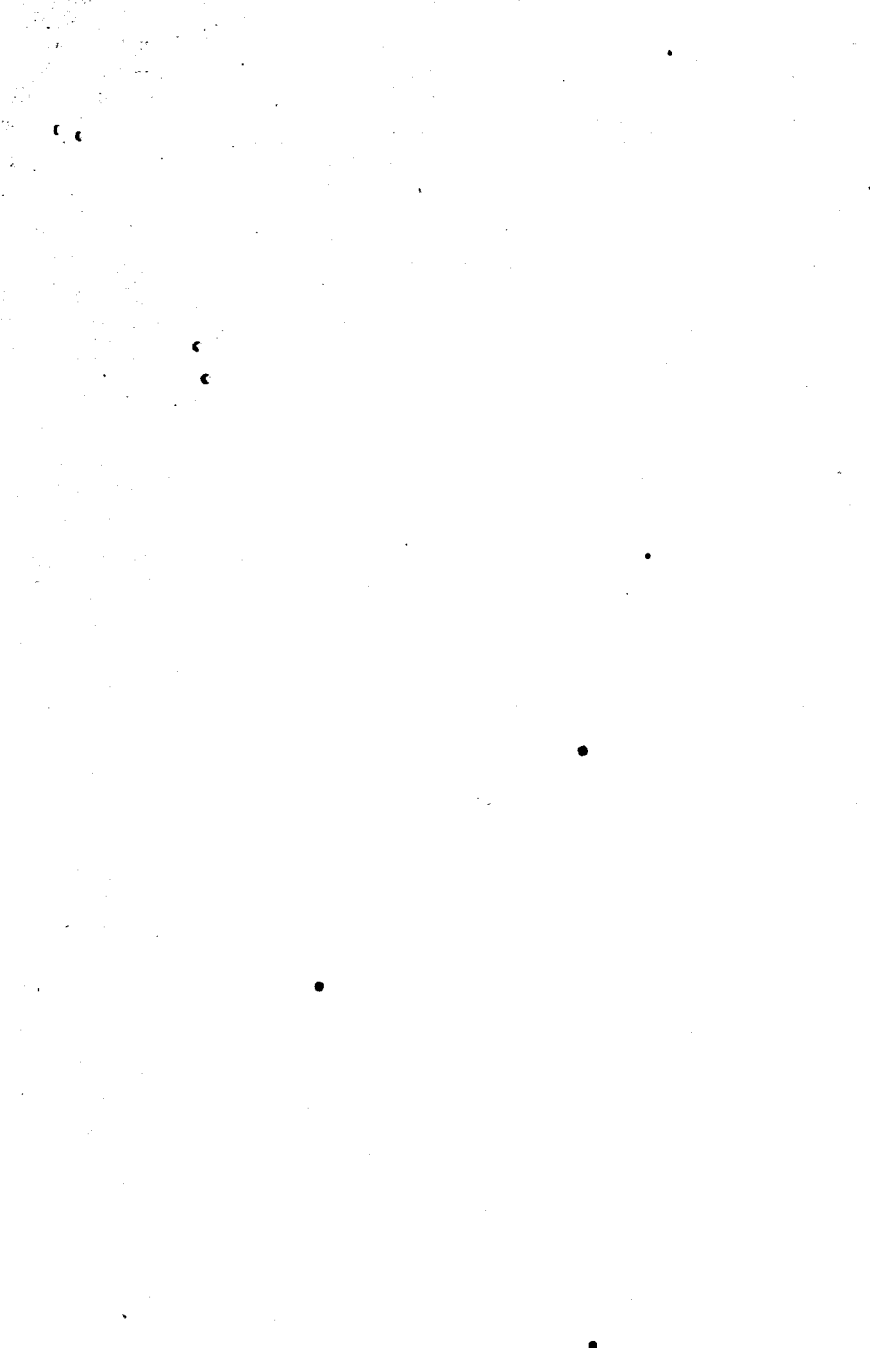
whose

DIVINE GRACE

illumined

Sri Gurudeva's

LIFE OF LIGHT



CONTENTS

	PAGE
GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE	v
FOREWORD	ix
BENEDICTIONS	xiii
PREFACE	xv

Part I

Intellectual Eminence

CHAPTER ONE: PRELUDE (The Glory of Saints)	1
Saints are Lotuses—Swans—Salt—Light-houses—Power-houses—Sri Gurudev was such a Saint	
CHAPTER TWO: A BRILLIANT SCHOLAR	6
Scion of Grace—At School—New Life and Marriage—Unique Success—At College—Dream—Blessings—Sri Maharaja's Prophecy—Prizes in Examinations	
CHAPTER THREE: A RENOWNED PROFESSOR	24
Students' Friend—First Serious Illness—Lecturer in English Composition—Curator of the Manuscript Library—Professor of Philosophy	
CHAPTER FOUR: THROUGH FIRE TO FAME	42
(I) The Departure of the Master—Separation from the Dear Ones—Adhyatma-Bhavan—Second Serious Illness	
(II) Nimal Ashram—Resignation of Life-membership—In the Holy Precincts of Prayag	

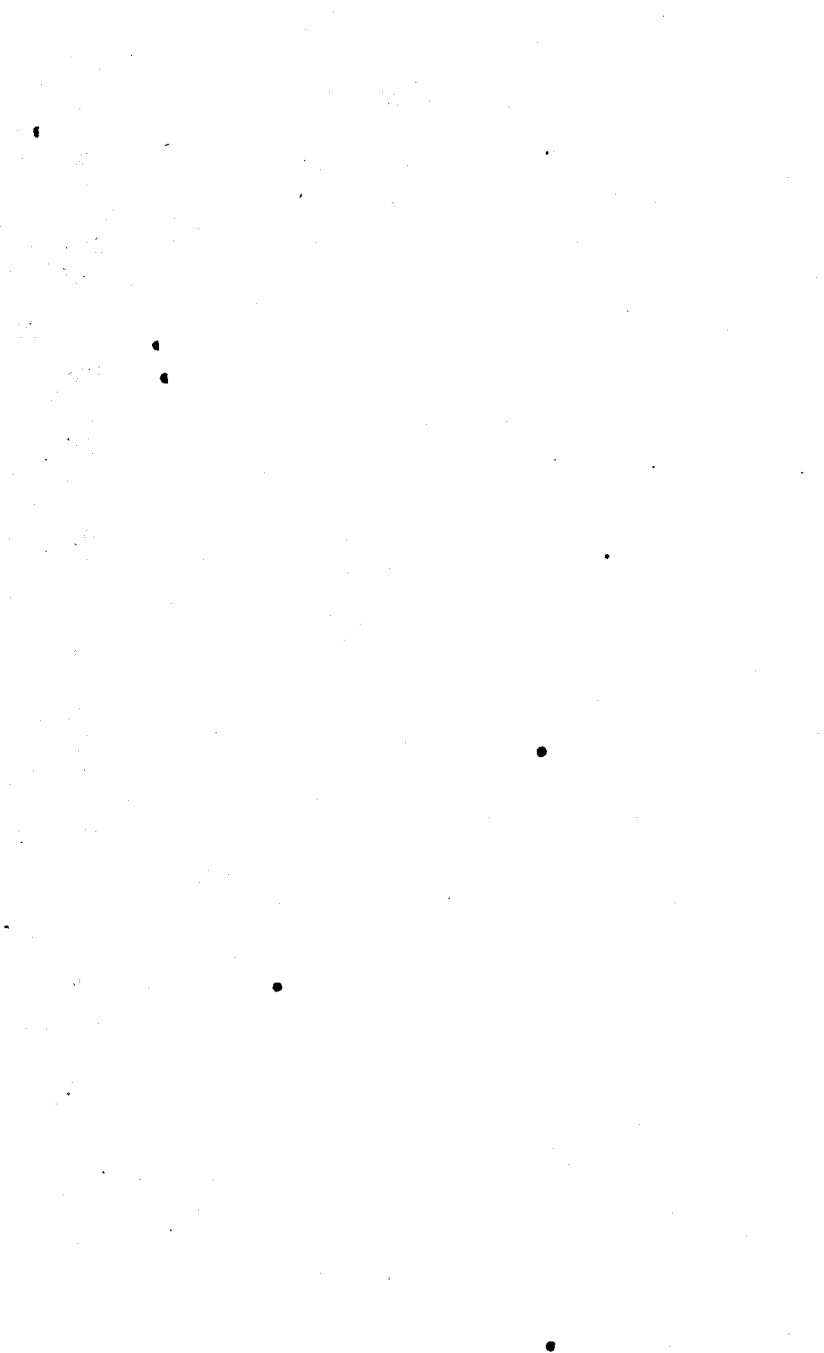
CHAPTER FIVE : MINOR WORKS AND LECTURES	68
(I) Nitya-Nemavali — Bodha-Sudhe — Characteristics — Signs of the Times—Essays	
(II) Philosophy of Spirit—How Humanity can be made One	
CHAPTER SIX : MAJOR WORKS AND INSTITUTIONS	90
(I) A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy—Mysticism in Maharashtra—Pathway to God in Hindi Literature—Conception of Spiritual Life in Mahatma Gandhi and other Hindi Saints—Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation—Pathway to God in Kannada Literature—Vedanta as the Culmination of Indian Thought—Pathway to God	
(II) Academy of Philosophy and Religion—Adhyatma-Vidya-Mandir.	

Part II

Spiritual Eminence

CHAPTER SEVEN : SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION	117
Needs of Good Growth—The Motive Power—Company of Spiritual Brothers—Verification of Experience—A Fiery Ordeal—Moral Agony—In the Company of the Master—Intense Sadhana—Second Ordeal—Higher Experiences	
CHAPTER EIGHT : SPLENDID EXPERIENCES	148
Rich Variety—Dream-Visions—Spiritual Sound—Flavour—Visions—Sudarsana—Golden Asvattha—Vision of Gods—Vision of Self—Cosmic Vision—Vision of the Infinite—Ecstatic Rapture	

CHAPTER NINE : BLESSED SRI GURUDEV	170
Proper Authority—His First Initiate—Sri Baba Departs— Dream-suggestion—Group of Disciples—Method of Initia- tion—Instructive Sittings—Spiritual Tours—Nectar Jubilee—Fury of Prayag—Great Departure	
CHAPTER TEN : PATHWAY TO GOD	195
(I) PREPARATION	
Supreme Ideal—Special Features—Five Stages : 1. Incentives. 2. Moral Preparation. 3. God and Saints	
CHAPTER ELEVEN : PATHWAY TO GOD	215
(II) ACTUAL PILGRIMAGE	
Introductory—4. Beginnings of Pilgrimage : (A) Master and Disciple. (B) Value of Name. (C) Methods of Meditation. (D) Company of Saints. (E) Attitude of Devotion and Surrender. 5. Highest Ascent : (A) Criteria. (B) Main Types. (C) Effects of God-realisation : 1 On the Individual. 2 On the Society	
CHAPTER TWELVE : EPILOGUE	241
(Pen-Pictures, Personality and Message)	
Retrospect—Pen-Pictures—Salient Facets—Eternal Message	
<i>Glossary</i>	255
<i>Bibliography</i>	259



PART I

INTELLECTUAL EMINENCE

1. Prelude (The Glory of Saints)
2. A Brilliant Scholar
3. A Renowned Professor
4. Through Fire to Fame
5. Minor Works and Lectures
6. Major Works and Institutions



CHAPTER ONE

PRELUDE

(The Glory of Saints)

Saints are Lotuses

The lotus is reputed for its purity, beauty and fragrance. It is really a '*pañkaja*' — 'a child of mud.' Still how very pure it is! How very lovely! What a world of difference between the mother and the child! The lotus abandons all the impure elements of its mother. It only absorbs her purity and builds and develops its own loveliness. It raises its head above the unclean surroundings and worships the lord of light, the sun. From him does it aspire to receive the light divine. Welcoming his rays with its full-blown petals, it implores the pleasant breeze to scatter its fragrance everywhere. To partake of its nectar, bees rush towards it in swarms from all directions, enjoy it and dance in joy. It thus creates around it an atmosphere of bliss and imparts it to all those who care to seek its company.

All this and much more is done by the saints as well. Though born in an ordinary, poor family, they inherit fine impressions and thereby, infuse supreme charm into their own lives. Social filth will never defile them. The sun of *atman* — the Supreme Spirit—is the constant object of their adoration. Their intellect is ever absorbed in the thought of *atman*. Their hearts ever pine to attain Him. These great souls perform incessant penance for the realisation of God, gain immense splendour as a result of their spiritual experience and enjoy eternal peace. They thus bring about an atmosphere of peace around them. These lovely lotuses in the lake of human life offer divine ambrosia to all the souls that care to approach

CHAPTER TWO

A BRILLIANT SCHOLAR

“ This boy is a scion of a grace, mother ! He is a budding saint come down to bless the devotees. Let me pay my homage to him myself ! ”

These were the remarks of a swāmiji—saint—sitting in the verandah of the Nāndikeśvar temple, in the outskirts of Jama-khāndi—the then capital of a small Indian State—now a taluka place in the Bijapur district of Karnātak. The swāmiji was looking at the boy, lying prostrate at his feet. A genuine feeling of love and reverence glistened in his eyes. Suddenly he raised his eyes from the boy and began to look at the sky with a fixed and steady gaze. It seemed as if he had a glimpse—a vision of the future greatness of the boy, when the spontaneous remark mentioned above slipped from his loving lips. This prediction of the future saintly career of the boy was addressed to his mother, Pārvatibai, standing near him with folded hands. She had brought her young child to her spiritual master for his blessings. The swāmiji, who was well-known in that part as Śrī Mahāliṅg or Śāmbhuliṅg Swāmi, thereafter raised the boy from the ground, took him in his arms, lovingly caressed him and once again assured the mother of his blessed future. These unexpected prophetic words of her master sent a thrill of joy in the mother’s bosom. Tears of gratitude trickled down her cheeks. She respectfully bowed down to the swāmiji and returned home with her child. An unusual feeling of blessedness filled her soul. Immediately after her arrival, she gave the child a good bath, seated him on a raised seat, applied *kuikumi* (saffron) to his forehead, placed a garland of flowers round his neck and washed his pretty feet with tears of joy. Amazed at this strange behaviour of his mother, the child asked: ‘ What is

CHAPTER THREE

A RENOWNED PROFESSOR

Students' Friend

"I have not seen such a simple and loving personality like you till now. Hundreds of virtues found in you were not to be found in any other person. I have preserved all your letters to me like a valuable treasure. Your valuable words of advice to us can never be had anywhere else at any cost. You have achieved such great things by staying in Bhārat alone. Had you gone to other countries, you would have moved the whole world." (Oxon, 8-9-1910)

Such is the certificate which a student has given to his teacher. Śrī. Rāmbhau was appointed Daxina Fellow in the Deccan College in 1908. He was also entrusted with the work of supervising the hostels which brought him in close contact with students. He then taught Sanskrit to the students of the previous class (First Year class). His simple, loving nature, idealistic noble life and remarkable intelligence—all these inspired love and reverence for him among the students. They all related their difficulties to Rāmbhau with the least reservation and received proper help and guidance from him. Thus had he become 'a friend, philosopher and guide' to all students. Śrī Puṇatāmbekar, who later became a renowned professor of Politics, was one of his pupils at that time. When he was studying in England, he wrote a letter to Rāmbhau, an extract from which has been given above. It clearly reflects the feelings entertained by his pupils about him and shows us how he had been a friend as well as a source of inspiration to all of them.

This reverential love of students once expressed itself in a peculiar fashion. Rāmbhau also responded to it in an unexpected manner. Śrī. Shrikhaṇḍe, one of his pupils, who was an admir-

CHAPTER FOUR

THROUGH FIRE TO FAME

(I)

The Departure of the Master

“...The health of the Master was recently causing great anxiety. As it is improving through his own grace our anxiety has been lessened a little. Sri Maharaj has been free from this illness like the sun from the eclipse. Hence I think he would shine with redoubled splendour. ...”

The above-mentioned extract from the letter written by Rambhau on 12th December 1913 to his spiritual sister, Smt. Śivalingavvā, describes the illness of Sri Maharaj, the anxiety caused by it, as well as the improvement in his health. But a few days afterwards, Rambhau had a dream in which he saw the bed of Sri Maharaj unoccupied, which threw him into great anxiety again. He intimated this to Smt. Śivalingavvā on 23rd January 1914. Within six days after this he heard the shocking news that Sri Maharaj attained *samadhi* at Inchagiri on 29th January 1914.

When the intellectual eminence of Sri Rambhau, firmly rooted in the Faith Divine, was bringing him laurels from all, Fate was sorely tormenting him with shock after shock. The departure of the master was the first rude shock received by him. To Rambhau Sri Maharaj was all in all. Sri Maharaj had granted him new life, shown him the Pathway to the Abode of Eternal Bliss and granted him the strength to tread that pathway. His illimitable grace had helped him at every step and showered upon him a few brilliant gifts, both of material as well as spiritual splendour. No wonder if the departure of such a Master proved to be a severe shock to him. Rambhau immediately left for Inchagiri. All the disciples of Sri Maharaj were plunged in sor-

CHAPTER FIVE

MINOR WORKS AND LECTURES

(I)

Nitya Nēmāvali (Book of Daily Prayer)

“ Just see ! How he has done everything and yet has chosen to conceal his identity ! ”

These remarks of Sri Maharaj about Sri Rambhau, who had just prepared the *Nēmāvali* in 1901, under the direction of Sri Maharaj, clearly depict Sri Rambhau's prevailing attitude. Even though he had prepared the *Nēmāvali* himself, he never cared to disclose his authorship. Nor is this all. He really believed that it was not he, but his master, who was the real author of the booklet.* “ *Nāham kartā Hariḥ kartā* ”— “ I am not the doer ; Hari is the doer. ” Such was the conviction of Rambhau that went on developing day by day and ultimately permeated his whole being. The origin of this attitude can be traced in his letter to Sri Maharaj in this connection :

“ ... Your untiring effort for self-realisation is the basic foundation of this booklet. ‘ He repairs to the valley but takes care of all. ’ These remarks about Sri Rāmdās are true in your case as well. These songs and verses (collected in this prayer-book) are the outcome of your *sadhana* at Inchagiri and the care you bestowed upon your disciples. If we consider the authorship of these poems, it would be proper to say that you really composed them, without actually composing them. In the absence of self-realisation, there would have been no songs and *abhangās* as well as this introduction. The introduction was got written by your Holiness by an ignorant person like myself. This would never

*नाहं कर्ता हरिः कर्ता ।

MAJOR WORKS AND INSTITUTIONS

(I)

*A Constructive Survey of Upaniṣadic Philosophy**A monumentum aere perennius* (A permanent monument)

PROF. GARBE

This superb opinion of the German savant, Prof. Garbe, is a standing testimony to the greatness of Rambhau's first major work about Upaniṣadic Philosophy. Really there is no other work of this type, that has expounded the eternal principles of our ancient sages in such a thorough and rational manner. Many a contemporary scholar has shared the opinion of Prof. Garbe about this book. "It is a monument of patient research and vast scholarship," declared Rawlinson. Mr. Muirhead opined that "this important book will have the effect of making the Indian civilization better understood in the West." "A mere glance at the work," says R. Zimmerman, "will show how far you have gone beyond Deussen's Philosophy of the Upaniṣads."

This is the outcome of deep study and *sādhana* extending over a period of two decades. Rambhau began the study of the Upaniṣads even when he was yet a student. We have already seen how he delivered three lectures about them, at Bangalore in 1915. He studied them again more minutely for preparing these lectures. He continued his study still further and published an article entitled, 'Psychology in the Upaniṣads' in the *Indian Philosophic Review* in 1917. After going through the article, Dr. Bhandarkar wrote to him: "Your pamphlet has struck me as a remarkably good production, showing rare powers of critical research and cogency of reasoning. I hope you continue to pursue such thorough enquiries." Rambhau pursued his



PART II

SPIRITUAL EMINENCE

7. Spiritual Evolution
8. Splendid Experiences
9. Blessed Sri Gurudev
10. The Pathway to God (1)
11. The Pathway to God (2)
12. Epilogue

Om

Spiritual Life

has been the beginning

of

My Philosophic Career.

Let me hope

it will be

its culmination as well!

— SRI GURUDEV

CHAPTER SEVEN

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

Needs of Good Growth

Good seed in fertile soil

Well tilled, well watered, will sprout
And soon will bear fair foliage
In spring, fine flower and fruit.

— SRI RAMDAS

What is true in the case of a physical seed, is equally true in the case of a spiritual seed. The needs of both are similar. The spiritual seed also, like its counterpart, requires a fertile soil for its luxurious growth. The mental soil of the seeker must be sufficiently cultured. It must have been enriched with good heredity, with faith, devotion and discrimination. But the seed sown in such a rich soil, must also be a viable seed — a seed endowed with the latent power of germination. The Divine Name granted by a realised master—*sadguru*—is the only spiritual seed of this type. Such a Divine Name alone can grow, can evolve. Ordinary name cannot do so. Then this seed must be watered by a continuous shower of meditation. Afterwards, with the aid of introspection, the weeds of evil tendencies must be detected and the soil must be cleared of them by self-control. This will enable the seed to sprout properly and give out a few shoots of experience. In course of time, it will evolve into a good plant with fine foliage if it gets a congenial atmosphere of the company of *sādhakas* and saints. But the advent of the spring of *sadguru's* grace alone will enable this plant to bear beautiful fragrant flowers and sweet luscious fruits of supernal, spiritual experiences and bless the seeker with bliss divine.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SPLENDID EXPERIENCES

Rich Variety

“ Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and Sri Bhausahab Maharaj are not a whit less worthy than Sri Jñāneśvar and Tukārām. Through their grace I have attained the spiritual experiences attained by Sri Nārād and Prahlād in ancient times. ”

This remark of Sri Gurudev (Rambhau) about his own spiritual experiences, fully reveal their uniqueness. The remark that follows speaks of their rich variety : “ I have not mentioned any spiritual experience in my books which I have not actually experienced.” If we glance at his major works, the truth of this remark will easily dawn upon us. In his major works Sri Gurudev has described the various splendid experiences of the Upaniṣadic seers, as well as those of Marathi, Hindi and Kannad saints. All of them are endowed with a rich variety. Some of their most important experiences have been given below for the benefit of the curious readers. The true *sādhakas* would do well to ascertain and enjoy their splendour from the original books themselves.

Let us first have a glimpse of the experiences of the Upaniṣadic ṛṣis. They had, we are told, the vision of the mist (*nīhār*), smoke (*dhūma*), the sun (*arkā*), fire (*anila*), fire-fly (*khadyōta*), lightning (*vidyut*), crystal (*sphaṭika*), and the moon (*śaśi*). They saw “ the spotless and the immaculate *Brahman*, on a disc set with gold, which is the light of all lights that the seekers after *Atman* experience.” As the spiritual world illumined before their vision, there was neither any sunrise nor any sunset ; there was eternal day for them. Then they saw “ the golden-coloured Being with golden moustaches and golden hair and who shone like gold up to his very

CHAPTER NINE

BLESSED SRI GURUDEV

Proper Authority

“The Teacher to whom we go to seek wisdom, must have realised his identity with the Ultimate Self.... A Teacher who has walked on the path may take his aspiring disciple from step to step on the ladder of spiritual perfection.”

—SRI GURUDEV

We have seen in the last two chapters how Sri Gurudev had fully possessed all the qualifications of a master enumerated in the above-mentioned passage. In his later life he had practically reached the zenith of God-realisation. He had thus acquired the proper authority to grant to the seekers what he himself had attained. Really, in his *sampradāya*, for acquiring this authority, such splendid spiritual experiences are not considered necessary. Those who gain the experience of the super-sensuous divine name are supposed to possess the power of initiating others. Sri Gurudev had acquired this power as early as 1920 when Sri Baba had asked him to begin to initiate the aspirants, which he had respectfully declined to do.

To be able to initiate and bless the aspirants three things are necessary: the seed of the divine name; unique spiritual experiences; and power to bear the responsibility of properly guiding the disciples. In this *sampradāya*, the master is supposed to impart his own spiritual power to his disciple, through the seed of the divine name. The disciple is required to water the seed with the constant shower of his one-pointed meditation and reap the harvest of spiritual

CHAPTER TEN

PATHWAY TO GOD (Part I)

Nature and Preparation

Supreme Ideal

“ To realise God for oneself and for others is and should be the end of human life. ”

SRI GURUDEV

As stated above, the supreme ideal which Sri Gurudev has placed before us is two-fold : individual uplift and social welfare. We should realise God, according to him, both for our own good, as well as for the good of others — *Swāntah sukhāya jagataḥ hitāya* — ‘For our own happiness and for the welfare of the world.’ The spiritual life dedicated to the realisation of God thus carries with it a double blessing. It blesses those that live that life and those that live and move in their company. “Give your personality a lift,” declares Swami Rāmatirth, “and you will lift the whole world.” Here self-improvement involves and includes the improvement of the associates. The lamp is only to get itself enkindled to see that its light illumines its surroundings. The flower is merely to blossom to see that its fragrance fills the atmosphere around it. Let the lamp and the flower shine and blossom properly, the consequent spread of light and fragrance would take place automatically. As a Hindi saint has put it :

*Piyat piyalā prēmakā, sudharē sabahī sāthi.

“He who drinks the cup of devotion reforms all his friends !”

This is really, according to Sri Gurudev, the most effective way of spreading the love for spiritual life.

* पियत पियाला प्रेमका । सुधरे सबही साथी ।

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PATHWAY TO GOD (Part II)

(Actual Pilgrimage)

Introductory

After completing the preparation mentioned in the last chapter, the seeker undertakes his actual spiritual pilgrimage. It consists of the beginnings of pilgrimage and the highest ascent—the fourth and the fifth stages of Sri Gurudev's pathway. The former deals with (a) master and disciple, (b) value of name, (c) methods of meditation, (d) company of saints and *sādhakās*, and (e) devotion and surrender. The latter includes (a) the criteria, (b) variety and (c) effects of God-realisation. All these topics will be briefly elaborated here.

IV. Beginnings of Pilgrimage

(a) *Master and Disciple* : The spiritual pilgrimage of a seeker begins, according to Sri Gurudev, with initiation by a worthy master. It is the master who can see and show the invisible form of the Lord to the aspirant that should be considered to be really worthy. The need of such a master is universally admitted. **Binā sabadā gurudēvakā, kabahū timira na jāya* — 'Without the words of master, never will the darkness of ignorance vanish!' says a Hindi poet-saint. Sri Rāmadās tells us: "Never can there be any knowledge (of the *Atman*) without a *sadguru*." †*Gurubina kōna batāvē bāta?* — 'Who will show the way except a Guru?' asks Tulsīdas. "You will never attain liberation unless and until you serve a master faithfully," declares Puraṇḍardās. All the saints are, thus, unanimous about the necessity of a *sadguru* in spiritual life.

* बिना सबद गुरुदेव का कबहु तिमिर न जाय !

† गुरुबिन कौन बतावे बात ।

CHAPTER TWELVE

EPILOGUE

(Pen-pictures, Personality and Message)

Retrospect

We have seen the divine lustre of the ' life of light ' of Sri Gurudev. We had a glimpse both of his external and internal life — of his intellectual growth as well as of his spiritual evolution. We have observed how his intellectual eminence was reflected in his teaching as well as in his literature, and his spiritual eminence in his splendid spiritual experiences. We have also tried to ascertain how Sri Gurudev inspired people to love spiritual life, through his initiation, public lectures and institutions. Here we intend to present (i) a few vivid pen-pictures drawn by his admirers, (ii) a few salient facets of his many-sided, unique personality, and (iii) his message to humanity.

Pen-pictures

(1) " Sharp of intellect, sweet by nature, modest of behaviour, Sri Rāmbhau could easily influence people. He was gentleness incarnate. Physically he was very weak. His profound scholarship, however, could easily conceal this shortcoming. His dress was quite simple: A clean white *dhoti*, red Poona shoes, a buttoned shirt, a loose close-collared coat, a scarf-like white upper garment round his neck, a loose Poona *pugree* on his head and a black gown loosely hanging down his shoulders. Such was the figure that used to enter the class-room in great haste. At times Sri Rāmbhau used to bring one or two additional books with him. His subject was philosophy, and he appeared also like a philosopher. His teaching which used to begin immediately he enter-

GLOSSARY

<i>Abhaṅga</i>	a species of metre in Marathi.
<i>Abhyāsa</i>	practice.
<i>Ācārya</i>	preceptor.
<i>Amara</i>	immortal.
<i>Amṛta-mahotsava</i>	nectar-jubilee.
<i>Ananda</i>	divine bliss.
<i>Apāna</i>	air stationed in the lower region.
<i>Ārati</i>	ceremony of waving light.
<i>Āsana</i>	pose.
<i>Āśvattha</i>	'a holy fig-tree.
<i>Ātman</i>	the Soul. Supreme Spirit.
<i>Audumbar</i>	a fig-tree.
<i>Bēhad</i>	unlimited.
<i>Bhajan</i>	community singing of hymns to God,
<i>Bhakti</i>	devotion.
<i>Bhāva</i>	ardent love.
<i>Bidi</i>	Indian cigarette.
<i>Bindu</i>	spiriton.
<i>Bodha-sudhe</i>	name of a book.
<i>Brahman</i>	the Absolute.
<i>Chipālis</i>	the two sticks used to clap together.
<i>Darśan</i>	vision.
<i>Dās</i>	devoted servant.
<i>Dās-bodha</i>	name of a book by Sri Rāmdās.
<i>Dharmasālā</i>	rest-house for travellers.
<i>Dhoti</i>	a garment of males worn round the waist

<i>Dhyān-maṅdir</i>	meditation-hall.
<i>Divya</i>	divine.
<i>Dr̥ṣṭi</i>	gaze.
<i>Gurukula</i>	an āśram where free education is imparted by a Guru.
<i>Goṣṭhācādana</i>	a species of white clay.
<i>Jayaṅti</i>	birth-day celebration.
<i>Jñānēśvarī</i>	name of the commentary on the Gita by Sri Jñāneśvar.
<i>Kailās</i>	paradise of Śiva.
<i>Kalā-yōga</i>	yoga of art.
<i>Kaliyuga</i>	the fourth age.
<i>Kalpa-taru</i>	wish-fulfilling tree.
<i>Kāma-yōga</i>	yōga of lust.
<i>Karma</i>	action.
<i>Karm-yōga</i>	yōga of disinterested works dedicated to the Divine.
<i>Kēvala-kumbhaka</i>	effortless stopping of breath.
<i>Kīrtan</i>	singing the glory of God.
<i>Kumkuma</i>	saffron.
<i>Mahābhāṣyakār</i>	a great commentator.
<i>Mahar̥ṣi</i>	a great sage—seer.
<i>Mahāsamādhi</i>	merging in the Supreme Spirit. Passing away.
<i>Mānas</i>	name of a lake; mind.
<i>Mantra</i>	sacred prayer-formula.
<i>Nāma</i>	name.
<i>Nirbayalu</i>	spacelessness.
<i>Nirguṇa</i>	without attributes.
<i>Nityā-nitya</i>	eternal and non-eternal.
<i>Padmāsana</i>	lotus pose.
<i>Paṅkaja</i>	lotus.
<i>Paramahaṅsa</i>	divine swan.

<i>Paramārtha</i>	true knowledge about the Supreme Spirit.
<i>Pitāmbar</i>	a silk-cloth used as dhoti at the time of worship or meals.
<i>Pothi</i>	a sacred book,
<i>Pranava</i>	the sacred syllable OM.
<i>Prāṇa</i>	vital breath.
<i>Prāṇāyāma</i>	control of breath.
<i>Prasād</i>	anything given as a blessing ; a boon.
<i>Prasthāna-traya</i>	the three great works, viz. the Upaniṣads, the Gītā and Brahama sūtrās.
<i>Punya-tithi</i>	anniversary day.
<i>Rasarāj</i>	king of relish; supreme flavour.
<i>Rṣi</i>	a seer.
<i>Rūpa</i>	form.
<i>Sabija-nāma</i>	viable name.
<i>Sadguru</i>	spiritual teacher.
<i>Sādhaka</i>	one who practises sadhana.
<i>Sādhana</i>	a method of yoga.
<i>Saguna</i>	with attributes.
<i>Sākṣātkār</i>	God-realisation.
<i>Sākṣi</i>	witness; disinterested observer
<i>Samādhi</i>	a tomb; profound absorption in the Supreme Spirit.
<i>Sambhāṣaṇa</i>	conversation.
<i>Sampradāya</i>	a tradition; a religious creed.
<i>Sāndhyā-vandana</i>	the morning and evening prayer.
<i>Saptāh</i>	a religious festival.

<i>Sat-cit-ānand</i>	epithet of the Supreme Spirit consisting of existence, knowledge and bliss.
<i>Siddhāsana</i>	accomplished pose.
<i>Sindhu</i>	ocean.
<i>Smarana</i>	remembrance; contemplation.
<i>Sparsana</i>	touch.
<i>Śrī</i>	an honorific title.
<i>Sudarśana</i>	the discus of Vishnu.
<i>Swāmī</i>	a spiritual preceptor.
<i>Swarūpa</i>	one's own form.
<i>Tajjalān</i>	a cryptic formula suggesting that God is the origin, the end and the life of all things.
<i>Tanpurā</i>	a Turkish guitar.
<i>Tatvamasi</i>	'that thou art.'
<i>Tīrth</i>	holy water.
<i>Trikāl</i>	three periods of time, morning, noon and evening.
<i>Trikūta</i>	a spot situated between the four ventricles.
<i>Vaikunṭh</i>	the paradise of Viṣṇu.
<i>Vairāgya</i>	dispassion.
<i>Vāraṅkari</i>	a devotee who performs a periodical pilgrimage to a holy place.
<i>Vastu</i>	spiritual form.
<i>Vīna</i>	Indian lute.
<i>Vivēk</i>	discrimination.

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THE AUTHOR

Sri Manohar Srinivas Deshpande was born in 1899, in Sambargi village of the Athni taluka, in the Mysore State. He was educated at Athni and Poona. While at Poona, he was greatly influenced by the burning patriotism of Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. Soon after his graduation in 1922, he joined a band of young idealists and started a High School at Athni, after the model of the famous New English School, Poona, to inculcate the spirit of nationalism among the students. He worked in that institution as a Life-member for well-nigh 35 years and retired as its Principal.

Along with this work of imparting national education, he also carried on public cultural activities at Athni, which brought him in close and loving contact with eminent savants of Karnatak like Dr. R. R. Diwakar and Prof. D. R. Bendre. Through them he imbibed a love for Kannad language and literature, taking his M.A. in 1937 with Kannad as the principal subject.

Sri Deshpande has more than two dozen books to his credit, in Kannad, English, Sanskrit and Marathi, on educational, cultural, and spiritual topics. His book on the Message of Gandhiji, entitled *Light of India*, has been acclaimed as 'original' and excellent by great critics and scholars. Sri Deshpande's innate love of spirituality led him to many saints before he was finally blessed by Sri Amburao Maharaj and Sri Gurudev Dr. Ranade. The present book depicts the life of the latter Master.